

Signs of the Times.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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POETRY.

SUPPLICATION.

SOMETIMES I cast my eyes to heaven,
And smite my breast, and say,
To me, O Lord, let light be given,
And teach me how to pray.

To this cold heart of mine, O Lord,
Send forth thy golden ray;
Call home my thoughts that rove abroad,
And teach me how to pray.

And when I pray to thee, O Lord,
Be my vain wishes still:
May all I ask of thee, accord
With thy all-righteous will.

Teach me, O Lord, my nothingness;
My many sins forgive;
Speak peace unto my troubled breast,
And let thy servant live.

JOSEPH B. MOON.

POWDER SPRINGS, Ga., Oct. 30, 1886.

ABBA, FATHER.

STRENGTH for to-day, Father, strength for to-day:

Strength to be holy, to walk in thy way;
Strength for the keeping my robes undefiled;
Strength to be humble, as seemeth thy child.

Strength in the tempest to turn from the
snare;

Strength to be constant and earnest in prayer;
Patient in well doing, faithful in heart,
Never, O Lord, from thy truth to depart.

Strength for the crosses thou giv'st me to
bear,

Resting my heart on thy fatherly care;
Trusting, although I may not understand;
Knowing that thou all my goings hast plan'd.

Strength to shun evil, to cleave to the right;
Strength that my light burn clearly and
bright;

Strength that I bring no reproach on thy
name;

Looking to Jesus, thy promise I claim.

Still be thou near me whatever betide;
Let me not wander away from thy side;
In life or in death be thou with me alway;
Strength for to-day, Father, strength for to-day.

MRS. M. P. HANDY.

A LOVE SONG.

"THE Lord hath appeared of old unto me,
saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an ever-
lasting love: therefore with loving-kindness
have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3.

I loved thee e'er the earth was born,
Or mountains met the blushing dawn;
Or e'er I bid the sun to rise,
And take his station in the skies;
And when old nature's heavy womb
Was big with wonders yet unborn,
I knew the object of my love:
'Twas you, my fair, my gentle dove.

Now though your feet have gone astray,
In following the forbidden way;
Your garments all defiled with sin,
And all your duties are unclean;
Corruption dwells in every part,
You have a false, deceitful heart;
But still I cannot thee forget;
I love thee, O I love thee yet.

'Twas for this love I formed the scheme
To save your soul from death and sin,
And sent my Son to bleed and die,
To bring your wandering spirit nigh.
He paid the debt you justly owed,
When from his side the torrent flowed:
And now he lives at my right hand,
And has all worlds at his command.

Dear Lord, I own my guilt and shame,
But bless and praise thy gracious name,
Which draws me with such cords divine,
And says, I ever shall be thine.
My soul is ravished with thy charms!
O let me fly into thine arms!
And sing and praise forevermore
That love which brought me safely through.

R. C. LEACHMAN.

FEBRUARY 8, 1846.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CONTROVERSY.

To A certain extent there is controversy in the presentation of any religious sentiment, for all opposing sentiments are controverted by it. The truth on any subject cannot be declared without controverting every erroneous view. In the discussion of subjects by brethren there must necessarily be controversy whenever different views are entertained, as there will be on many subjects while we are in the flesh. I cannot see any harm, but often much good, in controversy, so long as those engaged in it are directed by the right spirit. It is the sharpness and bitterness of personal allusions that worry and distress the tender spiritual mind, and cause many to regard controversy among brethren with dread. It is, perhaps, in our nature to resent any opposition to sentiments that we entertain; and when not under the control of the meek and gentle Spirit of Christ, one is very apt to think it necessary to sternly rebuke those who hold views contrary to his own. When we are in that state of mind we ought not to write, but wait till we can feel sure that a kindly and loving spirit is prompting us, before we undertake to correct what we deem to be errors in the sentiments of a brother. The apostle uses the expression, "Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. iv. 15); and I think, when the Lord calls one to speak or write upon these heavenly things, he gives him the spirit of love to control him. "The love of Christ constraineth us," says the apostle. We may feel very backward about claiming for ourselves such an exalted and holy motive, yet I am sure that if we cannot have some evidence that we are speaking or writing in love, we are out of place in attempting to discuss such sacred things.

It does not seem to me necessary that one should say offensive things to or of another, in giving a different understanding of a subject from that which he has expressed, only so far as the very fact of holding and expressing a different view may itself be deemed an offense. The object of one in any controversy should not be merely to defend his own view, and sustain his character as a correct thinker and a clear and deep writer or speaker, but to present the truth that has been made precious to his soul, with a humble desire to glorify God and comfort his dear children. If it is really the truth one is contending for, the real meaning of the Holy Spirit in the portion of Scripture under contemplation, there will be more than a mere array of proof

texts in presenting and confirming that truth. It will have come unto the one who is speaking of it, "Not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;" and that power will be witnessed by those who have been taught in their experience the same truth, as they hear it from him, and the speaking of such truth will be a comfort to such, although it may be the first they have ever heard it. The "form of sound words" which we heard from the inspired writers is to be held fast, and no experience can be regarded as genuine which is not in accordance with the letter of the word. But we are to remember that it is in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, that the Lord's people hold fast the form of sound words to their profit and comfort, and not in the carnal mind. The mere arraying of proof texts in defense of a point of doctrine is dry reading for one who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. One who knows nothing of grace, may take great delight in bringing forward the strong and clear declarations of Scripture concerning any point of doctrine, and may exhibit great skill and zeal in defending the doctrine; but his discussions will not feed the sheep. Although he may speak or write strictly in the letter of the truth, his words will not come into the hearts of the living family of God with the comforting, trumpet sound of the gospel. I have known a number of such, and I would have to say of them what a dear brother once said to me with reference to a sermon we had just listened to, "Well, if he said anything that was not true, I was too dull to see it; but he did not speak as though he felt it, and I did not feel it." The doctrine is not merely important; it is everything; but it is doctrine that has life in it to us; doctrine that is felt in the heart, not merely held in the mind. In salvation, the doctrine and experience cannot be separated. The doctrine is the foundation; it is also the house that is built upon the foundation. But what can we know of the foundation, unless we have been favored to rest upon it? what can we know of the house, if it has never given us the comfort of its shelter and protection? The doctrine is the rock; but what is the rock to us, unless it has poured out to us the water of salvation? unless we have been blessed to suck honey and oil out of it? If the doctrine is the honeycomb, the experience is the honey; and when the Bridegroom comes into his garden, which is his sister, his spouse, he says, "I have

eaten my honeycomb with my honey." In salvation, the honey is never separated from the comb, but they are eaten together. When either is exhibited separately, it may possibly be counterfeited; but when a piece of comb filled with honey is shown us, we know it is real. When the doctrine comes to us from God, every word is filled with sweet experience of love, and peace, and joy. We do not want one merely to tell us what the Bible says. That is not necessarily preaching the gospel. An infidel can do that as well as one of the Lord's servants. But when we are before the Lord, as Cornelius and his household were, we want to hear from the Lord's servant what is commanded him of God. We want to hear the word of the Lord that has come to him, and which is in him as a fire shut up in his bones, so that he is weary with refraining, and cannot stay. "Preach the word," writes the apostle to Timothy; but that word which he is to preach, is what he has seen with his eyes, and looked upon, and handled, of the word of life.—1 John i. 1-3. Preaching is more than merely giving one's views. When the gospel is preached, there is power, authority, in it; for "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." I remember once at an association, when a dear brother who had never been there before, and whom very few present had ever heard preach, took a text that led at once into a subject upon which there were very different sentiments held by different ones present, and concerning which there had been much fruitless discussion. This brother, in the simplicity and power of true gospel preaching, went right through the controverted ground, preaching the word out of his own heart, and in humble confidence opening the Scriptures, and declaring the doctrine of Christ; and all the brethren met together at once in the truth he proclaimed so boldly, humbly and sweetly. All with one accord said, "That is the truth." They recognized and felt the authority of the word preached, and their differences of views were for the time so far below them as to be lost sight of. His text was, 1 John iii. 9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

On the day of pentecost, the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one mind. But that one mind was the mind of Christ, the understanding of which the Son of God gives his people. That one heart was the new heart which is

given them. In that divine life the saints are one. By one Spirit they are all baptized into one body. But they are as diverse in the flesh as they ever were. They all have yet a carnal mind, in which they are no more one than they were before born again. It is from this source that differences arise among the saints, bringing wars and contentions. This carnal mind strives to impose itself upon them as that mind in which all the saints are, or ought to be, one. It is because of this that the apostle more than once exhorts them to be of one mind and of the same judgment. It is not only not wrong, but it is their duty, to strive to bring all their differences of view, in regard to divine things, to the infallible test of the Scriptures, seeking in solemn humility and brotherly love to discover and hold fast only that which is truth. That which is of the flesh is easily known by many marks, if we are only made willing to acknowledge them. All the various passions and evil propensities, as anger, envy, wrath, levity, hatred, covetousness, and the like, are of the carnal mind, and that position in defense of which they are enlisted is very apt to prove the wrong one. The power of the truth and of the love of God felt in the heart holds these fleshly propensities for the time in subjection, as the power of light causes darkness to disappear. The true weapons of our warfare are then at our service, which "are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations [in our own minds, or in the reasoning of others], and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into subjection every thought to the obedience of Christ."—2 Cor. x. 4. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." With this blessed privilege of access at the only source of true wisdom, it would appear that the dear saints might easily be of one mind.

In order to endeavor to be of the same mind and judgment in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, it is necessary that the saints should, as often as may be, speak one with another of these things, and not only present to each other that in which they do see alike, but that also in which their views are of any difference, in order to see if the Lord will show them which is of the flesh and which of the Spirit. This is controversy. But it really seems as though there is no need that there should be bitterness in it, or striving for the mastery, or angry, sharp or reproving words. Why should not brotherly love continue perfectly while each expresses simply and freely what he understands as the truth of the subject, setting forth such testimony as the Lord has, in his estimation, given him, and while each gives kind and careful attention to the views presented in opposition to his, ready and glad to acknowledge candidly anything that appears well supported in those views? This is striving together for the faith of the gospel;

striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; striving to be of one mind. It should be our anxious desire that this one mind, when we find ourselves agreed, should be the mind of Christ, rather than the mind of any one of us.

While many dear saints have been much troubled by controversy, because they fear that the asperities so liable to be indulged in by the parties disputing, will tend to interrupt brotherly kindness, and because any expressed differences among the dear saints hurt them deeply, others seem to be opposed to controversy because they are not willing that any position which they hold as correct should be disputed. Sometimes one will present his views very elaborately and positively, and then declare it as his opinion that controversy is not good, but rather detrimental to the cause; implying that the presentation of any view opposing his would be controversy. Such an one forgets that he who presents a point concerning which there is a difference of opinion among brethren, himself has begun the controversy, and would be doing injustice to himself, as a fair-minded man and christian, to wish to suppress such reasons as a brother might be able to present in favor of an opposite view. If he is absolutely sure that he is in the Spirit, and therefore right, he need have no fear; for whatever could be urged against the truth, would but set it out more clearly in the minds of those in whom God has shined, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. If he should happen to be wrong, it would be good to have the error shown.

If I should venture to give any advice to an editor of a journal of truth, which I would do with great hesitation, it would be to allow candid expressions of the views of brethren of good standing in the churches to be published, but never to allow one single word expressing reproof to one for holding different views from the writer, nor one acrimonious expression or unkind personal reflection to appear. Everything calculated to give personal offense, everything that intimated a desire to have dominion over the faith of a brother, I would have rigidly expunged. One cannot always see what manner of spirit he is of while writing, but the reader can see very clearly; and almost any one, when in his right mind, would be thankful to the editor who should with a stroke of the pen prevent him from appearing before the multitude of readers with anger, contempt, jealousy, hatred, plainly expressed, as they most surely will be when they are rankling within him while he writes.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Nov. 17, 1886.

JERSEY CITY, N. J., Nov. 13, 1886.

ELDER JENKINS—DEAR SIR:—I have taken the liberty to address you upon a subject which has given me much concern, and I have presumed to ask you to give me your views on the second chapter of Ephesians,

eight and ninth verses, in their entirety, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. How is salvation acquired? I have attended many churches, and of many different denominations, throughout New York, Brooklyn and Jersey City, and their doctrine, so far as I can understand it, is, "only have faith;" "just stand up and signify your willingness to be saved, and God will save you." This language I have heard from pulpits many times, and to my idea it is in direct contradiction to the text upon which I ask you to give me your views. I am not a member of any church, but I believe in the divinity of Christ, and I desire to be saved; but it does not seem possible to me that I can be saved in the last named way. Faith, as I understand it, is a conviction upon the mind of the truth of God's promises, and a belief in the expectation of a future reward, which enables a man to obey God in the face of all temptation. Now, I will not say that I have faith, for I do not think I have. I have not that conviction of God's promises, though I do not doubt them, nor do I want to. I seem to be in a negative state, and I have thought of the text many times. It seems to me that God will quicken my heart at times, and that I must await his will. Again, it seems that I must do something first.

I have written you hurriedly, and in all sincerity. If I am not encroaching upon your time too much, I would esteem it a great favor should you grant my request. I desire to understand this question; and though I seem to have weighed it carefully in my mind, I cannot see my way clear; but it puzzles me the more. Trusting you will grant my request, and favor me with an early reply, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

ARTHUR D. LOUD.

REPLY.

To those who have been quickened into divine life, and made to know and feel their lost and wretched condition by reason of sin, there is no subject of such importance as that of salvation. Such cannot feel indifferent to the matter. Like those to whom Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, who were "pricked in their heart," they will with great earnestness inquire, "What shall we do?" That was a death wound, such as none but God can inflict. Not even the preaching of the apostles could impart to a single individual, dead in trespasses and sins, a true knowledge of his or her condition as a sinner in the sight of God. This is alone the work of the Holy Spirit. "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand."—Deut. xxxii. 39. This work of our God, when once begun in the sinner, manifests him or her as a subject of his grace, or favor, and in his own time the Holy Spirit will assuredly reveal to that individual the salvation which is alone in our Lord Jesus Christ, who was delivered for the offenses of his people,

and was raised from the dead for their justification. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6. Salvation therefore is not something that sinners are to work for, or to go after; for it is alone the work of God, and always comes to the sinner, as in the case of Zaccheus. "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham."—Luke xix. 9. ("If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 29).

My friend inquires, "How is salvation acquired?" I answer, It is "acquired" alone by the only wise God our Savior. Webster says that to acquire is to gain, usually by one's own labor or exertions. In this sense of the word it never has been "acquired" by any of the fallen sons or daughters of Adam; yet the salvation which is revealed in the Scriptures embraces sinners, and none others. Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."—1 Tim. i. 15. Men commonly talk about salvation as though it were a work which is not yet accomplished, but may be "acquired" by sinners. "Salvation is of the Lord," and of him alone. Before the birth of the Savior it was announced by the angel who appeared unto Joseph, "And thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. And he has done it. As he expired upon the cross he declared, "It is finished!" On a certain occasion the disciples of Jesus were "exceedingly amazed" (Matt. xix. 25), "astonished out of measure" (Mark x. 24), as he told them of the utter impossibility of those who trust in riches (their own works, self-righteousness, resolutions, &c.), to enter into the kingdom of God. And they said unto him, "Who then can be saved? And Jesus, looking upon them, saith, *With men it is impossible*, but not with God; for with God all things are possible." And not only is the salvation of sinners possible with God, but he has actually accomplished that salvation for them, and in such a way and manner that it is "to the praise of the glory of his grace."—Eph. i. 6. "For we ourselves were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that, the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."—Titus iii. 3-7.

"For by grace are ye saved." Who are saved? Everybody? No. Let

us go back and find the antecedent of the pronoun "ye" in this text. "To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." These are the saved. And the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Thus the saints bless or thank God, when the eyes of their understanding are enlightened, and they are thereby made to know what is the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in them. What do they bless or thank him for? That he hath chosen them in Christ. When were they chosen in Christ? "Before the foundation of the world." What more do they thank God for? That according to, or in perfect harmony with, that choice or election before the foundation of the world, he blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, or high places, places above the law, where Christ now sitteth. Why did the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ thus choose them and bless them in Christ before the foundation of the world? "That we should be holy and without blame before him in love." But could they not have been holy and without blame before him in love as well in some other way? No. Why not? Because God had purposed that it should be in that way, and in no other way. His perfect "wisdom and prudence" abounds in this purpose, and it is "to the praise of the glory of his grace." And in the dispensation of the fullness of times he will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to [or in perfect harmony with] the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." These have redemption through the blood of the Lord Jesus, who, as their surety, has died for them, and his resurrection from the dead declares their justification. But they not only have redemption through the blood of Jesus, their Surety, but they also have forgiveness of sins through him, according to the riches of his grace. He has paid their debt for them, as they were not able to pay it themselves, and freely forgives them. Hence the forgiveness of sins is preached in the name of Jesus, who is exalted a Prince and Savior, to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins.—Acts v. 31; xiii. 38. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isa. xl. 1. Who then are saved? "My people," the body of Christ, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. What is the church, this body of Christ, of which he is the

head? "And gave him (to be) the head over all (things) to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all: even [for the word 'and' is used here in the sense of even, and as explanatory] you (hath he quickened) who were dead in trespasses and sins." The church, or body of Christ, according to this testimony, are elect sinners, the choice of God from among the sons and daughters of men, who "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," and "were dead in trespasses and sins." But it may be said, You have made the choice or election in Adam, while Paul says they were chosen in Christ. I have done nothing of the kind. I have shown from the testimony of Paul that the church, or body of Christ, or his elect people, were by nature the children of wrath, the same as those from whom they were chosen, walked in the same course, and were fulfilling the same desires of the flesh and of the mind. But these elect vessels of mercy were blessed in Christ, before the foundation of the world, with all spiritual blessings. As the spiritual life by which they are manifested in time as the children of God, was given them in Christ before the foundation of the world, they are said by the apostle to be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is the Spirit of God in them which identifies them, in distinction from the rest of mankind, as the sons of God. Hence John says to those who, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be," &c. We are identified as the children of Adam by having his life; and we are identified as the children of God by having the life of God in us. Hence Paul says, "As many as are led [if we were not sinners, it would not be necessary that we should be led; for if we were otherwise, we would go right without leading] by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." In this Paul says, that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, are the elect of God, are members of the body of Christ, and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death. They were once in a state of condemnation, were under the law and its curse, but are now redeemed from the law and condemnation. I contend earnestly and constantly, as saith Jesus, "Ye must be born again." "Except a man be born again." When one of the vessels of mercy, who has been born into this world, of the flesh, receives the life of God, eternal life, the Holy Spirit, he is then born again. Christ, who is the life of all his body, then dwells in him. Jesus is called the elect of God, because of his relation to his church, or body. "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."—Eph. v. 30. In Isa. xlii. 1, where he is spoken of as God's "elect," he is brought to view in his humiliation, as "my servant whom I uphold," as engaged in the work of salvation, as a partaker of flesh and

blood with those whom he came to redeem. He loved his own flesh and blood. "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. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his 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."—Eph. v. 29-32. I know of no salvation but that which embraces sinners. The election of God is an election or choice of sinners to salvation. None others needed salvation.

Having thus identified the subjects of salvation, let us next, in the light of Scripture testimony, consider how, or upon what principle, they are saved. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. viii. 20. "For by grace are ye saved." This is a plain, positive declaration, and it would seem that no honest inquirer after truth could fail to understand it; yet plain as it is, like all the things of the Spirit, it cannot be received and known by any in a state of nature; for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Saith Jesus, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25, 26.

But what is grace—"the grace of God which bringeth salvation," and by which ye are saved? A conditionalist might answer, The grace of God is the favor of God, by which all may "acquire" salvation, by complying with the terms of the gospel. It is a real favor that God has made it possible for any to so live and do that they may be saved. He might illustrate his view of the subject thus: Here is a man that has nothing upon which to subsist, and unless he obtains it he must die. He is able and willing to labor, to procure that which is necessary to sustain his natural life. Now what a great favor (or grace) is bestowed upon that man by one who furnishes him with the work whereby he may earn something to exchange for the necessary food. Thus sinners, dead in trespasses and sin, are exhorted to work and do, that they may have salvation, and then say they are saved by grace. But such grace, falsely so-called, would not avail God's people, who feel and know, as the apostle has declared, that they are "without strength." And no one is "without strength" who has the least particle of strength. And so it is written, "When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."—Romans v. 6. It is very evident that those who contend that salvation is by grace, and yet that some-

thing must be done by the sinner in order to obtain the salvation, either do not understand the meaning of grace, or they do not mean what they say. I would rather attribute it to their ignorance and blindness. Instead of the works of the creature procuring him salvation, and lifting him out of debt, the apostle by inspiration of God says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt."—Romans iv. 4. Let us hear the apostle's definition of grace; for that will settle the matter with all those who fear God and tremble at his word. "Let God be true, and every man a liar." Here is his definition of the grace by which "ye are saved." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)," &c. Thus the rich mercy of our God, because of his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, was displayed by his quickening us together with Christ, and thus by grace saving us. Thus the testimony is that we were saved by grace when Jesus was quickened and raised up from the dead, and was set at God's right hand in heavenly places, above the law, in the regeneration. This is how we are saved by grace. In this testimony it is declared that when Jesus was quickened by the Spirit, and raised up from under the law, all those who ever have or ever shall experience the benefits of that salvation by grace, were then quickened together with him, as the members of his body, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. As the Son of God, he was and is the spiritual life of all his members. As he is the only begotten Son of God, our sonship must be in him, and we must be members of him. "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ."—1 Cor. xii. 12. In eternity he was the Son of God, even the life of that church that was to be made manifest and developed in time. Hence it is said, "God sent forth his Son." Again, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance [or body, as in marginal reading] 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; [not imperfect, but undeveloped] and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, [what days they should be fashioned, as in marginal reading] when as yet there was none of them."—Psalm cxxxix. 14-16. When Christ died, he died as the head and life of his body. In that relationship, and because of it, he could and did die for his church, his body; yea, justice required that he should. Their sins thus were his sins, and he acknowledges them as such, and justice smote him, because their sins were found upon him.—

Read Psalm xl. entire; Psalm lxxv. 3; Zech. xiii. 7; Luke xxiv. 26, 46. In his incarnation he took upon him the seed of Abraham, appeared in the flesh of his people, and thus became perfectly identified with them in the flesh, as he was in the Spirit. When he died, he died as the head and life of his body. Hence the apostle says, "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then [at that time] were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. This is the blessedness of the church of God, as there is no salvation without it. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered [that is, atoned for]. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."—Romans iv. 6-8; Psalm xxxii. 1, 2.

"Through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." What is faith? Let the word of inspiration answer. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—Heb. xi. 1. The apostle tells us that it is the fruit of the Spirit; that all men have it not; that without it, it is impossible for men to please God. As it is the fruit of the Spirit, we must have the Spirit before we can be in possession of the fruit; and no one has the Spirit until born of the Spirit, born again, of incorruptible seed, by the word and will of God, and not man.—John i. 13; 1 Peter i. 23. It is called the faith of the Son of God, because he is the author and finisher of it. It is also called the faith of God's elect, because it is peculiar to them. All who have it are manifest as the elect of God, and have received it as the gift of God, and therefore it is not of themselves. They are never required to exercise it, or operate it, because it is "the faith of the operation of God." It is born of God, and always overcomes the world.—1 John v. 4. Though tried, it shall never fail. By this faith the subjects of it are made to choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. By it, as an invisible power working in him, Abraham, when he was called to go out of a land of idolaters, into a place which he should afterward receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. And thus it is with all the seed of Abraham spiritually. Through this faith, which is the gift of God, and which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things which are not seen or comprehended by natural sight or reason, the salvation of God is made known to all those who were quickened together with Christ, when he was raised up from the dead. Hence their salvation is by grace, through faith. This faith is said to come by hearing, and the hearing by the word of God.—Rom. x. 17. But how does faith come by hearing? Is it by hearing men speak? No. Hear what 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."—John v. 25. As soon as that voice is heard by any, they are quickened, spiritual life is communicated to them, they are in possession of the Spirit, with all the fruit of the Spirit, which, though not yet developed fully in their experience, shall be in the Lord's own time. Possessing now the Spirit, they have faith, and believe in God, and all the infidels in the world could not make them believe there is no God. They have now begun to know his name, his holy character, the God of justice, as he appears in his holy law, which is now written in their heart, and by which is the knowledge of sin. They are thus made to see their wretched condition, their vileness and pollution, and the justice of God in their condemnation; and while they view their just condemnation, and cannot see how God can be just, and the justifier of such a guilty sinner, yet they love that justice, and love the God of justice. They now love holiness, and hate sin and iniquity. God is working salvation in them, has begun a good work, and will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, or until Jesus shall be revealed to their faith as their salvation, having atoned for their sins, and now speaking pardon and peace to them. This knowledge of salvation comes to them through faith, which is the gift and operation of God. If we inquire of such, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" they will assuredly answer, Not for my duties or deserts, not because of anything I have done, but alone of the sovereign grace of God, who wrought salvation in my heart, and formed me for his praise. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

"Not of works, lest any man should boast." Notwithstanding this plain and positive declaration of God through the apostle, that salvation is not of works, men will yet affirm that God has offered this salvation to every son and daughter of Adam, on certain terms; that all who will comply with the terms may be saved, and that all who despise or reject the terms will be lost eternally. Are not such infidels? If the salvation of sinners depends upon something to be performed by them, then the apostle was in error when he said, "Not of works," and he is a false witness. If salvation depends upon anything to be performed by the sinner, is there not room for boasting? Would not those who accept and comply with the terms have ground for boasting over those who have neglected or refused to comply with the terms? And if the salvation depends upon some act of the sinner, can it be sure to any? But the apostle says that it is sure to all the seed of Christ, because it is not of works. "Therefore it is of faith, [that is, rests or depends upon the promise of God, who cannot lie,] that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to

all the seed."—Romans iv. 16. "And if it be by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."—Romans xi. 2, 6. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law."—Romans iii. 27, 28.

It cannot be that any of the children of God will fail to love this precious truth when it is understood by them, for it is taught in the experience of every one that is born of God. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." The experience of all the people of God is substantially the same, so far as the revelation of God's salvation is concerned. But their speech and manners are very often corrupted by the evil communications of the man of sin (1 Cor. xv. 33), so that instead of acting and making a noise like a sheep, they are made to howl like a wolf or dog. "For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed."—Isaiah lii. 4, 5.

Very much more might be written upon the text, but I forbear. May the Lord be pleased to establish my young friend in the truth, that he be not tossed to and fro, and carried about by the winds of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. May he be enabled with all saints to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

I would say to my young friend that I confidently believe he will fail to find in the United States a religious denomination who hold and preach this precious truth, the doctrine of Christ, outside of that people who are known in this country as Old School, or Predestinarian, or Particular Baptists. They are the only people that I know of who are contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and continue steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. They are therefore that "house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."—1 Tim. iii. 15. In the three great cities, New York, Brooklyn and Jersey City, containing an aggregate population of nearly three millions, we know of but one body of worshipers whom we can recognize as that "pillar and ground of the truth;" and for the information of this friend, we will state that they meet every Sunday for worship in their own meeting house, 154 West 36th Street, New York.

That many of the Lord's people, the subjects of his grace, may perhaps be found among every religious denomination in the land, we will not dispute. John heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, [Babylon] my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. xviii. 4; 2 Cor. vi. 14-18.

BENTON JENKINS.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon, Nov. 13, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is with much trembling that I attempt to address a few lines for your disposal. Often while reading our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and feasting on the doctrine as contended for by its many able writers, and after reading of the travels of dear brethren and sisters as related therein, I have been made willing to cast in my mite also; but through fear lest I am deceived, I have until now been kept from doing so. I am often made to feel that I would love to tell what the Lord has done for unworthy me; how he caused me to hate the things I once loved, and to love the things I once hated. I well remember that when I was but a mere youth I would take the Testament, and after hunting some secluded spot, would read of the wonderful works which Jesus did; how he unstopped the deaf ears, opened the blind eyes, and caused the lame to leap and run with joy. Then I would meditate much, and finally conclude that this man must have been a wonderful person. The Bible appeared to me in the light of a history of that particular age of the world, and only as such did I receive it. At that time the doctrine of Jesus Christ, as set forth in it, and verified by his disciples, had no beauty for me; and when in God's own time he saw fit to take my dear mother from sorrow and suffering, and relieve her from all earthly cares, and give unto her, as I believe, that rest her soul prayed for, I was past nineteen years of age, and so hardened that I could and did stand by her in her last moments, and clenching my fist, bitterly cursed, to think that a God who was represented as being so merciful, so compassionate, having all power both in heaven and on earth, could cause or permit such suffering. He was not worthy the name of God. I thought, Away with such a God. I was in this frame of mind for about one year; then, my eldest brother was stricken in the prime of life, and died. His death was very sudden, and a great shock to me; so much so that it caused me to feel like my time might come next; then what would become of me? It weighed upon my mind to such an extent that I resolved to lead a different life. At the time I was living with a family who professed to be Old School Baptists. But I had no use for them as Christians, and had less use for the doctrine they professed to believe. I thought salvation was free to all, if the people would only accept of it; and with all my might I did run after it. But in two short weeks, if pos-

sible, I was worse than before, rolling sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel, and my mouth was full of blasphemy. I had not formerly been a very profane youth; that is, I had not generally been in the habit of swearing; but now I delighted in it, so much so that not only my days were devoted to the habit, but a great portion of my nights also were spent in blasphemy; and I remember of falling asleep one night in just this frame of mind, and on awaking the next morning found that I had overslept my usual time of rising. The sun seemed shining unusually bright, and my first thought was, What will I first swear at this morning? But I had no desire to swear, and from that time I began to abhor myself and all my former works, and midnight darkness seemed to come down upon me, while my sins arose before me like huge mountains. In fact, they now became a burden to me. The things I once loved, I now hated; and I found myself without hope and without God in the world. While in this state of mind I remember going to hear a despised Baptist preach, and in his discourse he dwelt quite at length on the account given of Joseph and his brethren. Right there, if I am not deceived, was where the Scriptures began to be unfolded to my understanding, and I was made to see how the everlasting decrees of almighty God were made manifest in time. But it was only a glimpse; and at the same time I was being drawn towards those hated people; for did I not once hate them and persecute them? With shamefacedness I must acknowledge that I did. But now I began to love to hear them talk, and also began to read the SIGNS, a paper I once despised. Often my eyes did fill with tears while reading about or hearing those Baptist people telling of the Lord's dealings with them. I began to realize that their people were surely my people, and their God was surely my God. My sympathies were so drawn towards them that at their meeting on the third Sunday in December, 1875, I went forward and talked with the church called New Hope; and after being asked a great many questions I was received into their fellowship, and was baptized the same day by Elder Wm. M. Townsend. I then thought my troubles would cease; but far from it; for this last act only seemed to add weight to my already heavy burden, until I continually cried to God for mercy. There came a time when there seemed to be no relief for my poor soul. I was now married to a Baptist lady, and we had one little child. I remember going into the house, and after kicking the chairs about the room, trying to divert my mind from my woeful condition, I found myself leaning against the mantle-shelf weeping, and trembling in every limb, while great drops of perspiration seemed oozing from every pore. My wife, coming in at this moment, found me in the condition described; and seeing my emotion, she asked what ailed me. I told her I was go-

ing to die, and that hell was my portion. She said, "Surely it is not so bad as that," and desired to step to the door and call some near neighbors to come in. I entreated her not to do so, but requested her to lock the door, and to allow no one to enter, as I was not fit for man to look upon; but it was just and right for me to die and suffer endless torment. My companion then insisted on my lying down on the bed, and thought I might soon feel better. But I told her that right here I must forever die. She being alarmed, still insisted that I should lie down; so I thought I would make one desperate effort and fall on the bed, and there my miserable existence would soon be at an end. I made the effort, and instead of falling on the bed, I fell on my knees by the side of it; and if ever I was given the spirit of prayer, it was then and there on my bended knees. After remaining in prayer and supplication for a few moments, and uttering words that never before had come into my mouth, I was made to arise. Here language fails to describe the joy and peace of mind I was made to experience. I could then rejoice in the hope that God for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins, thereby removing that fearful load of guilt and condemnation from my poor soul. Then I thought what a pleasure it would be to me if some Old Baptists would come in; yes, it all seemed so plain to me that I thought I could tell the whole world all about it. But alas! how short sighted I was. How soon was I to be disappointed; for I was not to remain in that blissful condition for more than a few hours, until I was doubting whether this was a christian experience or not. And so it has ever been from that day to this, with very little variation. Sometimes I am doubting, and sometimes rejoicing; and I find by experience that there is a continual warfare being carried on between the flesh and the Spirit, and often am I made to go about with head bowed down, while mourning over misdeeds done in the flesh, and am made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Sometimes I try to read my Bible, but find it a sealed book from my understanding. Then again I have been caused to arise from my bed in the dark hours of night, and look up passages of Scripture that bore on my mind. Then it is that I can realize that these are they which testify of Christ. Often while meditating on the Scriptures of divine truth, I am constrained to cry out, "Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not?" Have I tasted that the Lord has been gracious to me? and is his banner of love over me? Sometimes the answer comes in this manner, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Then there is this knowledge to console me, there being a people that I once hated with all my might, on account of the doctrine they believed and held so dear; and now

they are the people I love to be with and to hear talk of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of what he has done for them. And with Ruth of old I feel to say, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." Sometimes I feel to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." If I am saved at all, it is by and through sovereign grace, and not for anything that I have done, or ever can do; for I have indeed realized that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy. As I have been quite lengthy, I will draw this to a close; and if it comes before the eyes of God's dear children, and they are comforted thereby, may God be praised; for he is entitled to all praise and glory. I do love the doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, as set forth by Elder Purington and others, through the SIGNS, believing it to be the doctrine taught in the Scriptures of divine truth. I will add that I have been much edified by the writings of brother Wm. R. Welborn, and also brother J. H. Yeoman, both through public articles and private correspondence; and I would say to brethren, one and all, when you feel inclined, write on. Yours in hope, JAMES K. BOYD. STATE ROAD, Del., Dec. 15, 1896. BRETHREN BEEBE:—I wrote my criticisms upon brother Cox's exposition of the parable of the wheat and the tares more for his sake than my own, and I felt to hope that he would review what he had published, and if he did so, would probably see some mistakes that he would be glad to correct. If, however, he should find no room for amendment, and should feel disturbed by the freedom I had taken, I hoped he would write directly to me. He has seen fit to call me to a reckoning before your readers, which of course he had a right to do, and of which I have no complaint to make; but as he has allowed the current of his zeal to bear him upon breakers worse than before, I think it is due to him and to the cause of truth to recall attention to the parable. An excellent man (the psalmist) once said in his haste what he would not have said in his calmer moments, and what a little reflection would have satisfied him was not true. It would seem that brother Cox had lost sight of the fact that the author of the parable had himself declared the meaning. I called his attention to the fact before, but he must have overlooked it. The application of the parable that the Redeemer has made I am satisfied with, and accept as correct. But if I was not satisfied with it, I should not think of meas-

uring arms with Jehovah. It will not do to suppose that so excellent a writer as brother Cox meant to conflict with the teaching of Christ, or to set aside the Lord's exposition, and substitute his own. He seems to have only my name before him; and if so, no wonder that he deals rather unmercifully with it. Allow me then to call attention to two or three of his passages: "Paul said to Titus, 'Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.' But Elder Rittenhouse says, 'The good seed are the children of the kingdom. He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.'" Now this is one of brother Cox's grand mistakes; for it was not Elder Rittenhouse at all that said it, but it was said by him who spake as never man spake. And I do not even feel called upon to defend it; I am merely calling attention to it. Instead, then, of saying, "If Elder R. is correct," he should say, If the Lord Jesus is correct, &c. He infers that if the children of the kingdom are made up of the sons and daughters of men, being sown by the Son of man, as he is God, and his work is perfect, that they would be sinless, &c. It might relieve brother Cox's perplexity to remind him that an apostle has said, "Now are we the sons of God," &c. Another apostle says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs," &c. The Lord himself says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Brother Cox says again, "I know from daily sad experience that I am not one of those sinless sons." As I said nothing about sinless sons, I cannot be held responsible for the stumbling block that he finds in his way. The Redeemer has characterized them as "poor in spirit;" and this being so, brother Cox will find himself included, after all. I will not question the good intentions of brother Cox in asking you to print such lengthy quotations of Scripture for my benefit. They all contain good doctrine, and I had read them all before. "But Elder Rittenhouse says, 'The field is the world.'" This is another serious mistake of his. Your readers will remember that it was the Master that said so; and as he was interpreting his own figure, we cannot question its correctness. He asks, "What world does he mean?" As I am not responsible for brother Cox's difficulties, I will not be expected to solve them. I am simply saying that the Lord said, "The field is the world. The good seed are the children of the kingdom, and the tares are the children of the wicked one." The Lord further declares that in the time of harvest he will say to the reapers, Gather together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn. In the interpretation he says, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into

a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Brother Cox says, and I think truly, that those angels were gospel ministers. "That kingdom was set up on earth, and in it were, and still are, his angels, the true ministers of the everlasting gospel." From this point brother Cox drifts into an interesting and instructive elucidation of the parable that I am greatly pleased with. I think it is in entire accord with the Savior's teaching, though in apparent conflict with himself in the former part of his letter. He illustrates by the churches in Asia, to whom these angel-reapers were sent with special instructions, apprising them that in some of the churches were advocates of false doctrine and dangerous errors, which were now fully developed and ripened as tares, and ready to scatter their pernicious and pestilential seed in every direction. The angels of these several churches were instructed and admonished by the Spirit to gather out of his kingdom all those offending characters and workers of iniquity, and consign them to burning with unquenchable fire. Then the churches could be commended as clothed in white raiment and walking with their Redeemer. The reapers were not only to gather out the tares, but to gather in the wheat. "He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." As a counterpart to all this, I find the statement that the harvest is death. If he means the literal death of the believer, what are the reapers to do in the case? He says that then the tares will be consumed. I think the mistake in that first application of the parable, and the utter absurdity of it, must be apparent. If the good seed is simply good principles in the heart of the man, and the harvest is his death, how are the reapers to serve? What are they to do? If the tares are evil principles, and they are to remain in the heart of the believer until he dies, how are these angels of the churches to get at them? Are we to understand that the Lord hath commanded his ministers to let the evil principles grow in the heart of the believer until he dies? "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal. I sent you to reap." I presume brother Cox wants to get at the truth, and to publish nothing but what is right. I do not recollect ever taking exceptions before to anything from his pen. Other topics introduced in his letter I will not now discuss, and with the parable of the tares I am now done. I want in all this to be understood as entertaining the kindest feelings towards brother Cox, feelings of christian love and fellowship.

Yours to serve,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

SILVER CLIFF, Colo., Dec., 1886.

MUCH ESTEEMED BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is declared by the prophet that "the way of man is not in him-

self: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jer. x. 23. And Solomon, in Proverbs xvi. 9, says, "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps." How true is this declaration with me! One year ago I had fully determined in my own mind that I would leave this part of the country; but here I am yet. I have just received a letter from brother Varnes, in Illinois, in which he says he is so situated that he can attend church meeting twice a month, and yet he complains of feeling so dull and lifeless. I have also a letter from a sister in Oregon, who says she often becomes so cold and lifeless that she does not appreciate the truth as she ought when she hears it proclaimed and knows it to be the truth. Now if this dear brother and sister, and all others in like condition of mind who have written me, could only realize what comfort and joy these bitter complaints which they have entered against themselves have given me, they would rejoice to know that their letters have given encouragement and comfort to one who is often in the same condition they are in. Is it not for the trying of our faith? If so, it is an inheritance of the people of God. And Peter says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." Often, when I get very low down in spirit, I take up my pen and write to the SIGNS, and after reviewing it, I see so much imperfection in what I have written that it seems to me that none can draw comfort from it, and I resolve, like sister Coddington, that I will not trouble the editors of our family paper with any more of my imperfect thoughts. But when I receive such soul-cheering letters as I have from brethren and sisters scattered abroad, some of whom are entire strangers to me in the flesh, telling me how they have been comforted and edified in reading some of my letters in the SIGNS, I lose sight of my resolves, and ere I am aware I am seated, with pen in hand, for the purpose of writing again; so that I not only believe that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," but also that he cannot even control his thoughts. I often think of the many poor mortals on earth who are so vain as to think that they can, of their own free will and accord, "cease from evil and do good," and thus place Jehovah under obligations to them; when they can no more control their thoughts than they can take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of earth. Just think for a moment, What would mortal man do if he only had the power? We have great reason, my brethren, to rejoice that the "way of man is not in himself." There was a time when men were given power (I say, given power, for the Savior said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."—John xix. 11. And Paul declares, "There is no power but of God."—Rom. xiii. 1) to act out what is naturally in man.

And what did they do unto the faithful saints of God? The saints endured at their hands cruel mockings, were scourged, imprisoned, stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. They wandered in deserts, in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And man to-day, in this "enlightened age of the world," as it is by many called, would, if he had the power, do the same thing unto the saints of God. I often have wondered how many of us would remain faithful unto death, should these things come to pass in this our day. Brethren and sisters, who have the privilege of meeting together, even once a month, and mingling your voices in songs of praise to God, where none dare molest or hinder, do you realize what a blessed privilege is yours to enjoy, that you are permitted to worship God under your own vine and fig-tree? If you could exchange places of abode for a while with some of the brethren and sisters who have written me, as well as with the writer of this letter, you would more fully realize what a blessed privilege you now enjoy, in that your lot is cast in such pleasant places, where you can meet with your brethren for the worship of God. When you read a letter in the SIGNS from some dear brother or sister whose steps are so directed that their lot is cast in some remote part of the land, or large city, as sister West's is, in order to realize all the feelings and the full meaning of the writers contained in these words, "All the preaching I have is through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES," you must exchange places with them for a season. Often have I thought that if the many dear lambs of God scattered over our land who are deprived even of a few crumbs that fall from the Master's table, could be so blessed as to all meet together at one time and place, though it might be in these rocky mountains, or on dry, sandy plains, O what a joyful meeting it would be! It would be indeed a blessed mansion in our Father's house.

And now, brethren Beebe, in conclusion, I wish to remove from the minds of some of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES an erroneous idea which they have concerning me; and that is, that I am a preacher. Some of them have urged me to come and locate among them, and take the oversight of their little flock. My dear brethren and sisters, I never tried to preach in my life. The word preach has always been too big a word for me; and were it not that you have written to me, telling me how you were comforted and made to rejoice in reading my communications in the SIGNS, my name would seldom, if ever, appear.

Brethren Beebe, what I have written is your property when it comes into your hands. Do with it as you think best. May God bless and sustain you, and all his people, while journeying in the path of life, where in all our steps are directed (not one too many, nor one less), is my prayer.

J. H. YEOMAN.

DECKERTOWN, N. J., Nov. 21, 1886.

TO THE MIDDLETOWN & WALL-KILL CHURCH:—"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." I feel my weakness so much, both of body and mind, that it will be very difficult for me to send you a letter written by my own hand. Sisters Heater and Sayer visited me on the third of the present month, leaving with me such tokens of love and esteem as were entrusted to their care. May the wise and gracious God be with you, and may our brother speak as becometh the oracles of God, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. Meet together as often as you can. You remember our old father Beebe too well for me to speak of him, farther than to say that his dying request was that we should be reconciled to God. Thus he laid down his pen and his life, having wrought till it was done. God help us that we may pattern after him. His sons have taken up the SIGNS, and we can hardly know any difference. I do not suppose I shall ever write you again, as I can hardly hold the pen. Whatever is amiss in word or doctrine, correct. I will say with one of old, in closing, "Finally, brethren, farewell: be perfect, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you." I have taken much comfort in reading the hymn commencing,

"Brethren, view the condescension
Of our great atoning Priest,
Who became our sure redemption,
That our souls in him might rest.
Eye him as our humble Leader,
When he through this world did pass,
And our glorious Interceder,
Now before his Father's face.

"O! but view him in the garden,
Loaded with our weighty sins;
Through keen anguish see him wading,
Forcing blood from his dear veins.
Then to see his foes accuse him,
Like a malefactor they
Did with awful spite accuse him,
On him pricking thorns did lay.

"Smote he was, and scourged, and jeered,
And he to the cross was nailed;
His dear side they also speared,
O such cruelty prevailed!
Yet he never seemed to oppose them,
But did yield to all his smart;
Opened wide his blessed bosom,
Free for every cruel dart.

"But God's presence was denied him,
While he with our sins was pressed;
Under torturing anguish cried he,
'O my God! why am I left?'
Mighty pains then made him languish;
Heaven and earth astonished stand;
Christ himself in torturing anguish;
O! such sorrows can't be penn'd!

"Twas so great the realms of nature
Shook and tottered at his pain,
When they saw their great Creator
Suffer death for sinful men;
For the sun refused his shining,
And the moon withdrew her light;
Nature's rays were all declining;
Then appeared a dismal night.

"But he rose, and high ascended
To his Father, God, in bliss;
'Tis by him that we're defended,
And his merits crown our peace.
He's our God, our guard forever;
He will save our souls from wrath;
Likewise he's our great Lawgiver;
O then follow him by faith!"

If the brethren Beebe will publish this in the SIGNS, I will be grateful, as it will be impossible for me to write to those who have written me.

I will say to the lady in Kansas, Go home to the friends, and tell them what the Lord has done for thee. And I say to the sister in Delaware, I cannot try any more remedies, as my stomach is injured from taking so much medicine.

HARRIET LEWIS.

FOREST HILL, Md., Nov. 23, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—My mind this morning has been led to the words, "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 yourselves."—Matt. xxiii. 15. I see very much of late going on in our midst, setting aside and placing in the background all the glorious work of redemption through the precious blood of Christ. My brother, if it is of works, why did our precious Savior bow his head in death? Why did he condescend to dwell among men, and to be made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? Why did he cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Why did he say, "It is finished," and give up the ghost, if he left even a small portion of the work for man to perform? "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost." But these Pharisees are like those of whom Isaiah spake: they draw nigh unto God with their lips, while their hearts are far from him. They talk about their getting religion, while Jesus has said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Was our first birth in our own power? I presume that every man and woman possessed of common sense will say, No. Well, a birth is a birth, whether natural or spiritual. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Did man in his natural, Adamic birth possess this Spirit, of which the spiritual birth came? If he did, then man is a self-existent being, and has all the power of Deity with himself. I do not wish to be understood as railing against those poor, deluded people, for they cannot do otherwise without a revelation of Jesus Christ. The truth is mighty, and will prevail, no matter how much falsehood there may be in the world. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." This is the language of our Savior himself. What was Christ's mission on earth? Was it, as some say, to make a way possible and passable for sinners to save themselves? Or was it, as some have lately told me, to save them that were on earth when he died, and left the others to save themselves? Or was it to finish the work of salvation, to die for the sins of his people, and rise again for their justification? I answer, Amen, to the last sentence.

I will state, in much sorrow and distress, that my dear wife is now at death's door. But thanks be to God,

who works all things after the counsel of his own will, she has given me evidence of a gracious work of salvation within her. Believing that all things work together for good to the people of God, I remain,

Yours in affliction,

JACOB A. GRAFTON.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Dec. 8, 1886.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—If you do not think I trouble you too often, you may use these few lines that come to my mind as I lay on my bed at night. I was thinking how many years I have sat under the sound of the gospel, and of the many sermons I have listened to since I have had an attentive ear; also of those who have stood at their post, on the walls of Zion, with their faces to the foe, for fifty or sixty years; bold to the enemies of truth, but gentle and affectionate as a child to their brethren. And I believe the mantles of those veterans cover the Elishas that are coming to the front, walking about Zion, marking well her bulwarks, considering her palaces, counting her towers, looking well at her cords, proclaiming that good old-fashioned doctrine, predestination and election, which the Scriptures declare.

Will brother Jenkins write and tell us what constitutes a mother in Israel? You may think this a simple request. We read in the Scriptures the names of many prominent women, such as Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, who gave food to David and his men in the wilderness, and told him that his soul should be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord his God. Also a certain wise woman that saved a city, Ruth, Martha, Lydia, Dorcas, who was full of good works, with Phebe and Priscilla, and many others, to be saluted with a friendly greeting.

I once heard of two sisters who would often invite a very poor woman to visit them, as they loved to hear her talk about divine things. But they had a brother who was an aristocrat, who was astonished to see them entertaining one so meanly clad. They told him she was a King's daughter, but had not on her best robe. Dear sisters, do we not often meet with the King's daughters, and love to hear them talk?

Please excuse this, and I will close by wishing you all a Happy New Year.

MRS. WM. P. CAREY.

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

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CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The ministers and messengers composing the South Louisiana Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Macedonia Church, Sugar-town, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 15th, 16th and 17th, 1886, to the several churches whom we represent, send love and christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—We feel happy to state that by the protecting hand of the all-wise and holy God, who ever keepeth covenant with his people, we are once more blessed with the glorious privilege of meeting in an associate capacity, of hearing your messages of love, of your strong desire for our prosperity, and also of mingling in social worship, sharing each other's joys and sorrows, and hearing the glorious gospel so calmly and ably defended by the young, as well as by the old veterans of the cross, who contend so earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, which has been fraught with so much heavenly rapture that we have been made to exclaim, It is good for us to be here: this is none other than the house of God. And, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

And now, brethren, as a foundation on which to base a few remarks, in this our annual epistle of love and token of fellowship, we will refer you to the words recorded in the first verse of the fifth chapter of Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia, "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." The text naturally refers our mind to the word "therefore," which signifies, for this cause or purpose. Then for this cause or purpose we are charged to stand fast; and in it is implied strength or ability. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned." "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Without enlarging on the subject, suffice it to say that these latter are characters unto whom the language of the text does not refer; but unto us who are already saved, and called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, is the subject addressed. And it necessarily follows that there must be an object upon which to centre his love; and as there is no object of more vital interest than one's own body or bride, the conclusion is at once formed that he loved his own. "And having loved his own, he loved them unto the end." And in prophetic strains we hear him say, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." If there was nothing in the beginning for him to love, he could not have loved you with an

everlasting love. This sweetly forces us to the conclusion that before the earth was formed we were one with him; and well did the inspired apostle say, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Having received a body of flesh subject to sin, and the tempter being more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord had made, offered inducements sufficient to bring about the transgression of the law of God, by which the bride was submerged in sin and death. Nevertheless he suffered not his faithfulness to fail, nor his loving-kindness to be withdrawn. And as Adam, who is the figure of Christ, was not deceived (but his bride was in the transgression; yet his love ceased not: and for the great love wherewith he loved her, he was willing to subject himself to the awful penalty, death, rather than be separated from her), so Christ, the great antitype, or second Adam, was not deceived. "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 the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore 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.—Heb. ii. 14-17. "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." So then, brethren, God is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. As we have already shown, in the transgression the bride of Christ became involved, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 4-10. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."—Rom. xi. 16. And in this manner we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." As prisoners we are sent forth out of the pit wherein is no

water. "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."—Psalm xl. 1-5. Then the change from death unto life is the handiwork of God, who hath created us in Christ Jesus, the Rock of our salvation, upon which our feet are placed, and upon which we are to stand. And the great deliverance from the bondage of sin, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, is the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. And now, brethren, use not this liberty for an occasion to the flesh; for it is liberty indeed, differing from all other liberties. Yea, it is a freedom from sin, being made free by one who had the right and power of deliverance in his own hands. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us 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."—Rom. viii. 2-4. Therefore, brethren, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. That is a portion of the glorious gospel of God, which we are commanded to preach, and of which Paul declared that he was not ashamed; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. And it seems to us, dear brethren, that these words, "stand fast," should be to us no trifling matter, but of the greatest importance, knowing that we are a tempest-tossed people, having heretofore been easily turned about by the false prophets, who are a wind, and who have not in them the word which was from the beginning. Thus we see the great importance of the command to stand fast, lest we be blown from our steadfastness by the boisterous winds of doctrine, which shall blow upon us to try our faith. Then, brethren, be sober, and watch, knowing the flesh is weak. For Satan, as a roaring lion, walketh up and down, going to and fro, seeking whom he may devour; and he always, with malicious art, watches every unguarded part. Think it not strange, brethren, concerning the trials which are to try

you; but stand fast, having your loins girt about with truth, 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. Being thus firmly fixed, we have little need to fear being again entangled with the yoke of bondage. But when we fall asleep in carnal security, and our anchor is fixed in particles of earth, like self, and not the Rock, then Satan beholds the defect, and right then and there we are overtaken, and a dreadful struggle ensues; and often the yoke of bondage is ready at hand, and in spite of all our efforts to escape and to stem the storm, it is placed upon us, and we are made to cry unto the Rock from whence we were hewn. When unequally yoked together with unbelievers, the blessed Jesus for a little while withdraws and hides his face, and we are left to grope our way, and labor under the galling yoke of bondage, to the gratification of those ministers of Satan, who are transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose business it is to deceive the elect, if possible. But the eyes of the Lord are ever over the righteous, and his ears are open to hear their cry; and their oppression shall not be perpetual, nor their bondage everlasting; for the Lord shall return to judge the oppressed, and set the captives free. Remember, brethren, there is an untoward generation, from whose tyranny we are commanded to save ourselves, and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; for it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God. But we would not have you believe that the heirs according to the promise can ever be robbed of their eternal inheritance; for we are 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. For says the blessed Savior, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 38, 39. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." "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." "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 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 hast sent me."—John xvii. 4, 6, 9, 10, 20, 21. So we see that it is not our eternal salvation we are to work out, by obeying the command enjoined in the text, for that is evidently secured to all the heirs of immortal glory in the person of Jesus Christ, as a free gift, without any conditions on the part of the poor, depraved, dead sinner. "I give unto them eternal life." There is no condition in this. "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." "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy [effectual] calling, not according to our works, [nor any condition whatever] but according to his own purpose and grace, which was [positively and freely] given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." And when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. The iniquity of all his people was laid upon him, he was wounded for their transgressions, and was raised from the dead for their justification. And now, being freely justified by his free and unmerited grace, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The salvation which is to be worked out by the poor sinner, already saved by grace, is a temporal salvation. And so all the precepts of the gospel which Paul preached, and which he declares is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, are only unto their temporal salvation, pointing out to them the danger of falling into vice and immorality, the miserable habit of quarreling, jesting, vain jangling, self-exaltation, and being drenched with false doctrines, which Satan and his ministers, transformed as ministers of righteousness, are pouring out in such a plausible manner, to deceive the hearts of the simple, and to turn aside out of the way the feet of the lame, and to bring again into captivity, by putting the yoke of bondage on such as do not remember and obey the language of the text, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

And now, dear brethren, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ we beseech and exhort you to search the Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Be sober, and watch unto prayer, and may you be able to shun every appearance of evil. For the time is come when evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; and they will deceive the very elect, if possible. But Jesus, as a bright and shining light, lighteth every man that cometh into the spiritual kingdom, imparting unto them the glorious revelation of himself, the imperfections of their sinful nature, and the awful deceptableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. We are thereby enabled to detect the wicked devices of Satan, to shun every appearance of evil, and with fear and

trembling work out our temporal salvation; for it is God that works in us both the will and ability to do his good pleasure. Let us endeavor to make our calling and election sure, and "add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Peter i. 6-11.

Dear brethren, lest we weary you by words, and make this letter too long, we will close, praying God to overrule all things to his own glory, and to the eternal joy of all the redeemed family. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

W. M. PERKINS, Mod.

I. S. MEADOURS, Clerk.

EXTRACTS.

"THOUGH your Sun for the present is clouded, yet he that rides upon the clouds shall scatter those clouds, and cause the Sun to shine and warm your hearts, as in former days; as the psalmist speaks, 'Thou which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.'—Psalm lxxi. 20, 21. God takes away a little comfort, that he may make room in the soul for much consolation. Poor soul, your storm shall end in a calm, and your dark night in a day of sunshine; your mourning shall be turned into rejoicing, and the waters of consolation shall be sweeter and rise higher in your soul than ever. Wait but a little, and you shall find the Lord comforting you on every side."

"COMING soul, the Jesus that thou art coming to is full of might and terribleness for thy advantage; he can suppress all thine enemies. He is the Prince of the kings of the earth; he can bow all men's designs for thy help; he can break all snares laid for thee in the way; he can lift thee out of all difficulties wherewith thou mayest be surrounded; he is wise in heart and mighty in power."

"THE Lord knows what I need, and what I can bear; gladly would I receive, earnestly would I desire, more of comforts while here; but if I mourn now, I hope to be comforted in heaven."

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1857.

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

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME FIFTY-FIVE.

IN entering upon the duties and privileges of this opening year, it is fitting that we should reflect upon the goodness and mercy of the Lord, by which we have been preserved through all the vicissitudes of our sojourn in this world of sin and sorrow. Notwithstanding the declaration of our Lord that his disciples shall have tribulation here, the saints have ever been inclined to seek for peace and rest in the alluring vanities of earth; and when disappointment has dispelled their vain hopes they have been ready to conclude that they were not subjects of the redeeming grace of God. This experience is very severe and trying to them, yet it is the only way in which they learn to look away from earth and self for real comfort. Reason can never understand the manner in which the Lord reveals his wisdom to the babes who are born of the Spirit of God. Instead of giving them that knowledge which puffeth up (1 Cor. viii. 1), their heavenly Guide implants within them that divine wisdom which invariably humbles its recipients in the dust, and in its perfect revelation cuts off all confidence in the flesh. This result is so contrary to nature that human language can convey no correct appreciation of it. The only Teacher who can impart such wisdom is the holy One who has led the way through the depths of suffering to the throne of perfect glory. They who are taught by him have received the gift of eternal life in the revelation of Christ in them the hope of glory; and while that knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, which is eternal life, is given them in the first manifestation of Christ as their only and perfect righteousness, all their subsequent experience of sorrows, afflictions and trials, is but the opening of their understanding that they may comprehend more fully this vital truth. It requires all the changes of comfort and distress which are given to the saints to qualify them to receive the unspeakable gift of the consolations of the gospel in which they have the assurance of eternal life in Christ. Thus, while it is true that the saints even as little children have an unction from the holy One, and they know all things (1 John ii. 20), yet in their daily conflicts with sin they find that it is ever true with them, as with Paul, that "we know in part" only while the veil of mortal vanity obstructs our sight. "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."—1 Cor. xiii. 10. If we could now see the glorious fullness of the sweet truth of our perfected

salvation as it is in our Redeemer, nothing could give us trouble, nor could we know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. But the infinite love of God has given to his chosen people the privilege of suffering with their Lord, as well as the glory of reigning with him; and this suffering is the infallible earnest of that inheritance of the saints in light which is secured to them by their joint heirship with Christ. When by the faith of the Son of God they are enabled to look on these unseen things, even through a glass darkly, they reckon all their afflictions light, and count it all joy when they "fall into divers temptations."

Within the year just past we have been brought to witness wonderful displays of the sovereignty of our God in visiting his judgments upon the nations of the earth; and hitherto unknown terrors have shaken our own country, destroying the accumulated treasures of generations, and sweeping away whole communities in resistless ruin. In the immediate presence of these symbols of omnipotence, human pride is momentarily overawed, and presumption shrinks in terror; but no sooner have the thunders been silenced than sinful man again pours forth his enmity against God in the worship of his own inventions. In no age of recorded time has will worship and idolatry been more prevalent, and the devotees of false religion more exalted in their success than at the present time; and nowhere is the thick darkness of religious delusion more impenetrable than in the boasted enlightenment of the American people. While so-called churches may be seen from every hill-top, and religious teaching is forced upon the masses of the children, such crimes as were unknown in former times are too prevalent for enumeration in the secular press, and even common honesty in business has almost become exceptional. The open avowal of infidelity no longer shocks the moral sense of the community, and the professing world scoffs at the faith which rests alone in the sovereign grace of God for salvation. Plain Scripture truth is as unwelcome to the popular churches as would be its divine Author in their pulpits. Even those who claim to be Baptists, who are in league with the hosts of anti-christian churches, no longer even profess to find the apostolic direction adapted to their government, having long since been "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." It was at first said by those who advocated the devices of men in preference to the inspired rule, that by these means the world would become converted to christianity before the present time. Millions of dollars have been gathered, in many cases robbing the widow and the orphan, to sustain the insatiable Moloch of will-worshiping religion, and carrying out the designs of those who assume to be the directors of the scheme for converting the world; yet while vital christianity is still despised by the world, the

very profession of that false religion which is approved by men, has become an empty form, in which even they who profess have no confidence. The prevalence of avowed infidelity in those countries which have been most zealous in exporting religion to the heathen, seems literally to fulfill the prophetic declaration of the psalmist, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision."—Psalm ii. 4. These developments of the awful depravity of human nature seem like a divine irony, mocking the blasphemous presumption of men who claim to have improved on the standard of righteousness as given in the inspired Scriptures. In political or business affairs, the practical demonstration of the utter failure of any system to accomplish the work for which it was designed, would be accepted as proof of the falsehood of the principle upon which that system was founded; but in this matter the Scripture is fulfilled concerning the revelation of that wicked "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—2 Thess. ii. 8-12.

When the fruits of false doctrine were developed in the introduction of modern religious devices in the church of Christ, they who still preferred to follow the apostolic pattern found themselves in the minority both numerically and in all the elements of popularity; for then, as in the primitive age, the multitudes were agreed in worshiping the works of their own hands, and following their own inventions. The little few who asked for the old paths were scattered, and each thought himself like Elijah, the solitary survivor of those who refused to worship the Baal of creature ability in salvation. It was then that the Lord enabled them to find each other through the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the first periodical ever issued for the defense of the truth, and for the use of lovers of that truth as a medium of correspondence. Through all the vicissitudes of fifty-four years, the saints have been cheered by the semi-monthly visits of this welcome messenger, and through its columns those who were scattered abroad have been enabled sweetly to commune together of the things which pertain to the doctrine and order of the church of Christ. While maintaining with unswerving devotion the truth of the gospel, which is the only hope of salvation for poor sinners, the uniform course of the editors and publishers has been to disclaim all censorship of the Scrip-

tural views of correspondents, reserving only the necessary right of judging the expediency of publishing articles submitted to them, as to whether they tend to edification and the promotion of love and fellowship among the saints. It would be presumptuous to claim that this judgment has never been erroneous; but we have great reason to adore and thank the God of all grace that during the long period of fifty-four years so little has been published in our columns which would have been better suppressed. To our esteemed correspondents, also, we feel it a privilege to publicly acknowledge the great obligations due to them for their christian forbearance toward us, especially since the senior editor was called to his endless rest. The trembling hesitancy with which his successors took the editorial charge which he had so well conducted is known only to God; though many dear brethren can witness our efforts to find a competent hand willing to assume the responsibility. For whatever success has been attained in continuing the publication, the praise is due to the riches of divine grace, by which gifted saints have been moved to strengthen our hands, both by their liberal and continued patronage, and by their able contributions to enrich our columns with the sweet testimony of the truth which feeds the hungry poor in their destitution. The gifts thus exercised for the edification of the saints have indeed been varied in their manner of presenting the truth; but their concord has appeared in the great end of ascribing salvation to the infinite grace given to the subjects of election in Christ Jesus before the material worlds were made. So the gorgeous colors of the rainbow have each a distinct hue, yet all mingle in perfect harmony in the clear light of the sun. The very fact that all agree in the ascription of their salvation to the crucified Lord, is more fully manifested in their diverse forms of expression than it would be if all used the very same language in telling the wonderful story of their deliverance from condemnation "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The exaltation of Christ as the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him is the vital point in the revelation which God has given in the Scriptures and in the experience of his children. This has been the theme of all who have written for our columns in the past, and we trust that this periodical may never be devoted to any other doctrine, nor be found exulting in the works of men for the salvation of sinners. There are many scattered and poor ones who can have no hope but in this sovereign grace of God which bringeth salvation to the lost. For their comfort, let them who inhabit the Rock sing, and let those who love this salvation "say continually, The Lord be magnified."—Psalm. xl. 15. This proclamation, is not the slavish duty enjoined by the law written on tables of stone,

but it is the delightful privilege accorded by the King of glory to those who love his gracious name. These are solitary in their temporal locations, as well as in their personal experience; and it is that they may be comforted by speaking often one to another that we desire to labor in the future as in the past to furnish a paper exclusively devoted to the declaration and defense of the doctrine of the gospel, as the truth is in Christ Jesus. It is not claimed that there has been no failure in the past in discriminating against the admission of error into our columns, nor yet that the editorial department has been free from mistakes; but our patrons will witness that in all we have written there has been nothing presented which has not been subjected to the judgment of our readers, to be tested by that only infallible standard—the apostolic record of the truth. This is all that followers of the Lord Jesus can accept as authority for doctrine or practice; therefore by this rule we still desire to be guided; and in this it is certain that the experience of the saints will sustain every position taken.

As in the past volumes of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it has been needful to declare openly the doctrine of salvation by grace through the perfect redemption that is in Christ, so in the future we desire to know nothing else as our hope of life. Neither by the works of the law of Moses, nor yet by the cunningly devised fables of the modern will worshipers, can any sinner be justified before God. Alone by the sovereign grace of God can salvation come to the guilty. Only by the immutable election of God in Christ Jesus can this grace be given. The determinate counsel of God, by which this grace is assured to all for whom Christ died, is what we call the absolute predestination of God. We dare not fix a boundary to this infinite sovereignty of God, and therefore we maintain that all things, in heaven, in earth, and underneath the earth, are subject to the immutable will of God; consequently from the enormous crime of crucifying by wicked hands the Son of God to the falling of a sparrow and the numbering of "the very hairs of your head," the eternal decree of the Creator has fixed every event, and set the precise limit to which the wicked shall do iniquity, and beyond which all malice of devils cannot go. Carnal reason still asks, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will." But we leave all cavilers to contend, as they ever will, against the God whom they hate. Our privilege is to rejoice in the infallible certainty of the exceeding great and precious promises which God has given to the poor and afflicted ones whose only hope is in his sovereign grace. While sustained by the grace of God, it is our purpose to contend earnestly, yet in love, for this glorious truth, ascribing greatness to our God, and confessing that the subjects of his grace have no merit in them-

selves upon which to rest their hope for his favor. To all whose trust is in this grace, we appeal for patronage and aid in the work of recording the goodness of the Lord, and testifying what great things he hath done for us, and hath had mercy upon us. It is a time of severe trial to those who love the Lord. Some have departed from the faith and turned to fables, speaking lies in hypocrisy.—See 1 Tim. iv. 1-3; 2 Tim. iii. 1-5; 2 Pet. iii. 3; 1 John ii. 18, 19; Jude 4. "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

To all who have sustained our efforts in the past, either with their influence and financial patronage or with contributions to our columns, we sincerely return our grateful acknowledgments, and earnestly request their continued favor. The lovers of truth are still a little flock; let them stand united upon the foundation of the apostle and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. For terms, see advertisement on page twelve.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

WE now have the pleasure of informing the subscribers of the Church History that the type is all up, and the sheets are printed and being bound as fast as possible, and if the binder fulfills his contract we shall be able to mail the books during the month of January. It has been no fault of ours that the books were not mailed long ago, as we have rushed the work in our office with all possible speed; but the book contains about twice and a half as much reading matter as anticipated in the prospectus, and added to this is a concordance of 44 pages, making in all a book of 1,032 pages of fine type, equal to over 2,000 pages of type the size mentioned in the prospectus. In consideration of these facts, we are satisfied our brethren and friends will feel well paid for the patient way in which they have waited for the completion of the work.

We still have unordered of the first edition:

Plain Cloth Bind'g	@ \$2 00,	220 copies
Leather	" @ 2 50,	120 "
Im. Morocco	" @ 4 00,	43 "
Genuine	" @ 5 00,	9 "

It will be seen by the above that the first edition is nearly exhausted, and any one wishing to procure a copy must order early or they will be too late. Address

G. BEEBE'S SONS,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It becomes my painful duty to send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary of my granddaughter, **Sarah Lucretia Stipp**. The deceased was born in my house in Waldo Hills, Marion Co., Oregon, July 5, 1863, and died in my house in Scio, Linn Co., Nov. 14, 1886, being twenty-three years, four months and nine days of age at the time of her decease. Her father, Daniel Stipp, died June 2, 1863. When he died his widow came to live with us, where she gave birth to Sarah. So we raised her from a newly born infant up to womanhood, and gave her a good education, I being appointed her legal guardian. (I do not now remember the date of her mother's death.) On August 9, 1881, she left Oregon and went to Wellesley College, Massachusetts, where she remained nearly three years; but that rigid climate did not agree with her health. There she acquired a bad cough; but on her return to the mild, healthful climate of Oregon she soon regained her former health. Last spring she was employed as a teacher in an Indian school at Chemawa, on the bank of Lake Labish, which is nothing more than a large frog pond, several miles long, with an average width of about three hundred yards, grown up with skunk cabbage, bullrushes, and other vegetation peculiar to marshy land. She used of the water of this pond. This, with great exposure, brought on a recurrence of her former cough, with an obstinate diarrhea. She then left the school and went to the city of Salem, and placed herself under the care of a physician. Here she got better and returned to her school, when she was taken worse than before. Then the doctors persuaded her to go to California, in order to regain her health. She had an aunt who was a practicing physician in San Francisco, who took her to Los Angeles, in southern California, to the Hot Springs, which were supposed to possess great healing qualities; but that extremely hot climate disagreed with her, and she sunk very fast. She then returned to Oregon, and came to my house to die, Sept. 27, 1886. When I saw her, her ghastly appearance frightened me. She was a mere skeleton. I employed a doctor from Salem, who made the treatment of chronic diseases his special business. He remained with her day by day, and night after night, and administered medicine to her from his own hand, never leaving her. I also hired a woman nurse and a woman cook (my wife, by reason of age and infirmity, was unable to do anything), so that she had all the attention that could be given her. But alas! the appointed time had come for her to depart, and she must go. Jesus' call is effectual, and she must obey. She daily sank lower and lower. I was seldom in her sick room, for two important reasons. The first is, I had so much to do, and so many things to see to, that I had but little time to be with her; and the other reason is, I am almost deaf, and when I would go into her room she would appear so pleased to see me, and would make a great effort to talk with me, and it would seem to worry her; so I thought it better for me to not often go into her room. She one day said to her grandmother, "I think that I can see the hand of Jesus guiding me; but he does not love me; he hates me; I have been so wicked." One night after this I was called by the nurse into her room. She said she wanted me to read in the gospel by John, concerning the crucifixion of Christ. After reading it, I turned to Luke, and read where the thief on the cross in his last dying moments prayed to Christ and found forgiveness; after which she asked, "Do you think that Christ can save me?" I replied, The apostle saith, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." But said she, "Will he save such a vile sinner as I am?" Said I, "Do you really and truly feel as you have just now expressed yourself, that you are a vile sinner, that you are lost, ruined, undone, and justly condemned, and need just such a Savior as Jesus to save you?" She said, "I do." Then said I, "You are the character that Jesus came to save. Hear what he saith, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Again, 'I came to seek and to save that

which was lost.' And again, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' &c. And the Lord Jesus, in the days of his humiliation, never did deny the petition of one poor, humble soul that came unto him. Neither will he deny your petition, if you come as they came. For a time he appeared as if he intended to deny the petition of the woman of Canaan, although she cried, 'Lord, help me.' But he said, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it unto dogs.' And she answered, Truth, Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of their master's crumbs. Then he said, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee as thou hast desired," &c. I said much more to her, but this must suffice, as I have extended this obituary by far too long already. After this she asked me to go to prayer. I then read the ninth chapter of Daniel, and kneeled by her bedside, and spoke in prayer; and as I arose from prayer she threw both her withered arms around my neck and kissed me. I then took my leave of her for the night. The morning she died she was seen to laugh. My wife said, "Sarah, what made you laugh? Do you feel happy?" She said, "I am all the time praying to the Lord." While we were at the breakfast table the nurse came to the door and said, "Lon [as they called her] says she will die, and that right soon." We all arose and went into her room. She could only speak in a low whisper, but she had on her countenance a serene and heavenly smile, as though she was well pleased to depart and be with Christ. She would look at me, then at her grandmother, as though she wished to tell us how happy she felt. Then she would look upward, as though she were looking for Jesus to come and take her to himself. She said, "I want to die sitting in the rocking chair." These were her last words. She was then taken up and placed in the rocking chair and in an instant her happy spirit (as we trust) took its flight from its clay tenement, to the bosom of Jesus, to die no more. Thus passed away one greatly beloved and lamented by all who knew her.

By the urgent solicitations of the citizens of Scio, Elder Daniel Bridges preached a very comforting discourse at my house, the night after her death, to a crowded house of mourners, from Heb. xi. 11-14. The next morning her remains were conveyed to West Scio and placed on the railroad train, and conveyed sixteen miles to the Old School Baptist Cemetery, where Elder Bridges preached again on the occasion to a large assembly, after which her remains were laid by the side of her father and sister, her last resting place on earth, until she receives the summons to arise at the resurrection at the last day.

JOHN STIPP.

I SEND you the obituary notice of **Mrs. Hannah Jones Danks**, consort of the late Elder Samuel Danks. Sister Danks was born in South Staffordshire, England, June 27, 1822. In 1842 she married Elder Danks, in Scotland, and a few years thereafter moved to Troy, N. Y. It was there that Elder Danks was baptized, and it was while living there that sister Danks received a hope, awakening her husband at midnight, and telling him that the Lord had just spoken peace to her troubled soul with the words, "Daughter, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee," when they both engaged in praising God for his goodness to them. In 1865 they left Troy, N. Y., and moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, and a year or so later sister Danks united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hamilton, and was baptized by Elder Lot Southard. She remained a member there until she with her husband and family moved to her late home, after which she with her husband put their letters of membership with the Mill Creek Church, in Hamilton Co., Ohio, of which church she lived a consistent and exemplary member until the day of her death. She was ever cheerful and gentle in her nature, forgiving in her disposition; in fact, her life was but an outward manifestation of the graces of the hidden man of the heart. Sister Hannah, her daughter, writes me, "Of her life I can hardly bear to write, it brings to my mind so vividly what we have lost in her taking away." Those who only

knew her best knew the place she filled in the home circle, the community in which she lived, and in the church, and how irreparable the loss. Her health began to fail shortly after the death of her husband, which occurred one year ago last June; but no one thought her seriously or dangerously ill until about six weeks before her death, when the family were warned by the family physician that she must not be left a moment, as she had disease of the heart, and might be taken off at any moment. She was a great sufferer for the last few weeks of her life, which closed at 4.20 p. m., Saturday, Nov. 13, surrounded by all of her children, six sons and three daughters, together with friends to minister to her wants in her last hours of her mortal pilgrimage. She had often expressed a desire and request that her six sons, now grown to manhood and filling stations of usefulness in life, should bear her remains to their last resting place. And on Monday after her demise I preached her funeral (assisted by P. W. Sawin), to a large concourse of relatives and sympathizing friends, after which it was a touching scene to witness those six stalwart sons come forward with tremulous steps, loving hearts and gentle hands, to act as pall bearers, to commit the mortal remains of their much loved parent to its mother earth, in Spring Grove Cemetery, by the side of their late father. Her course is run, her warfare ceased, and we confidently believe that she now rests from her labors. May God in his tender mercy minister comfort to the bereaved family, reconciling them to his will, is the prayer of your brother to serve,

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., Nov. 26, 1886.

PLEASE notice, for the benefit of the brethren and friends with whom she was acquainted, the death of sister **Margaret O. Christian**, wife of Seaman T. Christian, of Washington, South River, Middlesex Co., N. J., November 7, 1886. Her disease was paralysis of the heart, which began with what was thought to be a bilious attack, on September 29, while on a visit to her relatives in Orange. While her complaint was complicated, the family was assured by the physician that all was going well, and no immediate cause for alarm need be entertained. For some three weeks she was able to come down stairs with the family. She became gradually weaker, until the last two weeks of her life she was confined to her bed. She had grieved much since the death of her only sister in the flesh, sister Barkeley, of Hoboken, who died some nineteen months ago, and which was thought to be much of the cause of her distress; but the serious stage of her disease was thought to be over when the final struggle came. She seemed so much better in every way that the family were much encouraged, when on Sunday morning she called her daughter Anna to her bedside for a few moments, and said, "I want to speak a word with you, in case I should not get well." Anna answered, "You must not think that you are not going to get well, for we all expect you to. You have been very sick, but now you are so much better in every way. You take more nourishment, and you must not worry about that." The answer came, as calm and collected as ever in life, "O, I do not worry at all. It is all right whether I get well or not; but it seems sometimes as though it may be that it is God's will that I never shall get well. It will not do any harm to tell you what I have, any way. I would like to get well if it is his will; but if not, it is all right. I am perfectly resigned, and ready to go." After this she turned on her side and said, "Now I guess I can go to sleep." In a few minutes she was sleeping, and slept naturally for some two hours. When she awakened she seemed better than she had been for some time. She took a drink of milk from her devoted daughter in less than half an hour before she died. Her son came in with the physician a little past noon, who was present to behold how feeble is the skill of all earthly powers when the Almighty calls away the fleeting breath. In answer to his question, she said, "I have no pain; and in a flash came a most violent spasm, which in a few seconds, like a light going out, as peaceful as could be, hushed into silence the voice of a most devoted christian indeed.

She was a woman of few words, but they were seasoned with the salt of grace. To know her was to love her. She was known to the Baptists of this section generally, as their house was an open entrance to share their hospitalities.

She was baptized in the fellowship of the South River Church when she was about twelve years old, since which time she has remained a faithful member until her sixty-seventh year. The little church at that place has passed through (to them) a sad season, as she is the fifth member who has been removed in a short time.

Her funeral was largely attended by relatives, brethren and friends, who wore the countenance of a sorrowful spirit. Elder Wilson Housel and the writer of this notice spoke of the wondrous love of Christ to his people, from the words found in Rev. xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," &c.

May God in his infinite mercy and abounding love grant humble submission to a most affectionate and devoted husband and children, that they may know that as the family circle is broken, so are all earthly joys, by him who is the God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.

G. M. FETTER.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 2, 1886.

My dear husband, **Alexander Smith**, fell asleep in Jesus May 30, 1886, aged sixty-three years and four months. He died of heart disease, after a long and severe illness, which he bore with christian fortitude, and only seemed to be waiting the summons of his heavenly Father. I will give you a sketch of his experience. He said he had serious thoughts about religion when but a boy, and after having grown to manhood was taken ill, which produced more serious thoughts than ever. He promised the Lord that if he got well he would lead a better life. He felt that he was a poor sinner in the sight of God, and that there was a chance for others to be saved, but none for him. He continued in this way for some years. When passing through a field one day, where there was some oxen lying down, resting, looking at them he wished he could exchange places with the brute creation. After this he went to a night meeting, where they soon called for mourners to come up to the bench, when he rose from his seat and went home. On reaching home he picked up some sticks and kindled a fire, then turned to a chair, kneeling down to pray, when a voice said to him, "You ought to be more faithful. At that time his burden left, and everything seemed to be praising the Lord. But doubts soon came, and fears of being deceived. He then prayed the Lord that he might not be deceived, and he then felt that his many sins were forgiven. He then could see it was all the mercy of God, and that he had done nothing to merit any part of it. After this he went to hear different denominations preach, but could find a home only with the Primitive Baptists. He offered himself to Morgans Church, was received, and lived his days out with them, serving them the greater part of his time as deacon, until death released him from all the cares which belong to this life.

Myself, with one son and four daughters (all of whom are grown), are left to mourn. He was confined to his room seven months, and when dying said to his son, "Be quiet; there are four seasons in the year, and this is May, submissive." Our son replied, "The Lord's will be done." He said, "In all things submissive, for Jesus' sake, Amen, is my prayer." I then said, "Here are all your children." He threw up his hands and said, "Submissive; thank the Lord I am going home;" then put his hands together and fell asleep in death.

His funeral was attended on last Friday, by Elders T. M. Wright and J. C. Hall, both preaching to a large and attentive congregation. May God in his mercy give me grace equal to my bereavement, and the prayers of brethren and sisters, to bear me up at the throne of grace, is my prayer.

MAHALA W. SMITH.

DAVIS' MILLS, Va., Oct. 25, 1886.

DIED—In Washington Township, N. J., Dec. 9, 1886, **Mrs. Rebecca P. Cubberley**, aged eighty-five years, five months and eight days, widow of the late David Cubberley. Our dear departed sister, as well as her husband, in early life was united with a new school or Arminian organization of Baptists; but the departure of that organization from the simplicity of the gospel, and the introduction of so many "men-made" institutions into what they termed worship, became so grossly inconsistent with the New Testament record, that our departed brother and sister could no longer feel at home there; therefore about twenty years ago they united with the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, N. J., and remained worthy members of the church until called away from all their cares, toils and sorrows in this world, to their eternal home. Our dear sister Cubberley died a triumphant death, and was enabled to say, through reigning and abounding grace, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" She calmly expressed her desires concerning her funeral, wishing that six of her grandsons should be the "bearers;" that hymns 822 and 823 (Beebe's Collection) should be read; that the text to be used should be 1 Thess. iv. 14-18. Her funeral was numerous attended the 13th inst., at the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. F. Hutchinson, and her desires carried out in each request.

ALSO,

PLEASE publish the following notice, copied from the Hopewell Herald of Dec. 2, 1886:

"DIED—In Hopewell, N. J., on the 26th day of November, 1886, **Mrs. Susan E. Savidge**, aged forty-one years, one month, and twenty-four days.

The subject of this sketch was an affectionate wife, a kind mother, and devoted follower of the Lamb of God; for her well-ordered life plainly showed that she had been made the happy recipient of that religion which is heavenly in its origin, divine in its nature, and everlasting in its duration. During her long (and at times very painful) illness not a murmuring word escaped her lips; but she would say, "I do not want to be impatient, but I long to go home," which clearly exhibited that grace reigned, and that she could exclaim with rapturous delight, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

"Fearless she entered death's cold flood,
In peace of conscience closed her eyes;
Her only trust was Jesus' blood,
In sure and certain hope to rise."

Her funeral was numerous attended on the 28th ult., at the Old Brick meeting house in this village, which showed how she was respected by the church, of which she had been a worthy member for seven years, as well as by her neighbors and friends. The words used at her funeral were the following: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."—Phil. i. 21.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 14, 1886.

DIED—At his father's house, in Morgan Co., Ga., November 18, 1886, **Jessie L. Eubanks**, son of Elder J. G. Eubanks. He was in his eighteenth year. Jessie was a noble young man, of polite manners, and respectful to every one. He was one of the most dutiful sons, was a tender, loving brother, and made friends wherever he went. Hard work caused him to lose his mind for a short time, and had to be treated at an asylum. When brother Eubanks brought him home from there, the matron and doctors wept as if they were losing their own son. He was honorable and just in his business transactions, and in his walk and conversation lived a christian. He was out on the farm at work with his father, took a chill as they were going on to the house, and said, "Pa, I think I am going to die," and said it was all right if he did. He was resigned to the Lord's will whatever it might be. Everything was done for him that loving ones could do. He was sick only a few days, of typhoid pneumonia, when he calmly and sweetly, like one going to sleep, passed away. We are sure that for him to die was gain. He was patient and uncomplaining, often during his sickness ascribing praises to God. He loved to read the Scriptures, read them as long as he was able, and

when he was too weak to read them himself would ask his father to read for him. He had made no open profession of religion, but was always punctual at meeting whenever he could, a firm believer in the doctrine preached by the Primitive Baptists, and enjoyed spiritual conversation more than anything else. He was a great comfort to his father and mother, would stay with them, and not seek the society of young people like others of his age. O may the Lord pity them and their children, and sustain them under their great loss.

After a very comforting discourse by our brother, Eld. Wm. Adams, to a large gathering of sorrowing relatives and friends, he was laid beside his two little sisters.

Yours in christian love,

SUSIE C. DODSON.

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga., Nov. 21, 1886.

Cornelius Oscar Stone was born in Macoupin County, Illinois, Nov. 24, 1861, and died Oct. 2, 1886, leaving his young wife and two small children, a son and daughter. Our sister, though weighed down with grief, is not without hope. At the age of fifteen years he heard an old lady relate her christian experience, and while at work in the field the next day he told his father he was going to quit profanity. Shortly after this he was heard to say, "If I don't quit going to Old Baptist meetings I will have to join them." He did not go any more for a long time. He was married to Miss Sophia Vaughan May 24, 1881. His wife united with the Old School Baptist Church called Head of Apple Creek, and was baptized on the third Sunday in August, 1886. He objected to her joining the church; but when she was raised above the water he saw a smile on her face, and he was made to rejoice. From that time he earnestly contended for the peculiar doctrine held by us, having seasons of sorrow and joy, hopes and fears. But when at the meetings of the church he had not courage to offer himself to the church.

His disease was consumption. We believe he died in peace with God and man.

A large number of friends followed his remains to the grave.

C. A. JACKSON.

DIED—At the residence of his grandmother, near Howells, Orange Co., N. Y., **Charles Herbert Ketcham**, infant son of Herbert and Hattie E. Ketcham, of Newburg, and grandchild of Mrs. Deborah A. Corwin, and Mr. and Mrs. Stephen and Harriet Ketcham, aged two years, one month and nineteen days.

While on a visit at his grandmother's, he was taken sick with an affection of the bowels, Wednesday, Dec. 1, and died the following Wednesday, Dec. 8. The grief-stricken parents have the sympathy of their many friends in this sore bereavement. May the Lord comfort them, and resign them to his will.

The funeral services were held at the house where he died, and after a discourse by Elder Benton Jenkins, the body was laid away in the cemetery of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church.

"Whate'er thy sacred will ordains,
O give me strength to bear,
And let me know my Father reigns,
And trust his tender care."

DIED—At her residence in Logan, Ohio, Nov. 9, 1886, **Mrs. Lydia Nixon**, wife of Thomas Nixon. She united with Scott's Creek Old School Baptist Church on the second Sunday in June, 1875, and was baptized by Elder D. G. Barker.

Mrs. Maria Steers writes of her that she was sick only six days, and was very patient and resigned. When informed that she was past recovery, she replied that she was still trusting in Jesus. I also can testify of her exemplary life since I have been acquainted with her.

In sorrow,

MRS. G. W. BREHM.

DIED—At New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., Dec. 6, 1886, **Bell W. Hobart**, infant child of Hannibal and Mary E. Hobart, and granddaughter of John T. and Abbie Roe, aged five months and twenty three days.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

ORDINATIONS.

By request of Elkhill Church, of the Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists of Ky., for a presbytery and council to meet with it, for the purpose of setting apart brother W. Y. RITTER to the full work of the ministry, brethren from the following churches met in council on the first day of December, 1886.

Salt River—Elder S. Hawkins and brother J. Waterfill.

Bethel—Milton Money.

Little Flock—Elder P. G. Lester and brother B. Farmer.

Sulphur Fork—W. H. Ransdell and H. S. Chilton.

Cane Run—Elder N. A. Humston, brethren B. F. Chilton and George Chilton.

The council organized by choosing Elder N. A. Humston Moderator, and S. Shelburn Clerk.

Brother Ritter related his experience and call to the ministry, which were satisfactory, and being found sound in the faith, was set apart to the full functions of the gospel ministry.

Prayer by Elder P. G. Lester, and laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

Charge by the Moderator.

Benediction by Elder S. Hawkins.

N. A. HUMSTON, Mod.

S. SHELburn, Clerk.

IN accordance with a call from New Providence Church of Regular Baptist, near Ursa, Adams County, Illinois, for the ordination of two deacons, brethren John L. WORKMAN and J. G. WILLIAMS (candidates), brethren met at their regular meeting on Saturday, before the third Sunday in November, 1886.

The presbytery was composed of the following brethren: Elders Rice Harris, T. B. Ausmus, Deacons Laris Pulman, C. B. Davis and C. G. Samuel.

The presbytery organized by choosing Elder Rice Harris as Moderator, and brother C. G. Samuel as Clerk.

Prayer by Elder T. B. Ausmus, and laying on of hands by the Moderator and the presbytery.

A charge was given by Elder Rice Harris.

The right hand of fellowship was given by the Moderator, presbytery and brethren and sisters.

RICE HARRIS, Mod.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

ON Saturday before the fifth Sunday in October, 1886, the West Lebanon Old School Baptist Church met in special session, to set apart to the gospel ministry, by laying on of hands, brother WILLIAM N. CORY.

Services began at 10.30 a. m.

Introductory discourse by Elder J. C. Reed, from 1 Timothy i. 9, after which brother Cory gave a relation of his christian experience, and his call to the ministry.

The church then adjourned till 1.30 p. m.

Prayer by Elder W. C. Cornell.

Brother Cory then gave his doctrinal views. The examination being satisfactory, on motion it was agreed to proceed to ordain, by laying on of hands by Elders D. Hess, J. C. Reed and W. C. Cornell. The right hand of fellowship was extended to brother Cory, wishing him God speed.

The church then adjourned.

D. HESS, Mod.

E. S. CULY, Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

Bennett Swain 2.50, Eld J H Wallingford 2.50, Dr T D Isom 2, Benj E Johnston 2, Eld V J Turnidge 2.50, C A Cannon 2.50, M L Gilbert 2, R I Shaddock 3, Mrs E M Dodson 2, Albert Davis 2.50, Mrs James VanCott 5, Wm Harmon 2, Mr E Laforce 2, Mrs L Boone 2.50, Susan A Owen 2.50, Hon Horace Chilton 5.25, O P Pennington 2, John B Martin 2.50, John B Trott 2.50, Rebecca M Craft 2.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

J R Jerrell 50c, C Thomson 50c, H B Jones 1, Mrs M Lewis 50c.—Total \$54.25.

SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

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Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1887.

NO. 2.

POETRY.

HOW PREDESTINATION COMFORTS ME.

ALTHOUGH poor and weak, and by sorrow
sad torn,
Almost to myself and the worldling a scorn,
Yet I wish every child of Jehovah could see
How predestination applies unto me.

To me as a sinner, and me as God's child,
In nature directed, and from nature wild;
How born in God's time of a natural birth,
And then of the Spirit, and not of the earth.

I well can remember how wayward my
thought,
From infantile days till to Christ I was
brought;
Every day of my life has the Lord shown to
me
How his purpose in evil and good can agree.

Each thought and each deed have been les-
sons to show
How through grace I rejoice in the midst of
my woe;

For thus I am taught the sweet power of
grace,
From my knowledge of sin as disclosed in our
race.

God be thanked I was sinful; but grace,
mighty sway,
Was ample in purpose to make me obey;
All this, I feel certain, was the purpose of
God.

To teach me the bliss of his chastening rod.
For when my transgressions had reigned un-
to death,

Then life everlasting was shown to my faith.
If death then is needful to raise me on high,
I learned it is blessed, most blessed, to die.

To die is but passing from life and its ill;
Thus resigned, I accept the adorable will;
Feel surely Jehovah did purpose begin,
And finished his work through the channel of
sin.

Had sin never entered, no death would have
shown

How grace can exalt to an immortal throne;
Hushed then be my murmurs against the de-
cree

That fixed death and sin, and from both set
me free.

While thus I behold in the wonderful plan
All the purpose of God in relation to man,
Charge God with no folly, for in his decree
Sin belongs not to him, but pertains unto me.

And now my experience that will carries on,
As daily afflictions his purpose hath shown;
And his furnace burns brightly, my station
to prove.

As I mourn in his frown or rejoice in his
love.

Sweet doctrine, sweet solace, sweet comfort
from heaven,

Distill in my soul from assurance thus given;
That all things are working for good unto
me,

As all things work after Jehovah's decree.

Sin, death, hell and torment, yea, pleasure
and pain,

Hope, fear, care and sorrow, with the infi-
nite train

Of passions and conflicts, in his purpose com-
bine,

To lead me to Jesus, and hold him as mine.

Thus sweetly, as tempest around me may
lower,

I feel underneath his omnipotent power;
For thus I am led all my weakness to prove,

That thus I am drawn by the power of his
love.

And when to the church my rebellious heart
ran,
I felt 'twas arranged in the infinite plan;
For there as a witness the doctrine was given,
Preserved as a pillar for the record of heaven.

Though trials assail it in every form,
Though heresies rise like a furious storm;
Persecution, though fierce, to the trial of
soul;

False friendship deserting with treachery
foul;

Yea, though the whole fabric of organized
bands

Should all disappear throughout earth's
dreary lands;

All elements melt in the fierce flaming fire,
Fulfilling decrees of God's judgment and ire;

Still, still let my soul in sweet reverence wait,
And smile in beholding God's justice in fate;
For he who hath kept me thus far in his love,
O'er all desolations can raise me above.

A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Allen Co., Ohio.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNTO WHAT AND UNTO WHOM THE SAINTS ARE COME.—HEB. XII. 22-24.

NUMBER ONE.

"But ye are come unto Mount Zion."

Two mountains are spoken of here,
mount Sinai and mount Zion, which
represent the two covenants. The
first of these gendereth to bondage,
as Hagar, and answers to Jerusalem
which now is, and is in bondage with
her children.—Gal. iv. 25, 26. This

covenant of works is well represented
by a mount, as showing the exalted
power and glory of God; but it was
a mount that burned with fire, and
was enveloped in "blackness, and
darkness, and tempest," from which
came "the sound of a trumpet, and
the voice of words," which the chil-
dren of Israel could not endure;

"and so terrible was the sight that
Moses said, I exceedingly fear and
quake." All this represented the
terrible nature of the law, and of the
glory of God shining through the law
in the condemnation and eternal
death of all who are under that cove-
nant. This mount might be touched,
and to touch it was certain death.
This covenant, this Jerusalem, never
shows any way in which one of her
children can go out of that bondage.

"By the works of the law no flesh
can be justified." In that covenant
are no possible provisions of deliver-
ance from its thralldom. Death must
follow that bondage. The ministra-

tion of that law is glorious, but it is
a ministration of condemnation and
death. To that Jerusalem the Savior
says, "How oft would I have gath-
ered thy children together, as a hen
gathereth her chickens under her
wing, but ye would not." In his own
glorious way that covenant is taken

away; and all who have ever been
sensible of being in bondage under it
are brought forth by the strong arm
of glorious grace, and that house of
bondage is left desolate, none of the
children remaining there. The apos-
tle describes in vivid language the
terrible nature of this covenant of
works, as it appears to those unto
whom the commandment has come,
and then declares that the saints are
not come to this mount, but that they
are come unto mount Zion.

This mount Zion represents Jeru-
salem which is above (above the law
and death), which is free, as Sarah
was, "and is the mother of us all."—
Gal. iv. 26. This is the new cove-
nant; new in manifestation, yet from
everlasting. This is the mount of

God's holiness. It is the mountain of
the house of the Lord which is estab-
lished in the top of the mountains,
even in Christ, and exalted far above
the hills of human excellency.—Isa.

ii. 2. And it is in this gospel dispen-
sation that "many people 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." This Zion, as the name
signifies, is a monument raised up by
the power and wisdom and grace of
the eternal God, which shall forever
remain to the praise of his glorious
name. To this holy mount the Lord's
people come with weeping, and with
supplication the Lord leads them.—
Jer. xxxi. 6-12. Poor and helpless,
blind and lame, terrified by the
threatenings of the law, overwhelmed
by the multitude of their transgres-
sions, they cry unto the Lord for
mercy, and in his own good and right
time he brings them to the height of

Zion, where they sing of his goodness
and power and grace, and their souls
are as a watered garden. When it is
revealed to them that Jesus has
borne the curse of the law for them
and atoned for their sins, they stand
with joy and praise upon the mount
of God's holiness. "Ye are come
unto mount Zion," "the righteous-
ness of God by faith of Jesus Christ,"

a glorious monument of righteousness
raised up for them to the praise of
God's glorious grace. The saints
themselves are made the righteous-
ness of God in Jesus Christ.—2 Cor.

v. 21. When the saints are brought
by the power and riches of God's
grace to trust in him, they themselves
are as mount Zion, monuments raised
up to the praise of rich and sovereign
grace, which cannot be removed, but
abideth forever.—Psalm cxxv. 1.

Upon this mount Zion, in this

"everlasting covenant, ordered in all
things and sure," which the Lord has
made with them, is everything which
their soul desires. This is all their
salvation and all their desire.—2
Samuel xxiii. 5. Here are the green
pastures of God's love and grace,
where they are made to lie down in
gospel rest; and the still waters of
eternal truth, at which they refresh
their souls; and the paths of right-
eousness, in which they are so glad to
be led; and the feast of fat things
full of marrow, and wine on the lees,
well refined, the wheat and the wine
and the oil, the young of the flock
(the paschal lamb) and of the herd
(the fatted calf); a rich and bounti-
ful supply of all that is most delicious
an soul-satisfying.

Every poor soul who has been
made glad to know that salvation is
by grace through faith, and that not
of ourselves, but is the gift of God,
is come to mount Zion. Every one
who has been made to feel that in
himself is no merit, no good thing,
but has been made to believe in the
Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior and
Righteousness of his people, is come
to mount Zion. This includes all
that are poor in spirit, all that mourn,
all that are meek, all who hunger and
thirst after righteousness. Here also
in this great company are all the
maimed and the halt and the blind
who are in the lanes and streets of
the legal Jerusalem, houseless and
helpless there; and all the poor,
wretched beggars in the highways
and hedges, among the Gentiles.

One may be at one moment experi-
encing the terrors of the Sinai cove-
nant in his soul, and in the next mo-
ment may be rejoicing in the unspeak-
able blessings and holy delights of
mount Zion.

"The guilt of twice ten thousand sins
One moment takes away."

It is an immeasurable distance from
the powers of darkness to the king-
dom of God's dear Son, from the
depths of sin and condemnation to
the heights of holiness and heavenly
joy, and yet the deliverance from one
and the translation to the other may
be but the work of a moment. How
often it is the case that the blessings
and glories of the covenant of grace
are opened up to the poor, trembling
soul in a moment of time through
some portion of Scripture, which
comes into the mind and sinks down
into the heart with life-giving power.
"The words that I speak unto you,"
says the dear Savior, "they are spirit,
and they are life."

But in being come to mount Zion,
ye are also come "to the city of the
living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."

This is the church of the living God, and presents not only the exalted position to which the poor sinner has been raised, and the rich blessings of the new covenant, but also the unity of the people of God and the order of the church. A city is a number of houses and inhabitants established in one place. So here is presented the spiritual dwelling place of all the children of God. Their habitations are all built upon the same ground, close together. "Jerusalem is builded as a city which is compact together."—Psalm cxxii. 3. Having the same hope, the same life, being of one mind, of one heart, having one Lord, one faith, one baptism, they are "as a city set on a hill, whose light cannot be hid." All who have received a good hope through grace are come to this city, of which each one is a part, to the church of God, with all her order and ordinances. Whether one shall ever walk in those ordinances and be identified by this obedient walk as a member of the visible church or not, still if he is a living soul he is come to that church, her order and ordinances are in his heart, the Savior's precious commands are upon him, and, whether obedient or disobedient, he can never cease to be one of those who "are under law to Christ."

Zion is called "the perfection of beauty," and is spoken of as "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." Everything pertaining to her is the work of God, and therefore must be the perfection of beauty. In the whole earth there is no joy outside of her walls for the Lord's people. The Lord says, "Here will I dwell, for I have desired it." Every one who loves Jerusalem, and who mourns for her, is one who has come to this city; and it is declared to be his privilege to rejoice with her, and that he shall prosper.—Isa. lxvi. 10; Psalm cxxii. 6. This is heart work. This great change takes place without reference to where we are, or what we have or have not done, and without our having moved hand or foot toward effecting the wonderful work. The poor soul has passed from death unto life, and is translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son; and all that wonderful journey has been taken while the position of the body may have remained unchanged. This coming is by a birth. In this coming of the children of God unto a knowledge of and a participation in the blessings of this new covenant, the work is entirely of God. It is a work wrought in them instead of by them. "They are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." They now have the life of God in them, and are come unto the city of God. The saints under the old dispensation had divine life, but they had not come to this city, for it was not yet established. This "better thing" is reserved for us upon whom the ends of that Jewish world are come; that is, upon whom are come the realities, substance or end of those types and shadows that are now abolished. They were brought to Sinai, and to the types

and shadows, and heard the truth spoken in parables and dark sayings. But we are given to rejoice in the fulfillment of all those prophecies. We have the substance, which is Christ. We are come to mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and are dwelling close together with those we have never even seen in the flesh, and are builded together with them for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Dec. 17, 1886.

"BUT the sorrow of the world worketh death."—2 Cor. vii. 10.

My correspondents, who are inexpressibly dear to me, no doubt wonder at my long silence. The above passage of Scripture expresses a part of the cause of my inability to write infinitely better than any expression of my own I could make. True, my continuous suffering of body, my frequent delirium from fever and chills, and the weakness and debility that naturally follow, is a very good excuse; but had not my mind been surfeited with worldly sorrow, with human wrong and earthly care, the love that so often reaches out to the Lord's dear children throughout the land would have surmounted even this obstacle. O! I wonder if the dear, strong, valiant Paul ever felt the truth of this expression—if the force and fullness of it ever came to him through his own personal experience as it has to me. Often and often have I read this Scripture, but never did its full meaning strike me as it has during the past several months. I have sometimes thought, since affliction has cut me off from the world, that its sorrows and its joys could no longer affect me, that I was dead alike to the allurements, the snares and the temptations of them both; but alas! alas! how mistaken were my conclusions. Surely there is no place, no condition in this life what ever where the child of God is free from snares, from temptation and sin; no place under the natural sun where Satan cannot be at you, after you, to torment and entrap you with his wicked devices. One says very truly, "If Christ is near you, Satan will be near you too; and if he cannot entrap you in one way, he will in another." While the pressure of worldly trouble has at times, as I think, driven me oftener and nearer to the dear Savior's feet, and has shown me my helplessness and utter dependence on him more forcibly, it has also filled my mind with sorrow of a worldly sort, with anguish and bitterness, and caused me to moan, to writhe, and to cry out against the wrongs that have been brought to bear against me; and truly, most truly and sadly has it worked death to my spiritual growth and enjoyment, so that when I would feel a desire to write to my spiritual kindred I could not fix my mind upon spiritual things, nor still the tumultuous throbbing of my overburdened heart long enough to write upon the

things dearest to the Christian's heart. O how I am made to deplore the weakness, the fleshly weakness, that has caused me to fall so deeply into the snare and temptation of worldly sorrow, so that often my reason seemed to give way, and the afflictions of body and mind threatened me. No words can express the awful darkness, the sorrow and despair, that I have struggled against, and how deep and dark have been the waters I have passed through, to learn this bitter lesson, that "The sorrow of the world worketh death." When sunk so low in these dreary waters, how fiery have been the darts that Satan has hurled at my soul; what devices he has used, and with what force has he brought human reason to argue against the longings of my soul after God; and how hard has he tried to break down the stronghold of my hope and faith and trust in the living and glorified Redeemer. How hard it is to thus bear the cruel thrusts of Satan, when darkness envelops us on every side. "A wounded spirit, who can bear?" How, indeed, can the trembling child of God bear the aching of a broken spirit, unless he be strengthened and sustained by mighty, reigning grace? But if through grace we can say, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" and, "Though Jesus slay me, yet will I trust in him," then indeed may we account the victory ours. How kindly and full of meaning came the words of the blessed Savior to his disciples, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." How very good and wonderful seems his tender admonition, and how careful his vigilant watchcare. "Watch and pray." He does not want his little ones to enter into temptation, and therefore he cautions them how to avoid it; but O how sweetly is his forgiving and compassionate nature brought to view in the tender excuse he makes for us, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." If I am one of the favored number of the great Shepherd's little flock, I can scarce believe there is one member whose flesh is so weak as mine, who is so prone to fall into by and forbidden paths, who so easily gives way to temptation, or who gives way so utterly to the sorrow of the world and fleshly weakness. Yet it strengthens even me when I think that Jesus knows the flesh is weak, and that having been tempted in all things like as we are, he knows how to succor us when we are tempted. "He leadeth me." Ah! who is it that leadeth me? Can it be Jesus, dear Jesus, that is leading me, weighted down with worldly sorrow, sick with a sense of sin? He says he leadeth them into green pastures, beside the still waters; but can it be he that is leading me through these deep waters, through this fiery way? O bless his holy name, it is still the same dear hand that leadeth me; for does he not say, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and

through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned."—Isaiah xliii. 2. So that whether we are gliding sweetly upon a bright, clear sea, made glorious by the sunshine of righteousness, fragrant with the sweet incense of pardoning love, looking out upon scenes of green pastures, surrounded by clear, still waters, or whether we are tossed upon a dark, dark sea, sailing beneath a clouded sky, with no feeling sense of love, it is still Jesus that leadeth us; and not until the last sea is crossed, the last bitter draught drank, the last storm-tossed billow passed, and the wondrous journey of life is past, can we triumph fully over all, and shout, Grace, free, atoning, redeeming grace. Jesus says we shall (in the world) have tribulation; and he further says that his word shall all be fulfilled. Then trouble must come to the child of God in some form or other. The wicked, David says, are not troubled as other men; and do we not find it true? Even the worldly religionists have no such trouble as Paul and his fellow-disciples, who were troubled on every side, and had fightings without and fears within. I heard of a minister in this village a few evenings since taking for his text this Scripture, "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life."—1 Kings xix. 4. The poor, tried, tempest-tossed child of God, methinks, can plainly trace his own travail of soul and experience in the hardships and trials and vexations of spirit through which the great man of God had been passing, and has often, no doubt, said like Elijah, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life." But the minister above alluded to gave this Scripture a literal application, and said that Elijah had a fit of the "blues," or possibly a "bad liver." It appears to my limited understanding that the prophet was experiencing the same trial and bitterness of soul that Job and other godly persons did; and that the Christian must suffer in this world, is verified by the self-sacrificing, sorrowful life of Jesus, who went mourning all his days, and who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." The life and experience of the prophet Elijah has been sweetly comforting to me during the past months. The deprivations he suffered, the straits he was brought into, and the marvelous and striking manner in which God cared for him, showing that his little ones are indeed of more value in his sight than many sparrows, is such a comfort and strength to me. Again, when he was brought so low that he wished to die, alone in the wilderness, fleeing from a wicked adversary, how good and gentle and compassionate was our dear Lord, when he sent an angel not only to touch him, to arouse him from sleep, but to feed his famished soul,

to strengthen his weary, fainting body, so that he went forty days on the strength of that food. How often the child of God goes to sleep when under great worldly trial, when sorrow has taken away or worked death to all spiritual interest or enjoyment. How sweet it is then to be touched or awakened by the Spirit, who gives us food, and soothes and comforts us as one whom the Father comforteth. After a long spiritual fast or hunger, weary with our journey, wishing the last scene were over, how strengthening is that food from above, the manna from heaven, the precious gospel truth, which so strengthens the soul, and refreshes and buoys us up for many long days. O the blessedness of that food, which, if a man eat, he shall never perish, but shall have everlasting life; and the efficacy of that water, which, if we drink, we shall thirst no more. O that I could be fed more freely of that wondrous bread; that I could drink more freely from that glorious fountain, whose pure, crystal waters alone can satiate one's spiritual thirst; that I could come nearer and nearer to the great throne of grace, where even such poor creatures as I can find rest and help in all their sorrow and need. "But the sorrow of the world worketh death." With what shame and self-reproach do I confess to you, my dear kindred in Christ, that I have often allowed the sorrow of the world or the state of my financial affairs to take up my thoughts almost entirely; and often, very often, have I cried out within myself, O thou of little faith! Under this deplorable state of mind I could not write to those I dearly love, and whose correspondence I so much prize. Dear friends, do not, I beg you, feel slighted or neglected. I feel that my letters, under circumstances the most favorable, could do no one good; and when I do write, my words seem so like the wrung-out accents of a sorely tried heart, are so like a tale of sorrow always, that I fear to annoy and trouble the dear household, rather than comfort and build them up in the faith. To each and all who have honored and comforted me by letters of comfort and christian love, I send special love, craving an interest in your prayers, and sometimes a place in your thoughts. To you, dear Elder William Beebe, I send warmest thanks, for the ever-treasured expressions of christian love I had from you through a private letter to sister Cordie Yeoman. May the dear Lord abundantly bless and strengthen you, and all the dear household of faith, for his dear name's sake, to whom be glory and honor and power and majesty now and forevermore.

With feelings of warmest christian fellowship and love, I am your unworthy sister in deep affliction,
MARY PARKER.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio.

GHEENT, Ky., Oct. 12, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The prophet Ezekiel

says, "The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the color of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel."—Ezekiel i. 16.

While attending the Mount Pleasant Association, the first week in September last, brother Earnest Ransdale, of Henry Co., Kentucky, asked me to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some of my thoughts on the last clause of this text, particularly what is prefigured by the words, "A wheel in the middle of a wheel." Brother Ransdale and all of God's dear people must ever realize their entire dependence upon the great Giver of every good gift and every perfect gift for the ability to understand even in the slightest degree the wonderful teachings recorded by the prophets, and especially the mysterious figures presented to us in the first chapter of the prophecies of Ezekiel. Those figures are replete with meaning, and in the goodness and mercy of God toward his people were recorded for their learning. It is therefore appropriate for them to seek to understand the wonderful truth presented in those figures.

Ezekiel says, "Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God."—Ezekiel i. 1. Let it be remembered that the prophet was then among the captives by the river of Chebar. That name means "force, strength." Israel was then in captivity by the force and strength of Babylon. When in the depths of the humility incident to that captivity, they cried out, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"—Psalm cxxxvii. 4. Ah, dear saint, how often you, like Israel in captivity, are made to say, when by the side of that force, that strength, which the old man, the natural man, has, "How can I sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Spiritually you are in a strange land, in captivity, and the force and power of the current of the river Chebar, the old man with all his carnality, cannot deliver you from that captivity, nor enable you to sing the Lord's song. But like the prophet, you sometimes are blessed by being enabled to see visions of God. When the greatness and glory of his wonderful name is unfolded to your spiritual vision, you are enabled to see some of the wonderful things prefigured by "a wheel in the middle of a wheel." Let it be remembered that the prophet said, "I saw visions of God." Then the visions that he saw related alone to the wonderful character of him who would shortly appear for the overthrow of Babylon and the delivery of Israel from that fearful captivity. Israel was a typical people, typifying all spiritual Israel, the elect of God. Babylon was overthrown, and that

typical people delivered from that captivity. Now, dear saint, you have this glorious truth presented to you. Just as certain as Babylon was destroyed and Israel released from captivity, just so certain will that great and glorious period come when you will be delivered from all your enemies, and enabled to sing the Lord's song, not in a strange land, but in the glorious Zion of our God. That delivery will be by him of whom the prophet speaks when he says, "I saw visions of God." In those visions he saw a wheel in the middle of a wheel. In speaking of those wheels he says, "As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four." Mark you, these were visions of God. Then surely the prophet had a view of him as both God and man, as the child born, as the Son given, and as the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. In him, that child born, that Son given, dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. That great truth gives us an illustration of that part of the vision of the prophet where he says, "And their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel." The great and wonderful work here mentioned could not be accomplished by any but him who was both God and man. He was about to deliver his typical people out of captivity, which was a figure of the glorious and everlasting delivery of spiritual Israel from the captivity of sin and Satan. This wheel within a wheel presents to us that wonderful mystery of which the apostle speaks when he says, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." In that manifestation he appeared as a child born, as a Son given. The apostle gives the reason of his so appearing when he says, "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." None were able to deliver them but he who took part of their flesh and blood. But the prophet in this figure unfolds to the spiritually minded sons and daughters of the Most High more of his wonderful character when describing further the figure of the wheel in the middle of a wheel. "As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four." The wonderful character of him who was God manifest in the flesh was so high, so exalted, that the prophet when in that vision beholding him says, "They were dreadful." When Jacob awoke from that vision at Bethel he was afraid, and said, "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Jacob in that vision had seen "a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven:

and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it."—Gen. xxviii. 12. Ezekiel says, "As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful." And Jacob, when beholding God standing above a ladder that reached from earth to heaven, said, "How dreadful is this place!" Ah, my dear young brother, when you are enabled to behold our God in his character as the omnipotent Jehovah, in his wonderful character as the Creator and upholder of the vast universe, you are filled with feelings of wonder and awe, and are made to say, with old Jacob, "How dreadful is this place!" But while thus gazing upon him in his rightful possession of all power both in heaven and in earth, another one of his attributes is presented to your astonished gaze in that figure given to you by Ezekiel, who in speaking of those rings says, "Their rings were full of eyes round about them." The eye is the organ of sight. The psalmist says, "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy."—Psa. xxxiii. 18. Again, he says, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry." Remember, dear saint, that God is omnipotent, beholding the evil and the good; beholding you in all your ups and downs of life, protecting you amidst dangers seen and unseen; yea, is a present help in every time of need. That God of whom Ezekiel had visions, says by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." The psalmist says, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. 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." The figure of the eyes in the rings of the wheels presents to us the omnipresence and omniscience of God. He is everywhere, and all things are controlled by his wisdom and power, and it is all for the good and glory of his redeemed; for his eyes are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cries. His redeemed were before him ere time began, and all the members thereof were written in his book. Then the eyes in the rings of the wheels looked back to the very ancients of eternity; and that infinite, glorious and unsullied wisdom was there before the mountains were settled, while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the world. Yes, that wisdom and that power were there, carrying on the unalterable purposes of Jehovah in prepar-

ing a home for his people; yea, an earthly home, where they would be developed in creation, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, fitted and prepared by regenerating grace for their future and eternal home in the fairer world on high. Those eyes looked forward to that period when the mighty angel shall come down from heaven, and with his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and swear by him that liveth forever and ever that time should be no more. But Ezekiel says, "And they went every one straightforward." "Whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went." Let it be remembered that the prophet was recording "visions of God," and every figure that he uses presents the attributes of God. When he says, "They went every one straightforward," he is declaring his immutability. God in creation, in his providence, and in his wondrous grace manifested in the great plan of salvation, has turned neither to the right nor to the left, but in all things went straightforward, carrying out his own eternal and immutable purpose and counsel. Just here, brother Ransdale, let us indulge one great and wondrous thought, which is that the love of God toward his people was the great moving cause of all his wondrous works. The apostle, in addressing the church, says, "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." Then, dear saints, God was moved in his wonderful works of creation by his love for you. The smallest star, as well as the brightest gems that adorn night's sable arch; the pale moon, as well as the bright luminary of day; the earth with all its minerals, as well as its vegetable and animal life; its flowing rivers, its high mountains, and its broad seas and oceans, are yours; for you are assured that all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Remember, dear saints, O remember, that all things are secured to you in his eternal and immutable love for you. Not only did his love for his people move him to create and uphold the vast universe, but that wonderful attribute of his being caused him to lay aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and take upon himself that body which was prepared him, in which he became poor, that his people might be made rich. Ah, dear saint, does not the tear of fervent sympathy course its way down your cheek when you hear him say, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head?" Follow him still a little further into that lone garden, and see him in the darkness of that fearful night, sweating as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground; and then behold him in the agonies of death on Calvary's cross, and hear him cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In that fearful torture,

methinks in low and plaintive words I hear him say, "It is finished." All, all because of the love he bore his people. Then surely Ezekiel had wondrous visions of God, beholding him from the very ancients of eternity, going straightforward in creation, in the preservation of his people, their redemption, and their final glorification at the right hand of God, where there are joys forevermore.

I must now bid brother Ransdale farewell for the present, and hold a short and (I hope) pleasant converse with brother Rittenhouse, of Delaware, on the subject of the good seed and the tares. And you, brethren editors, will please dispose of this as you may deem best, and believe me affectionately yours,

H. COX.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Dec. 20, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It is generally known among our churches and members, and also among those who know us as a people, that we do not receive members from other churches upon the baptism which they have received at the hands of ministers in those churches, even though they may have been immersed. There may have been (indeed there have been) instances to the contrary, but such has been the general rule; and those who have acted contrary to this have not been considered as acting orderly or consistently as Old School Baptists. By general agreement we have received members from the New School Baptists who were baptized before we withdrew fellowship from them, but who may have remained with them till a later date; but the instances have been few and far between where members have been received upon a baptism performed by New School ministers, since the division took place. There were places where this separation and withdrawal of sound Baptists did not take place until several years after the work began at Black Rock, some fifty-five years ago; but in all places when the separation has been completed we have afterward, well nigh universally, agreed not to regard their baptism as being valid or gospel baptism. We have agreed that we are no more nor no less in fellowship with New School Baptists than we are with Free Will Baptists, Campbellites, Methodists, Presbyterians, &c., &c. This last is certainly true. I am sure no one will dispute it, at least among our brethren. I think it will be generally admitted that if we receive the baptism of one of these churches, we must receive that of all; and if we reject that of one, we must that of all.

Now it is in my mind to inquire into this practice, and see what reasons, if any, there are for it. I, for one, am persuaded that our general practice has been the only consistent one, and that it is truly scriptural, as well as consistent; and some reasons suggest themselves to my mind, of which I wish to speak. If we pursue a practice of any kind, we ought to have reasons for it, and to know what those reasons are. I do not propose

trying to exhaust the sum of the reasons that might be alleged, but only to suggest a line of thought which seems very plain and clear to me.

And first, right or wrong, we have declared for fifty years past that we had no fellowship for any of the religious denominations of the day, and did not regard them as being the church of Christ on earth, in any sense of the word. I think this is right, but will not stop to discuss this matter. Right or wrong, we are occupying this standpoint, and ought to either walk in harmony with this position, or else recede entirely from it. We have not said that there are none of the children of God among these peoples. On the contrary, we are sure that many are there, else it could not be said, "Come out of her, my people," &c. But the fact that some of the children of God are in any of these churches, does not constitute them the church of Christ. There are many of the true born children of God yet in the world, but that does not prove the world to be the church of Christ. And so it is with all these various churches. But while we gladly admit that many dear children of God are in all these organizations, yet we have declared and do declare entire separation and non-fellowship from them all, as organizations, and claim that they bear no relation to the church of Christ, save that of strangers and aliens.

Now it seems to me to be well nigh a self-evident fact that if our God has established his church as an organization on earth, and therein has set up his government, that all the execution of the laws of that kingdom must be within the borders of his church. Any earthly government, to be a government at all, must have all the powers of government within its own borders. A law enacted in England has no authority in America. English officials cannot enforce American laws. An English officer might give naturalization papers to a German, and tell him that he had become a citizen of these United States, but such would not be the fact. We might pity or blame the English official and his dupe, but we should not recognize his acts as binding upon us at all. Even so, if Jesus has set up his church on earth, she must have all authority in herself, and cannot recognize the authority of any other people or organization. This would seem, of itself, to settle the question as to whether we can receive the ordinances at the hand of a people for whom we have declared entire non-fellowship.

But further still, suppose that we do receive one who comes to us narrating a genuine experience of grace, but who says, "I have been a member of the New School or Free Will Baptists, and was baptized in faith by a minister in that church, and I am satisfied with my baptism." Suppose, I say, we receive such an one, and to-morrow a candidate comes who speaks of a good hope through grace, to the satisfaction of us all; and when asked who he desires shall baptize him, says, "I desire the same

minister to baptize me that baptized the brother whom you received yesterday." What could we say? Suppose we say, "It is not lawful." Can he not well say, "If it was lawful for him to baptize this brother ten years ago, why not me to-morrow?" Suppose we reply to this that the brother did not know any better when he was baptized, that he was ignorant of the wrong he was doing then; can he not say, "I am ignorant of the wrong of it now, and I want to be baptized without delay?" Does ignorance make an unlawful act lawful? Suppose we say that we have no fellowship with that man as a minister of the gospel, nor with his people as a church of Christ, and that we do not believe that he is called of God to preach or labor in the vineyard, and that he never has labored in the vineyard of the Lord; cannot this supposed candidate reply, "Why then do you accept his labors, and receive the fruit of them, as you did yesterday? If you can receive his work of ten years ago, why not receive his work for to-morrow?" There can be no half-way ground in this matter. Either none of his official acts are lawful, or they all are. If he could lawfully baptize for us when he and his candidates did not know us, he surely can do so, now that he and they do know us. If his act which was unauthorized by the church of Christ was valid, surely his act which should have the authority of the church would be valid. But the question is simply this, Has the Lord Jesus ever sent him to preach and baptize? If so, it is lawful for him to do so at any time; if not, it is lawful at no time.

And further, suppose this candidate is satisfied with the baptism of this New School Baptist or other minister; what is to hinder him from saying, "I desire also to receive the supper at his hands; I desire him to break bread for us?" What objection could we make that would not also invalidate the baptism which he had administered? If we say that he has no right to break bread for us, we also must say that he has no right to baptize for us. If we receive his baptism, we must also receive all his official acts. If we receive his acts, we receive him to our fellowship in them. If we thus receive him, we must his brethren; and if we receive his brethren, we are no longer a distinct church, and have given up our claim to be the church of Christ, and have confessed that we had no right to withdraw from him and his people in the first place. Vast consequences and great principles are often involved in what seem to be little things.

Let us take another point of view. Suppose a candidate comes to us and says that he has been immersed into the Free Will Baptist, or even the Methodist Church, and is satisfied with his baptism; but in the course of his narration he says that he no longer considers these people a church of Christ, and that he is fully satisfied that they are contrary to Christ in faith and practice, and therefore are

antichrist; could we not very pertinently ask him, "Was not your baptism the door into an organization that then you regarded as the church of Christ, but now are convinced stands opposed to Christ?" And further, would it not be good reasoning to say, "The door that ushered you into a false church cannot surely also be an entrance into the true church. You have entered a door into a building which you now see is not where Jesus dwells. Now here is another building, where Jesus does dwell, and here is another entrance into the true home; enter here." It was my privilege to baptize a dear sister once, who was troubled about giving up the baptism which she had formerly received in the Campbellite Church, and it was the thought presented above that satisfied her mind.

I know that one difficulty in the minds of many dear brethren and sisters with regard to giving up their first baptism is that they had a good hope at that time, and have no other now, and that when they were baptized they felt great gladness of heart, and an assurance that the presence of the Spirit of God was with them. With a tender conscience they feel that they do not want in any way to deny the gift of God to them. They feel that the heavenly Father smiled upon them in the act, and to reject it seems like rejecting him. God forbid that I or any one should seek to do violence to such an honest, God-fearing, tender conscience as this. Such an one has no right to come until fully satisfied in his or her mind as to the right of the matter. But for the consideration of such an one I would suggest a few thoughts. If any one were in dire need, and knew not where to obtain help, and without it must starve, and some one should profess great friendship for that distressed person, and should bestow upon him a bank-note sufficient in amount to fully relieve his need; would he not be filled with rejoicing? But suppose that soon afterward he should discover that the bill was a counterfeit; his joy would fly away at once, would it not? Yet the joy that he had felt would have been genuine and real, though the note was counterfeit. His joy would be no proof that the note was genuine. It would only prove that he thought it genuine. So when such earnest, loving souls received what they supposed was genuine, heaven-commanded baptism, they were filled with joy, as though they had found a great treasure. But the joy did not prove the treasure valuable; it only proved that they thought it so. Now bring this supposed treasure to the test of the word, and not judge its value by the joy you have felt. Is not this the part of wisdom?

Now, in closing, I will suggest that in the New Testament certain persons are commanded to baptize, as distinctly as others are commanded to be baptized; so that none but the former have a right to baptize, even as none but the latter have a right to be baptized. Therefore a proper administrator is just as essential as a proper candidate.

I leave these reflections. May God give us understanding hearts in all things.

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

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Nov. 25, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I think these letters will be of interest and comfort to the readers of the SIGNS, and especially to many who are like her in being deprived of the society and preaching that they love. She is not a member of the church, but is fully with them in heart, and would undoubtedly become a member if providentially favored to be so situated that she could be with them. She was in our family some years, during my childhood, and we love her as a sister, and as a sister in Christ. I have had spiritual comfort in copying these for publication.

Your brother,
SILAS H. DURAND.

ORWELL, Pa., July 5, 1886.

DEAR BROTHER SILAS:—It has been on my mind for some time to write you something of what I trust the Lord has done for me in bringing me out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light, and especially since you and Bessie have requested me to do so.

Since my earliest recollection I have been interested in hearing the Bible read, and in hearing christians talk on the subject of religion. When quite young I went to Sunday School, and I believe my teacher was a christian lady. She would talk to me about my condition as a sinner, and told me I must pray to the Lord for a new heart, and ask him to take away my hard heart, and give me a heart of flesh. I felt that I was a sinner, and tried to pray; but the more I tried to pray, the more wickedness I could see in myself, till it seemed I was the greatest sinner in the world. I could neither eat nor sleep much. I was living away from home, and the people saw there was something about me they did not understand, and asked me if I wanted to go home. I told them I did not. No, it was no earthly friend that I wanted to see; it was my blessed Jesus. I longed to see his smiling face, and to feel his pardoning love. Thus I lived on, sometimes driven almost to despair, so that I knew not what to do. Those people I then lived with seemed anxious to do me a kindness, and got a chance for me to go to meeting with a neighbor, the meeting being too far for me to walk. O how glad I was for the opportunity, for I wanted to hear about my blessed Jesus; and I was not disappointed, for all I thought of was the words that fell from the lips of the minister; and before he got through preaching, that burden so heavy on my heart rolled off, and O how light and happy I felt. I could but just keep still till I got back, and then I would walk about and sing so loud that the people told me I must not make so much noise, or folks would think me crazy. But I could not help it, for "Jesus all the day long was

my joy and my song," and I could rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

But I have lived so much of my time since so cold, and, like Peter, have followed my Savior afar off, that I do not feel worthy to be called one of the least of these little ones; and yet I feel that I would not give up what little hope I have of that blessed inheritance at his right hand when time shall be no more, for all the wealth of the universe. Often when I have been in darkness, filled with temptations, doubts and fears, and almost ready to give up as lost, that sweet voice of Jesus would seem to whisper so sweetly, "My grace is sufficient for thee," over and over again, till I would feel calm, and resigned to his most holy will.

Thus I have lived on from that time till this, the same unworthy, sinful creature; and if I am saved, it will be by sovereign grace alone, and not by anything that I have done or can do, for it seems that my whole life has been sinful and wayward. I feel often, O that I could, like Mary of old, sit at Jesus' feet and hear his word; but, like Martha, I am too full of the cares of this world. I think often that if I could only be at your associations and other meetings, I should be so glad; but it is all right. I have the SIGNS to read, from which I derive much comfort and encouragement; also the Book of books, the same Bible which you, dear brother, and sister Bessie, have to read, and O how thankful we have reason to be. In the SIGNS are many good sermons and letters from dear brethren and sisters, and able ministers of the New Testament, many of whom I would like to mention if I could; but I would like to speak of William R. Welborn. How wonderfully he has been led along. I had been looking for a sermon from him, and at last it came, and I was glad, for I believe it was all of the Lord, and was truth, whether men will hear or forbear.

I often wish we could have some good preaching in this place. Dear brother, I often wish you could preach here again. Your sermon down at your place was edifying to me. I got a line from Horace, saying there was to be a minister there from the south; but when I got part way I heard there was to be no meeting, and came back. I have heard of no meeting since, except a Methodist preacher at our place. I have not been to hear him. I suppose the people think me a strange being, but somehow my mind is drawn toward the Old Baptists. They seem to be my people, and their God my God. If I am not with them in body, I trust I am in spirit, yet so unworthy and sinful; but Jesus is ever ready and able to forgive us our sins, and if I am saved at all, it will be by grace alone.

I want to speak of another one of the Lord's precious ones, dear sister Mary Parker. How sorry I feel for her! for after passing through intense bodily suffering, then to have those that should be her best friends deprive her of earthly comforts, it looks very hard. But we know the Lord

will ever sustain her, and soon bring her to rest in his bosom of infinite love.

Now, dear brother and sister, this is written in such a blundering way that I am ashamed to send it; but believing you will overlook all my shortcomings, I will send it for your perusal, and not for publication, for it is not worthy, just like myself.

With love to you all,

E. C. O.

OCTOBER 24.

DEAR BROTHER SILAS:—I could wish I were at your meeting this Sunday morning; but as I am deprived of such a privilege, I thought I would write a little more. I know I am writing too much; but as you think of putting it in the SIGNS, I thought I would write of a dream I had, which I enjoyed very much, and a little of my late experience. In my dream I started to go to a meeting. I told my children to get ready to go, and I started alone. I came to a pair of stairs, and went up them, and came to another, and went up. I came to a room where much people were gathered, and Jesus in the midst. I went along and came to a foundation that I could not get up on, and said, How shall I get up here? Immediately Jesus turned around and said, I will help you; and I was up there among a good many, who seemed to be singing, and praising that blessed Jesus, who is ever ready to help in every time of need. And, blessed be his holy name, he has been my help when no arm of flesh could comfort or help me; and when in deepest distress and ready to sink, he has whispered in that same sweet voice, "My grace is sufficient for thee." O that sweet voice when he said, "I will help you." No earthly music is half so melodious, sweet, soft and tender. O how often I have wanted to hear it again. But perhaps not till I quit this vale of tears and sorrow, if it be his righteous will to permit such an unworthy worm of the dust to enter his presence, shall I again hear such sweet music.

At another time, when I was about my work, meditating on his goodness, passage after passage of Scripture passed through my mind as fast as I could repeat them, and such a peaceful feeling. I thought, Am I going to die? O how timorous we are when we think of death, the most of us.

But I am troubling you too much with my writing. I will just tell you the words that ran through my mind as fast as I could repeat them, a day or two after you were here, the time I was sick, on awakening out of a good sleep:

Blessed Jesus, thou art mine;
All I am and have is thine;
And in thee is all my trust
Till this body turns to dust.

Then from earth I'll soar away
To the realms of endless day,
There to see my Savior's face,
And forever sing his praise.

With much love to you all, I am, I trust, your unworthy sister in Christ,

E. C. O.

NOVEMBER 10.

DEAR BROTHER SILAS: I have

your good and encouraging letter, and trust I am thankful for a kind friend and instructor, though far away. Now, at your request, I will try and write a little more, though in a blundering way. I am aware that I wrote but a very little of my experience, and that was mostly before I came to live in your father's family. I was a child with the children, and enjoyed their company; but when alone I did at times enjoy the presence of my Savior, when meditating on divine things, and enjoyed reading the Bible, and hearing your father read both the Bible and the SIGNS. I remember that once he said, when reading the SIGNS, "Eliza likes to hear the SIGNS read, as well as the other children." I did think it was food, and it seems strange to me now that I did not begin to take it sooner than I did. I went to meeting, but there was no Baptist meeting that I could attend. When I would be where there was much water I would long to be baptized, but said nothing about it. The dear Savior has ever watched over me, and led me in a way that I knew not; and I trust he has led me out of Babylon, and has shown me that he was all in all, and to him all praise belongs. When I came home from your place I joined the Methodists, and remained with them for years, but I did not like all their doings. When the Free Will Baptists came and held a protracted meeting I thought they were quite right, because they believed wholly in immersion, which I always believed; so I joined them, and was baptized. But I soon began to see that they were not right, for I could see that they did not preach the truth. I was then reading the SIGNS, and as often as I could I went to your meetings, and heard other Old Baptist preachers, and began to be satisfied that they were right; and I have believed ever since that they are the true church and people of God, and I trust they are my people. I would be glad if I could go to your meetings very often; but if not, I must be content. The SIGNS comes a welcome messenger, to comfort me in my lonely pilgrimage.

Now, my dear brother, may the Lord comfort you, and sustain you for many years to preach his unsearchable riches, and comfort the weak, and feed his sheep and lambs, and be a comfort to your family and your only sister in the flesh, and me also, the most unworthy of all, is my prayer, for Christ's sake.

When I look over this I feel more like casting it into the fire than sending it to you; but I know you will excuse all mistakes and blunders. I do not think it worth printing in the SIGNS, but do with it as you please. It was written for you and Bessie; but if you wish to put it in the SIGNS, please sign my name thus,

E. C. O.

"A PEOPLE near unto him."—Psalm cxlviii. 14.

How great and glorious is the Lord! Who by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection? His works are great,

sought out of them that take pleasure therein. The heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that are therein, are the work of his fingers. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. God hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number? He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might; for that he is strong in power, not one faileth. He ruleth by his power forever. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He sendeth forth his lightnings, he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, fulfilling his word. He ruleth the raging of the sea. 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? Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand? The Lord hath said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This God, O believer in Jesus, is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death. When we are led to meditate upon the eternity, unchangeability, majesty, glory and infinite power of God, his unsearchable wisdom, the wondrous faithfulness of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, O what is man, that God should take knowledge of him, or the son of man that he should visit him? Why should God take pleasure in, why should he love and behold with delight such poor worms, who in comparison to his infinite being, glory and power are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity?—Isaiah xi. 17. And can it be that you, dear reader, that I, we poor, vile sinners, are included in the number of "a people near unto him?" Who is this people? They are the children of Israel; they are the chosen of God; chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world (Eph. i.); eternally loved of Jehovah (Jer. xxxi.); they are the portion which God has chosen unto himself, and are his peculiar treasure.—Exodus xix. 5. Do we not, dear children of God, when led to read or think upon the glorious and unspeakable mysteries recorded in the Scriptures, feel that these things are too wonderful for such sinful worms to be embraced in, the eternal love and delight of Jehovah? But "the things of Christ," though unknown and exceeding all the powers of the natural mind to comprehend, are most sweetly re-

vealed to the loved and chosen race by the Holy Spirit, who is the infallible teacher of all the redeemed of the Lord of hosts.

"A people near unto him." O how very far off am I by nature! The Lord is holy and pure, but I am so impure, so vile. When my eyes are turned within, truly I am nothing but sin. Then at the thought of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, the Lord so high, and I a loathsome sinner, sunk so low. How can it be that I can be, that I can have hope that I am among "a people near unto him?" Let us, dear children of God, take a glimpse or two into this precious subject as it is contained in the Scriptures, and I know you will agree that this can only be done unto edification by the leading and instruction of the Holy Ghost. O how blessed, how sweet, are those seasons in our life when we find it in our soul to acknowledge our dependence upon our God, and are found longing for divine teaching, heavenly food, and more and more revelations of the kindness and tender love of Jehovah to our souls. In the eighth chapter of Proverbs Christ, "the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians i. 24), says, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by him, as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." This is that one whom the Father calls "My dear Son," speaking in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure; for the Son of God is the Surety of this testament. Before the world was, the Son of God saw his seed; he beheld and delighted in the members of his body. Thus in Psalm cxxxix., speaking in David, he says, "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." Christ's body, which is the church (Eph. i. 22, 23), was given to him in the everlasting covenant by the Father. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." They were given to him out of the world (John xvii. 6), and

all their names are written in the Lamb's book of life. "All my members were written." These are the election of grace chosen out of the world (John xv. 19); and these, the elect of God, are predestinated unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ; for he is their life. "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—Eph. i. 5; 1 John v. 11. O, dear children of God, how precious is the thought that our life is hid with Christ in God. If we were favored with the sweet evidence of this, then,

"More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

For "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 3, 4. No separation: from eternity to eternity one with Christ Jesus. Look at this wonderful record concerning the person of our Head, our Husband, our Redeemer, our All. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men," &c.—John i. Thus we who now are poor, vile sinners, who mourn because of our iniquities, loathing ourselves in our own sight, and find ever springing up hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, were chosen from among men unto salvation. We were given to the Son of God, and in him was life eternal; and eternal life was given and promised us in Christ Jesus by the eternal God, who cannot lie, before the world began.—Titus i. 2. The church of Christ therefore has ever been in eternal unity in life with the Word, who in the beginning was with God, and is God; for in him was and is our life. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one."—1 John v. 7. "The Word was made flesh."—John i. 14. And our precious Christ declares in John xvii. 24, "Father, thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." And in him (the Word) was life, our life, eternal life. We then, to whom this life is given, "Are in him, even in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God."—1 John v. 20. And it is wonderfully, blessedly and gloriously true that all the elect, the whole family of the Most High God, in heaven and in earth, from the least unto the greatest, are in Jesus, the Word, bound up in him, the bundle of life, with Jehovah, their God.—1 Sam. xxv. 29. Therefore our Jesus says unto God our Father, "Thou hast loved them as thou hast 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."—John xvii. 23, 24. "I was daily his delight." The church and Christ Jesus are one; for in him is her life, and thus she is in him. Her name therefore is in him. Her name therefore is Hephzibah, because of Jehovah's

eternal delight in her.—Isaiah lxii. "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." Yes, Christ Jesus, the Word, loved his bride, loved the members of his body. He the Life, the Head, in the everlasting covenant, rejoiced before the Father, "rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men."—Proverbs viii. 30, 31. "A people near unto him." From eternity near unto Jehovah in eternal life oneness with Jesus, the Word. This is the source from whence is derived the foundation upon which is founded every aspect in which we view the nearness of the elect, the children of Israel, unto God. "A people near unto him."

"Before thy hands had made
The sun to rule by day,
Or earth's foundations laid,
Or fashioned Adam's clay,
What thoughts of peace and mercy flowed
In thy dear bosom, O my God.

A monument of grace,
A sinner saved by blood;
The streams of love I trace
Up to their fountain, God;
And in his sacred bosom see
Eternal thoughts of love to me."

"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."—1 John iii. Thus the Lord possesses "A people near unto him." They are "the household of God."—Eph. ii. 19. This revelation in the gospel of Christ, like all things belonging to the salvation of God's elect, is hidden from the wise and prudent of this world; it is altogether beyond the thoughts of the natural man, and he cannot know this glorious revelation of the Holy Ghost. "Now are we the sons of God." Natural reason even in the saints of God would sometimes send forth the challenge, How can a puny creature be a child of God? How can a mortal man call the immortal, eternal God "my Father?" This is a problem that carnal reason can never solve, but is a most precious revelation in the gospel of Christ. It is all bound up in Jesus, the Son of God. He was with the Father before the world was (John xvii.); and in the fullness of time, according to the everlasting covenant, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Galatians iv. 4-6. The will and works of the creature had nothing to do to bring this to pass, but all proceedeth from the Lord God of hosts, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. According therefore to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, whom he did foreknow (his loved and elect) he predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.—Eph. i.

5, 6; Romans vii. 29, 30. But you say, "I have felt, and even now sometimes fear, that I am an alien, a stranger, a foreigner, and do not belong to the house of God; and while others with no difficulty can say, 'Our Father which art in heaven,' I often feel this to be something too great for such a poor sinner like me." The popular religionists, who style themselves Christians, say in their doctrines that all mankind are the children of God, and therefore it is the duty of every one to call God "my Father." But this is not agreeable to the doctrine of Christ, and is at variance with the experience of all who are taught of God. Among the first things that the sinner taught of God is brought to feel, is that by nature he is an enemy to God by wicked works, that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so they that are in the flesh cannot please God. This bitter experience is learned by as many as are led by the Spirit of God, and such are the sons of God.—Rom. viii. 14. As outcasts from God, separated from the Lord by their sins, they feel they dare not call God their Father, and fear they have no marks, and that they have not the spot of his children.—Dent. xxxii. 5. It is in the power of God alone that we can feel and cry, "Abba, Father."—John i. 12. In the experience of each one of the chosen family of God there is a set time when they are born again, "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." They believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the working of the mighty power of God, and receive Jesus as the Christ, who is all and in all, their hope, their salvation, their all. To these, power is given to become the sons of God. Jehovah sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." "Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me."—Jer. iii. 19. This is experimentally realizing that God has translated us from the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of his dear Son. No more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.—Eph. ii. 19. O what an entrance is this, among the dear children of God! How very near to God when by faith in Jesus we are enabled to cry, "My Father." It is unspeakable and full of glory. With what simplicity does the dear child of God, at such favored seasons, approach in adoration and prayer before the Lord. "Our Father which art in heaven." In unity with the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God (John xvii. 4, 5), who said unto Mary Magdalene, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God and your God." It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but all is settled, and my soul approves it well. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. We have received the spirit of adoption, and we are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.—

Rom. viii. 19-23. God shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.—Phil. iii. 21. In the resurrection we shall awake in his likeness; this mortal shall put on immortality; this corruptible shall put on incorruption. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. "A people near unto him." In Jesus, as our High Priest, in the secret of his tabernacle, under his feathers. O to be favored more and more in experimental nearness to walk with God, and thus most sweetly prove how very near God is to his people in all those relations and characters that he bears unto them.

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

BRANDON, Miss.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I promised you two years ago, when I wrote to you, that I would send you a relation of my experience; but I have found that I cannot write or talk upon matters pertaining to the kingdom at will. It is the Spirit that infuses the irresistible impression to act. The still, small voice speaks, and it is done. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord." I was somewhat surprised to see the communication I sent you appear in the SIGNS; and when I attended an association that fall I met several brethren who had read it, and there was much inquiry after me. One old brother took me by the hand and said that in the future he desired me to call him brother. I was reminded by brethren to fulfill the promise concerning my experience; and if those brethren read this, I trust they will forgive my procrastination.

I was raised by Methodist parents, and was taught from childhood that man was free to act for himself, and that by his own works and obedience to the law he could secure a home in heaven. I often had many thoughts upon religion in my childhood days, and made many promises to the Lord, only to see them broken. I boarded with my grandmother, and she compelled me to say my prayers every night before retiring, and I became so habituated to it that I was afraid to sleep until I had repeated my prayer. I would commit many sins during the day, and pray them off at night, as I thought. I remember having three spells of severe sickness, and I promised the Lord that if he would raise me up I would join the church; and thus, having restraints thrown around me, as I was often told, I would be safe.

I was married in the year 1870, and it came to pass that I married into a Missionary Baptist family. At that time there were no Primitive Baptists in that county. My wife and I talked a great deal about joining the church; but I could not go to the Baptists, neither could I reasonably expect her to forego her prefer-

ence and go with me; so we had about compromised on the Presbyterians. Her mother visited us during the time, and requested me to read a book which she had, and to compare it with the Bible. I began to read, and when I came to a reference to the sixth chapter of Romans, I was convinced that immersion was baptism. As soon as I came to that conclusion I told my wife that I was a Baptist. From that day I began disputing with the learned doctors of the law on the subject of baptism, which is about all, or the main plank, that separates Rome's daughters. In order to have myself well fortified against my opponents, I had to read. When I came to the ninth chapter of Romans there I found "it is not of him that willeth," and, "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." I was nonplused. I sought the advice of the doctors of the law, and some said that revealed things belonged to man, while others said that I ought not to trouble myself with those hard passages which I could not understand, for there was enough in the Bible that we could understand, pertaining to our salvation. But I believed the Bible was truth, so I began to talk it, and soon was called a "Hard Shell." After working myself up to that point which makes an Ishmaelite think he has religion (for I was told that I had to believe I had it before I did have it), I joined the Missionaries. The minister gave in my experience, and said I knew almost as much as he did.

I will endeavor to be concise, and will pass over a portion of my experience that is not very edifying. I have mentioned some things to show the brethren how I believe the hand of God led me.

I was baptized by the Missionaries in 1872. I will say that during those years I would sometimes think of proclaiming the gospel to fallen man. I was at one time shucking corn, when something said, "You will have to preach." I was shocked as by electricity, and replied, Is it possible that a sinner as deeply dyed as I am must preach? I said, Not so; I never will; no, never. It was not long until I became as wicked as ever. I quit attending meeting, and I do not think there were many worse men than myself; at least I had that reputation. In 1878 I dreamed that I had three weeks in which to repent. As I had no confidence in dreams, the thought passed away for awhile. I had read the prophecy of Joel concerning dreams, and also Peter's quotation of it in the Acts of the Apostles. As it bore heavily upon my mind, I began to reason with myself what these things meant, and it came with more force than ever, so that I could not get rid of it. After a while it came to me that this meant three years; and the nearer the third year came, the more I was impressed to repent. I began in earnest, in the year 1880, to beg God's mercy upon me; but the more I prayed, the worse I felt. "He told me all things that ever I did." I felt that I had de-

ceived the people by joining the church, and had acted the hypocrite, and I felt that of all sins that was the greatest in the sight of God. I thought I was beyond pardon, that God's Spirit had ceased to strive with me, that I had sinned away the day of grace, and that I was doomed to everlasting torment, and justly, too. I could not see how God could save one like me. O the depth of misery my poor soul was in! I felt that I was the chief of sinners, and believed at that time that if Paul had been here I could have convinced him that he was mistaken, and that I myself was the chief of sinners. In the third month of the same year I got down by my bedside to attempt to pray for the last time, my wife having preceded me to bed. I lay down, and the next thing I knew my wife awoke me and asked me what was the matter. I told her that I saw Jesus standing on the bed. The joy that I felt I will never be able to express. The next night I prayed to the Lord to give me more evidence, when something said, "You ought to be satisfied." I then went back to the Missionaries and told the preacher my experience, and was received. I joined the Sunday School, made great progress, got to be superintendent, and did many wonderful things connected with Babylon. Soon it was whispered, "He will preach yet." One day while talking with some of my Missionary brethren on the doctrine of the Bible, I noticed a man paying marked attention to me, as he saw we did not agree, and as they called me "Hard Shell." He remarked to me, "I see that you and your brethren do not agree." I told him we did not, and asked him what he thought of my position. I had never seen the man before. He said I was right, and we continued to talk. He said he had a paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which he would like for me to see. I requested him to send me one, and he did so. I saw that I was lapsing the doctrine of a people I had never known anything about. I continued to read the paper, and was fed. I was in full fellowship with all the communications, especially the experiences and the doctrine of predestination. I was not ready to give up missionism until I read a communication by E. Rittenhouse on the subject of the commission given to the apostles. I went immediately to the minister and told him to tell his church to withdraw fellowship from me. He remarked, "Brother Rhodes, I believe you are honest in your course. I shall ever entertain the same regard for you, and shall pray for you." I never knew until this man told me that there was a separate organization of Primitive Baptists; and learning from him that there would be a "district meeting" in August, about twenty-seven miles distant, I concluded to go to it. When the time arrived I went. I remarked, when I had heard the first sermon, that it was the first gospel sermon I had ever heard. They did not read their sermons, nor did they

endeavor to convince men by human reason that they could fall in with overtures of mercy and be saved; but it was, "Thus saith the Lord," all the way through. I was told by the pastor of the church every time I went (and I went as often as I could), that I was out of duty; so the next year, in October, I felt that I would endeavor to go if possible, and tell the church what great things the Lord had done for me. One night I told my mind to my wife, and requested her to make preparations for the next meeting day. I lay down that night perfectly happy, and to my great surprise I could not sleep. Late in the night I fell into a doze, and when I awoke the words came to me, "You are a blank." I paid but little attention to it, and again fell into a doze, and just at break of day I awoke and heard the same words. I was now troubled, and did not know what to think. I told my wife about it, and told her I would not be baptized. I was in great trouble. During the evening, while meditating upon the subject, the thought came with irresistible force, You will have to preach. With trembling I promised the Lord that I would tell the church. I related my experience, and was received, and have been trying to exercise my little gift ever since, whenever called upon.

Your brother, I hope,

B. RHODES.

LIVINGSTON, Texas, Dec. 24, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please send my paper to the above address, as I have emigrated to this state. If there are any Old School Baptists near this place, I will be glad if they will write to me, as I desire correspondence with them.

Yours in Christ,

B. RHODES.

STATE ROAD, Del., Dec., 1886.

BROTHER WM. L. BEEBE:—I have some special reasons for addressing myself this time to you. In your next issue I suppose we may all expect a New Year's salutation from you. I think it would be no more than fair and right for some one for themselves, and in behalf of your readers, to write a New Year's salutation to you. As I think you are fairly entitled to it, I will try my hand at it, and at the same time hope that others may also be mindful of you.

There is ample occasion for mutual congratulations, not only for the year now closing, but for all the years that you have occupied the editorial chair. I have been connected with the SIGNS as agent and correspondent now for about forty years, or about three-fourths of the entire time of its publication. No one of the forty years has passed without some communications from my pen. Very few indeed are now living who have furnished as much matter for the columns of the SIGNS as I have. A considerable portion of it was in the form of association letters for three different associations, which of course did not show the name of the author. Perhaps I should not speak of these

things; but they seem to present themselves as I look back over the history of the SIGNS, and see the connection of my whole public life with the interests of that paper. The association letters that I have written have all been adopted and published, and copied into the SIGNS. My list of subscribers shows a steady and permanent increase. I hardly know what more or better I could have done if I had been given a pecuniary interest in the paper. With no inducement, and prompted by no other consideration, but the best interests of the Old School Baptists, and the success and prosperity of a paper devoted to their service, I have gone on unweariedly and never faltering, soliciting subscriptions, keeping accounts and remitting funds, until the close of this year of our Lord 1886. The deep and abiding interest shown in the cause so fully identified with my whole life would hardly admit of stronger testimony. Others may have done better; I hope they have. They may have had more talents to begin with. The sincerity and earnestness of my efforts will not be called in question. It will be apparent that the prosperity and usefulness of a circulating medium like the SIGNS would depend largely upon the contributors to its columns. Uniform fair weather and smooth sailing was perhaps too much to expect. But a review of the earlier years of the publication forces upon me the remembrance of unpleasant and threatening conflicts that are painful to think of even now. I was so fully identified with the division of the Baptist denomination, and familiar with all the elements leading to separation, that few men are living at this day who are better acquainted with those events. For some years the SIGNS engaged in the plain, straightforward work of pointing out and restoring the old landmarks, and exposing that Fullerism, or Arminianism, with all its fruits, into which a large portion of the denomination had been drifting. In a very few years the work of separation and purification had been accomplished, so as to be understood and recognized all over the United States. The church had indeed been in a militant state; but very many ministers of the church had long been in the war harness. War has its excitements and allurements, and it is not every soldier that readily returns from the field to the peaceful labors of husbandry and the tending of flocks.

In the course of time some finespun theological questions were introduced and discussed that had not been embraced at all among the elements of the original separation. I might mention one or two of them. What was called "eternal justification" was one; and the Sonship of Christ, just what constituted his Sonship, was another. As I was not a party to these discussions then, neither am I now; but I refer to them to speak of their tendency. In no one instance was the result a coming together; but instead thereof breaches were made and widened, and estrangement

and permanent alienation to an alarming extent resulted. To see gospel ministers, sound, orderly churches, and entire associations, who had come forth as gold from the furnace of the original separation, and who had walked together in love and taken sweet counsel together, permanently estranged, caused unfeigned sorrow and distress. It is no part of my present design to fix the responsibility of such an alienation among brethren, or to attach blame to the management of the SIGNS, but simply to remind ourselves of a few of these events. It was all painfully unpleasant to me at the time, as I thought I foresaw where it would end. Israel of old, when they had triumphed over all their enemies, were soon found fighting among themselves. In the discussions I have referred to each party claimed to be actuated by an upright zeal for the truth, and for its defense and maintenance, and I am not going to question the sincerity of either party; but I may say that the contention was almost entirely over phrases and forms of expression that the inspired writers never used in a single instance. The apostle cautions against the discussion of a class of questions, instructing the brethren to avoid them, because, he says, they are known to gender strife. If we are to know the tree by its fruit, we ought to be able to trace out some of those questions that fail to tend to godly edifying. These things are mostly so far in the past that an allusion to them will not be likely to revive them; and we can congratulate ourselves and each other that brighter days are upon us.

You speak of having been advised. You do not say by whom, or exactly to what, but intimate that you do not appreciate the advice. I had thought that you had long ago received counsel from that Spirit of Wisdom who gives good counsel to all her children, and that you had given good heed thereto. I think there was ample proof of this in the conduct of the *Messenger*, over which you presided for so many years. In dealing continually with more than a hundred subscribers I cannot help but know that the great bulk of them deprecate strife and all harsh or unkind words, but desire that the brethren should in meekness and love serve one another. What brethren thoroughly understand, and things to which their own experience bears witness, they are not likely to fail in setting forth to the instruction and edification of others. Now, you know, brother Beebe, that in all our private correspondence I have never sent you a word of censure or criticism, have not even presumed to offer advice (a thing that I am somewhat addicted to); but you will allow me to say, as the apostle said to the Philippians, while he commended them in every particular, he would that they should abound more and more.

Before closing this letter I suppose I ought to take some notice of the letter of Elder James Wagner, in which quite a free use is made of my name. I wrote a short letter to the

Gospel Messenger last summer, which, if it could have been seen by all your readers, I would allow to rest upon its own merits. As very few who see his letter had a chance to see mine, I wish your indulgence for a few lines. The psalmist says, "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path." It is a source of consolation to remember that the Lord knows, if men do not, the path we tread. I think it is also a consolation sometimes to remember that men, even brethren, do not know, else they would speak more kindly than they do. I will, however, plead no excuse if I speak unadvisedly. During the early part of the present season I read from the pen of one of the ministering brethren the following expression: "We are standing upon the verge of a great conflict for truth, that must eventually shake the Primitive Baptist denomination throughout the length and breadth of our land. It is not wise that we should turn from the evidence continually crowding upon us that shows the necessity for this conflict," &c. I will confess that I did feel sorry to see such foreboding. I had not seen a necessity for such conflict at all. I wanted to see peace and truth the rest of my days. It was this, with what I thought looked like on the part of some a disposition to precipitate the conflict rather than to avoid it, that led me to write. If it is wrong to counsel to "Follow the things which make for peace, and whereby one may edify another," so be it; but charge the wrong where it belongs. Brother Wagner says that he would take such counsel "if he did not believe that gospel truth and a sense of duty suggested a different course." I mentioned brother Wagner's name to call his attention to an expression used in his letter in the SIGNS that the passage referred to did not warrant. I said he would not take it amiss. I still think he should not. I cited an exact quotation from the record by Moses: "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." The passage in his letter reads, "Thus, he loved Jacob and hated Esau before they were born," &c. The reader will see that there is no mention made of the names of either of the boys, and nothing said of them as individuals, or of loving or hating them, either before they were born or afterward. I prefer correct quotations, that the enemy get no advantage of us. There is no declaration of Scripture anywhere to warrant the assertion above quoted. The Lord loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity, and so he hateth the workers of iniquity as such; but he that is born of God and knoweth God ought to know that God is love. Even in the hearts of the children of men the Spirit of God does not produce among its fruits hatred to anybody. I do not know what that different course may be which brother W. proposes to take. He says, "Now, brethren, and brother Rittenhouse in particular,

does not enlightened reason sustain the position?" It may, brother W., for what I know; but as what the Scriptures sustain is what we are after, I will not discuss that question. The readers of the SIGNS may all understand that I did not make issue with anybody on any doctrinal point, and that I so distinctly stated; so of course I am not responsible for the drift which brother W.'s letter has taken. I very much regret the seeming necessity for me to refer to the matter again.

In conclusion, I will refer brother Wagner and any others who feel an interest in the matter to another letter in that same number of the SIGNS, August first, signed "W. F. Kercheval." Said letter was originally a private letter written to me in answer to a private letter written to him; and I would fain commend it both in letter and spirit, as I think it will also commend itself as a model to all those who communicate with their brethren and sisters of the household of faith. I think it may there be seen how brethren may be brought continually nearer together, and to a better understanding, and more and more endeared to each other in the bonds of christian love.

Now, brethren Beebe, for yourselves, your contributors and your readers, one and all: may the incoming year be a happy and prosperous one in abundant rewards for your labors of love beyond any that have preceded it.

Yours to serve,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

NOTE.—With the highest esteem and brotherly love we would acknowledge the truth of all that brother Rittenhouse in this letter claims to have done in aiding the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and thus publicly return to him most sincere thanks. The most tender regard for him as an able minister of the New Testament causes us to feel grateful for the kind words in which he refers to the present editorial conduct of the paper. But if so clear discernment as his has failed to see that we still contend earnestly for the very same principles announced by the original editor in 1832, we must confess that we have utterly failed to express the doctrine of God our Savior as it is in our own experience. With "finespun theories" we desire to have nothing to do; but we are confident that our dear brother would not have us yield a single point of gospel truth, either to secure peace or to save our own life, whether it be the word of the Lord in Isaiah xli. 9-11, or that same word written Romans ix. 10-13. We make no issue with any who confess the plainly recorded truth of the inspired Scriptures. That truth we know our dear brother would not have us deny. It is deeply to be regretted that brethren do not always see alike the propriety of some forms of expression. This will ever be the case while "we know in part." Therefore until "that which is perfect is come," may we all have grace to bear the infirmities of the weak; and may the weak not seek to destroy any whom they may adjudge too strong.—See Romans xiv. 4.—Ed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1887.

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

THE DOCTRINE WHICH YE HAVE LEARNED.

THE importance of correct views in regard to the truth which is revealed in Christ Jesus is clearly displayed in the inspired Scriptures. The Lord himself, and the apostles who spake as moved by his Spirit, in all their teaching presented the doctrine of God our Savior as the embodiment of truth. Too much care cannot be taken, therefore, that they who are his disciples should not be seduced by any of the alluring devices of error, either to leave the firm foundation of revealed truth, or to build upon the quicksands of carnal reason. Resting upon the immovable basis of the divine word, there can be no power which shall be able to shake their sure refuge, so that they have no occasion to fear the assaults of error or ignorance. Then whenever they feel inclined to tremble for the ark of God's eternal truth, or to avenge themselves upon their enemies and persecutors, it is evident that they have at least for the time forgotten the eternal truth on which is founded the doctrine of salvation by grace, through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, in whom alone is that justification which cleanses us from all sin by his blood.

In this day of will-worship and delusion it is well for the saints to remember that the doctrine of Jesus is but one, and is never by inspiration called doctrines. There are indeed "doctrines of devils" and "commandments and doctrines of men," which are all included among those "divers and strange doctrines" against which the saints are warned; but the gospel of the grace of God is but one doctrine, including all the principles of truth as God has revealed it in the experience of such as have learned of the Spirit of Christ.—See Col. ii. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 1; Heb. xiii. 9. This "sound doctrine" is that which all have learned who are the children of Zion, for they shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace.—Isaiah liv. 13. This peace is not that false agreement which may be devised by the natural mind, which is attained only by concessions on both sides, and can only stand as being sustained by accepted creeds and theories of men. The peace which is as a river whose streams make glad the city of our God, is that heavenly unity of the Spirit which rules in the new heart of those who are born of God. This is never disturbed by the doctrine of God. On the contrary, it is the manifest effect of sound doctrine to produce that true peace of God which characterizes the church of Christ as walking in love; for there is no principle of the doctrine of Jesus which can be left out of the experience of

the saints. Hence there can be no correct experimental preaching which does not include the whole fullness of sound doctrine, nor can sound doctrine be presented without embracing all genuine experience. For all true doctrine testifies of Jesus as its author, sum and substance; and there is no genuine experience in which that same Jesus is not revealed as the beginning and the end.

The foundation of "the doctrine which ye have learned," both in christian experience and in the revelation as recorded in the Scriptures, is in the infinite sovereignty of God. No motive outside of his own purpose is assigned in the record of the creation, either in Genesis or in the simple but forcible statement of John. And the absolute sovereignty of his work is attested by Solomon in words which cannot be either misunderstood or perverted. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. If any mortal is bold enough to cavil against this truth, we have no other argument for such but to refer to the emphatic answer of Paul to all opposers, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Rom. ix. 19, 20. Standing upon this foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone, no weapon of the enemy can reach the little children of the Redeemer, because they dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Thus the Scriptures clearly testify that God is sovereign in all his works, and he is just in all his ways. So it is written, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face."—Psalm lxxxix. 14. There is no standard of truth and justice but the will of God; and no created being can judge of right and wrong but as that will of God is revealed. Very early in the history of man a proposition was suggested by which he might be qualified to know good and evil; but the result of that suggestion was the reign of death over all men. So the absolute sovereignty of God is the doctrine of the Scriptures, and therefore all the hope of salvation rests in his eternal will and purpose. He is immutable in the counsel of his will; therefore his purpose cannot be changed. He cannot lie; therefore his promise is sure to all the seed, which is Christ, including every member of his body, the church, which is the election of grace, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.—Heb. vi. 16-18; Gal. iii. 16; Eph. i. 20-23. Some call this *strong doctrine*, which is not suited to comfort little children who are weak in the faith; and it is said that it is not profitable to present such solid food for babes. This is indeed a serious consideration, and it well may demand attention. That it is according to the Scriptures cannot be de-

nied; but will it be prudent to preach this positive truth to the little ones? If it has not been already taught them in their own experience, it will not profit any, though it should be preached with the eloquence of Apollos and the conclusive demonstration of Paul. But there are many times in the experience of the saints when they fail to comprehend their own exercises. Let us see if this absolute sovereignty of God can be found in your own experience, dear reader. Have you a hope that God has revealed in you Christ Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness and as your only hope of glory? Why did that revelation come to you instead of your fellow-sinner? You will not claim that you were better or more deserving than others. "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God."—Rom. iii. 9-11. But for the sovereign election of God how could his mercy have been manifested to you? Your sins forbade all hope, and testified against you so that in the blazing light of divine justice you confessed that your condemnation was strictly just. When Jesus spoke peace and the forgiveness of sins to you, what comfort or relief could have been in that word had it not come in the infinite power of the immutable will of God? Thus the very basis of the hope of every saved sinner is in the absolute will of God. As that will is immutable, it is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Can any one afford to doubt this truth while hoping in the mercy of God? This is the very foundation of the christian's hope; and it is well asked, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"—Psalm xi. 3.

Resting upon this foundation, and inseparably identified with it, is the election of grace. This principle, so dear to every saint, could not avail anything for the salvation of sinners without the absolute predestination of God, which secures the fulfillment of his purpose of love. In the experience of every saved sinner this true motive appears as the only cause of the abundant grace of God being bestowed upon one who could plead nothing in self as meriting the favor of God. Thus their own salvation is to every one of the subjects of grace a perpetual and abiding witness of the unchanging truth of perfect salvation from sin through the election of God in Christ Jesus. This is "the doctrine which ye have learned," not in the schools of men, nor by study and reason, but alone by the revelation of Jesus Christ in your own individual experience. It is not an abstract theory, yielding no present fruit of comfort and support to the tried and tempest-tossed child of grace; it is the very fullness of consolation and assurance that there can be no failure in the word of promise on which the Lord has caused his servant to hope.—Psalm cxix. 49.

There can be no other doctrine which can give such sweet comfort and strength under every form of trial. That election of grace which embraced you in infinite love even when you were dead in sins, can never fail, nor will sin itself ever be able to separate you from it.—Eph. ii. 5; Rom. viii. 38, 39.

This precious doctrine is so entirely different from all other doctrines that the natural man does not receive it, for it is foolishness unto him; neither can he know it, because it is spiritually discerned. All who have received and known it must have been born of the Spirit who reveals it. These are manifested as the children of God; and as such their salvation is secured in the full redemption which is in Christ. The evidence on which this perfect assurance of salvation rests is the fact that God has given to them the Spirit by which they love righteousness and desire to be free from sin. Hence all who have received this Spirit can say with Paul, "To will is present with me, but (how) to perform that which is good I find not."—Rom. vii. 18. And they who can in truth say this, are certainly led by the Spirit of God, and therefore they are the sons of God. None can know of the doctrine without this will; for Jesus says, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."—John vii. 17. This knowledge is not comprehended by the natural mind even of the saints, to whom it is revealed through the faith of the operation of God. They have by experience learned this doctrine, and must continually learn it while they remain in the body of this death; for their reason cannot cease to suggest doubts and present evidence against their hope. Their great Teacher makes these very elements of opposition bear testimony to the doctrine in the end, showing that the faith of the tried and tempted saint does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

They who have learned this doctrine are not able to boast of their own ability or diligence in acquiring this knowledge. It is not attained by searching. They to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, receive that unction from the Holy One by which they know all things; and this anointing enables them to discriminate between truth and error. Hence they need no further teaching but to stand fast in that doctrine which they have learned not of man but of God, who giveth liberally to all of them that pure wisdom which is from above. Any departure from that doctrine will invariably bring them into trouble. This but confirms their knowledge of the truth. If any professed follower of Jesus can give heed to other doctrines without finding them in the end the ways of death, the evidence is that they never knew the doctrine of God our Savior. As the Lord our God is one Lord and his way is one, so his Spirit teaches one doctrine to all who are led by him.

Having learned this one doctrine

of the unlimited sovereignty of God in their salvation, all their subsequent growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is but the opening of their understanding, that they may understand this doctrine which they have learned in the first revelation of Christ to them. In it is included their obligation to keep all the commandments of their Lord as their highest privilege; for they are not their own, being bought with the price of the precious blood of their Redeemer. Then it certainly is their reasonable service that they present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, not being conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing of their mind, that they may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.—Rom. xii. 1, 2. This perfect doctrine is all embraced in the perfect pattern presented by our Lord Jesus. In all his words and steps he gave us the one only rule for our guidance. In following him we shall fulfill all the doctrine of the gospel, including not only the vital principle of all inspired teaching, but also the practical observance of all that is enjoined upon those who love the Lord Jesus, for he is in all things our example. He has not left us to explore some new way, or to walk in some untrodden path, but simply to follow him in all his sufferings and afflictions, that we may know his fellowship therein; and in all the conflicts through which he leads us it is certain that our tribulations must end in everlasting triumph because our Leader already has the victory. The crown of joy is in his hand, not to be won by the effort or ability of his followers, but to be given unto all them that love his appearing.—2 Tim. iv. 8. Thus "the doctrine which ye have learned" assures the ultimate glory of every one of his redeemed people, who are the only ones who do love his appearing. In the depth of their distress and darkness, his appearing brings joy and light; when they faint with weariness, his appearing is rest. Hence they love his appearing, and this is their abiding witness that they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. Well does Peter say then, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious."

HYMN AND TUNE BOOKS.

We are in receipt of a box of Elders Durand & Lester's Hymn and Tune Books, which we will mail from this office on receipt of price, which see in their notice on last page.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER Isaac McCarty having changed his residence from New London, Iowa, to Valeda, Labette Co., Kansas, desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

WE now have the pleasure of informing the subscribers of the Church History that the type is all up, and the sheets are printed and being bound as fast as possible, and if the binder fulfills his contract we shall be able to mail the books during the month of January. It has been no fault of ours that the books were not mailed long ago, as we have rushed the work in our office with all possible speed; but the book contains about twice and a half as much reading matter as anticipated in the prospectus, and added to this is a concordance of 44 pages, making in all a book of 1,032 pages of fine type, equal to over 2,000 pages of type the size mentioned in the prospectus. In consideration of these facts, we are satisfied our brethren and friends will feel well paid for the patient way in which they have waited for the completion of the work.

We still have unordered of the first edition:

Plain Cloth Bind'g @ \$2 00,	218 copies
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It will be seen by the above that the first edition is nearly exhausted, and any one wishing to procure a copy must order early or they will be too late. Address

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THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS.

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

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

ORDINATIONS.

THE Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church, Barbour County, West Va., took into consideration at her meeting of business July 24, 1886, the ordination of brother JOHN N. BARTLETT, one of her members, to the work of the gospel ministry; whereupon a presbytery was called together on the fifth Sunday in August following, at nine o'clock a. m., (it being the time of our association, the Tygart's Valley River) consisting of Elders J. S. Corder, L. A. McDonald, H. Zinn and Wm. M. Smoot, of Corresponding Meeting of Va.

Proceeded to organize by appointing J. S. Corder Moderator, and H. Zinn Clerk.

The candidate was then called upon to give a relation of his christian experience and call to the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which was done in the presence of a large audience.

The Moderator then proceeded to interrogate the candidate on the cardinal points of Bible doctrine, after which the presbytery, being fully satisfied, proceeded to the ordination.

Ordination prayer by L. A. McDonald, with laying on of hands by the presbytery.

Charge by Wm. M. Smoot.

The hand of encouragement was then given to the candidate by the brethren.

Dismissed the audience by praise and prayer.

J. S. CORDER, Mod.

H. ZINN, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

ON Dec. 9, 1886, at the residence of the bride's parents, by Elder William J. Purington, Mr. Joseph B. Hill and Miss Francina P. Blackwell, both of Hopewell, N. J.

ON Dec. 15, 1886, at the residence of the bride's parents, by the same, Mr. Daniel C. Hart and Miss Rachel N. Sutphen, both of Hopewell, N. J.

ON Dec. 30, 1886, at the residence of the bride's parents, by the same, Mr. George L. Stout, of Hopewell, and Miss Emma A. Hunt, of Princeton, both of N. J.

THURSDAY, Nov. 25, 1886, by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, at the residence of the bride, Fairfax Co., Va., Mr. John H. Riggs, and Miss Irene Harrison, both of Fairfax Co., Va.

TUESDAY, Dec. 14, 1886, by the same, at the residence of the bride, Fairfax Co., Va., Mr. J. Sutton and Miss Cora Willett, both of Fairfax Co., Va.

NOV. 10, 1886, at the home of the bride's father, in Southampton, Pa., by Elder Silas H. Durand, Mr. J. Hubert Sourman and Miss Carrie A. Fetter, both of Southampton, Pa.

DEC. 23, by the same, at his residence in Southampton, Pa., Mr. Horatio G. Yerkes, of Philadelphia, and Miss Mary J. Hallowell, of Willow Grove, Pa.

AT the residence of Mr. John Orr, near Graefenberg, Ky., by Elder J. E. Newkirk, Miss Sarah B. Shaddock, of Shelby County, Ky., and Mr. Reuben B. Reynolds, of Jeffersonville, Ind.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, near New Church, Va., Dec. 21, 1886, William E. Macredy and Anna L. Hall, both of Accomac County, Va.

IN North Berwick, Maine, Nov. 23, 1886, by Elder Wm. Quint, Mr. Fred E. Stackpole and Miss Kate R. Downes, both of Sanford, Maine.

JAN. 5, 1887, by Elder Benton Jenkins, at the residence of the bride's parents, near Middletown, Mr. Giles W. Cowley and Miss Florence L. McEwen, both of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is my painful duty to record the death of our dear father, **David Reed**, who died at his residence in Spink Co., Dakota, on the evening of October 12, 1886. Father was seventy-five years old. He was born in the state of Maine, near Augusta, in 1811, and at the age of thirteen years emigrated to Crawford County, Ohio, together with his parents. At the age of twenty-four years he was married to Miss Elvira Cummings, who was also from Maine. In June, 1856, father and mother, together with their family of six children (two boys and four girls), emigrated to Cerro Gordo Co., Iowa. After a long and protracted illness, in the year 1876, mother departed this life, being fifty-nine years old. She left many friends and relatives to mourn; but we trust what was our loss was her eternal gain. Mother united with the Little Cedar Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in Floyd Co., Iowa, I think, in the year 1867, being a constant member for about nine years. She was sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace; and though not a great talker, she was ever ready to defend the truth. In the fall of 1881 father removed to Spink County, Dakota, together with his son, Isaac C. Reed, where he made his home until his death. Father had been a member of the Old Regular Predestinarian Baptists for over fifty years. He experienced a hope, and was received by the Bethel Church, Crawford County, Ohio, in 1835 or 1836, and remained a prominent member until 1856, when he removed to Cerro Gordo County, Iowa. He then united with the Little Cedar Church, where he remained a prominent member until death. Father's house has, since my earliest recollection, always been a home for the Old Baptists. He had been quite feeble for many years, and lost the use of one arm some three years before his death. He suffered intensely a great share of the time; and as his disease was of a palsied nature, he could not keep his arm and hand still. He was never heard to murmur or complain, but was always

patient and cheerful; and when any one would sympathize with him in his affliction, he would always say that he wanted to suffer just as long as the Lord saw fit to let him. A day or two before his death, when asked if he felt willing to go, he said he knew his Redeemer lived, and where he lived he would live also; but he was willing to wait the Lord's own time. He was a good husband and kind father, an honored and respected citizen, and we feel his loss deeply. He leaves four sisters and six children, and quite a number of grandchildren, to mourn their loss. One sister in Ohio, two in Indiana, and one in Dakota; two daughters and one son in Iowa, one daughter and one son in Dakota, and one daughter in Texas. We feel to be submissive to our heavenly Father's will, knowing he doeth all things well, for our good and his glory. We feel confident that our father is now enjoying that rest which he longed so much for.

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

This was our dear father's favorite hymn.
Yours in hope of eternal life,

L. W. REED.

ROCKFORD, IOWA.

DIED—At Otego, N. Y., Nov. 10, 1886, sister **Mariah E. Smith**, in the sixty-sixth year of her age. In the departure of our dear sister the church has sustained the loss of one of her most firm and steadfast members. She was baptized by Elder A. St. John, nearly thirty years ago, and remained until death a highly esteemed and much beloved member of the church at Otego. Her health was very bad most of the time for thirty years, and when unable to attend to her domestic affairs was seldom absent from the meetings of the church; an example worthy of being followed by us all. Her firmness in the faith was admirable to us all. Never in all my intimate acquaintance with her did I ever see in any of her conversations anything that partook of legality or Arminianism. Her only theme was salvation alone by grace. The predestination of God, without limitation, was her solid foundation of hope. She would often say that she disliked unsoundness in herself or in any of the Baptists. It was specially her delight to listen to the word preached by our brethren, and was ever anxious to entertain all in her power, as many can testify who have shared in the comforts of hers and our dear brother Smith's home. She leaves our dear brother, Deacon A. Smith, one daughter and several grandchildren to mourn for her. And while as a church we feel our loss is great, we also are convinced that the change for her is altogether a glorious one. Mortality is now swallowed up of life, the victory won, the conflict over, pain and death forever fled away, and eternal bliss and endless rest obtained.

Her funeral was largely attended at the meeting house on the 12th, where she so often met with her brethren, and we spoke of those things accompanying salvation to the people. May the Lord in mercy comfort the afflicted ones and reconcile us all to his will.

ALSO,

DIED—At Walton, Delaware Co., N. Y., Nov. 9, 1886, sister **Harriet Dumond**, aged sixty-three years. She was born in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., and in after years moved to Walton, where she spent the remainder of her days. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Roxbury, and afterwards united with the church at Otego by letter, and maintained a walk and life of faith until her death, which came unexpectedly and sadly to us all, especially to her family. She had been at different times unsound in her mind, but I am informed by the family that she had never given any cause to fear she might do violence to herself. But the day of her sad end she was left alone for a short time, and on the return of her granddaughter from school was found hanging in the chamber by a skein of yarn, and life was extinct. And though sad as is the event, we are not at all shaken in that sweet fellowship we so long had with her, that for her to die

was gain. She leaves one daughter and her husband, with whom she lived, and several grandchildren; her husband, brother Ezedore Dumond, having departed about four years ago.

Her funeral was attended Nov. 11, when the writer tried to speak to the afflicted friends of the safety of that life which is hid with Christ in God.

Yours affectionately,

B. BUNDY.

DIED—At his home in Green County, Ohio, Oct. 23, 1886, brother **Charles W. Wright**. The deceased was born in Loudoun County, Va., Nov. 26, 1822, and was therefore aged sixty-three years, ten months and twenty-seven days. He emigrated with his parents to the neighborhood of Springborough, Warren Co., Ohio, when only seven years old. He was united in marriage with Miss Elizabeth Venard, May 25, 1843, who survives him. There were born unto them two sons and six daughters; but three went before him to that happy land. He has left his wife, two sons, three daughters, twenty-two grandchildren, two brothers, with numerous other relatives, friends and the church; but while we mourn, we do not sorrow as those having no hope, but verily believe that our loss is his eternal gain. He became a member of the Old School Baptist Church in the year 1851, and with his companion, one son and one daughter, were constituted members of the Valley Predestinarian Baptist Church, July 12, 1873, of which he was a true and faithful member until his death. His disease was cancer, from which he suffered intensely for several years, but attended to his business affairs until about three weeks before his death. Through all his sufferings he never complained, ever trusting in that divine hand which alone could sustain him in the sad hour of affliction. He peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, in whom he had trusted for over thirty-five years. He was an affectionate and loving husband, a kind parent, a good citizen, of a generous disposition, temperate, industrious and economical, and had become wealthy.

His funeral took place from the Valley Baptist Church, in Waynesville, Ohio, Oct. 25, at which time a funeral discourse was delivered by Elder J. H. Biggs (assisted by Elder L. Bavis), from 1 Thess. iv. 15-18, after which his remains were conveyed to Miami Cemetery, that beautiful city of the dead, followed by a large concourse of friends and neighbors, there to rest until the resurrection morn.

A precious one from us is gone;
A voice we loved is stilled;
A place is vacant in our home,
Which never can be filled.

God in his wisdom has recalled
The boon his hand had given;
And though the body moulders here,
The soul is safe in heaven.

ALLEN HAINES.

PLEASE Publish the obituary of **Mrs. Cornelia Fullerton**, relict of Thomas D. Fullerton, and eldest daughter of John and Deborah Berryman, who for many years was known as a sincere and warm-hearted Baptist by all the members of Baltimore Association, and by many in other places. Mrs. Fullerton departed this life on Nov. 30, 1886, aged sixty-five years, five months and nine days. She was stricken with paralysis about five years ago, but after a time rallied, and was able to get out to meeting and to occasionally visit her friends. About a week before the end, she suffered from severe neuralgic pains, but was patient and cheerful amidst all. About an hour before the end, she desired to sleep, and said, "If I sleep, do not waken me on any account." No one thought the end was so near. After an hour her daughters heard her draw a long breath, and hastened to her side to find her fallen into that sleep that knows no waking. How striking her last words to them were, not to awaken her. I have been in the habit of visiting her when I could for several years. Her faith in the Redeemer was always clear. One thing she was settled and grounded in, that salvation is all of grace. She would often say that in her was no merit. I have heard her say that her first conviction was when she was a girl, at a

remark made to her by Elder Samuel Trott. She said that she and others had been very gay, when he said to her, "Cornelia, do you never think that you must die?" The words never left her. She spoke of a hope for many years, but yet never gained confidence to confess her Lord in baptism. She loved the truth and those who loved the truth. Owing to a failure to receive a telegram, I did not reach her funeral till the services at the house in Baltimore were ended; but took part in the service at the grave. Two affectionate daughters cared for her in her last years, and their devotion must be a comfort to them now, that their mother is gone from them. She also leaves two sons, a brother and two sisters. But they have no doubt that for her to die was gain.

F. A. CHICK.

It is with hearts filled with sadness that we try to write the obituary notice of our beloved mother, **Esther A. Cole**, wife of D. C. Leonard, who departed this life January 21, 1886. The deceased was born June 23, 1823, in the town of Broome, now Gilboa, Schoharie Co., N. Y., was baptized by Elder I. Hewitt in the fellowship of the Gilboa Church, November, 1843, and was married by the same March 4, 1851. She and her husband then left kindred and friends and moved into a new country, in Sullivan County, where they lived about twenty-two months. They then moved on a farm in Roxbury, Delaware County, where they lived until her death. She was taken sick very suddenly, and was sick about thirteen days. She had made preparations to attend the church meeting that day, but God ordered otherwise. At times her sufferings were intense, yet she bore them all with christian fortitude and patience. During her sickness she repeated many hymns, sang some, and when talking with us repeated many passages of Scripture which have been of great comfort to us since. In conversation with one of her sisters about her soul being saved, she very emphatically replied, "O yes, I believe that Jesus is my Friend, that he will never leave me nor forsake me, though time shall have an end." She was a loving and devoted wife and mother, never tiring in doing for her family, and to make home pleasant and happy. She was a faithful member of the Baptist Church over forty-two years, ever ready to raise her voice to defend the truth, and greatly desired the peace and union of Zion. She enjoyed the company of her Baptist friends, and often have I heard her say, when there was meeting at her home, "This is my meat and my drink." Her husband is left to mourn his loss, also two daughters, one granddaughter and a son-in-law, together with brothers and sisters, a large circle of friends and the church. Yet we mourn not as though we had no hope, for we believe that our loss is her gain. She was of a strong constitution, and so sudden was her sickness, so unexpected her death, it seems she was snatched from our midst. We were not ready to give her up, but God saw fit to call her home. O how we miss her. Her place is vacant. We bow in humble submission, and desire to be reconciled to God's will.

Elder Earl preached a comforting sermon from 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

HER DAUGHTERS.

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Nov. 21, 1886, **Mr. James W. Door**, aged twenty-six years, two months and eight days. His disease was typhoid fever. He had a mild run of the fever, and we all thought he would come out all right, but he had a relapse of the fever, and death soon did its work, and he is gone to be here no more. He was a fine young man, with good habits, industrious, saying what he earned, so in life he was doing well. He has left a sorrowing wife with one child, father, mother, one brother, one sister, and many relatives, to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—In Wells, Maine, Nov. 25, 1886, sister **Susan J. Hatch**, wife of Deacon Joshua C. Hatch, aged fifty-seven years. Her death was very sudden and unexpected by us all. She was at meeting on Sunday at the meeting house, and after the meeting closed came in to our house and seemed as well as usual. The next day she went to one of his brothers

on a visit. Tuesday night she did not rest, thinking that she had eaten something that laid hard in her stomach; but Wednesday she felt better, so that she was around seeing to the affairs of the house as usual. The next morning, some past five o'clock, she told her husband that she felt bad at the stomach and wanted him to fix some medicine for her to drink, which he did; but after she drank it he saw that she appeared as dying; and they being alone in the house, he started for help; but when he got to the door he felt that he could not leave her, and went back to her and she was dead. I baptized her twenty-nine years ago last summer, and from that time until her death she was sound in the doctrine of the gospel of Christ, and seemed always interested in the cause, so that her seat was always filled when she could get there. She was brother Hatch's second wife, and he had four sons by his first wife, all now living, and they all told me at her funeral that she had been a good mother to them, and did all that she could for them. Brother Hatch is now left alone in his house, and feels to say, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." May God bless him and enable him to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be his name.

At both the above funerals a large number of people attended, and I preached at both of them. WM. QUINT.

DIED—Of hasty consumption, at the house of his father, near Pardee, Atchison Co., Kansas, August 21, 1886, **Otto R. Higly**, aged twenty-three years, three months and twenty-four days.

Much might be said on this occasion, but knowing that obituary notices for the SIGNS should not be lengthy, I will simply say that I have known the subject of this notice from a child, having baptized his mother when a girl, whose maiden name was Caroline Hooper, and afterwards married her to Russel Higly, who was baptized by Elder R. M. Thomas, and they have been a worthy deacon and deaconess for a number of years. Otto had made no profession of religion publicly, but some four or five days before he died he called his father, mother, five brothers and three sisters, and told them that he would have to leave them, and said that if he had ever done anything to hurt their feelings he wished them to forgive him. He then asked his father to pray for him, and often prayed for himself, until his eyes closed in death, at which time there was a brightness in his countenance which seemed to say, O death, you have no sting. He was beloved by all who knew him. He leaves, besides the relatives named above, a large circle of relatives and friends, but who mourn not as those who have no hope. The writer spoke on the funeral occasion, the fourth Sunday in November, to a large and attentive congregation, from Luke xviii. 14.

ALSO,

DIED—At Easton, Leavenworth Co., Kansas, Sept. 28, 1886, of diphtheria, little **Dolly Worral**, daughter of Charles O. and Sarah Worral, and grandchild of the writer, aged three years, seven months and twenty-eight days. The stroke fell heavily upon her parents, and in fact upon all the relatives, as well as all who knew her, from the fact that she was the only daughter, the other children (four) being sons, and also that she was very sprightly. She was sick four and one-half days, when we had to give her up to him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

W. F. JONES.

EASTON, Leavenworth Co., Kan.

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

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OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,
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THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH

OF EACH MONTH,

BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS,

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Opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper will be observed a date, this date denotes the time at which such subscription expires, and when a remittance is made to renew the subscription the date should be watched to see that it is forwarded to such time as the remittance pays to, and if neglected, by informing us, it will be corrected. By this method each subscriber has his own account, and can see that the proper credits are given for his remittances.

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In the last instance it will be necessary for the person sending the remittance to be particular to give his post-office address, that we may know where to mail the receipt.

If after making a remittance any should discover a neglect on our part to advance the date on the pasted slip containing the name, as stated in instructions to subscribers below, under the caption, "Look to your dates," they will please advise us, and we will make the correction, if the remittance was received, and if not, we will inform them of its failure to reach us.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNTO WHAT AND UNTO WHOM THE SAINTS ARE COME.—HEB. XII. 22-24.

NUMBER TWO.

"AND to an innumerable company of angels."

The meaning of the word translated angel, in both the Old and New Testaments, with but three exceptions, is messenger, agent. The exceptions are in Psalms viii. 5, lxxviii. 17, and lxxviii. 25. In far the greater number of places where the word is used it is very evident that beings of a different order from men are referred to. In some places it is equally clear that men are designated by it. In considering this subject it is important to remember the strict meaning of the word; that it does not necessarily imply a different order of beings from men, but merely an agent or messenger, whether a man or a being of another nature, whether holy or evil, whether sent by the Lord or engaged in the service of the devil.

Those who were appointed to attend to the divine service under the first covenant were truly angels, and are undoubtedly referred to as such in several places in the Scriptures. Stephen said to and of the Jews, "Who have received the law by the disposition [the act of arranging or regulating; the application] of angels, and have not kept it."—Acts vii. 53. The apostle Paul says that the law was ordained (arranged throughout) by angels in the hand of a mediator.—Gal. iii. 19. Again, he says, "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression received a just recompense of reward," &c.—Hebrews ii. 2. Now we know that it was men appointed for that purpose, and not heavenly beings, who ministered the law to that people, and were engaged in the arrangement and application of its rites and ordinances; and these men were in the hand of Moses, who, as mediator between God and that people, was given absolute authority in the name of the Lord over them to control and direct in all the service of the sanctuary, and throughout all the camp. The Lord spoke to the people only through him, and placed in his hands all the priests and officers and men of skill and wisdom who were appointed to arrange, set in order and minister all his commands and ordinances. He was to Aaron and to them in the place of God.—Ex. iv. 16; xxiv. 2; xxviii. 1-3. These men are the angels spoken of in the portions of Scripture quoted.

The apostle Jude says, "I will

therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels 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 5, 6. The apostle Peter uses very similar language. After referring to the false prophets among the people, and comparing them to the false teachers that shall be among the saints, and declaring that "their judgment now for a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not," he says, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."—2 Peter ii. 1-9. It has been the belief probably of the great majority of professed christians for many ages, and is still the belief of many of the Lord's people, that there were among the holy angels of God in heaven a great multitude, once pure and holy as the rest, who sinned, rebelled against the Lord, and fell from that high estate, and were cast down to hell. I cannot see that the Scriptures teach this anywhere, nor warrant such a theory. I do not believe any sin or evil of any kind was ever in the heaven of eternal glory. Without referring at this time to any other of the places in Scripture where it has been supposed that this theory was taught, I will consider briefly what I have quoted from the apostles. The connection in which angels are spoken of by both of them shows that they are of the people of Israel. Now very many of the priests and officers and prophets under that legal dispensation, who were angels (messengers, agents), did rebel and sin, and kept not their first estate, which was appointed them in that worldly sanctuary, but left their own habitation there, and subjected themselves to terrible punishment. We remember Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, who offered strange fire before the Lord, and who were devoured by fire that went out from him (Lev. x. 1, 2); and Korah and Dathan and Abiram, who withstood Moses and Aaron, and the earth opened and swallowed them up; and the two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown, who joined in the rebellion, and were consumed by fire from the Lord

(Numbers xvi.); and Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites, who was slain by Phineas while transgressing the law (Numbers xxv. 14); and the many false prophets, corrupt priests, unfaithful officers and wicked kings throughout the generations of Israel, who turned from the holy commandments, made void the law by their traditions, corrupted themselves with idols, and did all manner of evil in the sight of the Lord. These all were angels, all did have a high estate in that conditional covenant, all did fail to keep it, and all left their own habitation by transgression, left the dwelling place and security given them there; and all are set forth in the Scriptures in all their hideous deformity as vile and wicked transgressors, and in that inspired record are forever presented before the people of God as under chains of darkness, never having had knowledge of God in salvation, but abiding under his wrath. To such characters I believe the apostles allude. Some of those I have named are referred to by both in speaking of false teachers now as having followed in their way. It looks clear to me that the false prophets spoken of by Peter in the first verse are the angels that sinned spoken of in the fourth. Both apostles refer to Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them as set forth (in the Scriptures) for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, which confirms this view of their meaning. Both are speaking by way of admonition and solemn warning and rebuke to the people of God, as they declare the awful denunciations of God's wrath and terrible judgments against transgressions; and the apostle Paul speaks in the same way and of the same characters in several places.—1 Cor. x. 1-11; Heb. x. 28, 29; ii. 2, 3. The same characters as those that are thus set forth in the sacred record as under chains of darkness, having manifested the darkness of their mind, the falseness of their profession, the enmity of their heart to God, are seen in gospel times, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof;" "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy iii. 5, 7); clouds that are carried with tempest, to whom is reserved the mist of darkness forever (2 Peter ii. 17); wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.—Jude 13.

We will now consider the innumerable company of angels unto whom the saints have come. Those that I have been speaking of as the angels

of the first covenant are not referred to here, for this innumerable company is in Zion, the city of the living God. For the same reason we see that reference cannot here be had to that time when the saints shall be released from the bondage of mortality and called into the presence of God in glory, as some have understood. The apostle says, "Ye are come!" It is now, here, in this gospel dispensation, in the church of Jesus Christ into which we have been gathered, in this banqueting house to which the bride has been brought under the banner of love, that these angels are. Now can this be said of the people of God with reference to those holy heavenly beings which dwell forever in the presence of God, and are sent forth to do his will? Is there any sense in which the saints under the gospel have come unto such angels as were sent to Abraham, Manoa, Daniel, the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, the Savior in the wilderness and in the garden, Peter in prison, and Cornelius, any more than those under the legal dispensation? Can the people of God under either dispensation be said to have come unto those heavenly beings? Those "angels of God" were sent unto his people before the coming of Christ as well as after; and their visits were not confined to the Lord's people, but they were sent also to denounce and execute judgments upon wicked men and the enemies of Israel. Evil angels also, as well as good, were sent from the Lord.—Psalm lxxviii. 49.

When we "look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities," and consider her glorious perfections as they are presented in the New Testament to the spiritual understanding of the Lord's people, we understand who are those angels. They are the gifts with which she has been blessed through Jesus, her glorious Head. They are the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers which are given to her "for the work of the ministry, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—Eph. iv. 11, 12. These are the messengers sent from God to his people, agents appointed to act in his name in attending to the order of his house. These angels are in the church of God as a part of this glorious city, to be seen by all who enter in through its holy gates. They belong to that kingdom into which the saints are translated as part of its glory and blessedness. They are stars in the right hand of Jesus, to send forth the light of truth where he will.—Rev.

i. 20. They are earthen vessels, through whom the Lord refreshes his thirsty people with gospel treasure. They are clouds which the Lord uses as his chariots, and from which he comes down like rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth.—Psalm lxxii. 6. "He maketh the clouds his chariots."—Psalm civ. 3. By many other figures the gifts to the church are represented, but in all they bear the character of messengers or agents of the Lord. These are an innumerable company. "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it."—Psalm lxxviii. 11. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place."—Psalm lxxviii. 17. The word angel here is not from the original word signifying messenger from which it is generally rendered, but means repetition. But that the gifts in the church are intended, is shown by the declaration that the Lord is among them, as he was among those who ministered the law to Israel, who received from his presence and favor all their power, wisdom and authority; and also by the declaration immediately following, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." In this the Savior is shown in his gospel power and glory, receiving and manifesting the gifts which are for the edification and comfort of the church.

In coming to mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the saints are come to this innumerable company of angels, who are placed here as a part of the glorious provisions of God for the comfort of his people. They are forever giving blessed testimony here concerning Jesus and his salvation. They are as watchmen upon the walls, to sound the alarm in all God's holy mountain; and when any would endeavor to lay a burden upon the people of God, they are heard to sound the glad trumpet of victory, and cry unto all the inhabitants of Zion that their warfare is accomplished, their iniquities are pardoned. This is most comforting to the redeemed, and is heavenly music to them. With no discordant note, but "with the voice together," these watchmen sing of mercy and judgment and righteousness. They forever declare unto Zion, Thy God reigneth; and their messages are always of holy and solemn comfort to the people of God. These are the angels that the saints shall judge.—1 Cor. vi. 3. By the light of divine life within them, the Spirit of Christ, which all his people have, they shall be able to judge all who profess to be servants of God, and distinguish those who have his word to speak from all others.

It is not merely that servant of God whose face we have seen and whose voice we have heard unto whom as an angel of the church we have come. It is unto the whole innumerable company, unto all the glorious testimony of Jesus, unto the ministry of

the word, unto the dispensation of the gospel of Christ, which is nowhere else but here. The testimony of Jesus is in the churches.—Rev. xxii. 16. It is bound up and sealed among his disciples.—Isa. viii. 16. The nourishment of the body of Christ is ministered from within by joints and bands.—Col. ii. 19. All the gifts in the whole church of God, from the highest to the lowest, from the first to the last, belong to each one who comes to Zion. From the apostles, who are the twelve stars on the head of the woman clothed with the sun, to the least and latest gift of exhortation, all are ours. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all are ours. Every minister who has ever been sent to speak to any of the people of God, or to administer in any way for their comfort, every one who has been favored to give a cup of cold water to one of the Lord's little ones, is one of this innumerable company of angels, and is a gift not to one alone, but to all the multitude of the redeemed who shall come to Zion through all the ages of time.

In this Zion, the perfection of beauty, all the angels are appointed, and the place and work of each assigned him. This place he will most certainly fill, and this work he will do, for there can be no failure with God nor imperfection in Zion. It is the Lord's work, and every one of his angels "does his bidding, hearkening unto the voice of his word."—Psalm ciii. 20. To each one he gives the word which he is to deliver, and with it that angel goes directly in obedience to the Lord's will. To himself and even to others his way may seem very crooked, his obedience very reluctant and imperfect, and his miserably poor and unfit to be regarded as the service of God at all; but we know that the work has been done and the word received just in the time and manner the Lord designed. Messages of love and peace, tokens for good, words of exhortation and admonition, solemn reproofs and rebukes, comforting instruction concerning the blessed mysteries of the gospel, all are given according to his will, and received in the right time for the good of his people and for his own declarative glory. The Lord's word in the mouth of his servants is as a fire (Jer. v. 14); and in the dispensation of that word "he makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire," as they "are sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Jan. 1, 1887.

POWELLVILLE, Md., Sept. 1, 1886.

ELDER DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If the Lord will direct my mind and guide my pen I will pen you a few lines of my christian experience, if I have any. I think I was about sixteen years of age when I began to think about heaven, the fear of punishment, and what I must do to gain the favor of God and shun torment. I thought I had to begin

the work, or the Lord would not save me. My sister, younger than I, was affected the same way and about the same time. We were very often together, and would be thinking and talking about the plan of salvation, and how we thought sinners were saved. We thought we would begin the work by reading the Bible, and would try which could get through reading it first. I think we got along pretty well for a time, until we concluded that we could not accomplish much by that. Then we began saying our prayers, and tried to do better for awhile. I had used profane words, and sometimes told stories; but I stopped all that for a time. I suppose I continued to say my prayers and tried to do better for a month, and then neglected my prayers, and finally grew worse. I thought it was because I had neglected to say my prayers, and so I began again. I would repeat what is called the Lord's prayer, as far as the words, "Give us this day our daily bread," when I would retire at night, but thought that portion of it would suit better to repeat when I arose in the morning. Also at night I would repeat the words,

"Now I lay me down to sleep;
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
And if I die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

I continued in this state of mind for some weeks, sometimes having a mind to do good, or serve the law of carnal nature, and sometimes would be led off by the evil one to do and say things that I ought not. I soon found that I could not accomplish anything by my good works, so I rested easy for a time, until I concluded to try another plan, which I thought would suffice. My brother and I were working together one day, and as he was older than myself I thought I would mention it to him. There was a protracted meeting in the neighborhood, and I said to him, "I reckon I will go to the meeting and get religion, and make an open profession, and do better." He said to me, "You must be foolish, to think that will do you any good." Though he was not troubled or concerned about religion as I was, I thought it had a good meaning, and it had the effect to drive away from me the foolish notion I had at that time. Then I concluded that it was all a notion, and tried to throw it off; but this did not seem to satisfy my mind. There seemed to be something deeper still upon my mind that I could not throw away, and I began to think more seriously about the matter. I had heard of some who, while alone in the woods, had knelt down and asked God to have mercy upon them; so one day while alone in the woods I began to feel very anxious about my salvation, and I knelt down by a stump and tried to ask God to have mercy upon me. But I felt worse after I arose, and looked all around to see if any person was near by or looking at me, for I really felt ashamed of myself. Thus I was left in the dark to mourn the absence of that God who works all things after the counsel of his own will. Thus

time passed on until I left my father and went to Snow Hill to learn a trade. The man I first went to (a carriage maker) asked me if I ever used bad words, as he said he did not want his boys to learn to curse and swear. I was so anxious to get with him that I pretended I was very good. I began to work with him, and soon found, to my surprise, that his boys knew more about cursing than I or any one else could teach them. From some cause I had no desire for their company. I soon left that man and went with another. Both were Methodists. It was not long until he asked me to attend his meetings, and I did so, but did not receive much comfort from them. I also attended their Sunday School occasionally. They gave me books to read, and I would sometimes read them, but they only brought more trouble upon my mind, because they presented a conditional salvation; and I had begun to think that if salvation depended upon anything that I must perform, I must be utterly lost, as I had tried so often and had failed. I soon found that their mode of worship was not in accordance with the teaching of the Bible, so I wanted to get hold of something written by an Old School Baptist, to see if I could receive any comfort from that. I would occasionally get the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from Mr. Joseph L. Staton's place, as he was living in Snow Hill at that time. I also recollect going home to my mother's about that time, and in looking over her books and papers I found your book, "The Trial of Job." I took that home with me and began reading it. I thought I had never read a more interesting book in all my life. I thought Job's comforters were like some I had to contend with. They could not understand the disease, therefore their medicine was poisoning. I began to want to hear an Old School Baptist preach, and when I would go to my mother's I would go when there was preaching at Nassaongo by Elder T. M. Poulson, who preaches there once a month, if not providentially hindered. So time passed on. Sometimes I was doubting, and sometimes hoping; hoping I might hear something that would be consoling to my mind. It was not long until the yearly meeting was held at Nassaongo. I think that at that meeting was the first time I ever heard a gospel sermon, preached by Elder Wm. J. Purington. I think he was on his way to Virginia to attend some meeting, and stopped off at Salisbury, and some one took him out to Nassaongo. He preached but one sermon, and I thought it was the best preaching I had ever heard. It seemed as though the Lord had just opened my eyes spiritually to see the way of salvation, how poor, lost and ruined sinners are saved. I think he preached about two hours, and I did not become wearied. It was food to my hungry soul. It was what I had been hungering for so long. That meeting was a season of rejoicing to me. It continued two days, although there was no other minister there but Elder Poulson. As time passed

on, sometimes all would appear dark and gloomy, and sometimes the Sun of Righteousness would arise with healing in his wings, scattering the clouds of doubts and fears for a time. I think it was shortly after this that some Old School Baptist preachers would occasionally stop off at Snow Hill and preach, and I would go and hear them. They could tell my feelings much better than I could, and I enjoyed their company very much. After awhile I began to feel that I would like a home with the Old School Baptists, for I believed them to be the people of God. About five weeks before I was baptized, I think, I went to Nassaongo to hear you preach on Saturday and Sunday. The preaching was good, but I thought it was all for the people of God, and not for a wretch like me. After the preaching on Saturday you asked if there were any present who desired a place in the church. I felt that it would have been a relief to my mind to have gone to the church and related what I hoped the Lord had done for my soul; but I felt too weak and sinful. I could not have courage at that time. I wanted to hear what was said, but I did not want to be seen, so I placed myself back in a corner of the house. Mrs. Louisa Staton was present at that meeting, who has since passed from this world of sorrow, to dwell in the arms of her Savior. I saw her sitting near the stand, and thought if I was as good as I thought she was, I would willingly go forward. Not long after this she was led into the baptismal water, and I cannot describe my feelings at that time. I felt that I was in trouble about something, and I could not get clear of it. My greatest desire was to be with the people of God and hear them talk. I never felt that I could say anything to comfort or console them. They could tell my feelings better than I could express them myself. After about two weeks, I think, Elder Chick came to Snow Hill, and was to preach in the country, about seven miles distant. I thought I would give anything to see him and shake hands with him. I went to the depot to meet him, but did not see him and returned, feeling sad and lonely, burdened with a load of sin and guilt. I could not help thinking that I would yet see him. As I came to the street where he was to pass, it commenced raining, so I stepped into a candy shop, my mind still fixed upon him, and thinking that he would speak a comforting word to my troubled soul. Very soon I saw him coming, and was so rejoiced that I spoke out and said, "Yonder he comes." Those present in the shop did not know what to think, and one of them looked and said, "Who?" I went out to offer him my hand, and he said a few words to me and went on. I did not tell him of my feelings at that time. I felt a love for him that I had never experienced before, and it seemed to grow stronger and stronger for the Old School Baptists, because they could tell what the Lord had done for me, and not what I had done for

the Lord. I went on toward my home, feeling much downcast, sad and gloomy, burdened with a load of sin, but hoping that I might find peace. I had a great desire to be with some Old School Baptists and hear them talk, and so after tea I walked over to Mr. Staton's, about half a mile from my boarding place, to hear him talk. There I met with Mr. Cook, from New York, and received much comfort in hearing him and Mr. Staton talk about the good things of the kingdom. Tongue cannot express nor pen describe my feelings while returning home that night. I felt that I was the chief of sinners. If I ever prayed, I think I did that night. Before retiring I kneeled down to ask God to have mercy on me, a poor sinner. All I could say was, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I wanted to get clear of my burden of sin. I believe the Lord spoke to my troubled soul. I went to bed resting assured that the Lord would save to the uttermost all them that call upon him; that whom he wounds, he wounds to heal. When I awoke the next morning my burden seemed to have left me, and everything seemed to be as calm and bright as the noonday sun. I felt that the Sun of Righteousness had arisen with healing in his wings. I felt to rejoice that the Lord had had compassion upon me, a poor, worthless worm of the dust. I found that in him was all power in heaven and earth to save, and that beside him there is no power to save. I could look to no other source for salvation. I am glad he has all power to save; for if there is any part left for me to do, I know I must be forever lost. I love to hear his power extolled, and man abased.

But I am wandering somewhat, and am making this too lengthy. Very soon I began to think about baptism, and this Scripture came very forcibly to my mind, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I felt that I did love the dear people that loved him, and I desired a name and place with them. I remember going over to Mr. Staton's place, and having picked up the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I found the editorial headed "Baptism." I thought it was just what I wanted to know, as it was then upon my mind. I began reading it, and I thought it just suited my case. Before I got through reading the piece I felt to rejoice. I arose to my feet and gave brother Staton my hand. I felt like the Lord had taken me up out of a horrible pit and miry clay, and had placed my feet upon a rock, and established my going, and had put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God. I think that was about ten days before I was baptized. When the time came I went to Nassaongo on Saturday; and when Elder Poulson got through preaching, and gave the invitation to any present who might wish to say anything to the church, I felt that I had something to say, but it seemed that I could not go forward and tell it until all were about to leave. Then I ventured up to Elder Poulson and took hold of his hand. He said to me,

"Do you have a desire to say something to the church?" I told him that I did, and so he called the church together again. I said something, but I hardly know what. I was received, and was baptized on Sunday morning. I felt to say to the world, I bid you adieu. It seemed like a heaven below. I thought my troubles were all over then, but O how mistaken I was. How often have I thought since then that if the church knew how wicked and sinful I am, and could see me as I see myself, they would erase my name from their book. I can say with Paul, "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing." I know that if I think one good thought, or do one good act, it is not me that does it, but the Lord; so may his name be praised forever and ever.

Dear brother, if I were to tell you of all my ups and downs, I think it would be more than you would want to read. It appears to me that I have only hinted at what I want to tell you; but I think this will suffice for the present, unless I could tell you something that would be of more interest to you. Remember me while at the throne of grace.

From your little brother in the fellowship of the truth,

LEMUEL A. HALL.

GRAEFENBERG, Ky., Nov. 3, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—A few days ago some ministering brethren and myself were talking about a communication from our venerable and esteemed brother, John Stipp, which we thought was very able, and one of the brethren suggested that I write some upon the same subject. Said communication is in the SIGNS OF November 1, on title page, and is a reply to sister M. A. Bowie's request. I shall only offer an appendix, by brother Stipp's permission, as the subject is voluminous, and my time is almost wholly taken up by hard toil to keep the wolf from our door.

I think we are living in the evening of the sixth seal (Rev. vi.), which is also the sixth church trumpet, vial, &c. The number six seems to me more of a full, finished, complete and perfect number than the number seven. The number seven, to my mind, signifies transition from labor to rest. "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest." On the sixth day God finished the work of creation, and on the seventh day he rested from all his works. Again, six years were numbered to Israel to sow their fields, and prune their vines, and gather in their fruit; but the seventh year was a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord.—Leviticus xxv. 3, 4. Much more Scripture might be cited, but let this suffice. I wish to call attention to the fact that the number seven shows termination of one era, and the dawn of another era. Thus the sixth church, Philadelphia, stands firm, while threatened by professors belonging to the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie. How soon is the

order changed in the seventh, or Laodicean Church, who have imbibed this Satanic doctrine, and are ripe for destruction, and are spewed out of the mouth, as unsavory.

The seals present volumes in themselves. The book written within and on the back side not only represents the church under the legal (back side) and gospel (within) dispensations, but also presents the outward walk and the inward teaching by the Spirit of every subject of grace. Abraham had the outward by circumcision, as the seal of his righteousness. The gospel saints have inward circumcision, of the heart, in the spirit, the seal of their righteousness by faith. None in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, could open this book, nor loose the seals thereof, but the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. A seal is a character or signature to brand or stamp ownership, as boxes or barrels of goods bought, and consigned to the purchaser. It is found in decrees of kings, to confirm laws, deeds and titles. Such are royal seals, which can only be loosed by him who fixes them: as Ahasuerus' seal to Haman's wicked decree. So, as Jesus has fixed the seal of ownership, he alone can open to the purchased property the knowledge of their owner, purchaser, &c. Now this sealing does not take place till they are manifested, and is affixed by the Holy Spirit after they believe. Hence in each dispensation they are being sealed, and as often as the seal is loosed to them by the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Under the sixth seal, in which we are living, among other things John saw were four angels, standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And he saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. Here we have presented four angels, or powers, namely, Russia, England, France and Prussia, whose conquests, allies or dependencies reach from corner to corner, and are bound by treaty to assure peace in their respective realms, until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. These things were not so under the other seals, nor will they be so under the seventh. The seventh seal brings silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And we come to a repetition, under the similitude of seven angels, to whom were given trumpets. But as we are treating on occurrences in our own time, for the sake of brevity we will pass on to the sixth. "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the

great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt." Now it is evident that these four powers, or angels, are bound in Euphrates. The four powers are jealous of each other, and each has a longing desire to add Euphrates (Turkey) to their own dominion; but God has put it into their hearts or minds to do his will, and hold the powers or winds in check till the church is sealed; and no sooner will the last heir of salvation be sealed than the Lord will loose them, there being no further need of keeping them bound. I must quote an expression from the writings of my dear brother, Wm. J. Parington, while treating upon the subject of, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." The elements of destruction are in man, and are held in check by God's Spirit; and when the salt of earth is gathered in, God has only to withdraw his Spirit, and the elements will be untrammelled, and will be hurled to destruction by a war of unprecedented magnitude and violence, all under the name of zeal for the religion of Jesus. Suffice this, as the subject would extend this to too great a length.

"And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants, the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."—Rev. xi. 16-19. This shows transition, as the seventh seal. As I have briefly noticed the sixth seal and the sixth trumpet, and showed the harmony contained therein; also the seventh seal and the seventh trumpet; both show a change of order, or finality of the sixth order; I wish to state that, should any object to my literal application of these texts, they must also reject the literal

fulfillment of the past seals or periods; they must reject the literal dragon (Paganism), the literal beast (Catholicism), the literal false prophet (Mahomedism), the literal whore, the literal ten horns of the beast, the literal bloody persecutions of the church, &c. There is not one of the prophets that has not foretold literal events. Though prophets foretold literal events, it was by the Spirit that they were enabled to foretell them; and by the same Spirit the saints see the fulfillment of the prophecy. Natural men may be versed in all the literal transactions, but they can see no analogy they bear to prophecy.

Now I desire to notice briefly the seven vials of wrath, which are the seven last plagues; and before I proceed, I wish to make a remark upon the plagues poured out upon Pharaoh. There were none of those plagues inflicted upon God's chosen people, but upon their oppressors, and resulted in the complete deliverance of God's chosen people from oppression. Even so these plagues are poured out upon the oppressor, for the complete and final triumph of the saints. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."—Rev. xvi. 12-14. The sixth angel poured out his vial on Euphrates, or Turkey, right where these four powers are bound by the treaty of Berlin in 1878, and the waters thereof (people) were dried up. In 1878 Russia (the Gog of the Scriptures) dried up her resources, depleted her treasury. Whether she was sufficiently dried up to answer all the conditions, does not appear; but it is a fact admitted that each of the four angels are biding their time to swoop down upon her for a slice of territory. But they cannot move till the last heir of promise is sealed, and a way is made for them to the great battle. But it shall not harm you, little ones, but will work your deliverance.

"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done," &c. Agreeing with the other sevens.

Brethren Beebe, if this finds a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I hope that my dear, tried and afflicted yokefellow may reap some comfort in its perusal. If so, I will be amply rewarded for my time and trouble. I ask to be remembered by all the dear brethren and sisters, for I am in great affliction. The dear SIGNS is laden with rich food for lonely me, and I do hope our old brother Stupp will continue to contribute his mite.

JAMES E. NEWKIRK.

Ghent, Ky., Dec. 29, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The apostle says, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."—Rom. xiii. 8.

The dear saints do well to take heed to the many admonitions, in instructions and exhortations left on record by the apostle. He by the great Head of the church was made the apostle to the Gentiles; hence his admonitions apply to us most appropriately. We are Gentiles, and have in this glorious gospel dispensation the things taught by the apostle, as well as the wonderful truths presented to us by the prophets, prefigured by the offerings under the law, and symbolized by the things which John saw on that lone isle, and recorded in that wonderful book, the book of Revelation. Thus the saints in this gospel day are surrounded on every side by the witnesses which God hath appointed to bear testimony to us, testimony to the wondrous things revealed to his saints in the gospel.

Among the many and most wonderful things which he has revealed in the gospel and made manifest in the hearts of all the regenerated sons and daughters of the Most High is that love which is declared by the apostle in the text above quoted. It is right for the saints to owe one thing, and that is love. Our Lord said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." One of his glorious attributes is love. One of those seven pillars that uphold his church, that house which he hath built, is that other wonderful attribute, wisdom. The wise king of Israel said, "Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars." Upon those seven pillars, the seven divine perfections of our God, does that wonderful building, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, rest. Those seven divine perfections make up his wondrous character; hence he says to Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Upon that sure foundation stands that wondrous building, and one of its strong, immutable and everlasting pillars is love. It is declared, "God is love." He says to that church, the people who compose it, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. The saints are drawn to him by the wondrous power of that eternal and immutable attribute of our God. O how wondrous that attribute is. It reaches far beyond the power of human thought, far beyond the reach of finite minds, because it existed in our God before his works of old; and his love for his people underlaid that incomprehensible attribute called omnipotence, that power by which he created the vast universe. Love underlaid all his works of creation, for they were created for that people who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. The apostle says, "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but

nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church."—Eph. v. 29. Mankind do not hate their own flesh, but nourish it; so our Lord nourishes, protects and upholds his church, his people, because they are now and ever have been one with him, having been chosen in him before creation's dawn. The saint, having a view of that eternal love, breaks out in the language of the bride, "Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee."—Song i. 4. The dear saints, when drawn by the power of that wondrous love, run after him. Yes, they run and are not weary, walk and do not faint; all, all because they are kept by that wondrous power that brought again Jesus from the dead. They are brought by that power from a state of death in trespasses and sins, and thus are enabled to run after him. It is then, with hearts overflowing with love to their glorious Lord, and love for one another, that the law is fulfilled in them. Then love is the fulfillment of the law. Without that wondrous attribute of our God, our Lord would not have laid aside the glory he had with the Father before the world was. He would not have become poor, that his elect, his chosen people, might be made rich. Yea, he who created the vast universe of God in his everlasting love for his people, in which they might have a home, when by divine, sovereign and unfrustrable grace they should be redeemed from the awful consequences of sin, be prepared for the society of the just made perfect, and made heirs of God, and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ, to all the superlative glories of the purer world on high. I say made heirs of God, for it is in this earthly state, when clothed with mortality, that they are given a knowledge of that heirship in the glorious work of regeneration by the power of God's Spirit. Then with joy unspeakable and full of glory they are enabled to hope, trust, and say, "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." O how superlatively glorious and effulgent is that light! It enables the saints to look away from the vanities of time to their great and glorious Lord, whose name is a strong tower, into which the righteous flee and are safe. Yes, safe from all the thunderings of Sinai, from all the storms and tempests of earth; for he is a hiding place from the storm, a covert from the tempest, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Then how wonderful, how glorious is his character, made beautiful beyond the power of human thought, beyond the power of human imagination, by being adorned with love. In that love, which is the fulfillment of the law, and which is in union with all the other attributes of our God, is secured to all the heirs of promise all things needful for them in time, and all the never-fading glo-

ries of a vast eternity. Then may love have its perfect work in uniting all the dear saints in sweet harmony, yea, in the bonds of true fellowship; and may it hush into eternal silence all murmurings and complainings, by which sorrow and confusion are made to take the place of that love which has no bounds, no limits, among the redeemed of our God. O what a wonderful, what a glorious attribute of our God is love! "Now abideth faith, hope, charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is charity." If it were possible for us to measure eternity, we might form some idea of the duration of love; but as all our aspirations for knowledge, for power to look into a never-ending eternity, are husbed into silence in the contemplation of that which is without limit, so we are made to stand in profound wonder in all our meditation upon that infinitely glorious attribute of our God. That attribute which subordinates all things to its mighty power, and centred away back in eternity upon the bride of the glorious Son of God, that bride of which the angel spoke when he said to John, "Come hither, and I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife;" yes, that attribute which, throughout a never-ending eternity, will encircle that bride, the whole elect family, in its ample folds, and in unyielding harmony with that power which created and upholds the vast universe of our God, will keep them amidst the unsullied and never-fading glories around the eternal throne of our God. O, dear brethren and sisters, what joy, what comfort, what sweet consolation would be yours all through your earthly pilgrimage, if this old man, this body of sin, could be kept under, and you enabled by grace divine to cast the mantle of charity over the errors and missteps of one another, and thus live in the sweet exercise of that love which fulfilleth the law.

But what have I written, and what am I writing? When I took my seat it was for the purpose of saying to you that the time for which I had paid you for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES had now expired, and your pay for the year 1887 was now due; but the words of the apostle, "Owe no man anything," came up forcibly in my memory, and I quoted the whole text. Then my pen started, and continued to run till these scattering thoughts were written, but perhaps not guided by wisdom. Inclosed you will find your pay for the next volume of the SIGNS, which you will please direct to me as heretofore. With the first number of that volume I will enter upon my fifty-first year as a reader of that paper. Nothing but the power of God and his unchanging love for his people could have kept your venerable father and you in the straight course which the SIGNS has maintained in the defense of the everlasting gospel through a half-century. How thankful, how full of gratitude should our hearts be to the great Giver of all good, for his mercy and goodness to the dear saints, in giving to them the comforts and consolations of the gospel published in that paper from the pens of its long-trying and faithful editors and its many able correspondents. Surely, dear readers of the SIGNS, we are all prepared, with the apostle, to say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Remember, dear saint, that that power is exercised in that unchanging love of God about which we have been feebly talking. Then O how sweet, how consoling is that gospel when presented by the faithful servants of the Most High, and carried home to the hearts of the redeemed by his Spirit. It unfolds to your enraptured vision the wondrous and ever-glorious character of that God in whom you trust. By faith you are enabled to behold him in his beauty, and to see that land which is very far off, which is your future, your eternal home, when, disrobed of mortality, your sainted voices will be attuned in the sweet melodies of the skies, to speak aloud through eternity the praises of your exalted Lord and King, to whom be glory forever and ever.

H. COX.

P. S.—The SIGNS of January first, 1887, has just come to hand, and I have read Elder Rittenhouse's criticism. I will just say that I do not propose to disturb the readers of your paper with any further reply to him.

As ever, yours in christian love,

H. C.

DECEMBER 31, 1886.

ALVINSTON, Ontario, Canada, Nov. 7, 1886.

TO LEE HANCKS—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS CHRIST:—How very strange it will seem to you to receive a letter from this far-off land, from an entire stranger in the flesh; but as I read your communication in the last SIGNS I felt a desire to write you a few lines by way of approval of the sentiments therein expressed, especially the paragraph referring to absolute predestination. You say you cannot see how any one can believe in the Godhead, and deny any part of predestination. Such have always been my feelings of this important subject since I have had a hope in his mercy; for had I not a settled conviction that he is the great, eternal and only author of all things, it seems to me I would have no security for my eternal salvation. It seems to my mind to be the most comforting thought I can realize, to know that our God orders and rules all things for the good of his children and his own glory; and to know that from the movement of midgets to the destructive tempests, all are guided by his unerring wisdom, and can only do his will. I think if there is one thing harder than another to believe in regard to his sovereignty, it is to feel that his will is accomplished in poor, vile me; for I so often feel that I go contrary to his will, that I do not see how it can be that his will is accomplished in my disobedience; and yet there are times when I think I can realize that there is a needs be for even this, as I find by experience the

truth of the words of holy writ, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; and that if ever I am counted worthy to obtain eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, I will have more cause for praising his holy name than any of the blood-bought throng that surround the throne of God.

After writing the foregoing, some two weeks ago, I had to lay aside my pen, from a feeling sense of barrenness, and that I could write no more; but to-day I again felt, after reading your communication in the SIGNS for December first, that I would like to tell you that I read with pleasure the remarks you made, especially in regard to leaving all and following Jesus, whether it be in the shape of position, society, lodges, or any of the institutions of men, of whatever nature they may be. The dear Savior said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." And so God's dear children at times feel willing to leave all in his hands, and feel a desire that he may be all in all to them. I am at times led to wonder how it is that some whom I hope have been led to see and feel their condition as sinners, and have a hope in the mercy of God, and in their own personal experience are very clear, are so very lame and weak in some points, such as the predestinating purpose of God, and also the preaching of the gospel; in believing that God uses his creatures as the means of giving life to dead sinners. And I am sorry to say that even among our own people a number will contend for such erroneous principles, which to my mind is one of the fundamental truths of our belief, as the doctrine of God our Savior. They are his children, and were from eternity, and in his time they are manifested as such. It does seem to me akin to blasphemy to utter such declarations; and it seems to me very much like the act of Uzziah when he put forth his hand to steady the ark of God. How could the psalmist utter by the pen of inspiration such a declaration as is written in Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16, if such sentiments be true? O no, my dear brother. I feel sure and certain that his arm alone brought salvation to all his chosen family, both in the great sacrifice for sin on Calvary, and also in the manifestation of each and every member here in their time state. Perhaps you have no differences on these matters in your churches; and if so, it is pleasant. I cannot feel that nearness and dearness toward those who differ with me on what I consider essential points, that I do to others with whom I can take sweet counsel, and walk in company with, and be agreed; and I am glad that there are a goodly number of such. I do not wish to be contentious, or to say that a brother must think as I do or I cannot fellowship such an one; but still I desire to contend earnestly for the faith as it was once delivered to the saints. The apostles themselves, while being set up in the character of judges to the church of God in all ages and

nations, do most positively disclaim any power in the great work of salvation by grace, and declare that they were witnesses of these things, and that their testimony was true, and as such is received by God's dear children among all the kindreds and people of the earth; and none but his children can receive their testimony, for they alone have experienced it, and can set to their seal that God is true.

I hope you will excuse what may seem boldness on my part in writing to you, an entire stranger in the flesh, but I hope not in the spirit; and though I can say sincerely that I feel I am unworthy of a name and a place among God's chosen people, yet if I know my heart I can say in the words of Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c. Should you not be displeased with my writing, and think it worth while to write me a few lines by way of reply, I may write again when I feel like it; but I am a very feeble worm in spiritual matters, and perhaps it were better for me to forbear writing at all.

I am, I hope, your brother in love of the truth,

R. SCATES.

OZARK, Ala., Dec. 27, 1886.

MR. R. SCATES—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Your precious letter was very much appreciated by me, and I am glad indeed, my brother, that you could condescend to write to a poor, little one like myself. I am truly glad, dear brother, to find you so firm on predestination; for if there is any doctrine that is consoling to me it is the absolute predestination of God respecting all events. Those who are firm on those points seem much nearer to me than one who holds to a sort of chance system, that some things are purposed, and the others happen by chance.

Webster defines predestination thus: "Purpose of God respecting all events." Some will say they believe in predestination, but believe only part was predestinated. Then they do not believe in predestination. If there is one thing that happens by chance, then everything happens by chance. If I fail to control all my affairs, why is it? Simply because I have not the ability. Then if God does not control all his creation or affairs, why is it? For lack of ability upon his part. Hence that theory denies his sovereignty. If I make anything, if it is only an ax handle, do I not have a purpose in view before I make it? Most assuredly I do. Then do you suppose that God is more ignorant than yourself? "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. Hence we conclude that God had a purpose in everything which he created. He had a purpose in making the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove. Then if God made all things, and had a purpose in it all, does it not accomplish the purpose for which he made it? If not, he is thwarted in his pur-

pose; and if thwarted in one instance, is there not a possibility of his being thwarted in all? But God is not thwarted in any of his purposes; for he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. Some say that God does not predestinate evil things, but just suffers them to take place. If you suffer your son to steal a horse, why do you? Is it not because you cannot control him? Then if the Lord suffers one to do wrong, why is it? It is because he cannot control him. Then if the Lord suffers the devil to take one to hell, has he not outdone God? If he can outdo God so much as that, he could take every sinner there. Again, if evil takes place, could it take place differently? It could not; for if it takes place, did he not think it would take place? Surely he did. Then, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "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." "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?" He works all things after the counsel of his own will. He does not work part, and leave the rest to chance; neither does he leave the devil to control part, for he holds the keys of death and hell; hence the devil is under his control. God is in the cyclones and the whirlwinds, and not a sparrow can fall without him. He controlled Daniel and the Hebrew children, so that they were not consumed. So, my brother, it is either by purpose or chance. If my name was not written in heaven in eternity, all the powers of angels cannot put it there; hence my destiny is fixed. My steps are all directed of the Lord, and all my conflicts are for my good. And, dear brother, if I am embraced in the covenant of redemption, my salvation was as complete in the purpose of God in eternity, as when I shall finally enter the eternal haven.

I feel thankful, dear brother, that you have the same views that I have. I am glad to have the assurance that we have been taught in the same school. You express my feelings precisely. Surely God is God everywhere.

I would write more, but I feel barren. Our churches are in peace and harmony. I have baptized thirty-three since the first of September.

Yours in hope of immortality,
LEE HANCKS.

STATE ROAD, Del., Jan. 12, 1837.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been requested by a good brother from a distance to write a letter for the SIGNS on those remarkable declarations by the apostle concerning Melchizedek, Hebrews vii. 1-3. I am not conscious of having any light on the character and office of that distinguished priest, beyond what has heretofore been

published in the SIGNS; yet I am well aware that there are those among us who have never been entirely satisfied with what has been written. Sometimes it seems necessary to declare the same things again. The things we have heard we are apt to let slip; and then there are always some younger minds in need of instruction.

The apostle evidently uses the name and character of Melchizedek in this place as a type of Christ. As he was writing to Jewish believers, every point he made would be well understood by them, and they would know and feel the irresistible force of his arguments. It will be remembered that he had spoken to them of Christ as not only a priest, but as a High Priest. As the Jewish high priesthood was confined to the descendants of Aaron, and the entire priestly dispensation to the tribe of Levi, and as Christ was not of the family of Aaron nor a descendant of Levi, it became necessary to show upon what grounds the claims of Christ to the high office rested. The apostle prefaces his argument with the assertion that no man had ever taken this honor on himself; that Aaron was called of God to the office, and that so Christ had not glorified himself to be made priest. But the Lord Jehovah had sworn that he should be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. David was always good authority with the people of Israel, and David commences his Psalm with, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."—Psalm cx. Among the questions that the apostle undertakes to solve is, Why, if Christ is a priest, and as Aaron was divinely appointed, should he not be called after the same order? He intimates moreover that there could not be a change in the priesthood without a change also in the law; and he goes on to say that there was verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. "For the law made nothing perfect." If perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, what need was there that there should arise another priest, and that he should be called after a different order from that of Aaron? I will not now notice but one of the imperfections of the order of Aaron's priesthood, and of that carnal commandment upon which it was based.

The priests did not continue by reason of death, and the office was transmitted continually from father to son, on the ground of natural or fleshly relationship; and the law neither provided qualifications, nor made any exceptions against the most base and profligate men. Aaron or Eleazar or Eli might be holy and devout men, but there was no provision to secure such men, or prevent the office going in the next generation into bad hands. As the heavenly things all were presented in patterns going before, so the apostle will show that this high priest and his priest-

hood had a type. Of the several things said of Melchizedek, that have bewildered so many inquirers, the solution will be found in understanding them all to be spoken of him as priest of the most high God, and of the order of his priesthood, and not of him as a man, or in any other sense. His title, priest of the most high God, would imply that he was divinely appointed, instructed and qualified for the exalted station. His priesthood emanated from God. It was unchangeable, in that it never changed hands. It began and ended with himself. It will type a perpetual and unchanging priesthood. Whatever its exaltation and dignity, it never can be dishonored by falling into unsanctified hands, but remains and abides what it ever was continually. I think it is evident that Aaron could not in any important sense be a type of Christ; and as to the order of his priesthood, it made nothing perfect. If perfection then is to be attained, and a priesthood supersedes that of Aaron, with a view to perfecting the comers thereunto, it must of necessity be of a different and a superior order to that of Aaron. As Christ hath put away sin forever by the sacrifice of himself, and obtained eternal redemption for his people, his work is perfect, and can never be superseded. No more sacrifice for sin is required. There has probably never been another man on earth except Melchizedek who could fully type out the priesthood of Christ, or any order but that after which he could have been called. He united the offices of both king and priest in his own person; and not only so, but the name by which he was called signified righteousness, while the name of his city (Salem) signified peace. Abraham, as well as all of Abraham's literal seed, paid tithes to Melchizedek; thus acknowledging and recognizing his priesthood, and its superiority over that of Levi. As a man, I presume he had father and mother, like other men; and he may also have had offspring. If so, that had nothing to do with the order of his priesthood; for in that he was without father and without mother and without descent. Christ is not dependent, as were the sons of Aaron, upon the law of a carnal commandment for his appointment, nor upon the uncertainty of life for continuance in office; for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, and he is sustained in his priestly vestments by the power of an endless life. The sacrifices themselves under the law were as defective as the order of the priesthood. The heavenly things themselves must be cleansed with better sacrifices than those. They never did and never could take away sins. It was the weakness of that commandment, and of all mere commandments, that it was not in them to qualify men for sacred office. This is wherein they were carnal. While they would assign to men sacred trusts, they were destitute of spiritual life and power

to qualify them. They did not and could not go beyond rights based upon the carnal, fleshly birth. It is indeed remarkable that a man should in so many respects have been made like unto the Son of God; but remarkable as it may seem, we must remember that it is given us as a type. To assume that Melchizedek was an angel, or was Christ himself, or some other superior being, destroys the idea of a type, and of course destroys the force of all the apostle's argument. It is better to understand it just as the record is given. We know where Salem was, and that it was near to the route where Abraham was journeying. Melchizedek went out and met Abraham. These things were never written to arouse curiosity about this remarkable man, but to call our attention to the great apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. He is such an high priest as became us. He is entered into heaven itself, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Nothing remains, but from henceforth expecting until all enemies are put under his feet.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

TIFFIN, Ohio, Sept. 19, 1836.

MRS. A. L. DULIN—DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—I was surprised as well as comforted in receiving a card from you, and that you should request me to answer it through the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel very unworthy and incompetent to address any of the Lord's little ones, and fear I may crowd out better matter. But as it is a card of introduction of our relationship through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, I will, by his help, who is all wisdom, write as the oracles of God; for without him I can do nothing. I have wondered why you should think of such a sinful worm as me. We are strangers according to the flesh, but from the tone of your short message I have sufficient evidence that you are a living witness to the truth as it is in Jesus. What a great blessing to enjoy, that we are made partakers of the heavenly calling. This is all, dear sister, that concerns me. Have I tasted that the Lord is gracious, and been called with a holy calling, and experienced the grace of God in my heart? This is of serious importance with me. But "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Now this is a good reason of our hope in Christ. The things I once loved, I now hate; and the things I once hated, I now love. O wondrous love! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." Behold the manner in which he pursues, to turn about and instruct his chosen ones. He took me from the ball-room and the card-table, and placed me in his banqueting house, and his banner over me is love. This, dear sister, is what gives me hope that I have been called out of nature's darkness into God's marvelous light, and I have no confidence in the flesh. I draw a great deal of comfort from

reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the Bible; but there is so little that I can retain, and I blush with shame that I have such a foolish heart, and that my mind is carried away with the things of this world. O that I were as in days past, when the candle of the Lord shined upon my tabernacle, and I could sing with a joyful heart,

"Now my remnant of days
Would I spend in his praise."

You spoke of those bright jewels, sisters Kate Swartout and Cordie A. Yeoman, and that patient dove, Mary Parker. How my heart throbs with peculiar emotions when I think of her sufferings, which I have beheld twice in eight years. I am not privileged to see her as often as I wish. Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, and she has a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, nearer and dearer than all earthly objects; even Jesus, the sinner's Friend, who was smitten for our offenses, and arose victorious over death, hell and the grave. O what a comfort, that we can trust in him as a complete Savior. What a blessing it is that the poor sinner has nothing to do in the salvation of his soul, and can desire or have nothing but what the Lord gives. It is all of grace from first to last. Jesus finished the work that his Father gave him to do, which is now made manifest to his sons and daughters, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Now, dear sister, I have written more than I intended, and have penned these lines in rather a dark state of mind. If you can draw any comfort from them, give all the praise to the Lord, who is worthy of all honor.

I often think, when I am impressed to write to any of the dear ones, that I will wait until I am in a more happy frame of mind, and that then they would be more comforted by it. But I mostly enjoy those seasons of rejoicing when I am engaged in some busy scene, and cannot then leave to pen them; but perhaps all would disappear should I make the attempt. We walk by faith, and not by sight. What great conflicts! I wonder if any one is surrounded by troubles as I am. It seems that you are afflicted, and have not the privilege of hearing the gospel preached. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." I have been afflicted many times in my short period of thirty-seven years, and several times drew near the grave; but the Lord has raised me up, and I am now in the enjoyment of good health, and also my family, and I feel truly grateful for all his benefits. Let us hear from you, dear sister, either by private letter or through the SIGNS.

Yours in much love,

MATTIE S. DERR.

Tiffin, Ohio, Oct. 11, 1886.

BELOVED SISTER DULIN:—If one so vile may address you thus. I come again in my weakness, and in a feeble manner, to tell you, or to try,

how I enjoyed your letter in the last number of the SIGNS, though it is better felt than told. I think at times that I am only making a grand display of my ignorance in trying to write to any one, and think I will forever hold my peace; for what good will my letters do any one? Let those who are gifted write often. What oneness and nearness of soul is felt by brethren and sisters, though strangers according to the flesh, but knit together by God's everlasting love and kindness toward us.

Dear scattered ones, should this come before you, I want to tell you how I love you all for Jesus' sake; yet I tremble to convey these words, fearing I am deceived in the whole matter. But the searcher of hearts knows all. It is by the grace of God that I am what I am. I sin and repent daily of my folly. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." Yes, the evil that I do, as well as the good, is seen by the great I Am. Should I commit something very wrong, contrary to what a professed christian ought to do, and I want to conceal it from others, or from my brethren and sisters, am I not making my bed in hell? O what a blessing that we can confess our faults, and not find fault with our dear kindred, unless we can kindly and in love reprove them for errors that we know to be unscriptural. I admired and rejoiced in a letter written by our dear brother, F. A. Chick, which I think covers the whole ground of our personal faults. How beautifully he proved it, and reasoned out of the Scriptures. How gladly, when I do a good or kind act, I would have others know it. But beware. Let not the left hand know what the right hand doeth. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." How many professed christians ever have and ever will boast of their great works, by sounding a trumpet in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have praise of men; and all because of their blindness and ignorance of what the truth is as it is in Jesus, and of the examples which he taught for the instruction of his saints, that they may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

Now, dear sister and kindred, I have been very scattering, and hope you will bear with this imperfect scribble, if it is published; for I am nothing but a worm of the dust, yet I hope I have been with and learned of Jesus.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

MATTIE S. DERR.

Rockville, Md., April 1, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I returned to my home in Rockville on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in November, from my son's, in Rockbridge County, Virginia. On Satur-

day following I went to Washington, and on Sunday I mingled once more with the dear saints of our God in that city. The first Sunday in December I met in the assembly of the chosen few in Alexandria. While there our dear sister Broders fell asleep in Jesus, with whom I hope to shout eternal rounds, in glowing love that knows no bounds, when raised up to heaven. During my stay in Washington I was highly favored with health and strength to visit a number of that chosen people, the royal family, a holy nation, the children of a king. From their outward appearance one would not suspect that they were children of a king; but when their minds are drawn out on the subject of the things of the kingdom of the Lord of lords and King of kings, you will perceive that they are of that people described in the last chapter of Proverbs: "She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple." Not many of them have the silk and purple of this world, but they are all glorious within, of wrought gold. Many of them are passing through the fire of affliction, cares, sorrows and trials of this time state, which consumes the dross, purifies them, and they come forth as gold. That dear sister who is afflicted with cancer said to me, "When I recover from those terrible spells I am humbled in the very dust." Her words sunk into the very depths of my heart, and have followed me ever since. Yes, my dear brethren, they are all glorious within; for they believe with the heart and confess with the mouth that salvation is of the Lord, by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, but the gift of their Lord and Savior. He is to them the one altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand. They know themselves to be full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores; and nothing but corruption issues from a putrefying sore. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts." They are searched from day to day, which causes them to groan on account of sin, and they cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." They know that nothing but the robe that Christ wrought out can cover such a spotted one. But sometimes they can sing,

"Thy bloody crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er thy body on the tree;
Then I am dead to all the world,
And all the world is dead to me."

"She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night." Her candle flickers and burns very low, but it cannot go out; for Jesus is her light and life, and he lives forever.

"O live forever, wondrous King!
Born to redeem, and strong to save;
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
And where's thy victory, boasting grave?"

Sin hath lost its sting; the grave of darkness is for a time gone. They mount up on eagles' wings, run and are not weary, walk and are not faint. With grace abounding and love surrounding, they can exclaim in the language of the poet,

"Where can such sweetness be
As I have tasted of thy love,
As I have found in thee?"

The psalmist cries, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." I was greatly comforted many months ago in reading the words quoted above, for I was made to see and feel that we could only lose the joy, but not the salvation, for that is Christ in us the hope of glory. The glory that awaits that people whose God is the Lord beyond this vain, delusive world, is inconceivable by mortal man; but God reveals it to his saints by his Spirit. One evening last summer, during my stay in Rockbridge County, as I walked to the front door, the evening star just in front of my eyes, by the eye of faith I saw glories that I cannot describe. The mountains surrounding the home of my son's father-in-law sang and preached to me of the power and glory of my Lord and King.

"Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
To praise thy name, give thanks and sing,
To show thy love by morning light,
And talk of all thy truth at night."

When light abounds we can show his love and sing his praise; but when it is night with our souls we can only talk of his work, the work of grace that we have felt in the past. We know that it is of his mercy that we are not consumed. How could we think otherwise with a view of this deceitful, wicked heart, which seems at times to be filled with his love and praise? The prophet Jeremiah fully describes this heart of mine when he says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" None but those to whom the great God reveals it by his Spirit. The anguish of a sin-burdened heart is only known by those who feel its weight. But our God is so merciful, that at times he takes away this heart of stone, and we can sing in secret, in the company of those who know not this heart,

"Jesus, thy boundless love to me
No thought can reach, no tongue declare;
O knit my thankful heart to thee,
And reign without a rival there."

"Thy love, how cheering is its ray;
All pain before its presence flies;
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,
Where'er its healing beams arise."

In sufferings of mind and body for many weeks past, the verses quoted above were applied most sweetly, and with a smile inwardly felt I feasted for days. How clearly Elder Durand draws the line between the professor and the possessor of grace. If we read the writings of mere professors, or listen to their talk, their language will surely betray them before they stop. If you talk of a vile, polluted heart and nature, they look astonished. Some time ago I was talking with a Methodist, and spoke of what I knew myself to be by nature. She opened her eyes, and in a surprised manner said, "Why, you are not all that!" which plainly showed that she had never seen what she was by nature.

Dear brethren, these thoughts were commenced some time ago, and laid aside from so many suggestions of Satan; but on reading Elder Durand's confession of the same, I concluded to write them all and send them to you for inspection, if in your

judgment they are worthy a place in our dear family paper, the SIGNS. I receive so much comfort from the writings of the dear brethren which you publish, that I could not withhold from you at least the beautiful view of those that I had just visited, being the children of the King. The SIGNS comes regularly to me in my home in Rockville, and also last year in Rockbridge County, Virginia. I have the great favor bestowed upon unworthy me in knowing that my son and only child loves to read that dear paper, and I think, from his own words, with an experience. May you be spared to us for many years to come.

Your sister in gospel bonds,
RUTH ADAMSON.

LEONARDSBURG, Ohio, Aug. 14, 1886.

BELoved BRETHREN:—I wish to make apology for my delay in remitting for the SIGNS. During the last three years sickness and death have visited my family. My wife has been confined to her bed over seven months with a complication of diseases. During our afflictions we have received many kind letters from the brethren in different parts, and I do not know when I will get time to answer them. I have not had the privilege of meeting with the Lord's people for a long time, so the SIGNS has been perused with more than ordinary interest. I rejoice to hear of the union of sentiment and feeling among the brethren. I do not wish to single out the dear writers for the SIGNS, but I wish to say that I have read the letters of sister Mary Parker, and they have been of great consolation to my wife in her affliction. She feels like writing to sister Parker a long letter, but is too weak in body to do so. She wishes her to know that she can truly sympathize with her in her afflictions, and she believes she will be sustained by the arm of the Almighty unto complete victory, where not a wave of trouble will roll across her peaceful breast.

Brethren Beebe, I have been looking over some of the SIGNS published years ago, and saw the names of very many writers who have been discharged from the war. I saw that they wrote of the same conflicts that do those who write for the SIGNS today. Sometimes while reading the letters from the many pens, I become full of something, and I hope it is love to the people of the Lord, and I feel like I must write some of my thoughts, to let the dear brethren know of the comfort I have received. I have often written long communications, and enjoyed myself well, when all at once my long letter would turn upon me, and would get stale upon my hands. It would seem that I could not have written a piece more dry if I had tried to do so, and so I have thrown it into the stove. I have done thus many times. I reckon none of the dear writers of the SIGNS have such feelings. But, brethren, I believe I love the truth, even if I cannot write about it. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." They do not have to be

able to portray or picture it out with their lips or pen. While many hands that once helped to fill the columns of the SIGNS now lie silent in the grave, I am glad that the mantle has fallen upon others of our brethren. And when our brethren do not see exactly alike where a text of Scripture applies, I am glad to see the respect they have for each other's views. There is nothing more lovely to look at by the way than brethren walking in the truth, and adorning the doctrine by a well-ordered life.

I think we often lose sight of our duty and obligations one to another. Other denominations have gone to extremes, hiring their pastors; and sometimes we hear our people saying, "God doth care for oxen; and if he calls a man to preach, he will equip and furnish him." Very well; but the duty of his brethren is too plainly set forth to require comment. The Lord cared for the Levites, but how? See Numbers xviii. 21. And Paul says, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"—1 Cor. ix.

Also, some have laid so much stress upon prayer, that many, I fear, have forsaken the altar. Do we pray for and with one another as the primitive saints did? Do we endeavor to wash the feet of our brethren who have stepped aside into forbidden paths? Do we seek after the erring brethren? O that we may be found looking after the old landmarks, as we see error presented in such popular colors.

"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." Brethren, our labor of conflict here, battling with unbelief, will soon end, and then we shall rest from our labors. But death will not undo nor hinder the good work which God has begun in his children, for he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. All our works God had wrought in us. The works of God in his people and for his people are not yet complete. We only see and know in part while here below. They will not all stop when we lay off dull mortality. "Their works do follow them" unto the full consummation in the resurrection. "But 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." Their works will follow them to perfection. And when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. O the wonderful works of God! Yet they are our works; for he doeth them for us. "This is the Lord's doing: it is marvelous in our eyes."

Well, brethren Beebe, you see where I have wandered while trying to excuse my slowness in paying my subscription.

SABEERS MARTIN.

P. S.—I do not remember seeing any views presented upon Isaiah xxv. 8, "The rebuke of his people shall he

take away." Will some one please give their views thereon? How would it do to say, The restraint of his people shall he take away? You know they are restrained from living and walking as they desire while here, on account of the law in their members, warring against the law and spirit of their mind, so that they cannot do the things that they would. God himself will take that away from his people, from off the earth. Again, "For the creature was made subject to vanity," &c. S. M.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Dec. 28, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I thought I would take the liberty of writing to you; but I am such a poor writer that I hardly dare do so; and yet the Spirit of Christ, who is in every believer, says, Write to your brethren of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for they have the Spirit of Christ; and where the Spirit of Christ is, there is liberty, and the love of Christ will overlook all our failures.

In the first place I desire to say that I love the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I cannot bear to think of giving it up. If the kind Lord spares my life until next spring, and prospers me, I will send my subscription by Mr. Leitch.

And now for what is upon my mind. Perhaps the Lord of love will use it for some poor child of his, and therefore I am encouraged to write it out. How do I know that I am a child of God, or that I am born of God? I can only rely upon the testimony of the Holy Spirit to my spirit. The Spirit testifies to my spirit. "Who-soever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." God has revealed to me that same Jesus who was crucified and put into a tomb, and was raised from the dead on the third day, who is truly the Christ, the Son of God. Flesh and blood could not reveal this to me, but my Father who is in heaven. Neither could I do anything to merit his favor, which would cause the Father to have compassion upon my poor soul. When he caused me to experience that I was without strength, a lost, ruined, hell-deserving sinner, of the worst kind, and made me exclaim from my inmost soul, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," then by his Spirit he revealed to me that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I felt to be chief.

Now I wish it plainly understood that I do not trust in my feelings, nor in my experience, nor in anything that I have done or can accomplish; but my trust is in God and in him alone. Christ Jesus came to do the Father's will, and upon the cross he said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. Now it is according to that will of the Father whether I am saved or not. It is revealed to me in God's word, by the Spirit. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Also that I am, and every child of God is, perfect in Christ. For the word of God says, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sancti-

fied. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." I rest upon God's unchanging grace; for I am saved by the grace of God, through faith; and that not of myself, it is the gift of God. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I rest satisfied in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ; that it was God's will that he should bear all my sins, and put them away forever by the sacrifice of himself; and all who trust alone in him will know the truth for themselves. But my telling a poor sinner to trust in the Lord will be of no avail, except God speak through me, or except they hear the voice of the Son of God for themselves. A self-righteous man cannot hear that voice; but God works a work in every sinner that is to be an heir of salvation. This work may be long or short. In the first place the hard ground has to be broken up by the plow, and then the harrow; and then the seed is sown, which germinates, and is caused to grow until it is fit for harvest. This is all of God's sovereign grace. How do I know that I am a sinner? By the Spirit of God. He has convicted me of sin, therefore I feel myself a sinner. Now the work is begun; not my work, but the work of the Spirit. He leads me on until he shows me that in my flesh there dwells no good thing. He shows me that I am undone; that I have no strength to do God's will; that by nature I am a child of wrath, even as others; that I am under condemnation by nature and practice; that if I am saved, it must be by God's sovereign grace; that I am made to cry out, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Then he reveals Christ Jesus as my Savior, in power to my poor, thirsty soul. Then I can say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dear brethren, perhaps I have intruded upon you. This is left to you, for your better judgment. May the Lord bless you, and make you a blessing to untold thousands, is my prayer.

Yours in Christ,

JOSEPH READ.

CHENEY, W. T., Feb. 13, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I seem to be one by myself, or one almost lost, I will give to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a short outline of my life. I was born in Trigg County, Kentucky, and when I was about twelve years old I was awakened to see my condition as a sinner. At times my trouble was so great that I could hardly eat or sleep, and then it would grow less for a time. Thus I continued for seven years. The most numerous body of religious people in that country were the United or Missionary Baptists. I attended a meeting in the summer of 1853, which

continued two weeks. During that meeting my trouble grew so that I thought I could not live much longer. There was a darkness or gloom before me, so that I could not see as I had before. I had never told any person, except my mother, of my condition, but at this time I talked with a preacher, and told him how long I had been praying for deliverance. I asked him what I must do to be made whole. He gave me spiritual advice, but I could not understand it. I went off into a dark hollow and tried to pray, but could not say anything I ought to, and it seemed as though I could hear my words fall upon the dry leaves of the ground. The gloom before my eyes grew more thick, and I went to the schoolhouse where the meeting was. I was so weak that I could hardly walk. The preacher talked, but all was darkness to me; and when the preaching was over I asked an old man to pray for me, for I felt that I could not go home. While I was down upon the floor, after the old man had prayed for and talked to me, he turned away. Then I thought that my last friend had left me, and I said, "Lord, take me as I am." Right then and there my great burden of sin and trouble, which had been upon me for seven years, was taken away, and all things seemed new. Yes, brethren, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." I felt the effect, but I could not tell how it came. It did not come as I had expected, for the carnal mind cannot understand the things of the Spirit. Well, I had never heard an Old School Baptist preach, there being but few in that country, so I united with the people there. In the summer of 1857 I was married, and remained in that church until the fall of 1865. I went to western Missouri, but found no Old Predestinarian Baptists there. As yet I had never heard one preach, nor ever read a paper of their faith. In the winter of 1882 I came to Washington Territory, but found none of that sect here. There is not one in Cheney. Last spring I chanced to find a young preacher of the old faith, as it is sometimes called, and heard him preach twice. That is all the Old School Baptist preaching I ever heard. He lived nearly one hundred miles farther west. I have lost track of him; but if he is taking your paper, or if you know his post-office address, please inform me. His name is Joseph Chambers. I have never met but eight of my Old School Baptist brethren, so you see I am one by myself. I would be glad to meet more of them.

Brethren Beebe, if you see anything in this that is good, you can see more than I can; for in me there is no good thing.

Yours in hope,

WRIGHT RUSHING.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1887.

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

TRUE WORSHIP.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 24.

It is one characteristic peculiarity of the race of man that in every age and in every condition there is an inherent principle by which men are moved to worship something. In the earliest record of time the first children born on earth were engaged in worship. The devotion of Cain manifested the essential principle of all the religion which originates in the natural mind, whether it is called infidelity, heathenism or christianity. All worship which is the voluntary action of the natural mind has for its object the exaltation and commendation of self; and this selfish principle is the motive power of all that worship which is represented in the offering of Cain. He was "a tiller of the ground;" and of the fruit of that cursed ground, produced by his own labor, he brought an offering unto the Lord. In substance this is the hope of all worshipers who seek to obtain the favor of God by their own works; and as the Lord had not respect unto Cain and to his offering, so all the polluted offerings of the world are rejected by the holy God, because they are already under the curse of divine condemnation. This includes not only all the works of the hands of sinners, but the withering power of this dreadful curse extends even to the thoughts and intents of the heart. So "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—Gen. vi. 5. Evidently there could be nothing acceptable to God which such a heart could offer. And instead of the years bringing improvement, the word of truth declares, even since the gospel is preached, that "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."—2 Tim. iii. 13. This forbids the possibility of any true worship from sinful man, which can be accepted by the holy God. All such devotion, therefore, as is produced by the will of man must ever be rejected with the offering of Cain, the first will worshiper, whose cursed offering resulted in the murder of his brother. That bloody zeal which incited the first murder still rules in the votaries of carnal religion, by whatever name it is called; and all its effects are of the same character with that first exhibition of its wicked spirit. While assuming very devoutly to worship God, every offering brought by the direction of this will worshipping principle is full of enmity and blasphemy against the true God; the whole substance of this worship consisting in self-exaltation and the denial

of the justice of divine judgment. Yet this is the only worship which is approved by the natural reason or carnal mind.

That worship which is specified in the text as the only worship acceptable to God, is clearly confined to those who are the sons of God by spiritual birth; "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." It is evident that only those who are thus led can render worship in spirit; and all worship which is not the result of the leading of the Spirit is of the same sort with that of Cain. They who truly desire to worship God in spirit and in truth will not be likely to object to this scriptural discrimination; but they may be ready to faint at the suggestion of the tempter that they cannot claim thus to worship God. This is a subject of the deepest interest to every one who desires to be found approved in the sight of God; and they are so well assured that the divine judgment in their case is infallible and immutable that they cannot afford to be deceived in regard to it. With their natural mind they can see no evidence that their worship is in spirit and in truth; therefore it always appears to them, when looking at the things which are seen by the natural mind, that all the evidence is against their hope in the salvation of God in Christ Jesus. They always ask in regard to every divine judgment in their justification, Lord, when did we do the things which justify us in thy sight? They cannot find in themselves any good thing; but with all their sense of poverty, pollution, weakness and unworthiness, they are blessed with the ability and the will to worship God in spirit and in truth, for it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—See Phil. ii. 13. In considering this subject it is needful to understand what is meant in the Scriptures by the word *worship*. The popular idea is that God is worshiped in temples made with hands, and that he is pleased with the forms of devotion commonly called religious; but this is not the meaning of the word as defined by inspiration. In the record of the woman of Canaan who cried unto Jesus, it is written that "Then came she and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me." This is the worship which is in spirit and in truth; and they who feel and know their helplessness are they who alone have the qualification to worship God in this acceptable manner. Two points of the truth of God are included in this worship; first, that the suppliant has no right to demand the help sought, which is indispensably necessary; and second, the full assurance that God is able to afford the needed help if it is his will to so display his grace. This agrees with the declaration that "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb. xi. 6. There can be no worship of God without this faith; and since this is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God, it always pro-

duces worship in spirit and in truth.—See Gal. v. 22; Eph. ii. 8. The experience of the saints in all ages attests the power of this faith of the Son of God even to remove mountains and reverse the wheels of time for the accomplishment of the will of God; but they also learn that they can as easily hurl the resistless thunderbolts of Jehovah as command that faith at their own capricious will. Those who "exercise faith" may be able to believe whatever they will; but the trembling little subjects of redeeming grace cannot find rest in that faith which is subject to their own will. They are led by the Spirit to pray to their Father in heaven with their victorious Leader, saying in the spirit, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." They whose faith originates with themselves may have power to exercise it at will; but then it cannot be the fruit of the Spirit, which is governed only by the will of God. The saints since the days of Abel have been dependent upon God for faith to trust his word and rest in his love. The assurance of faith enabled Elijah to triumph over the prophets of the grove and of Baal by the fire of God consuming his sacrifice and altar. But before another sun had set the same Elijah fled from the threatened vengeance of a wicked woman.—See 1 Kings xviii. xix. Why could not he remember the power of God so signally displayed in his defense the day before? The answer is evident. That faith by which he triumphed was not of himself, but of God; and reason could no more command that faith than it could again bring the fire from heaven. Then it was as much for the declarative glory of God that Elijah's weakness should appear as that the victory was given him. So even that eminent prophet must worship God in the experience of utter helplessness. In no other condition can the saints in spirit worship their God, "saying, Lord, help me!" But when out of the depths their cry goes up to God, then they express the full belief that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Worship in spirit and in truth is not a mere act of the natural will of the worshiper. No one can of his own will become so utterly helpless as to worship God by thus appealing to infinite mercy and grace. Indeed, it is the perpetual trouble of the poor tried subject of salvation, that he cannot do the good he would, nor refrain from the evil which he would not do. This brings him continually from necessity to pray without ceasing. This is worship in spirit and in truth. There is no worship of God in recounting our own good works and merits. So in the parable the guilty publican went down from the temple justified rather than the boasting Pharisee.—Luke xviii. In this way they who are led by the Spirit are made to worship God in spirit and in truth by their conscious unworthiness and destitution. Yet so wonderfully is the way of truth revealed to them that they are always humbled in its manifestation instead.

of being exalted in their own estimation. From the first discovery of the infinite grace of God in salvation to the end of their pilgrimage here, every lesson they learn in the school of Christ gives a clearer realization of their own sinfulness; so that boasting is excluded. They never can understand the way in which they are led until after they have been brought through it, for it is a way which they knew not. Then looking back they can say that they have been led in the right way. It never seems to them that it is right when they are called to endure fiery trials and fierce temptations. At the time they really feel with old Jacob to say, "All these things are against me." But when their patience (*i. e.*, suffering) has had her perfect work, they who are exercised thereby are perfect, wanting nothing.—James i. 4. Then in spirit they can say with Israel, "It is enough."—Gen. xlii. 36; xlv. 28.

So dark is the understanding of the subjects of divine teaching that they cannot learn any principle of truth by their own searching. All they can ever know is given to them by the revelation of the Spirit, who takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto his followers. Seen in the light of perverted reason, the things of Jesus are all grief and pain. He was afflicted, and learned obedience by the things which he suffered. This is all that the natural mind can see in the things given to his disciples, "the fellowship of his sufferings." But the blessed Comforter takes these very sufferings, and shows them to the favored subjects of affliction as glowing with celestial radiance in the crown of immortal victory which Jesus gives unto every one who knows the fellowship of his sufferings. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."—2 Timothy ii. 12. This regal victory is in the present result of every conflict and trial here in time. It is certain to every afflicted and weak child, because Jesus has it already in his hand, and they to whom it is given are themselves "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Their conscious weakness and insufficiency of themselves to stand against the terrible assaults of doubts and sin, does not forbid their hope for that victory which is given by the grace of the Captain of their salvation. Although they can do nothing meritorious, and are utterly without strength, they receive the unspeakable gift in Christ Jesus by which their very weakness, poverty and unworthiness are witnesses of the infinite grace of God bestowed upon them in the electing love which chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. When they tremble under conscious weakness to withstand the mighty enemies which beset them in the world, the flesh and the devil, they of necessity worship God, in the prayer, "Lord, help me!" Then the glorious victory is given in the soul-cheering answer, "My grace is suffi-

cient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." On this gracious principle every helpless sinner does indeed worship God in the beauty of holiness; and this worship is "in the glorious sanctuary."—Psa. xcvi. 9, marginal reading. The Lord our righteousness is that glorious sanctuary. In him we have all the perfection in every particular which divine justice requires. Hence in him we have the victory over every enemy. The necessity which drives us constantly to cry unto him for grace to help in every time of need, makes it certain that this true worship can never cease while "Salvation is of the Lord," and his people realize that "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12.

The sweetness of the truth in the text on which we write consists in the fact that this acceptable and true worship of God is not left to the uncertain volition of the saints themselves; if it were so, then they might well fear for the result; but the worship which is in spirit and in truth is wrought in them by the Spirit of Christ which dwells in them. As there can be no failure on the part of that Spirit, so it must ever be true that the afflicted and poor people shall worship in spirit and in truth by calling upon the name of the Lord in every trial and in every time of need. Your weakness and bondage under sin give evidence that you have no confidence in the flesh; and this is the character of those who worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus. All such are in fellowship with the apostles and prophets; and that fellowship is truly with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.—Phil. iii. 3; 1 John i. 3.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

OUR binder has promised to ship us our first lot of the Church Histories on the 28th of January, 1887; and if he fulfills his promise, by the time this number reaches most of our subscribers we will be mailing the books, and all should receive their books before the close of February. We still have a few copies of the different styles of binding not yet ordered. The number of each style, together with the price, may be seen in the notice of the Church History on the last page of this paper.

They are going fast, and all who do not wish to wait for the second edition must order very soon, or they will be too late.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS,

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

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

MARRIAGES.

DECEMBER 29, 1886, at the residence of the bride's father, at Parsonsburg, Md., by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Mr. Daniel J. Holloway to Miss Henrietta Baker, both of the vicinity of Parsonsburg.

JAN. 4, 1887, at the bride's residence, near Salisbury, Md., by the same, Mr. James J. Matthews to Miss Sallie A. Parsons, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

IN North Berwick, Maine, by Elder Wm. Quint, Dec. 8, 1886, Mr. Joseph Abbot and Mrs. Callie O. Getchell, both of North Berwick, Maine.

AT Griffins Corners, N. Y., Dec. 30, 1886, by Elder James Miller, Mr. Irving Morrison and Miss Celia Fellows, both of Halcott Centre, Greene Co., N. Y.

AT the residence of the bride's father, December 30, 1886, by Elder A. B. Francis, Mr. T. Jackson Gheen and Miss Alice Robey, all of Fairfax Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At his residence, five miles north-east of Anita, in Cass County, Iowa, **James Cline, Sr.**, on December 29, 1886, at seven o'clock a. m. Brother James was born in Montgomery County, Indiana, October 24, 1824, and was at the time of his death sixty-two years, two months and two days old. He leaves a wife, eleven children, thirteen grandchildren, brothers, sisters, a host of friends and relations to mourn his loss. He was a volunteer soldier under Gen. Zach. Taylor, in the Mexican war, at the age of twenty-one years, having enlisted under Capt. Robert Milroy, in the first Indiana regiment, in Carroll County, Indiana, whither his parents had moved when he was a boy of six years of age. He was one of the first who arrived upon the scene of conflict after the declaration of war by president Polk, and was among the last to leave. He was one of the fifty men who volunteered to carry the dispatch announcing the surrender of the Mexican army and the completion of the treaty of peace, through a hostile country, over six hundred miles, to the governor of Texas. Though fifty men started on the hazardous undertaking, he with but ten others reached their destination, thirty-nine of the men having deserted in the face of over three hundred guerrillas: but the little band of eleven determined to go through or perish. Being well mounted they made a bold dash at the enemy who, mistaking them for the skirmish line of a large body of Texas rangers, fled and let the little band pass through. But some learning their error, rallied and pursued in hot haste; but their steeds were too slow, and they were soon left far in the rear. No other incident of moment occurred on this perilous journey. Having his discharge, to take effect when the message was delivered at Austin, the seat of government of Texas, he returned home and entered upon the peaceful pursuit of farming, in Carroll County, Indiana. Soon after his return home he married Miss Susan Lenon, of Carroll County, Indiana. The fruit of that marriage was eleven children, six boys and five girls, all of whom survive him.

On the 4th day of July, 1854, he met with a terrible accident which came near ending his life. Being deputized as the principal cannoner in the celebration of the national birthday, through the carelessness of the thumber the ordinance was prematurely discharged, tearing his right hand in a shocking manner, and badly burning his left arm. Recovering sufficiently to get about, he sold his little home and emigrated to Iowa, arriving at Panora about the first of November, 1854. Here he bought the land which is now the farm of G. H. Moore. In 1856 he was elected sheriff of Guthrie County, which office he filled satisfactorily to his constituency for two terms. About 1857 he entered the mercantile business with the writer, which pursuit he followed until the spring of 1865, when with several others he emigrated to Oregon. He was one of the enterprising spirits that built the woolen mills in Panora, in 1863. He remained in Oregon in the pursuit of farming for eight years, and then removed to Keokuk County,

Iowa, and remained nine years. In 1882 he removed to his late home in Cass County. About two years ago he took a severe cold, which settled on his lungs, and terminated in that dread disease, consumption.

Thus passed away another pioneer of Guthrie County. He was a kind husband, an indulgent father and a dutiful neighbor. His parents belonged to the Primitive Baptists. He never attached himself to the visible church, but had, nearly all his life, been a firm believer in the sovereign God and the crucified Redeemer, putting his whole trust in him for salvation. Never having obeyed the commands of our blessed Master as to the ordinances of God's visible church, he lost very much of the pleasures of life; but as disobedience of this nature can only affect the present life, he died in the full triumph of living faith in the blessed Redeemer as expressed by himself to the writer last June. He remained in a state of perfect resignation, and bore his affliction with great patience, and at the last moment gently stopped breathing, without a struggle. Truly,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

A large concourse of his neighbors, friends and relatives followed the remains to the beautiful cemetery at Anita, and there deposited the body in the ground, to await the summons of the general resurrection. Till then, farewell, dear husband, father and brother. May God bless and comfort the bereaved widow, children and relatives.

JOHN CLINE.

DIED—Dec. 4, 1886, at his residence in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., very suddenly, of heart disease, **Mr. George Davis**, aged sixty-seven years. Mr. Davis was not a professor of religion, but from evidences left, to the comfort of his friends, we believe that their loss is his gain. We believe he was a well wisher of the Old School Baptist cause. He was not much of an attendant at meetings, but enjoyed the company of those who visited at his house, and seemed anxious to have his wife, our sister in Christ, attend meetings. By this sudden and sad bereavement the widow, one son, four daughters, one brother and one sister, with other relatives, are left to mourn. The Lord only can comfort the mourners and still the tempest.

ALSO,

DIED—Dec. 13, 1886, **Abbie Carroll Squire**, wife of Isaac Squire, aged sixty-three years. Only a few years have passed since this estimable lady came to live among us, but her many graces of mind and person so endeared her to us all that our hearts are filled with sorrow unutterable, that so soon death has taken her from our midst. Her long and painful illness was borne with quiet christian fortitude, and although surrounded by everything to make life desirable, she calmly and patiently awaited the final summons. Although for months she had been unable to distinguish her friends by sight, she evidently saw with clear vision the one Friend, who alone was able to go with her through the valley and shadow of death, and we have no doubt but our loss is her eternal gain. Her aged mother and bereaved husband, with other relatives, have the sympathy of the entire community. Of her it may be truly said,

"None knew her but to love her;
None named her but to praise."
"Now the weary hands are folded,
And life's battle now is o'er;
She has crossed the icy river,
Safely reached the other shore.

Beautiful in death we laid her
In the dark and silent tomb;
O how much we daily miss her
In the circle of her home.

But the God in whom she trusted
Gave the victory to his Son;
Over death he rose triumphant,
And we say, 'His will be done.'

This obituary of Mrs. Squire was handed me by our friend, Mrs. James Patterson, and she has my thanks for her kindness, as it is ample.

ALSO,

DIED—After three days of sickness, of pneumonia, at the residence of his brother Isaac, in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., Mr. **John W. Squire**, aged sixty-three years.

Dear brethren, you and we have lost a firm friend and supporter of our interests in the common cause of our dear Redeemer. His whole soul seemed absorbed in the cause of his Master, although he was not a member with us. A number of years ago he united with the M. E. Church in Virginia, but afterward was made to see the doctrine and order of the Lord's house, as the Old School Baptists believe and see it. Many comforting interviews I have had with him, as we have traveled and lodged together. One circumstance I will mention for the comfort of others, as well as for my own. In relating the Lord's dealings with him, after great labor of mind, and while listening to our beloved Elder Bundy discoursing on the work and deliverance of our Redeemer, his soul was so drawn out in love to Elder Bundy that he felt he could not keep from speaking. Said he, "O what an overflow of love divine!" The precious name, doctrine and order of our Lord had never appeared so before. His mind was settled, and he could quit all the hopes he held before, to embrace his living Lord. Sometimes he felt quite willing to come to the church, yet there were obstacles he did not overcome. I often tried to persuade him for his Master's sake to leave all and follow him, whom his soul loved. I think he craved the peace of the church more than his own life. He was engaged in going to meeting and gathering subscriptions to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as his last work. Our church and society will sadly miss him. As a dear sister said on the day of his funeral, his counsels were wise and comforting. But the Lord has taken him, and we must submit. His widowed wife and brother, with whom they lived in one family, are lonely indeed, and only the Father of light can comfort them. He left two other brothers and his wife's brother, with other relatives. We do most certainly believe that he is at rest, and that our loss is gain to him. May the Lord sustain and comfort them, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, Delaware Co., N. Y.

DIED—Of congestive chills, at her home, four miles southeast of Paris, in Monroe County, Mo., Mrs. **Lucy Fowkes**, wife of Valentine Fowkes, on November 20, 1886. Sister Fowkes was born in Scott County, Ky., January 17, 1814, and was at the time of her death nearly seventy-three years old. She was married to James H. Smith in the state of Kentucky, in the year 1831; her maiden name was Acuff; moved to Missouri in 1833, and settled upon the farm upon which she died. Mr. Smith went to California in 1850, and died the same year. She was married to Mr. Fowkes in the year 1856, with whom she lived until the day of her death. Sister Fowkes united with the Dry Run Church, in Kentucky, in the sixteenth year of her age; was baptized by Elder Thomas P. Dudley. She with her husband brought letters from Dry Run Church, and united with Middle Fork Church, in the town of Paris, in the year 1833. A few years after, the mission subject was introduced by Elder Anderson Woods, the pastor of the church, which brought about a division on the second Saturday in August, 1840. She with her husband remained steadfast in the faith, as set forth by Elder Dudley and others. It will be seen from the above that sister Fowkes had been a member of the church for more than fifty years. She was a woman of a strong mind, had been called to pass through several sore trials, the one alluded to above, in the church, and the afflicting hand of the Lord on her family; but the sustaining hand of her heavenly Father supported her through them all. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, always attended church meetings unless providentially hindered, and was always delighted to have the brethren and sisters visit her. Her faith was an abiding faith; for as she lived, so she died. She leaves a husband, one son, two daughters and the church to mourn their loss; but our loss is her gain;

or we believe she is now at rest with her precious Savior.

Her remains were laid away at Cedar Grove on Nov. 21, and a very large assemblage gathered at that place to pay a last tribute of respect, when the writer delivered a sermon to the people from 1 Thessalonians, fourth chapter, beginning at the 13th verse, to the close of the chapter. May God's grace rest on the friends and relatives of this mother in Israel, and may he by his grace add others to his church to fill the vacant seats caused by the death of our departed ones.

J. F. SUTTON.

My dear companion, Mrs. **Sarah Baldwin**, died Nov. 7, 1886, aged sixty-six years, seven months and four days. She was born in Muhlenburg Co., Ky., April 3, 1820, moved to Illinois with her parents, John and Catharine Reed, in 1827, and settled in Logan County. She was married to Obed Allen in her twenty-second year, with whom she lived eighteen months, when he died, leaving her with one daughter. On Feb. 12, 1846, she was married to the writer, the result of which marriage was three daughters, two of whom died when young, the other still living. She possessed many noble traits of character, was a loving companion, kind to the poor and needy, always ready to help those in distress, and her hands were never idle. She was brought to see herself a sinner before God when young, and was relieved of her great burden of guilt, by the grace of God, when about twenty-one years old, and joined a Baptist Church that was constituted of members who had moved into that county from different parts of the United States. Two years later the minister went out with the Missionaries, and took about one-half the members with him. She stood with the part that contended for the old landmarks, and for about six years had no church privileges. In 1853 the members that stood firm, with a few more that had moved in, organized what is now called Lebanon Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, of which she became a member, with the writer. Fifteen years ago the writer was ordained a deacon, which brought her to fill the station of a deaconess, which she filled to the time of her death to the satisfaction of the brethren and sisters. She will be greatly missed by the church and a large circle of relatives and friends; but we sorrow not as those who know not God by an experience of grace, for we are satisfied that our loss is her eternal gain. We can but say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." She told me it was her last sickness, and prayed for the Lord to take her.

On Monday, Nov. 8, the funeral was preached at the house by Elder James H. Ring, and her remains were conveyed to the old family burying ground and laid beside her three daughters who had gone before. There was a pleasant smile on her countenance, which she carried to the grave, which made us think she was happy, notwithstanding the agony she had suffered.

She has left her husband, her aged father and step-mother, three brothers and two sisters, one daughter, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

DANIEL BALDWIN.

LINCOLN, Logan Co., Ill.

SISTER **Matty Heart**, wife of our much esteemed brother, Wm. M. Heart, of Tompkins County, N. Y., died April 16, 1886, aged thirty-two years, six months and sixteen days. She had been in delicate health for several months, but was about the house most of the time. On the morning of April 16th she was taken very sick, and died in the afternoon of the same day.

For several years she tried to live with the Methodist society as a member, but their preaching did not harmonize with her christian experience, therefore it was not a home for her. She had been taught of the Lord that salvation is by grace, through faith, and that not of herself, but is the gift of God. As she had a mother and other relatives in that society, she remained with them until she was completely separated from them, and was compelled to renounce them, with all their isms, institutions, doctrines and com-

mandments of men. The writer baptized her several years ago, at Horse Heads, Chemung Co., N. Y., in (not into) the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church; for she had the fellowship of the church before she was baptized; but being authorized by the church, I baptized her. She and her husband, after four or five years, united with the church at Waverly, of which she was a worthy and consistent member until her death. She has left a sorrowing husband, a mother and other relatives. She is gone home and is now at rest; absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

Elder Charles Bogardus preached on the occasion of the funeral a very comforting and edifying discourse, from John xi. 25. May the God of all grace comfort and sustain the mourning friends.

Your brother in affliction,

M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, N. Y.

DIED—June 26, 1886, at his residence, **Hewell Richey**, aged seventy-one years lacking a few days. This old brother received a precious hope about twenty years ago, but did not join the Primitive Baptists until about four years ago. I formed an acquaintance with him a short time before he came to the church, and he told me about his long life away from the fold, and how he loved Jesus and the brethren. Since then I have been with him, and I can truly say that he loved the brethren. He bore his sufferings with much patience, and manifested a lamb-like spirit. Just before he breathed his last he called his dear wife to him and said, "Ma, good-by, good-by." His oldest son, Elder David Richey, was by his side, and he pulled his hand to his mouth and kissed it. His son then fell upon his knees and invoked the blessing of the God of heaven and his presence in that trying hour. The old father smiled and fell asleep. It was a solemn hour indeed. It pleased the Lord to call him away so calmly that all were constrained to say, Bless the Lord for his wonderful works to the children of men.

On the fifteenth of August, at the church where his membership was, and where his remains lie, I tried to preach his funeral discourse from the words, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans vi. 23. This Scripture was presented to him at the time he received a hope, and he often asked ministers of our order to preach from it, as the words were so sweet to him. Closing remarks were made on the funeral occasion by Elder M. Patterson.

He leaves a dear old mother in Israel, four sons and two daughters, to mourn their loss. May the dear Lord comfort the bereaved, is my prayer.

J. K. P. BURNS.

HINESTON, Rapides Par., La.

DIED—August 25, 1886, in Delmar, Md., **Martha A. Gordy**, daughter of D. J. and Leticia Staton, aged twenty-six years, six months and fifteen days. Her disease was typhoid fever. She lay unconscious for several days, and then passed away, leaving a babe about one year old. Martha possessed an excellent character, and lay very near the heart of her father and mother. She had never made a profession of religion, but seemed to think a great deal of the Old School Baptists. We must confess that God's ways are unsearchable, and his judgments past finding out. How much more it would have accorded with nature if the mother had been spared and the babe taken. But God ordered it otherwise, and we must acknowledge his authority. I think we do not mourn without hope, for we are told that "he that is not against me is for me." It was a heavy stroke to the entire family, but we would say to them, It is the Lord's doings, though it is marvelous in our eyes. I suppose that none sustained a greater loss than her broken-hearted companion, but we hope that he may have sustaining grace given him. I united them in marriage October 28, 1884, and I think they lived happily together until her death. She leaves in sorrow her father and mother, companion, one brother, two sisters and many friends.

I was called upon to attend her funeral,

but owing to sickness I could not be present. The families have my heartfelt sympathy.

T. M. POULSON.

NEW CHURCH, Va.

Frances West (nee Wiles) was born March 15, 1802, in Halifax Co., Va., and died Dec. 13, 1886. When a little girl she went to Caswell Co., N. C. In her nineteenth year she professed a hope, and was baptized by Elder Stephen Chandler into the Primitive Baptist Church. She moved to Tennessee in 1822. In 1825, on May 16, she was married to Daniel W. West. They removed in 1830 to Sangamon Co., Ill., where, on Dec. 26, she was bereft of her husband. Henceforth she was to fight the battle of life alone. She emigrated to California in 1864. On Sunday before her death, she said the day she professed a hope was the brightest day of her life. Glory be to God on high, she was going where there would be no more parting. She leaves six children to mourn their loss, all of whom went to homes of their own, except one, who cheerfully laid on the altar of filial duty all her time, love and devotion. Many friends also mourn the loss of one who was a friend indeed. God has taken her to himself. May those that are bereft be led nearer to him.

A FRIEND.

OUR beloved little niece, **Dorcas Sylvesta Smith**, daughter of George D. and Emma Smith, was called away from this world of care and sorrow at about 2.30 a. m., Nov. 16, 1886, being four years, three months and twenty-one days old. She died of that dreadful disease, diphtheria. She was ill only five days, during which time her sufferings were intense. The little darling was very patient, never complaining, but saying every little while, "Mamma, I'm so tired." She seemed to take it hard that she could not see friends, who were kept away because of the contagious disease. Our little Dorcas was a dear engaging girl, and we all loved her so much. O how hard it is to realize that we shall never more hear her sweet voice. How hard for parents to see such dear little ones snatched away by the cold hand of death. None but those that feel it know. O may we be enabled to bow to the will of him who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind.

BERTHA WELLS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Dec. 21, 1886.

DIED—At her late residence near Berryville, Clarke Co., Va., August 1, 1886, our dear sister, Mrs. **Mary Glass** (nee McCormack), relict of the late Hon. Lewis Glass, in the sixty-seventh year of her age. Her disease was of the heart. Our dear sister was baptized by the late Elder R. C. Leachman, in the fellowship of Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, about fifteen years ago, and continued a faithful, beloved and consistent member till her death, ever ready to give a reason of the hope in her, when required. The writer has often heard her speak of passages of Scripture that were brought to her with much comfort while engaged in the duties of life. She left three sons, one daughter, the church and a large circle of friends to mourn their loss. Like myself, she had about fourteen miles to travel, the often turbulent Shenandoah River and the Blue Ridge mountain to pass; but her kind children were ever ready to accompany her when the weather and her health would admit.

F. E. R. KABLE.

My mother, **Eunice Nichols**, wife of Aaron Nichols, died October 4, 1886, at the advanced age of eighty-eight years, eight months and two days. She was called by grace at the age of eighteen years, and has lived a devoted christian life, and died in full faith in her Savior.

Father's age is nearly ninety-six years, his health rather poor, and his sight so failed that he cannot see to read. Father and mother have lived together sixty-five years, and have taken the SIGNS OF THE TIMES forty-eight years. Mother has read the paper to father for a long time, her sight being good, and she enjoyed reading it to him.

JOHN NICHOLS.

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Dec. 6, 1886, **Sadie L. Ford**, daughter of Mr. Caleb

and sister Elvia A. Ford, aged ten years, seven months and twenty-one days. She was a fine young girl; but in life she was like a bud cut off before it had fully blown. A large number of people attended her funeral. She has left father and mother, brothers and sisters, to mourn.

WM. QUINT.

ORDINATIONS.

AGREEABLE to a call of the Salem Church of Regular Baptists, situated in the county of DeKalb, state of Missouri, the following presbytery met with said church on Dec. 25, 1886, to wit, Elders R. A. Oliphant, of West Union Church, W. J. Pollard, of Little Flock Church, and Deacons Robert Rowe, of Nodaway Church, and Eli Adams and Luke Thornton, of said Salem Church.

The presbytery organized by choosing Elder R. A. Oliphant Moderator, and Elder W. J. Pollard Clerk.

The said Salem Church being satisfied with the presbytery, submitted brother CALVIN C. MOORE for examination and ordination to the work of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

After being questioned by the Moderator, and found to possess the necessary qualifications, the presbytery proceeded to ordain the said Calvin C. Moore to the full functions of the gospel ministry, by the laying on of hands by the presbytery, and prayer by Elder R. A. Oliphant, after which an appropriate charge was delivered by Elder W. J. Pollard.

A hymn was then sung, and the hand of fellowship extended by the presbytery and church.

The presbytery then adjourned.

R. A. OLIPHANT, Mod.

W. J. POLLARD, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

(For the eastern shore of Maryland and Delaware).

At Welsh Tract, the third Sunday in February, 1887.

Bryn Zion, Monday following.

Cow Marsh, Wednesday.

Delmar, Wednesday night.

Rewastico, Thursday.

Broad Creek, fourth Saturday and Sunday.

Smith's Mills, Monday following.

Forest Grove, Tuesday.

Indiantown, Wednesday.

Snow Hill, Thursday, also at night.

Nassaongo, Friday.

Salisbury, first Sunday in March.

Fishing Creek, Tuesday following, also at night.

A. B. FRANCIS.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1887. NO. 4.

POETRY.

PSALM CXIX. 55.

"I HAVE remembered thy name, O Lord."

I THINK of thee, my God, by night,
And talk of thee by day;
Thy love my treasure and delight,
Thy truth my strength and stay.
The day is dark, the night is long,
Unblest with thoughts of thee;
And dull to me the sweetest song,
Unless its theme thou be.
So all day long, and all the night,
Lord, let thy presence be
My air, my breath, my shade, my light,
Myself absorbed in thee.

J. S. B. MONSELL.

HARVEST.

DEDICATED TO ONE GONE BEFORE.

Be good to one another, whom God has join'd
for life;
Remember well the nuptial vows you made
as man and wife;
To cling close to each other in sickness and
in health;
As well in abject poverty as in luxury and
wealth.
Be good to one another. How know you
which will be
The first that's called to launch away upon
the unknown sea?
For in that last sad parting if there's nothing
to forgive,
Death hath no sting for such that die, nor
remorse for such that live.
Be kind to one another, and if amid life's
cares
An angry thought unbidden rise (the purest
wheat hath tares),
Check it ere speech shall follow, suppress it
with a smile;
The cloud will pass, and love's sun rays will
shine, though lost awhile.
Be good to one another, where'er your lives
be cast;
Remember, life is short at best; reap while
the harvest lasts;
And when with retrospective glance you turn
toward life's lee,
Remember, as you sowed the seed, so shall the
harvest be.
Be true to one another; and as day must fol-
low night,
So sure you'll have no sad regrets, no wrongs
you cannot right;
For wrongs there be ye cannot right, at
times the heart will feel;
The tears will flow, the scars remain, al-
though the wound may heal.
Be kind, be faithful, ever true, in sunshine
and in tears;
And as adown life's troubled stream you pass
to ripened years,
"One shall be taken, one be left," to pass be-
neath the rod,
To watch and pray for that bless'd day when
you shall meet with God.
Your journey done, the victory won, earth's
joys and tears are past,
The morn is brightly breaking on your har-
vest home at last;
Faith, love and truth, the seed that's sown,
you shall the reapers be;
And your harvest sun will never set through
all eternity.

W. BAYARD BURNETT.
NEW YORK, January, 1887.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SCIO, Linn Co., Oregon, Jan. 12, 1887.

DEARLY BELOVED EDITORS:—I have been somewhat interested in the discussion between H. Cox and Elder E. Rittenhouse on our Lord's parable of the wheat and the tares, as published in the late numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and by your permission, brethren Beebe, (like young Elihu), I will also show my opinion.—Job xxxii. 10. Far be it from me to judge between the two brethren, and say who is right and who is wrong; but when brethren differ, we know that both cannot be right, but there is a possibility, or even a probability, that both may be wrong. It is not my aim to controvert what either of the brethren has written, but merely to give my views on the parable, and let them go for what they are worth.

Now it is essentially necessary that we start right; for if we start wrong, we are sure to continue wrong to the end. Were I intending to go to New York, and should start west, and continue to travel in a westerly direction, I would never reach my intended destination; but if I should start eastward, and continue to travel in an easterly direction, I would sooner or later arrive at the place of my destination. Next, it is very essential, in order to start right, that we ascertain to whom the parables were spoken. Now we must understand that these parables were not spoken to the disciples, but to the multitude of unbelieving Jews, and were significant of that people as a nation. We read, "The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables," &c.—Matthew xiii. 1-3. Verses 34 and 35: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude [not disciples] in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." Again, verses 10 to 15: "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever

hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Now I have laid the premises, and will commence building. Now to the parable. Verse 24: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field." We must be mindful of this, that it is the kingdom of heaven that is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field; if we lose sight of this we are sure to go wrong. "But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." The exposition that the speaker of the parable put upon the parable is this: "Then Jesus sent the multitude away [to whom he had spoken these four parables], and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that sowed the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels" (John the Baptist and the apostles). Now, as I have repeatedly said on former occasions, there are three heavens spoken of in the Scriptures. Paul was caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. xii. 2), which was neither of the world nor in the world. The first and second kingdoms of heaven were set up in the world, but were not of the world. The first kingdom of heaven, although a temporal, earthly kingdom, was not, strictly speaking, of the world; according to the words which God put in the mouth of Balaam concerning Israel as a kingdom, "For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."—Num. xxiii. 9. Inasmuch as they were sanctified and set apart from the world as a type of spiritual

Israel, which is the Lord's portion, and the lot of his inheritance. Now in these parables, where Jesus says, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto," &c., the first two kingdoms are embraced in one kingdom of heaven; and these parables show the removing of the first kingdom of heaven and the establishment of the second, as set forth by an apostle thus, "Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He [Jesus] taketh away the first [law kingdom of heaven], that he may establish the second," or gospel kingdom of heaven. Now concerning the time and place of the setting up of the first two kingdoms of heaven. They were both set up in what was called the land of Canaan, the land of Palestine, the land of Israel, in the country of Zion, at Jerusalem. The first kingdom of heaven was set up in the days of David, king of Israel, a temporal king, to reign over a temporal people for a term of forty years. The second kingdom of heaven was set up in the days of the incarnation of the Son of God, the antitypical David, concerning whom it was spoken by an angel sent from God to the virgin, saying, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."—Luke i. 32, 33. These last Scriptures were quoted to show the reader why Jesus spoke of what we call two kingdoms as one kingdom: "The kingdom of heaven," &c. They are set forth in the Scriptures as the same kingdom, under two distinct covenants. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt," &c.—Heb. viii. 6-9. So you see, dear reader, that it is a continuation of the same kingdom of heaven under two distinct covenants. Now then, we

will come to the parable again; but first I will say, lest I be misapprehended, that the first covenant was made with a temporal people, and the last covenant was made with a spiritual people. "My kingdom," saith Christ, "is not of this world."—John xviii. 36. "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, did not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He saith unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." This is the parable. We will now quote our Lord's elucidation of the parable. "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one [of whom Christ saith, Ye are of your father, the devil, &c.]; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." The good seed which the Son of man sowed are the children of the kingdom. These, although they are the children of the kingdom of heaven, are nevertheless sown in the world. I believe these children are real persons, and not mere natures begotten in persons, either by generation or regeneration; for the seed was sown in the field, which is the world, and not in the hearts of men, as the parables were spoken to unbelieving Jews, to Pharisees and Sadducees, and had direct reference to that people as a nation upon the earth. Abraham was the natural, earthly father of that nation of people, and also the reputed father of all the faithful, the whole election of grace according to promise, as it is written, "And he [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." * * * As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations," &c.—Rom. iv. 11-17. Now as the parable pertained to the nation of the Jews, as the kingdom of the first heaven; also the holy nation that Peter spoke of as the antitype of that nation of people, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation," &c. (1 Peter ii. 9), are included in that parable; so I take it for granted that Abraham,

Isaac, Jacob and the patriarchs were the wheat that the Son of man sowed in the field, which was the Jewish world. But while men slept (this sleep was during their sojourn in Egypt, which is an emblem of night, of darkness; and the Scripture informs us that they that sleep, sleep in the night), an enemy, the devil, sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way; and when the wheat blade sprang up and brought forth fruit in Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Caleb, Eleazar and others, then appeared the tares also, Nadab and Abihu, and a host of others, who murmured against Moses and Aaron, and joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.—Psalm cvi. They also committed whoredoms among the heathen, &c. "The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." God had yet many of his elect in the loins of these wicked tares, which must first be born before they are gathered up and burned. Let both grow together until the harvest. Thus we see the wheat and the tares growing together in the legal kingdom of heaven, which is the first heaven. We see the holy prophets, which are the wheat, growing together with the wicked kings (tares) in the same kingdom of heaven until the time of harvest, which is the consummation of the legal heavens and Jewish world, when the clusters of the Jewish vine were fully ripe for destruction. The wheat and the tares grew together in the same field or kingdom of heaven until the harvest, when the separation began to take place under the ministry of John the Baptist, of which I will speak more fully hereafter. The apostle John, in his exile upon the isle of Patmos, gives a beautiful description of the harvest, and the reaping of the Jewish nation and kingdom, thus, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven [the first or legal heaven], he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire: and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city [by Titus and his army], and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse

bridles, by the space of a thousand six hundred furlongs."—Rev. xiv. 14-20. This is the final separation of the tares from the wheat. They are to grow together no more. This is the end of the first kingdom of heaven. The reader can now see how beautifully this agrees with our Lord's exposition of the parable. "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [or dispensation]. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." This is in perfect agreement with another parable. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind [both wheat and tares]: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels [apostles] shall come forth, and sever the wicked [tares] from among the just [wheat], and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

I promised to say something more concerning John the Baptist, and it is this. The harvest spoken of above commenced under the ministry of John the Baptist. The separation then and there began to take place between the wheat and the tares, and was consummated under Titus in the final end of that dispensation or kingdom of heaven and destruction of the tares. Their place was found no more in heaven. Their heaven had passed away, and they had no place in the second, or gospel heaven. When John the Baptist saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? [meaning the wrath that was soon to be poured out without mitigation upon Jerusalem and Judea, in which the tares were burned up.] Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones [Gentiles] to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees [these trees represent the Jews as a nation of people, both wheat and tares]: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water [in water] unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor [the legal church, which was organized in the wilderness of Sinai, and the first kingdom of heaven, which was set up in David], and gather his wheat into the garner [gospel kingdom]; but he will burn

up the chaff with unquenchable fire."—Matthew iii. 7-12. Chaff is only another appellation for tares, and means the same thing. When Jesus healed the centurion's servant (the centurion being a Gentile), he said to them that followed, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west [Gentiles], and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven [i. e., gospel kingdom]. But the children of the [legal] kingdom [the tares] shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."—Matt. viii. 5-12. These occupied a place in the first legal kingdom of heaven, but were not suffered to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the second or gospel kingdom of heaven, but were cast out into outer darkness, in heathen lands. The prophet Malachi also prophesied of the end of the legal dispensation, the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning up of the tares, and the coming in and establishment of the kingdom of grace, saying, "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts. * * * Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet [John the Baptist] before the coming of that great and dreadful day of the Lord."—Malachi iv. 1-5. Peter, speaking of the deluge, saith, "Whereby the world that then was [there was no kingdom of heaven on earth then, as I said before. The first kingdom of heaven upon earth commenced with the reign of king David; therefore he uses the word 'world' in the singular], being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," the day when God entered into judgment with, and poured out his wrath upon, Jerusalem in their final overthrow and destruction. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the [legal] heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements [ordinances] shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and

the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.—2 Peter iii. 6-13. Isaiah, prophesying concerning the promise of new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, saith, "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."—Isa. lx. 18-21. "In that day [the day of the new heaven and new earth, the day of the gospel kingdom of heaven] shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."—Isaiah xxvi. 1, 2. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people."—Daniel ii. 44. This kingdom is the New Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife; unlike the old Jerusalem (which was Hagar), and was destroyed eighteen hundred years ago, and was left to other people. But this kingdom is built upon Christ, the eternal Rock of Ages, and shall never be destroyed or removed, or left to other people. "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever."—Dan. vii. 18. And Jesus saith unto his disciples, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke xii. 32. An apostle saith to those whom he denominates "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," &c. (Heb. iii. 1), "For ye are not come unto the mount [Sinai] that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: for they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: but ye are come unto mount Sion [he does not say ye shall come, but ye are come], 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. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape [chastisement], if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth [there was no kingdom of heaven on earth at the time of giving the law from Sinai, as said before. The first kingdom of heaven on earth was set up and completed with the reign of king David; hence the earth only was shaken]: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."—Heb. xii. 18-28.

Your brother in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ,

JOHN STIPP.

PLEASANT VALLEY, Va., Jan. 31, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—During my recent visit to Middletown I was requested by our dear aged sister and mother in Israel, Lydia Mullock, to write my views of the text found in Psalm xxxvii. 3, for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I cannot say that I have no views of the text, but I am so little in the habit of writing for publication that it seems rather a task for me to undertake it; but I hope I am willing to spend and be spent in the Master's cause, feeding his sheep and lambs, using as he gives ability both pen and tongue to this end.

The text reads, "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." I will premise by saying that this, as was all that was written during the continuance of the legal dispensation, was written directly to and for the instruction of Israel, who was then under that covenant which the Lord God made with the fathers when he took them by the hand to bring them up out of the land of Egypt; and that all the blessings enjoyed by that people were assured to them on the ground of their obedience. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—Isa. i. 19, 20. We have a complete history of the dealings of God with that people in the writings of the Old Testament; how he rewarded their obedience and punished their rebellion, from the time he called Abram out of his native country till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the rejection of that people is predicated upon their unworthiness. In Isaiah v. 20-25 the Lord says, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for dark-

ness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust; because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." From this we see the awful judgment of God against the national Israelites, who were a fleshly people, carnal in all their propensities and desires; and who, notwithstanding the goodness which the Lord had shown them, followed their natural inclinations, doing the things they were expressly forbidden to do, and refusing to do what God had commanded. In the day of our Lord upon the earth, one of his accusations against the most zealous of the Pharisees was that they made "void the commandments of God by their traditions;" and against the lawyers that they had "taken away the key of knowledge, entered not in themselves, and them that were entering in they hindered." Obedience was and is the great principle underlying all works that deserve to be called good. Said Samuel to Saul the king, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."—1 Samuel xv. 22, 23. What God commands his servants they must do; nor shall they bring God into judgment before carnal reason, to decide the righteousness or unrighteousness of his law. Saul was commanded to destroy the Amalekites, even to their sheep and cattle; but Saul took the responsibility to save some of the best of the sheep and oxen to offer in sacrifice to the Lord. Carnal reason would say that Saul was honoring God, that he meant well, &c.; but he disobeyed God, and disobedience is dishonoring at all times and under all circumstances. In "obeying the voice of the Lord" alone can his people honor him. This is to "do good."

The Psalms of David were written for the comfort and instruction of Israel, God's chosen heritage. Israel then was exhorted to "Trust in the Lord, and do good," under that covenant in which all that Israel enjoyed was a reward for obedience; and the promise was, "So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." But while those things were

addressed to Israel of old, have they no application to us? Surely they have. Israel of old was but a type of the spiritual Israel, the church of Jesus Christ; and all that happened to them was for the instruction of God's chosen people under the gospel dispensation. Paul says, "These things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." True, we are under another covenant, not after the manner of the covenant which they were under. That covenant was written on tables of stone; the new covenant is written upon the "fleshy tables of the heart." The terms of the new essentially differ from the old. God says, "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."—Heb. viii. 10. Let us then examine this subject with this in view, to see if there is not instruction for us. The writings of Scripture do not really benefit us unless we realize a personal application, and have that experience which answers to the word of the Lord; by this Israel is now known. "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. ii. 28, 29. Under the legal dispensation the Jew, or Israelite, traced his genealogy back to Abraham, and boasted he had Abraham to his father: "We be Abraham's seed." But under the gospel dispensation the true Israelite traces his genealogy to Christ; he is of the "generation of Jesus Christ." "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." This is not to be ascertained by looking to our natural or fleshly origin. Our fathers and mothers after the flesh may have been true Israelites, but that does not make us such. How then shall we know that we are Israelites? By the inward, spiritual circumcision, the law written in the heart, evidenced by a knowledge of our condition as sinners of Adam's fallen race, under the curse of the law and dominion of sin and death, from which we have the assurance of deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ, the hope of salvation which God has secured and assured to all Israel: "And so all Israel shall be saved." To this people all the Scripture is addressed, and they alone are benefited. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—Rom. xv. 4. Then to us this word comes in its true application, "Trust in the Lord," &c. What is it to trust in him, but to have perfect confidence in his power, love, faithfulness, and all his glorious and wonderful attributes; that he will do all his pleasure, and that it is his pleasure to save his people. According to my limited understanding, a perfect trust in the Lord embraces a belief in his absolute

sovereignty, his power over all worlds and all things, as himself has declared, "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."—Isa. xlv. 10. But even those who have this faith are at times in doubt, becoming weary and faint-hearted, oppressed with a sense of sin; and looking at themselves, and again at the low estate of the church, anxiously inquire, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? are his mercies clean gone forever?" They see all the various denominations of religion round about them flourishing and growing fat, increasing in numbers and outward prosperity; and becoming discouraged, they conclude that there must be something wrong, something lacking. Perhaps they are not as zealous as they should be in the Master's cause; and sometimes they lay the blame of the unpopularity of the cause of truth on the preacher. "He preaches too plain; if he would only preach his own doctrine, with experience, and not preach so as to drive others away." Then again they think he preaches too much doctrine; he ought to preach more experience, &c. Really the doctrine of God our Savior is the cause of the unpopularity of the Lord's ministers and people in this generation. It was so also in the days of our Savior on earth. Multitudes followed him when he fed them on loaves and fishes to the satisfying of the carnal appetite; but when he preached his doctrine, the spiritual food of believers, they said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" And they went away, and followed no more after him. They had no appetite for that kind of food. It is so at this day. It does seem as if God had provided an abundant supply of "loaves and fishes" (in the popular religion of the day) to satisfy the wants of the multitude, and they are following after it and eating greedily of it, fully satisfied with what, to the child of God, are mere husks. But a few realized that the words he spake were spirit and life, and only twelve remained with him of all the multitude, and one of them was a devil. The saints, instead of fretting because of the fewness of their numbers, ought rather to rejoice. We have no business to compare numbers with the worldly denominations. The injunction is, "Fret not thyself because of evil doers," &c. Even if they do flourish as the green bay tree, their great popularity and increase is the result of the iniquitous means they use. Were it not for the various auxiliaries, helps, &c., which they make use of continually, their fine churches (so-called), fine music, Sunday Schools, &c., they would not flourish so. They have to be continually at work, watering the earth with their foot, in order to make it increase to them. Consider, dear people of God, that all our help, all our increase, all our spiritual food, comes from the Lord. He sends the snow and the rain to water the earth, to make it bring

forth seed to the sower and bread to the eater; and so (in like manner) he sends his word, and makes it to prosper, and accomplish that which he pleases. Then we come up to the text, "Trust in the Lord, and do good." It is in view of these things that the saints are admonished to put their trust in the Lord, assured that he will bring to pass all his will and fulfill all his word, doing his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the sons of men; and he will surely gather all his chosen to himself. I so fully believe in the absolute sovereignty of our God, that I do not believe anything ever transpires but in exact accordance with his will. Jesus said in his prayer, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 2. To his disciples (the apostles) he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."—Matthew xxviii. 18. May we not then well afford to trust him?

"And do good." What kind of good? Worldlings talk of doing good. They profess to be helping the Lord to save souls, &c.; but all their works are in the Scriptures called "works of iniquity," and they are "workers of iniquity." The saints are commanded to "exhort one another to love and to good works." Obedience is good; and in God's people all that is the opposite of obedience is evil. King Saul did evil when he spared even the best of the cattle and sheep of the Amalekites, though his design was to offer them in sacrifice to the Lord. Should he have been permitted by Samuel to do so, it would have been a polluted sacrifice, a sacrifice to his own contempt of the commandment of the Lord. Jesus said to the fault-finding Jews, "If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." God does not any more require sacrifice at the hands of his people, nor do they worship him with the hand, but with the heart; a spiritual worship or service consisting of principles wrought in them, the great underlying principle of all being love. The love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, manifests itself by love to those who are born of God. "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." This love is exhibited in acts of kindness, forgiving, showing mercy, charity, &c. "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?"—Micah vi. 8. "Love is the fulfilling of the law;" and love is shown by our acts, not merely by words. "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world. The people of God may find sufficient that God has commanded to keep them busy, without doing what he has not required; and this is doing good.

"So shalt thou dwell in the land." After this manner; this is dwelling in the land; he who does the Lord's commandments dwells in the land. "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."—Rev. xxii. 14. The land of Canaan in which Israel dwelt was given to them by their God in fulfillment of his promise made to Abraham, and is typical of the church in its visible organization, the gospel land. All those who walk in obedience to God's commandments enter into and dwell or abide in this land; "but the rebellious dwell in a dry land."

"And verily thou shalt be fed." This is assured by the abundant provision which the Lord has made for all the needs of his people. He has prepared a feast of fat things, full of marrow, and of wine on the lees, well refined. When Israel was obedient they dwelt unmolested in the land and ate of its good things; when they refused and rebelled they were led away captive, or God sent a famine on the land, and it yielded no meat, and they were put to death with the sword. So it is realized in a gospel experience by the saints; not literally, as with Israel of old, but spiritually. No one who is disobedient to the commandment of our Lord can enter in and dwell in the church, and enjoy its privileges and blessings. It is as true of the people of God now as in olden time, that the willing and obedient eat the good of the land. It is a mistaken notion of men that our obedience is a condition of eternal salvation, nor indeed that it is a means to an end in any sense; but the language of our text is explicit, which I quote in conclusion, "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Affectionately submitted.

A. B. FRANCOIS.

GHEAT, Ky., Jan. 12, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother Ed. Williams, of Jefferson, Alabama, in which I find the following paragraph: "From your exposition of the parable of the wheat and tares, I understand your position to be that the wheat or good seed are sown in regeneration. Am I correct in this or not? If so, it seems to me that you reverse the order of sowing, as the Savior says, 'The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field.'" Brother Williams is correct when he says, "I understand your position to be that the wheat or good seed are sown in regeneration." I as firmly believe that to be what our Lord taught in that parable, as I believe any other of the wonderful and glorious things taught by him and left on record for the comfort of his saints. Surely our Lord in giving that parable was talking about his own kingdom, which he had come to earth to set up; that kingdom of which the prophet speaks, saying, "And in the days of these kings shall

the God of heaven set up a kingdom."—Daniel ii. 44. That kingdom was to differ from all other kingdoms. Our Lord says, "My kingdom is not of this world."—John xviii. 36. Other kingdoms were of this world. The subjects of the kingdoms of this world were "folks, sons and daughters of men;" but as the sons and daughters of men they could not see the kingdom of God. Our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He further said to that ruler of the Jews, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." By the birth of the flesh they, the sons and daughters of men, are enabled to see the kingdoms of this world, and live in them, and enjoy the protection of their kings; by that spiritual birth they who are born of the Spirit are enabled to see the kingdom of God, and enjoy the protection of the great King, and behold the beauties and glories of his kingdom. But mark you, the natural birth precedes the entrance into earthly kingdoms, and the spiritual birth precedes the entrance of those who are born again into the spiritual kingdom, as it was set up on the earth in the days of those kings. Our Lord in giving that parable was talking about that spiritual kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, which is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—Matthew xvi. 18. That church is built of lively stones. The apostle says, "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. 5. No individual ever could or ever did enter into that church, that spiritual kingdom, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, until he was born of that spiritual birth, until the good seed of spiritual, eternal and immortal life was sown in him by the Son of man, that seed of which John speaks, saying, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him."—1 John iii. 9. Then it is abundantly plain that in the new birth that good seed is sown by the Son of man. All who are born of God have that good seed sown in them; but it is sown in them before their visible entrance into the church in its organized form. Our Lord said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." That building, that church, is of lively stones. The sons and daughters of men are not spiritually lively stones, for they in their natural state are dead in trespasses and sins; but they in whom the good seed has been sown can and do enter into that kingdom of heaven, and none others. When you, brother Williams, asked for membership in the church, you told to the dear saints the wonderful things which the Lord had done (in the past tense) for you, and the joy you experienced when by faith you were enabled to see the King, the Lord of hosts. Then surely

the good seed had before that time been sown in you; and by reason of its having been sown in you the church in its organized form could and did receive you, and extend to you the glorious privileges and ordinances of God's house. You were then received into the fellowship of God's dear people, for the reason that you told them of your spiritual birth, and that you were enabled to rejoice in the goodness and mercy of your adorable Lord. All this preceded your being admitted to all the rights and privileges of the church. Then surely I do not "reverse the order of sowing;" but in my feeble way I have attempted to present the great truth that the new birth precedes the admittance of those who are born again into the true church. But our Lord said, "The field is the world." That world was that of which John the Baptist spoke, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" and that of which the apostle spoke when he said, "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."—2 Cor. v. 18, 19. Our Lord said, "The field is the world;" and an inspired apostle in after years said, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Surely that world was not the world of which the Arminians and their aids tell us, saying that God is in the world, begging, beseeching, entreating and persuading the world of unregenerate sinners to be reconciled to him and accept his overtures of mercy; and if they will accept his offered salvation he will gladly accept them into his kingdom, and will not impute to them their trespasses. O no; it is that world, that kingdom, in which a King shall reign in righteousness. In that glorious reign he works in all the subjects of that kingdom to will and to do of his own good pleasure; and it is his good pleasure that they should give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, having been taught by his Spirit that "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." He does not impute to them their trespasses, for the reason that he has in his own glorious person met all the demands of the law against them, and redeemed them from all iniquity. Surely they are a chosen generation (not chosen in Adam, but in Christ), a royal priesthood, a holy nation. Their royalty consists in their being the children of God, not in their being sons and daughters of men, for they are made kings and priests unto God; and having had the good seed of spiritual, eternal and immortal life sown in them, they are prepared to offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. O what a glorious world that is! Christ in all his wonderful and glorious fullness in it, reconciling it unto himself; yea, and

giving to his ministering servants in that world the ministry of reconciliation. When they go forth preaching the everlasting gospel in and to that world their language is, "Be ye reconciled to God." That language is directed to all the regenerated sons and daughters of the Most High, all who have experienced in regeneration the sowing of the good seed in them, that seed which will remain in them in time, yea, and will be theirs throughout eternity. It is that spiritual, eternal and immortal life which was treasured up in their glorious Lord before the world began, and is sown in them in regeneration by the Son of man; for they are born of God, born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. But there is a time with all the dear saints in which the word "soweth" is precious to them. That time is when they are first enabled to rejoice in beholding the beauties and glories of the great plan of life and salvation through the finished work of their great Redeemer. O how sweet to them in after life are the memories of that blessed hour. The mariner, when his vessel is borne onward by the mighty storms that raise the ocean waves mountain high, looks to the needle that points to the North Pole, and to his chart; and in the strong assurance of faith, sustained by those two witnesses, rejoices in his safety. So, dear saint, when you are shaken by the storms of adversity, and all around you is darkness and gloom, you look to the saint's unerring chart, the word of God, which says, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man." His work is perfect. Then you look back to that bright and to you most joyful hour, when you by faith were enabled to say in gladness, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." You, brother Williams, and all the dear saints, have these two witnesses to strengthen your faith, and comfort you amidst the sorrows of earth. When the seeds of divine and sovereign grace, that have been sown in you by the glorious Son of man, are growing in you, it is then you grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. You learn that outside of Jesus you cannot find truth, for he is the way, the truth and the life; and your great chart, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, tells you of your wondrous and never-failing safety in him. The good seed of eternal life, which at the dawn of your spiritual existence was sown in you by the Son of man, enables you to read that great chart, and rejoice in the glorious truths contained therein.

My apology for having written so much upon this subject is, that to me it is a subject which affords me infinitely more enjoyment than all other subjects combined; for it tells of the goodness of the Lord made wondrously manifest to his saints in redemption, in that new and spiritual birth, in which the good seeds of spiritual, eternal and immortal life

are sown in them by the Son of man, and enables them to rise on the pinions of hope, and look away to that wondrous period when all the dear saints will be clad in the superlative beauties and glories of a resurrection and immortal life. Sometimes in the lone hours of night, upon my humble couch, in sweet meditation, I am enabled to gaze upon the riches of redeeming grace, made manifest to all the redeemed in their ever-glorious Lord. Then in sweet meditation, looking to that period when I shall be called to lay my armor by, the precious language of the poet comes up in fond memory to add to the sweets of those meditations:

"Earth with its vanities no more
Shall pain my weary eyes;
I leave my prison for my home,
A mansion in the skies."

I have said but little in this about the tares, for the reason that, if I am one of the redeemed, they are ever present with me, causing that warfare in which all the saints are engaged, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. I do not enjoy talking about or meditating upon that which gives me sorrow. The corruptions of the flesh afford to God's dear people no pleasing subject, but daily fill them with murmuring; while the infinitely great and glorious subject of God's redeeming and regenerating grace lifts their thoughts and meditations into the green pastures of God's unchanging and eternal love for his redeemed.

H. COX.

SILVER CLIFF Colo., Jan. 16, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In February last I wrote a letter privately to brother Purington, and he saw fit to send it to you, and it was published in March 15th number of the SIGNS. Some time after, I received a letter from a highly esteemed and much beloved brother in Christ, in which he said that brother Purington and I had taken a position which we "could not establish within the compass of the Bible." If I know my heart, I do desire above all things that I may know the truth. I do not believe that I ever bowed before God in prayer but what I asked in my petitions that he would lead me in the way of truth.

I was left a poor orphan boy, without father and mother, at the tender age of ten years, and as a consequence I received a very limited education, only learning reading, writing, and first principles of arithmetic. I speak of this, so there need be no comments made upon my ungrammatical expressions.

Since receiving the letter referred to from my brother, I have devoted my spare time to reading the Bible, searching carefully and (I hope) prayerfully for the truth, and especially upon this point, "The Absolute Predestination of all things." As a starting point, I will make use of a declaration of Peter on the day of Pentecost; and as he was "filled with the Holy Ghost," none will deny that he spake as the Spirit gave

utterance: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—Acts ii. 23. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none like me: declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xli. 9, 10. It would seem that this ought to be proof enough to establish the predestination of all things; but I will give another. "And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them."—Isa. xlv. 7. It cannot be said of this declaration of God by the mouth of the prophet, that the "things not yet done," and "the things that are coming, and shall come," had direct reference only to the coming of the Savior into the world. We find that the house of Israel were so zealous in worship that when God withheld from them the demonstrations of his mighty power, for the time being, they were sure to set up, of the works of their own hands, an idol or image, and fall down and worship it. God was here speaking through the prophet to the house of Jacob, and remnant of the house of Israel, showing them the difference in power and knowledge of these idol gods, and the God of their fathers. I conclude that when God "declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done," that *all things*, however small or great, were included. If not, I want to ask the question, which I have asked of others before, and especially of my brother, is there any rule laid down in the book of inspiration whereby a line of distinction can be drawn between the things that are predestinated of God, and the things not?

But now to the text. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." He was despised and rejected of men, stricken, smitten of God, wounded for our transgressions, brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened he not his mouth.—Isa. liii. Read the entire chapter. Let us notice some of the things connected with his betrayal and crucifixion. "They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver" (Zech. xi. 12), and "cast it unto the potter." "They pierced my hands and my feet."—Psa. xxii. 16. "They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."—Psa. lxix. 21. "They cast lots upon my vesture."—Psa. xxii. 18. "A bone of him shall not be broken."—Psa. xxxiv. 20. O, says one, you need not bring forward so much proof to establish the predestination of God as to the crucifixion of Jesus, for I believe that all the main things connected with his betrayal and crucifixion were predestinated. Well, then, I want to call your attention to a portion of the

text: "Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." It seems to me that the crucifixion of the Savior was a very important matter, in the purpose and plan of God, for the salvation of all whose names were written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world; and if so, I do not feel warranted in saying (as some say and affirm), that it was optional with Judas in betraying Jesus. Suppose we admit it was, and Judas had concluded (when the time had come that God had predetermined that Jesus should be betrayed) that he would not betray Jesus, what a woe! dilemma this would have placed the great Jehovah in. If it was optional with Judas as to his betraying the Savior, he might have changed his mind even after he received the sop and had gone out. We hear Jesus saying to his disciples upon one occasion, "Have I not chosen you twelve? and one of you is a devil." Not hath a devil, as some read it, but "is a devil." It does seem to me very strange that one who really believes that God has all power, wisdom and knowledge, would attempt to argue thus. I have shown that some of the things which did transpire at the crucifixion of the Savior were declared of God by the mouth of the prophets, that they should come to pass. The number of pieces of silver which Judas received, the purchasing of the potter's field, casting lots for his vesture, were without doubt predestinated of God. Then if these minor things (so to speak) were predestinated, much more the betrayal of Jesus was fixed and sure, as well as all the things connected with his being taken before Pilate. When he was taken before Pilate, Pilate asked him, "Whence art thou?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Here is the fulfilling of the declaration of the prophet, that he is "brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened not he his mouth." Now I will ask a question. John, recording the language of the Savior to his disciples, "Have I not chosen you twelve? and one of you is a devil," enters on the same record immediately following, "He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."—John vi. 71. The question I shall ask is, Did John record the truth? If so, where is Judas' power of option, or "free agency," in the betrayal of Jesus? Pilate thought he was a "free agent" in the matter of the crucifixion of the Savior. When he asked, "Whence art thou?" and Jesus gave him no answer, "Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest not thou unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" Jesus answered, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."—John xix. 10, 11. This same record tells us that "from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him;" but he could not do it: and why? I answer, He had not

the power given him from above. The apostle Paul was a firm believer in this same all-powerful God that I have herein been trying to set forth; for he says, "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."—Rom. xiii. 1. And in his letter to his Colossian brethren he says, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." If there is any spirit, power, thing or being, other than God himself, that is not included in the above declarations, I am free to confess that I am so ignorant that I cannot comprehend what it is. Well might the apostle, in contemplating this wonder-working, powerful God, with whom we have to do, exclaim, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Often when contemplating the greatness of the power, wisdom and knowledge of the great Jehovah, I am made to greatly fear and tremble; and when I attempt to comprehend his divine attributes, I am lost in amazement and wonder; and often my mind grasps, as it were, mysteries too deep for my comprehension. Shall I, a poor, ignorant, finite man, because I cannot solve the mysteries of the infinite God, set a limit to his power? God forbid. The world of mankind charge us with making the God of heaven and earth an unjust God, because we advocate the doctrine of election. There is nothing more plainly taught in the Bible, to my understanding, than election; yet the religionists of the world denounce it as an untruth, because they cannot reconcile it with their ideas of God. I do rejoice that all the power of earth combined cannot change the eternal truth of God. Nothing can be taken from or added to it. It is a great mystery to me how that God, who is so pure, holy, just and good that he "cannot look upon sin," yet so controls in his "determinate counsel and foreknowledge" the wicked acts of men as to accomplish his praise and glory, and yet leave them sinners, and accountable to him. But because I cannot comprehend it, it does not change in the least the truth declared by the psalmist, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."—Psa. lxxxvi. 10. So that when the appointed time had come that Jesus should be "betrayed into the hands of wicked men," it only required the withdrawing of the restraining power of God from over those "wicked hands," that the praise and glory of God should be accomplished, as determined of God should be done, in the crucifixion of the Lamb of God. Take the case of Joseph's brethren in selling him into bondage, who will say that it was not evil in his brethren so to do? Joseph tells them, "Ye thought evil against me; but

God meant it unto good. It was not you that sent me hither, but God." The evil intended by Joseph's brethren was not only overruled to their good, but to "saving much people alive." Here was the beginning of a long chain of events, or decrees of God, yet coming, concerning national Israel. When a new king rose up in Egypt that knew not Joseph, the children of Israel had increased abundantly and multiplied, so that the land was filled with them; so much so that the king feared that they would join in war against him. He thought to reduce their members by instructing the Hebrew midwives to kill all the sons born unto the Hebrew women. But the midwives feared God more than the king, and "saved the men children alive." Here is the restraining power of God manifest over the wrath of man. We find that from the time that Moses and Aaron went, according to the commandment of the Lord, to Pharaoh, saying, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness," Pharaoh began to lay heavy burdens upon the children of Israel; so much so that they would not hearken unto Moses when he spake unto them, because of "anguish of spirit and cruel bondage." None will, I believe, deny that Pharaoh was a wicked king; and yet it is declared that the Lord hardened his heart, that he might "multiply signs and wonders in the land of Egypt."—Exodus vii. 3. And not only did God harden his heart, so that he would not let Israel go, but he said, "And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."

I find that what I have already written will occupy more space in our family paper than I feel willing to ask be allowed to me. I have in much weakness tried to show some of the testimony upon which my belief is founded, as to the predestination of all things. What I have written, I submit to your consideration, brethren Beebe, and if published, to the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS generally, and to my much esteemed brother referred to. May God bless what I have written, that is in accordance with truth, and pardon error. Amen.

J. H. YEOMAN.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Dec. 28, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES for January first, 1887, came to hand to-day, and found me low down and disheartened spiritually; but I felt greatly comforted in reading the precious truth as it is in Jesus, set forth in the columns of the dear old SIGNS. I have never yet seen the time since my first acquaintance with the SIGNS, some ten or twelve years ago, that I was not glad to see it. During all these years of trials, troubles, persecutions and bodily afflictions, that dear paper has proved to be an ever-faithful friend to me, and seldom, if ever, has

it failed to afford me comfort and consolation, no matter what the circumstances by which I was surrounded; and I feel now that I want that dear paper to visit me as long as I remain on earth. I have not read all that is in this number, and have read but very little for some time; but I was specially edified in the perusal of Elder Durand's article upon the subject of controversy, and also Elder Jenkins' reply to Mr. Loud, of Jersey City, and also the editorial; and in fact I found joy and comfort wherever I read. Elder Jenkins, speaking of the brethren meeting every Sunday for worship in the city of New York, made me want to be there. During my bodily afflictions for the past twenty-eight months (rendering me incapable of going about to meeting much), I have greatly desired to live near a church of the Old School order where they met for worship every Sunday, so that I could meet with those once a week whose "conversation is in heaven." Often does this Scripture occur to my mind, "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."—Mal. iii. 16. It is good to meet together in the name of Christ; but to meet in our own name, or in the name of some man, is not so good. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;" but O how sad to see them striving, backbiting, vilifying, &c. I try to learn more and more every day of my own weakness, depravity and nothingness, and more of the honor, purity and holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I desire to be more like him. I want to learn obedience by the things that I suffer. I want to turn my cheek to the smiters; and when I am reviled, revile not again. I have suffered great trials, tribulations, persecutions and afflictions within the past three years, and I have many times been ready to faint by the way; but the Lord Jesus has strengthened and sustained me, and by the help of God I continue unto this day; and I desire to return unto God my heartfelt thanks and gratitude for his kind protection over me. As to my afflictions and sufferings, I feel that they are just, that I deserve them all, and I feel that they have only been the gentle strokes of a loving Father, dealt out to me for my good; and sometimes I am enabled to "rejoice in my sufferings." I wish the SIGNS, its editors and patrons, and all who are in any way connected with it, the abundant blessings of our never-changing God. I desire to be remembered by you all in your petitions at the throne of grace. Grace, love, mercy and peace be with the Israel of God.

Your unworthy servant,

H. J. REDD.

STATTON, Oregon, Dec. 28, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just received a letter from a nephew, whom I have not heard directly from for over twenty

years, which was so full of comfort to me that I feel, with your permission, like having it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, hoping and trusting that it will be of interest to others of like precious faith. I mentioned in my communication, published in the SIGNS of November first, my being afflicted, from which I am still suffering. The doctors call my ailment rheumatic gout, which affects my feet and lower limbs, causing them to feel numb and heavy. I am also troubled with shortness of breath, so much so that I am unable to lie down much of the time. It is nearly impossible for me to write any more, as I am so nervous, and can remain in one position only a few moments at a time, which is my reason for not communicating with my brethren and sisters in the Lord, and relatives in the flesh. The letter is copied, at my request, by my son Richard, who has fled for refuge to lay hold on this same hope set before us, and feels to rejoice with them that rejoice. My brother, Ahirah Sanford, is living with me, and is in good health generally. Though almost entirely blind, he is still firm and strong in the faith.

With christian love and fellowship for all the faithful in Christ Jesus, I remain your brother,
JOEL SANFORD.

HADDAM, Kansas, Dec. 14, 1886.

TO JOEL SANFORD, GREETING:—In the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Volume liv., No. 21, page 249, I find a short communication over your signature, stating that you were in your seventy-third year and badly afflicted, but that your hope is still strong in your Savior, through the testimony received from God. Dear uncle, I rejoice with you, that the Lord has given you abundant assurance of your inheritance with the saints, and of being an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ, to an inheritance in his heavenly kingdom that is undefiled, and that passeth not away. In old age, when this earthly tabernacle is failing, racked with pain, and the afflictions that flesh is heir to, when earthly pleasures, comforts and desires are one by one departing, when we surely know that this earthly body must very soon crumble back to its mother earth, from whence it came, what a rapture it is to be in possession of that hope which is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, reaching to that within the veil, where Jesus, our forerunner, is gone; and to be able to say, I have fought a good fight, I have won the race, and I know that a crown is laid up for me at his right hand; and not for me only, but for all those who love his appearing and kingdom.

Dear uncle, when I last visited you, at Sanfordville, you expressed to me a hope that the Lord in his own good time would bring me into the light, and give me the evidence of that good hope. Now, dear uncle, rejoice with me in the hope that I have a good hope; for I feel that I can testify that he has brought me by a way I knew not, led me in a path I had not seen, opened my blind eyes, unstopped my

deaf ears, and put a new song into my mouth, even praise to our God; and all this, too, without my doing anything to merit his great mercy and favor. "By grace are ye saved." O how grateful I feel, and yet how unworthy of all his great mercies. I indeed have a great desire to be Christ-like, holy, just and true; but my carnal nature is sinful, and wars against the spiritual nature. There is a constant warfare within me. I have no righteousness of my own; I have no hope but in Jesus, the Savior of sinners. He is my righteousness, my sanctification, my redemption. He is my rock, my high tower. He is to me the shadow of a great rock in a parched desert and howling wilderness. O what love has he manifested to me! yes, poor, unworthy me. When I was poor and blind and naked he took the filthy rags of self-righteousness from me, and clothed me with salvation, his righteousness. He gave himself for us, that through his death and sufferings we might have life.

Your unworthy nephew and (if I may venture to add) brother in Christ,

AMOS REED.

LONG GREEN, Md., Jan. 4, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please send the SIGNS OF THE TIMES one year to Samuel Glen, High Point, Harford Co., Md. This is another of the Lord's dear children that has been made manifest during the past year; also my sister Lydia and three others, since the first Sunday in May, 1886. This is cheering indeed to our little church at Harford, and we are made to feel that the Lord is not slack concerning his promises; that he will bring his sons from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth; and how much further can they get? The church here is at peace one with another, and in perfect harmony in all the essential points of doctrine on which some brethren seem to differ. In this we do not feel like boasting, but desire to put our trust in God; for it is he that has helped us hitherto, and we believe he will continue his goodness and mercy to us, even in tribulation, in which we also glory, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope;" and is not this all we need while in the flesh? Nothing can make us ashamed of such an hope, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts; and we see our own sinfulness and nothingness, and thus realize our dependence upon the strong arm of the Lord. Whenever we are resting in the strength of the Lord we are putting our trust there; and "Blessed is he that maketh the Lord his trust." What a resting place, in the arms of Jesus! When we realize that the everlasting arms are underneath, how sweetly the child of God can sit and sing itself away to everlasting bliss. But this is not all that makes up the life of a christian in this world; for we cannot be a disciple of the Lord without persecution, and we have this persecution in ourselves. The flesh

fight all the way, and persecutes that which is by promise.

My mind seems led to express a thought or two on the tares among the wheat. All parables seem to me to set forth something in nature which we can comprehend, but not setting forth perfectly that which it is intended to signify spiritually; for all natural things come far short of the spiritual. It appears from this parable that after the good seed was sown in the field, and they slept, an enemy sowed the tares. Now we are all aware that no man came and sowed tares in his neighbor's field; but as far as the tares are concerned, they were in the ground before, that is, the seed; and the tares are so intermixed with the wheat that it would destroy the wheat to dig them up, so they remain until the harvest. As I understand this, "the tares are the children of the wicked one." When did he beget them? In the garden; and when Eve partook of the forbidden fruit they were born, and have remained ever since; but they are not so manifested to any one until the good seed is sown, and they begin to grow, or show themselves together. How well every child of God knows this. My experience has taught me this; and what I have thus learned I cannot but believe. In the harvest the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; yes, all the hay, wood and stubble will be utterly consumed, and nothing but the pure gold will be left.

My mind reaches so far into this subject that to stop is more discreet. I wish to add my voice to Elder Durand's. Let controversy continue, also brotherly love, with no cutting or harsh words, remembering what is the fruit of the Spirit.

Yours in hope,

MILTON DANCE.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Dec. 14, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I received the hymn books you sent, and upon a close examination find them to be suitable for Old School or Primitive Baptists. I feel to say, as others, abler and more scrutinizing than I, have said, that you can open that and sing on any page, and feel assured that the doctrine and sentiment of each hymn corresponds with God's revealed word, and is sound; and more than that, the hymns are suited to the feelings and sentiments of God's people, who feel to be saved by the Lord. I sit down and read them, and they bring to me a degree of joy and comfort; and I feel that with that book in hand, when I have the spirit, I can sing with the understanding also. I feel that it is due to say this much in its behalf. We have used Lloyd's Collection in our section, but prefer by far the Beebe hymn book.

While I am writing this, I also desire to encourage those who write for the SIGNS; for I do enjoy the reading of the many good letters from the brethren in the kingdom of the Lord, from the different parts of the country. How often our poor, downcast hearts are made to leap for joy in reading the expressions from the

hearts of the Lord's people, their conflicts, their trials and afflictions, and their deliverances, bringing home to us the truth and fulfillment of God's precious promises; for the Lord hath said there shall be deliverance in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. O how delighted the children feel, after weeks of fiery trials and manifold temptations, and the Lord assures them that he will never leave them nor forsake them. How bitter the cup often seems before it passes; but after it is taken it passes, and O what joy! No chastening seemeth joyous, but rather grievous; but afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby. How glorious, when above the din and roar of a confused world our eyes are turned to behold him who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the majesty on high. He rises above all, and to him we can look; and he says, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

ACTON, Texas, Jan. 4, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—When I came home from Blanco, Texas, on December 31st, I found a letter from brother J. D. Hubbell, of Kelley's Corners, N. Y., containing a check drawn in your favor to pay my subscription for our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for which I feel thankful indeed. I hope the dear brother will be remembered by me, and by all the household of faith, for his kindness not only to me, but I am persuaded to many others. I also found a letter from Dayton, Washington Territory, sent by Elder I. N. Newkirk and other dear brethren there, stating that they had sent four dollars to you, subject to my order; and I acknowledged the receipt of the same by registered letter, January first. Dear brethren, I will apply the money as requested. I would say to brethren and friends who may hereafter send help to our destitute brethren in western Texas, that they should send it to Elder Willis Russell, Eliasville, Young Co., Texas, and to brother A. B. Medlan, Graham, Texas. Brother Medlan is deacon of the New Mount Zion Church, and Elder Willis Russell is pastor of two or three churches in that drouth-stricken country. I would recommend J. P. Randolph and Elder B. L. Throneberry, Springtown, Texas, as good men, who would properly apply whatever might be sent to the brethren in Parker County, Texas. Also Elder Caudel, who lives near Alexandria, Texas, is a good man, and one who can be relied upon, and (being in destitute circumstances) would do right with whatever might be sent to him. Elder E. Caudel is pastor of several churches, who think a great deal of him, but are unable to help him.

Dear brethren Beebe, I inclose the two dollar check, for which please

give me credit. I will be thankful if you publish this imperfect letter. A Happy New Year to you and all your readers. Yours in hope,

W. L. ROGERS.

TIFFIN, Ohio, Dec. 15, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I notice on the last number of SIGNS received the above date, also credit upon my subscription to this date only. Thus am I reminded of the flight of the past year, and the hopes, prospects and requirements of the new year just before us. We live in an age remarkable for the many artificial wants which social usage has introduced. Hence it often becomes a question, when the means to gratify all our desires are too short, What shall I do? Where shall I draw the line between the indispensable and the dispensable? On the one hand are the necessities of food, raiment and shelter, indispensable to human existence; and yet no two minds can agree upon the character of these to be employed. What to one mind seems scanty, to another appears ample, and to another luxurious or extravagant. So with regard to the culture or endowments of the mind. One is content with little, another is never satisfied, never has enough. A few years since I enjoyed the communion and unstinted hospitality of Baptist brethren in far away Texas. In one instance it made a lasting impression upon my mind. I found a brother and sister with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and a western Baptist periodical, and the family Bible, as constant companions. An average Ohio Baptist with such limited comforts and conveniences of a material kind would feel quite too poor to read one Baptist paper even. Yet I found these brethren rich in faith and enjoying in a remarkable degree the fellowship and sweet communion of the saints. With the Spirit and the understanding they could sing,

"While bless'd with a sense of his love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there."

If brother Blevins, or Clark, or Bolin, or Fleming, or any of the brethren whom I met at the Union meeting in 1882, should see this, I beg to assure them of my grateful remembrance of their brotherly kindness to me, a poor stranger in the flesh, whom they never saw before, and may never see again. If our Master in the kingdom of love notes a cup of water given to "the least of these my brethren," surely the feast of good things so freely given is felt in the heart of infinite love. Brethren, what a privilege to have a medium of correspondence and christian communion with those of like precious faith. How often have I taken my empty pitcher, and at one of the "wells of salvation" found a gifted brother or sister drawing out the pure water of life. With my little pitcher replenished, I have been refreshed and strengthened. And then some little gift sometimes comes tremblingly to the family altar, with the same sweet story of Jesus

and his love. O how like a gem it sparkles in the diadem of that Spirit whom it crowns as Lord of all. Some of these gifts manifested in the SIGNS, to the comfort and instruction of its readers in days gone by, will appear no more on printed pages here; but other witnesses will God raise up to speak and write the wonders of his love and grace. Darkness may cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but light, the light of divine truth, will still shine amid the darkness, till every heir of heaven is emancipated from the dominion of sin, and taught like Jonah, that salvation is of the Lord. I should like to name those whose contributions to the SIGNS have come like rich odors from the "South Country," from the garden of the Lord; but I cannot name all, and will only say that every number has well paid for perusal. Go on, brethren Beebe, as in the past, exposing the craft of false prophets, who prophesy for gain; and with tender care promote the peace and health of God's little ones, even as the good Shepherd careth for his flock. May God bless your labors to this end, and to his own glory.

Yours in hope of a triumphant resurrection and a blessed immortality.

JOHN SEITZ.

SANFORD, Maine, Dec. 25, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am so destitute of something to write, I hardly know what language to use, for I do feel that within myself I cannot say anything to interest a child of grace. But I have been impressed to try to write some of my ups and downs here in this barren land, where there is naught but strife and turmoil, unless the God of Israel leads about and instructs a poor wagfaring mortal; for it is evident to my mind that according to the word of truth I am but a poor sinner, as I see myself, doomed to destruction. Nothing but the grace of God can do a poor sinner good. Christ says, "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." "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

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

"No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon: it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isaiah xxxv. 9, 10. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isaiah xl. 1, 2. The word of God, how substantial it is,

brought about by God's grace and mercy in eternal wills and shalls.

Now, as the time has arrived for me to renew my subscription, you will find inclosed two dollars for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I do not feel like giving up a paper that comes laden with such glorious communications and editorials, holding forth the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in its purity.

Dear brethren, there were four added to the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, Maine, by baptism, last September, and it was a few drops before a more plentiful shower, I hope. Since then the Lord has been pleased to call home a dear sister that belonged to the same church. We shall miss her, for she will not be here to fill her seat; but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken; blessed be his holy name.

O that the Lord may sustain you, dear brethren Beebe, in your publications, is the desire of a poor, unworthy one, and less than the least, if one at all.

Fraternally yours,

LEWIS BUTLER.

OLIVET, Iowa, Oct. 21, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In love to all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I take my pen to say that I have been a reader of the same for more than forty years. I am made to marvel at some of the correspondence, even at some of our most able brethren, in their attempt to go out on the subject of predestination. To attempt to prove it true, one might just as well go out and attempt to prove that the sun is the light of day. The one is not more plain than the other. Please try to get a man to see before his eyes are opened, or until the seal is loosed. I do not say this because I doubt the doctrine of predestination; no; but because it admits of no argument. And then, to make it that much more dark or doubtful, to consume time by apologizing for God! The things are so, for God so arranged, fixed, ordered or created them, and that is all there is of it.

I may further say that the manner in which the subject of the "seals" is treated, I also marvel. If we place the comma after the words, "written within," then only that written within is written at all; but place the comma after the words, "and on the back side," as it is, then all that is written, both within and on the back side, is under seal, till the good Lord is pleased to open the same. This "written within and on the back side," is properly the two witnesses, of which so much is talked about. Now, dear brethren, what is a witness? It is that which tells the truth, as the case now before us. Many things are taken into court and called witnesses, which are not properly witnesses. My witness as to penmanship is my work, as you see when you see this scribble. So God's witness is his work; and as we have two

witnesses of the God of the whole earth, these witnesses are his works, and are under seal till he opens them; and no man can even look thereon, as the good book says. Some seem to think that the Old and New Testaments are these two witnesses. Just let me say that these Testaments are but the affidavit, at best, of these two witnesses. The two witnesses are the works of God. The work of God in nature is the "back side" written (witness), and the "within" is the work of God in grace. From these flow the golden oil through the golden pipes, from which is the light found in the lamp, or the church.

I have been very brief upon this very grand subject, but will close, in love to all.

AARON WOOD.

ROCA, Nebraska, Dec. 21, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel a desire to thank you for sending me the SIGNS so regularly, and hope to be able to remit to you in advance the next time. We do not feel like we can do without it, for it comes richly laden with the heavenly manna from our Father's table. It is truly rich food for our hungry souls, and we can feast with delight even here, on the broad plains of Nebraska, where we have never met with an Old School Baptist, and have been here nearly seven years, and have not heard a sermon preached for about ten years. So, brethren, write on; and may the dear Lord enable you to wield your pens to the honor of his name and the glory of his cause, and the comfort and edifying of his poor and afflicted children here in the world. Of course we hear plenty of will-worshippers, who claim that a person must want to be born again, and then be willing to let himself be born again; and that we must do so and so before we are born of the Spirit. And this is not the worst of it, for they say that we can be switching back and forth from serving the Lord to serving the devil all the time. But, dear brethren, I am glad that God has said that he will save his people with an everlasting salvation, and that he loves them with an everlasting love, and that no power can pluck them out of his hand; so there is no danger about any of his dear children being lost.

Your brother in hope,

JOSEPH BRUCE.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Jan. 29, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I write to say to the brethren and friends of the Old School or Primitive Baptists, anywhere and everywhere, that I have purchased a lot in Northport, Ala., for the purpose of erecting a house of worship for our people (the Old School or Primitive Baptists). The lumber and other material is now being laid down on the ground, and, the Lord willing, I want to have the house framed next week. The size of the house is to be 20x40 feet, simply a plain house; and as I am dependent on voluntary contributions to defray the expenses of the building, I wish

to say to all who may feel able and inclined so to do, that any donation, no matter how small, sent to my address, will be used for that purpose alone and thankfully received. The people here (regardless of tenets) have helped to pay for the land, and some donations besides, and I feel to thank the Lord for it. We have a few brethren and friends here, but they are all poor in this world's goods, and cannot help much. I have for about fifteen years sighed and groaned and wept and prayed for a house of worship and an organized church at this place, and the Lord has heard my prayer so far that we organized last February, and I believe he will enable me to build the house. To this end I pray night and day.

Northport, Alabama, is a money-order office. If any persons should send any money for the above purpose, they will please address me at this place.

I will further state that we are entirely without any house at present; besides, the Little Hope Association is appointed to meet at this place on Friday before the first Sunday in next September.

H. J. REDD.

4 MANDIVILLE ST., UTICA, N. Y., Dec. 20, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Finding ourselves nearly at the close of another year, reminds us of the dutiful privilege of remitting for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the ensuing year. You will therefore please find inclosed post-office order for two dollars for the same. While in our darkness and ignorance we do not feel able to contribute to its pages, we would add our untold satisfaction at the manner in which it is conducted, and our high appreciation of the matter it contains. This proves it to us to be one of the streams which make glad the city (church) of our God, as by and through the same we are so comforted and instructed, and to lose which we feel would be an irreparable loss. Although there are other good periodicals in circulation, yet we think this (our family paper) has the pre-eminence. We therefore hope that the dear writers will continue so to feed the sheep and lambs that there will be no lack of that rich provision which is partaken of only by the household of faith, as none others see it or even desire it; and if we do,

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Now, dear brethren editors and publishers, we hope that you may see the reward of your labors in the prompt remittances of your patrons at the close of this fast-fleeting year, with the consoling thought that your strength is not spent in vain, nor your labor for that which satisfieth not. While many doubtless have not seen you personally, yet they are thanking God in their very souls that they find it to them as a well of living water, and as streams from Lebanon.

As ever, in the hope of the gospel,

R. & L. ALEXANDER.

BLANCO, Texas, Jan. 6, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—As many of your patrons have written to me in commendation of the sentiments embodied in articles from my pen and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and as lack of time from worldly engagements will not admit of private correspondence with each, with your permission I wish to say to them through the columns of your paper that their kind notices and expressions of sympathy and christian fellowship are very encouraging and consoling, and are much appreciated by me. And as many of your patrons have made inquiry about this country, I will say to them that my information in that particular is limited; yet I believe that as to fertility of soil, and as far as my knowledge extends, the morals and social habits of the citizens, will compare favorably with any of which I am acquainted.

I will say to brother Scates, of Canada, that the portion of the state where I live is a rough, mountainous country, with good water, plenty of rough fire wood, and is settled principally by small farmers, who are good, social and energetic citizens. We have organized a little church of good, sound Baptists, as I think. If you, brother Scates, wish to come here, we will be glad to welcome you.

I expect to write for the SIGNS as I may get time, as many of your patrons request it.

JAMES WAGNER.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Feb. 7, 1887.

ELDER BENTON JENKINS—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I see by the *Messenger* and *Landmarks* an appeal from many brethren in Texas for help. It is stated that a terrible drought has existed there for two years. No doubt you have seen all the particulars. Can't we help them a little? It seems that many are well nigh starvation. It seems terrible. We propose taking up collections in our churches to that end. I have written to several of the brethren about it, and expect to write to others. Can you not mention the matter to brother Beebe and show him this letter? If we can raise but little yet it may be a great help to some.

I want to say that your article in the SIGNS of Jan. 1, commends itself to me throughout. It rings true. I do not know that I should desire to change a sentence to affix my name to it. The editorials are specially good of late.

Remember me in love to all.

As ever, your brother,

F. A. CHICK.

[The suggestive of brother Chick is a good one, and we hope that the churches of our order generally will act in the matter, and send help to the needy ones. See the letter of brother W. L. Rogers on page 43. —Ed.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1887.

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

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

IDOLATRY.

"LITTLE children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."—1 John v. 21.

The subject of our last article, "True Worship," suggests its counterpart, to which attention is called in these words, with which the aged John closes his first epistle to the scattered saints. Their importance cannot be overestimated by them to whom they are addressed. It should be remembered that the admonition was not written to the world of natural men, but to those whose fellowship was claimed by the apostle, as is clearly expressed in the beginning of this epistle, and often reiterated throughout the letter. From the fact that idolatry is so closely allied to all the emotions of man in his fallen state, the wisdom of inspiration recognized the necessity which these "little children" must experience for inspired direction to keep themselves from the deceitful snares of that idolatry which was their natural element, as well as their constantly recurring temptation while surrounded by its alluring and deceitful enticements. The light of reason could afford them no guidance; and while their own experience would inspire the lesson here taught, they yet needed this apostolic admonition to establish them in it beyond the power of doubt and cavil.

To those who know the depravity of fallen man, it is not strange to find "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart only evil continually." Thus it has been since by the first transgression sin entered into the world. Hence it is nothing more than might be expected that sinners in nature's darkness should be wholly given to idolatry. With such it is not our design at present either to contend or remonstrate. Our text does not address such characters. The endearing terms in which the old apostle designates those to whom this epistle is written, can apply to none but those who have "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." To them the last survivor of the inspired apostles stood indeed as a father, and as such could well call them his little children. It was not the mere fact that they were so much younger than John in nature that justified the use of the term "little children." Even though they may have attained the natural years of the patriarchs, or of old Simeon and Anna, in the sense of our text they were still "little children;" for those to whom the admonition is addressed are such as have been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." These helpless characters are indeed correctly designated as "little chil-

dren," and never do they grow to be less dependent upon the sovereign grace of God than in their first reception of his life-giving word. Indeed, their growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ shows them more clearly their own insufficiency and nothingness. So, it was but a faint expression of the truth experienced in his own soul when Paul claimed to be "less than the least of all saints." Their conscious weakness renders these little children easy victims to the delusive pretension of those idols which are suggested by the tempter as being able to help them. If they had been secure against such temptations, the admonition in our text would have been unnecessary; but the Spirit of truth seeing their need of this sustaining instruction, left it on record to corroborate the truth as revealed in their individual experience.

In order to correctly apprehend the meaning of this admonition, it is needful to understand what is the scriptural definition of an idol. Paul was guided by the unerring wisdom of inspiration when he wrote, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one."—1 Cor. viii. 4. This was said of those images which were worshiped by the heathen Corinthians, among whom the church to whom he wrote was located. Those inanimate things could neither improve nor injure the meats offered to them. Yet lest the action of the saints in partaking such food should be misunderstood by the weak as authorizing them to eat with reverence for the idol, the apostle would abstain from eating meat altogether. It was not idolatry for Paul to eat such meat as had been offered to idols, for he knew the idol to be nothing; but for those who were not established in this truth to partake with their idolatrous associates would be in them idolatry. It was to avoid the possibility of thus by his example causing the weak to offend, that Paul would deny himself that which was to him lawful. This expression of Paul is sometimes perhaps carelessly perverted as subjecting himself to the prejudices of his brethren; as if he had said, "If meat offend my brother I will not eat it." It will be seen by reference to the text cited that his expression will not bear that interpretation. So the true declaration of Paul in this text does not conflict with James, who says, "In many things we offend all."—James iii. 2. While the apostle would deny his natural appetite to avoid the possibility of causing a weak brother to reverence an idol, he would not hesitate to tell the truth to the churches of Galatia, even though they should count him their enemy.—Gal. iv. 16. Thus the limit of justifiable submission to the weakness of brethren is fixed at the sacrifice of personal privileges. When we would be so submissive as to yield any point of divine truth, we are making an idolatrous offering to secure a deceitful

peace. Truth is too precious to be sold for any consideration. So Wisdom directs, "Buy the truth and sell it not."—Prov. xxiii. 23. There is no idol for which the saints can afford to disregard this instruction, not even the promise of peace and safety.—See 1 Thess. v. 3. Every word of inspired truth is essential to the present comfort of the saints. Any departure from that infallible standard is a step in the worship of an idol. So narrow is the path of life that there is no room for the disciple of Jesus to carry with him anything wherein he can glory. The very entrance to that way demands that self be denied.—Matthew xvi. 24. When self is excluded, all idols are excluded with the element in which they originate. But the insidious working of this terrible principle will even deceive the most watchful saint; so that when he thinks he is entirely free from selfishness, ere he is aware of it the Satanic principle of pride will fill his heart and blind his eyes until he can see no fault in self and no good in any one else. This most poisonous principle is called in the Scriptures covetousness, and it is expressly defined by the apostle as idolatry.—See Eph. v. 5; Col. iii. 5. Thus the text warns these "little children" against this terribly destructive enemy of their peace; and it is very necessary that they heed the warning, for they are never safe from its treacherous assaults while they remain in the body of this death.

In the type the nation of Israel often fell into the deadly sin of worshipping the idols of their heathen neighbors; and it was always the cause of severe punishment coming upon them. While they could do nothing which could dissolve their relationship to Abraham naturally, yet they did suffer the consequence of their own disobedience to the covenant which God gave them, in temporal calamities, captivity and death. In this the saints are shown how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God in provoking his chastising rod.—See Heb. x. 19-31. Their eternal life is secured with Christ in God; but they are subjected to the pains of hell in their present experience of the rod of chastisement.—Col. iii. 3; Psalm cxvi. 3. Thus they learn by personally enduring the withering effects of idolatry, that "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."—Jonah ii. 8. In no other way can this lesson be so thoroughly impressed upon them as it is done by their suffering the just visitation of their own folly. The Lord is faithful to his promise in the new covenant, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes."—Psalm lxxxix. 30-32. And this manifestation of the truth of the everlasting love of God is cited as the full testimony of the chastened one being a genuine child. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiv-

eth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."—Heb. xii. 6-8. Such evidence of their vital relationship to God can never satisfy the natural mind of the saint, which is always seeking something agreeable to carnal selfishness as displaying the divine favor. Hence they who are guided by this principle are always worshipping their idol of self-reliance, while they who are led by the Spirit of God have to say with Paul, "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."—2 Cor. i. 9, 10. This childlike trust in God is found nowhere but in the chastened subjects of his grace. In them it shines more clearly as all other confidence is cut off. So, when the multitude had gone back from following Jesus he asked them that remained, "Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."—John vi. 67-69. This faith of the Son of God is the sure support of them in whom it abides; and in the night of sorrow and affliction they are blessed with assurance of its living power to keep them as they never saw it in the light of comfort and joy. Therefore they who have endured most severe trials are most firmly settled in the truth of salvation by grace alone; and this truth is their protection against the allurements of self-confidence which lead the unstable into idolatry. So the apostle says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."—James i. 12. This life is in the present experience of the tried one in contrast with the death experienced in the idolatry of confidence in themselves. It was to living saints that Paul wrote, "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."—Rom. viii. 13.

"Keep yourselves from idols." As these little children are so utterly helpless, reason can see no consistency in this injunction to keep themselves. Yet they are repeatedly admonished in similar language in the inspired Scriptures. It is only to those who are kept by the power of God that this direction can apply. They can keep themselves from idols, because they are thus kept by their Lord, whose Spirit dwells in them. Yet it is not by any effort of their own that they obey this exhortation. If they are so far left to their own will as to endeavor in their own strength to keep themselves, they invariably fall into this very sin against which they are admonished

in our text. Their bitter self-reproach while walking in darkness, and their exultation when they see the light, are alike manifestations of idolatry when they are looking to themselves for light, or ascribing their deliverance from the darkness to any efforts or merits of their own. There is no other way in which the saints do keep themselves from idols but by their experience of the vanity of all such refuges of lies. When they have proved the folly of trusting in selfish resolutions and in their own strength, then they are driven to flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us, which is nothing less than Christ in them the hope of glory. Repeated instruction is necessary to keep them in remembrance of this very important lesson, and they must be crucified and die daily in learning it; yet they find after all their severe conflicts that the whole truth was in the first revelation given them that "Salvation is of the Lord." They can testify from personal knowledge that there is nothing meritorious in self; and that had anything been left to their own works or will, there would have been no hope for their salvation. In this testimony they are witnesses of God, and that besides him there is no Savior.—See Isaiah xliii. 10-12. Yet they need the power of God to keep them continually, that they may be enabled to keep themselves from idols. Thus they know that their preservation is "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. iv. 6. They keep themselves from idols by the ruling power of the same Spirit by which they are guided into all truth.—John xvi. 13. So Jude exhorts "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," saying, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." This specifies how the saints do keep themselves, not by any trust in themselves, but by reliance alone upon the sovereign mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. So they can only keep themselves from idols by the same perfect trust in that full salvation from sin which is revealed in their Lord. There is no idolatry in casting all their care upon him who careth for them.—1 Peter v. 7. This is the way to worship him in deed and in truth; and in thus committing all their trust to him for time and for eternity they do keep themselves from idols.

Sometimes carnal reason accuses the trembling and bewildered saint of idolatry in those natural affections which are so strongly interwoven with our natural existence, as the love of parents and children, husbands and wives, and all the ties of kindred. Especially when these relations have been broken by the power of death does this cruel suggestion of the tempter aggravate the smitten heart of the mourning survivor. But by reference to the Scriptures it will be seen that this is not idolatry. It is

commanded by the authority of our Lord that this natural love should be expressed by his disciples; and nowhere are they cautioned against it. It is enjoined that husbands shall love their wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.—Eph. v. 25. There is no idolatry in obeying this direction. Other natural ties are specifically enjoined upon the saints; and it is not sinful to obey the word of the Lord. On the contrary, Jesus himself wept at the grave of Lazarus, and there gave us the example of indulging that grief which results from the sundering of natural ties. It cannot be idolatry to follow the perfect example of our Lord. The scriptural meaning of idolatry is the trust for righteousness and salvation in anything else besides the name of Jesus Christ, whose blood alone cleanseth us from all sin. The Amen which concludes our text seals it with all the epistle as divine truth.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

WE now have the cloth bound books mailed to all who answered our card of inquiry of last August to know if we had their address correct. We still hold about five hundred of the cloth binding until we hear from the parties, as we do not deem it safe to send books to addresses sent in from two to five years ago, until we hear from them again, to know whether their address is still the same or not. We sent out postal cards last August to all the subscribers of the book, to inquire if they were still at the same place as when they ordered their books, but from about five hundred we have received no reply. From all such we withhold the book until heard from. Any one to whom a cloth bound book is due should have it before this notice reaches them, and if they have not received it they should immediately send their name and address to us.

THE LEATHER BINDING.

We are mailing the leather binding as fast as received from the bindery, about one hundred a day, and we still hope to have all mailed before the first of March, 1887.

We still have a few copies of each style of binding left; for the number and prices see notice on last page.

MARRIAGES.

ON Jan. 13, 1887, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, at his residence in Hopewell, Mr. Richard H. Romine and Miss Jane A. Butterfoss, both of Stockton, Delaware Township, N. J.

ON Jan. 13, 1887, at the residence of the bride's father, near Graefenburg, by Elder J. E. Newkirk, Mr. James Harvey, of Madison Co., Ky., and Miss Naoma Masters.

FEB. 2, 1887, at the residence of the bride's uncle, John Vandervort, by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, Mr. Wm. B. Sproul, of Jersey City, N. J., and Miss Lizzie Wright, of Warwick, N. Y.

JAN. 12, 1887, at the residence of John W. Byrd, near Oak Hall, by Elder T. M. Poulson, Mr. Wm. T. Hall and Miss Tabitha S. Byrd, all of Accomac County, Va.

By Elder F. A. Chick, on Dec. 29, 1886, at the residence of the bride's father, Melville F. Ensor and Sarah A. Ensor, daughter of John H. Ensor, all of Baltimore Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—In Harford County, Md., Dec. 1, 1886, **Mrs. Virginia Grafton**. My dear wife was born in Baltimore County, Md., and with her parents moved to Bureau County, Ill., when in her thirteenth year. In the spring of 1877 I went west and located in the same county, about six miles from where she then lived. On April 3, 1878, we were united in marriage. During the nearly nine years of our married life she made no profession of interest in regard to the salvation of her soul, and until about two weeks before she died was openly and bitterly opposed to the Old School Baptists, saying that if she believed as they did she would be ashamed to tell any one. I used to tell her that the Lord had declared that his people shall be willing in the day of his power. She would answer that he had not the power to make her believe such a hard doctrine as that. But blessed be his holy name, he made her willing, and when the day of his power did come I never saw one more willing, or a more childlike subject of his redeeming love. About two weeks before she passed away I was sitting by her bedside and reading, when she suddenly burst into tears. I told her not to be afraid (she having been told that she could not live), for Jesus loved her. She said, "O! that is just what troubles me. How can he love such a sinner as I am? I have prayed so hard for his love, but he will not come to me. O! I have been such a great sinner. Can he ever forgive me for the way in which I have spoken such hard things concerning his doctrine and his people? O! can he forgive me for the way I treated you when you were baptized? Can you forgive me? I have treated you so badly. Now I can see no other way in which a poor sinner can be saved; for I have done all in my power, and feel myself to be farther off from God than ever in my life."

I tried in my feeble way to comfort her in her great agony of mind, for she said the suffering of the body was nothing to be compared with what she suffered in mind. Her disease was consumption. I tried to point out Jesus to her as the way of life and salvation; that he had not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance; that he had shed his own rich blood for wretched, dying men. She answered, "O! I can plainly see how he can save others, but I can see no way that he can justly save me." Thus she lingered in the most distressing state of mind until the 27th of November. Early in the morning she called me to her, and told me she had seen the loveliest sight she ever beheld; that she had seen Jesus as plainly as she could see me, standing at the foot of the bed, and that he looked at her with an eye of pity in her distress, and then moved slowly away, telling her that he would come again. She seemed completely melted down, and with tears exclaimed, "O! Jake, I had no idea there were such things laid up in heaven as I saw this morning; and, of course, I have not seen the half." I said, "No; the apostle tells us that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." She replied, "What has made me love the things I once so hated? O how I would love to hear the Old Baptists talk once more. I have wondered what made them so fond of each other's company; but it must have been love." She said to me, "Once I was ashamed to hear you talk; but now I want to tell you, while I am yet able to talk, do not be ashamed to speak on the subject anywhere, for I see it is true." On the morning of Dec. 1 she called to us all to come quickly to her side. When I asked her what the matter was, she raised her hand and said, "Jesus is calling me; I must go home." I had scarcely time to summon the family around her before she had passed, without a struggle, from the shores of time, to her eternal home. She told me in her last hours on earth that she had no fear of death or the grave. She was conscious to the very last, whispering words of comfort to me to the last breath. When I asked her, just a moment before she passed away, if she felt that all was well with her, she said, "O yes, my sweet home in heaven. Don't you see him standing there? He is beckoning for me to come. I

must hurry home." She then whispered the words, "Love, love," and spoke to us on earth no more.

Her funeral was preached by Elder Wm. Grafton, and the bearers were my three brothers, Wm. O., Richard M. and Almiron D. and my brother-in-law, J. N. Henderson. The interment (by request of my wife just before she died) was at the Harford Baptist meeting house, in Harford County, Md.

In much distress of mind I have written the above.

JACOB A. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., Jan. 24, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the following notice concerning the death of our dearly beloved brother, **Samuel H. Stout**, of Montgomery Township, N. J., who departed this life Jan. 1, 1887, aged seventy-eight years, ten months and six days. On Sunday morning, the 7th of last November, he was suddenly partially paralyzed in his right side, but the next day he seemed much better; yet it soon became evident that he was gradually becoming weaker; but he was cheerful and always much pleased to have the members of the church, as well as his friends, visit him, and during his illness not a murmuring word escaped from his lips; but he would say, "I feel comfortable, and this is all right." So far as we mortals could judge, his was a painless death. The writer of this notice saw him when "passing away," and he appeared sinking down as free from pain as a little infant would be when sobbing itself to rest on the mother's bosom. Truly,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Our dear departed brother had certainly been a remarkable man; but the all-wise, eternal and unchangeable God has determined concerning man, the number of his months, and has appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;—which truth was clearly exemplified in the sparing of our dear brother to such a ripe old age. We as a church feel our loss very much, but we would be still and know that our God does all things right, however dark and inscrutable his providential dealings with us may appear.

Our dear departed brother discharged the duties incumbent upon him as a member of the church long and faithfully; for he was a member of the church fifty-four years; fifty-two years of which he was leader and conductor of the singing; forty-nine years clerk of the church; and thirty-five years a member of the board of trustees; and but very few of the church meetings, during that long period of time, was he prevented from attending, except the two previous to his death. His home and the hospitality there shown will be sweetly remembered by the brethren of this church, as well as our association, and the many strangers from distant churches; also will linger with us, while reason remains, the calm and peaceful expression that mantled his brow, when we viewed the enshrouded remains, coffined for the grave, and bade our last, sad farewell, saying in our hearts, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The grace of the Spirit bestowed upon him, enabled him to walk in obedience to the commandments of Christ, and according to the profession which he had made, thereby making his life a written epistle, known and read of all men, to the comfort and edification of his brethren, and the glory of the God of his salvation. May we have grace to live the example of our brother, the life of the righteous, fall asleep in Jesus and awake with his likeness. Our dear brother has left an aged sister, five children, one son and four daughters, grandchildren, and other relatives, as well as the church, to mourn the loss of one loved and respected by all who knew him.

His funeral was numerously attended at the brick meeting house in Hopewell village, Wednesday, the 5th inst., and the text used was 1 Cor. xv. 22-26.

ALSO,

DIED—In the city of Trenton, N. J., Sunday morning, Jan. 16, 1887. **Mrs. Mary**

Kulger, aged ninety years, one month and twenty days.

The subject of this notice was baptized when in her nineteenth year; therefore had been a member of the church more than seventy years. The writer never was much in the company of sister Kulger, but knew her to be mild, gentle in her manners, but uncompromisingly established in the truth; and the modern inventions of men in religious matters had no charms for her; for Christ and him crucified was her theme, and her only surviving sister told me that our dear sister said to her a short time before her death, "The Lord has stood by me in all my troubles." Our dear sister, at the time of her death, was a member of the Second Hopewell, or Harbourn town church, of which she had been a member about forty years; she first united with the Kingwood Church, but after changing her residence, she united with the church at Harbourn town. She has left one sister, the youngest one of the family, she being the oldest, and I think four children, two sons and two daughters, and many grandchildren and quite a number of great-grandchildren, as well as many others who feel that another "link in the chain" connecting the past generation with the present, has been severed.

Her funeral was at the village of Titusville, Tuesday, the 18th inst., and the text used upon the occasion was Job xvii. 13-15.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPWELL, N. J., Jan. 24, 1887.

By request I send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the notice of the death of Philip C. and George W. McDonald, sons of Alexander and Martha McDonald, of Ekfrid, Ontario, Canada. Mr. McDonald is a friend of the Old Baptists, and Mrs. McDonald is a sister in the church.

George W. McDonald died Oct. 26, 1886, aged two years, four months and fifteen days. The disease was diphtheria. George was a bright child and winning in his manners; but disease and death spare none. When they come the young, the middle-aged and the old must go. A few minutes before he died he raised his little hands for his father to bend down, when he put his arms around his neck and kissed him, leaving this expression of his love, and took his departure out of this sinful world. I attended his funeral and preached on the occasion.

Philip C. McDonald was very ill with the same complaint when his brother was buried, but such was his presence of mind that when some spoke about people that would be afraid to congregate in the house because of the disease, he suggested to his father that perhaps they had better hold the meeting in the town hall at Appin, which was on the way to the burying place, and which was done. Philip died on the 5th of November, 1886, aged twelve years, seven months and nine days, of the same disease. He was also a very promising boy, forward for his years in understanding, and the pride of his loving parents. He seemed to have a knowledge of preaching when he heard it, telling his mother the difference between our preaching and those who differ with us. He said a little before he died, "My row is hoed." Being asked what he said, he repeated it; meaning, as we suppose, his work was done, or his race was run.

Also, on the 11th of the same month a baby boy was born. Sister McDonald took the complaint, and the babe took it and lived a week. All the other children had the diphtheria, three boys and two girls, but recovered. Our sister is now in good health, and all the family. I visited them on the 8th instant and found them all well, and seemingly reconciled to their sore bereavement. May the Lord be better unto the afflicted parents than sons or daughters.

WM. POLLARD.

DIED—In the morning of August 14, 1886, at his home in Lithonia, Ga., brother **N. Center**, who was born Nov. 10, 1800. Our dear old brother has been a great friend of the writer, and gave me many words of comfort in my youthful days in the ministry. He was a faithful deacon of the Rock Springs Church, a member of Yellow River Baptist Association, which church I tried to serve for

nearly twenty-three years. He was faithful, sound in the faith, and good company. The brethren have lost one of their strong pillars, and feel their loss very much, although he has been so badly afflicted that he has not attended his meeting much in two or three years. He had been paralyzed, which so affected his speech that he could be understood by nobody but sister Center. He was almost helpless for some time before his death. His mind was good to the last, and he went off like one falling asleep. He has been a Baptist nearly sixty-two years. He was a poor man as to this world's goods, but was rich in faith and an heir of the kingdom.

He has left his poor, afflicted wife, our dear old sister, and many warm friends and some relatives, to mourn their loss. Sister Center has kept up well, considering her age. O may the good Lord give her grace and sustain her in all her afflictions, and may she ever realize that the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him.

A very comforting discourse was preached at his funeral by our much beloved old brother, I. Hamby, to a large and sorrowing assembly, and we hope to good effect.

W. D. ALMAND.

NEAR CONYERS, Ga.

SISTER Emaris Mullen was born in Lawrence Co., Miss., Aug. 25, 1813, and died in Attala Co., Miss., Oct. 7, 1886, aged seventy-three years, one month and twelve days. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Holmes Co., Miss., over thirty years prior to her death. She was baptized by Elder McDonald. She lost her husband forty-two years ago, leaving her with five children, two sons and three daughters. The two sons were lost in the late war.

Sister Mullen was a worthy example of christian piety, and was a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She possessed as much energy, perhaps, as was ever allotted to one human being. She suffered much in her afflictions, but bore it all with christian fortitude. She was laid in her resting place on the 8th of October, and Elder W. B. McAdams preached her funeral at the grave. In token of her strong and abiding faith, shortly before her death she sang the following words:

"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?"

Much might be said of such a noble subject, but space forbids. She left her three daughters, eleven grandchildren and many friends to mourn their loss, but not as those without hope. In the language of Paul let me admonish all, "Be ye reconciled to God."

W. GUESS.

WATER VALLEY, Miss.

DIED—At the residence of Mrs. Mary S. Simpson, in Fayette Co., Ky., sister **Mary W. Goodloe**, wife of Mr. Thomas Goodloe. Her maiden name was Mary Webb Ware. She was born Dec. 18, 1814, and was married to Thomas W. Goodloe Jan. 17, 1844, and died Jan. 8, 1887. Sister Goodloe had been a member of the church at Bryans for about fifty years. She was baptized by the late Elder Thomas P. Dudley. She was a living example of the christian religion, and of that wisdom that is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. All of these gracious attributes were certainly exemplified in her daily walk; for her to live indeed was Christ, and to die was gain. Although she was hopelessly paralyzed a number of years ago, which rendered her almost helpless, yet she was a regular attendant at her church meetings, faithful in the discharge of all her covenant duties. It usually required two to assist her from her carriage to her seat, and back, when she attended her church meetings. She leaves her husband, one brother, numerous relatives, a host of friends, together with the church, to mourn her departure, but we mourn not as those that are without hope.

I was called by telegram to conduct the funeral services, on January 11th. May

the God of all grace comfort her aged husband and brother, with all who mourn her loss.

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

Dorcas Sylvesta Smith, daughter of George D. and Emma Smith, died Nov. 16, 1886, aged four years, three months and twenty-one days.

Our darling little Dorcas,
Just turned from four years old,
Is taken from this earth away,
To join the heavenly fold.

When here, her childish prattle
Oft cheered a lonesome hour;
But now she's safely landed
On that peaceful, happy shore.

This little lamb of Jesus' fold,
Only four days before,
Did sit and sing of Jesus
Till she could sing no more.

Her little baby sister,
Not very long ago,
Was taken too from earth away,
From sickness, pain and woe.

Short was their stay with us below,
For Jesus thought it best
To take them to his loving arms,
There peacefully to rest.

Through grace we hope to meet them,
When our days on earth are fled,
And join to praise our Savior God,
With saints around the throne.

Now, gracious Lord, if 'tis thy will,
The rest in mercy spare;
And may we of thy goodness boast,
And own thy tender care.

REBECCA WELLS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario.

DIED—At Bowdoin, Maine, Sept. 12, 1886, **Jonathan Brown**, aged seventy-six years. Brother Brown experienced religion in early life, and united with the Second Baptist Church of Bowdoinham, in 1836, being baptized by Elder Samuel Fogg. At the time of the division he and others left this church, and constituted what is now the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church. He loved the truth as it is in Jesus; he enjoyed the love and fellowship of his brethren; we know our loss is his gain. May God bless the sorrowing children and us all.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

BATH, Maine, Jan. 17, 1887.

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1887.

NO. 5.

POETRY.

SUPPLICATION.

JESUS, merciful and mild,
Lead me as a helpless child;
On no other arm but thine
Would my weary soul recline.
Thou art ready to forgive;
Thou canst bid the sinner live;
Guide the wanderer day by day,
In the strait and narrow way.
Thou canst fit me by thy grace
For the heavenly dwelling-place;
All thy promises are sure;
Ever shall thy love endure.

T. HASTINGS.

BIRTHDAY.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—February fifteenth is my birthday—the date of the next issue of our paper, the SIGNS; and if the following meets your approval, can you print it at that time?

Full nine and fifty years have flown
Since first I saw the light,
And all these years have come and gone,
Through scenes of day and night.

In narrow bounds it all appears,
Yet full of grief and pain;
With shame I look on bygone years,
For all seems dark and vain.

The world with its bewitching snares
Drew my unwary feet
Adown its road, till filled with fears,
I hastened to retreat.

'Twas Sinai's loud and dismal sound
That caused my fears to rise;
A safe retreat could not be found,
Except beyond the skies.

I could not climb that lofty height;
Alas! I here must dwell,
And in one long, eternal night
Must make my bed in hell.

How lovely then did saints appear!
How free from every sin!
Their lives so pure, their way so clear,
A shining light within.

Beneath my feet Golconda lay,
And California's mine;
I'd give you all for one small ray
Of hope of life divine.

O where am I? despair has gone,
My fears distress no more;
What is it in my soul has come
With such a glorious power?

Beyond the range of mortal sight,
'Mong beauties none can tell,
My soul was made to take a flight,
And made in heaven to dwell.

O happy place without alloy!
My soul, how came thee here?
Nothing can now disturb my joy—
What glories now appear!

Alas! alas! for sinful me,
I fell to earth again;
'Twas but a vision, now I see,
And all my joys were vain.

On billowy heights, in awful depths,
I since that time have rode;
And on this dreadful sea of life
I'm pressing home to God.

But few more days of fleeting breath
My vessel shall be driven,
Till, stranded in the gates of death,
I hope to land in heaven.

THOMAS COLE.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNTO WHAT AND UNTO WHOM THE SAINTS ARE COME.—HEB. XII. 22-24.

NUMBER THREE.

"To THE general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven."

In the patriarchal and legal dispensations the first-born son had the pre-eminence as the heir to his father's name and estate. It was with regard to this pre-eminence that among the children of Israel every first-born son was to be given to the Lord.—Ex. xxii. 29. Of the whole nation of Israel, which was expressly chosen to be a type of the children of God, the Lord said, "Israel is my first-born."—Ex. iv. 22. Ephraim also, a tribe of Israel that in an especial sense represents the Lord's spiritual people in their various conditions and exercises, in their rebellions, backslidings, repentance, self-bemoanings, returns and comforts under the smiles of their God, is spoken of as the Lord's first-born.—Jer. xxxi. 9.

All that is recorded of Israel, of the laws and institutions which the Lord established among them, has especial significance as representing the things in the gospel dispensation; and these things are all written for our learning and admonition upon whom the ends of the (Jewish) world are come.—Rom. xv. 4; 1 Cor. x. 11; Col. ii. 17; Heb. ix. 9. Thus in the gospel dispensation, where is found the reality of these patterns and substance of these shadows, the children of God are counted as the true first-born of God, and thus are presented as true and legal heirs of God. But it is not in themselves that they can be considered as holding this precious relationship to the eternal God, for in themselves they can only be regarded as vile sinners. Besides, there can be but one first-born in a family, and here are unnumbered millions. But it is in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, that they all have their standing and relationship to God. It was as their Head and Savior that the Lord said of him, "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth."—Psalm lxxxix. 27. Here the unity of Christ and his people in eternal life is presented to our faith. The sonship of all the people of God is in him, and in him they are each esteemed as the first-born, and are thus "heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ;" each one being, as a first-born son, heir to the whole undivided estate, for this is joint heirship. In him also they are made priests unto God; and this is

beautifully shown in the type by combining the figures. In the place of the first-born of all the families of Israel, the Lord took the Levites. So the first-born of Israel were all numbered, and the Levites were taken in their stead; and those of the first-born that were more than the Levites were redeemed, and the redemption money was given to Aaron and his sons.—Numbers iii. 13, 40-51. Thus every first-born son was represented in the priesthood; and thus in the gospel every one of the redeemed is a priest unto God, all being in a spiritual sense sons of Levi, whom the Lord has thoroughly purged, that they may offer unto him an offering in righteousness.—Mal. iii. 3. This holy nation is "a kingdom of priests."

There were assemblies of the children of Israel appointed to be held for various purposes from time to time during their generations; but as that people became scattered because of their disobedience, these assemblies became less and less possible, and when held they were less according to the command by which they were instituted. But there were promises given by the mouth of the prophets of a time when all Israel should be gathered again from all the places whither they had been scattered, and should come together in one great assembly. "I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee."—Micah ii. 12. "I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered."—Ezek. xi. 17; xxxiv. 11-16; Jer. xxxi. 11, 12. These precious promises were not fulfilled in the case of Israel after the flesh, and never will be, for it was not concerning them that they were spoken; but they were spoken and recorded concerning spiritual Israel, the elect people of God, and their fulfillment is in Christ. It was declared that "unto him shall the gathering of the people be."—Gen. xlix. 10. A general assembly, or whole assembly (as the original word, used but this once in the Bible in this sense, literally reads), could never have been had of Israel after the flesh, for one generation of that people passed away as another generation came, and so but a part of one generation could ever be together at one time; but in this general assembly are all the first-born of God, all his people from among all generations. They are all in the Lord Jesus Christ, and were in him when as the ark of our salvation he rose above the floods. Distance in time can no more divide them than distance in space, for there are no different generations of them succeed-

ing one another, and separated from each other by years and ages. They are all one generation, "the generation of Jesus Christ." No man can declare his generation.—Isa. liii. 8. No man can know anything about it. But by faith the comers to Zion behold that "chosen generation," "the generation of the righteous." This is that holy nation that was "born at once" in the birth of Jesus from the dead.—Isa. lxvi. 8. This generation was quickened together with Christ, and raised up from the dead and from under the law together with him, and are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; and this exhibition of God's glorious power was made that in the ages of the gospel dispensation he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward them through Christ Jesus.—Eph. ii. 1-7. Here is the glorious place of this general assembly, in Christ Jesus; and here time, with all its continually vanishing and coming years and ages, is no more. Those who are experimentally gathered together in the name of Jesus, to be shown the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness toward them, are made to know the power of the resurrection of Jesus, the power of that eternal life which was given them in him before the world began, and by virtue of which they were one with him from everlasting, "preserved in him" as their dwelling place in all generations, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the Lord had formed the earth and the world.—Psalm xc. 1, 2.

In this general assembly are Gentiles, who are "far off," being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, as well as Jews, who were "nigh" in a fleshly sense, being children of Abraham. Both are equally far off by nature from God, both concluded under sin, and both through the same rich mercy made nigh by the blood of Christ, "and builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. Here are all who have ever been made to sorrow on account of sin. "I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly."—Zeph. iii. 18. All have come to this assembly experimentally with weeping and supplication.—Jer. xxxi. 9. They are all as Ephraim, "desolate in the day of rebuke," "oppressed and broken in judgment," bemoaning themselves under the chastisements of the Lord, and yet finally, to their unspeakable joy, received by him and rejoiced over as his first-born.

All Israel were reckoned by gene-

alogies, and were written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.—1 Chron. ix. 1. The first-born also, and the Levites, were all written and reckoned by number from generation to generation of the Jewish nation. But all these records are gone; the writing has not only long since faded, but the books and their places of deposit have been destroyed by time. Not so with those who constitute this assembly of the Lord's first-born. The record made of this innumerable company is beyond the reach of time's power to destroy, and the writing is of a kind that will never fade. They are written in heaven.

It seems that sometimes "the book of life" mentioned in the Scriptures may mean a membership in the visible church of one who is a living soul. This would seem to me to be implied by the possibility of the name being blotted out of that book, and the part of that one being taken away out of the holy city.—Rev. iii. 5; xxii. 19. One who by transgression subjects himself to the discipline of the church, which results in his being justly excluded from its fellowship and holy privileges, may be regarded as having had his name blotted out of the book of life, and his part taken away out of the church. Yet the apostle speaks of such, who were delivered unto Satan, as certainly children of God, who will learn through this trial not to blaspheme, and whose spirits will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.—1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Timothy i. 20; 2 Thess. iii. 15. Those who are not living souls, but who crept in unawares, never had any part in the holy city, nor were their names ever in the book of life, the record of living souls who have been brought into the church; and when they are discovered and withdrawn from, they suffer no loss spiritually, for they had no interest or inheritance there; and when they are cast out they go to their own company, where they are at home, which they never were among the people of God. How important, how solemn a thing it is for a child of God to have a name and place in the visible church. Nothing on earth, no position of power or wealth in the world, is to be compared with it; and earth affords no compensation for the loss of this place in the fellowship of the church, and the joys and rest that belong to one who is walking in obedience to the commands of our dear Redeemer.

But the expression, "written in heaven," means more than a membership in the visible church. I regard this as expressing what is true not only of all whom the Lord has given a place in his visible church, but all unto whom he has given a "good hope through grace;" and not only those who are manifested as the subjects of grace in this gospel dispensation, but all of the Lord's people who lived in the former ages of the world; for our Savior says of those who come from the east and the west to the kingdom of heaven that they shall sit down in that kingdom with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Here is the whole assembly of the people of God.

Here not only do those who come to this general assembly hear the voice of those who speak to us the blessed truth of the gospel now, and the voice of Paul and all the apostles and prophets, whose precious testimony was given in the beginning of the gospel of Christ, but here also Abel "yet speaketh," although he lived and died in the early morning of the world. This general assembly and church of the first-born unto which we have come is all of that church for which "Christ gave himself, 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, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that it should be holy and without blemish." Here are all the members of the body of Christ which were written in the book of God, while as yet there were none of them.—Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16. Here are the living of all ages who are seen in the light of the gospel day as holy, not because of any goodness in themselves, but because they "are written in Jerusalem."—Isaiah iv. 3. In the legal Jerusalem were many who were not living souls. The living and the dead were not distinguished from each other there. But when the new heavens and new earth were created, which is the new Jerusalem and her people as manifested in the gospel, none of the enemies of the Lord could enter there.—Isa. lxxv. 17, 18. They were "blotted out of the book of the living," where they had stood as Israelites, and were "not written with the righteous," not "written with the living in Jerusalem."—Psalm lxxix. 28; cix. 13. This holy city is the heaven where the righteous are written. It is said of her, "Thy people shall be all righteous."—Isa. lx. 21. No one can creep in there unawares, for the way is barred by the eternal decree of God, who has declared that into this Jerusalem, clothed in her beautiful gospel garments, there shall no more come the uncircumcised and the unclean.—Isa. lii. 1.

This is a secret place where this great assembly is; and they who are here are all hidden from the world, so that it knows them not, because it does not see him who is their hiding place. The Jews who stoned Stephen did not know where he was, although they saw his body; they did not know the holy and secure refuge he was in, where he was sheltered from all their malice, which could kill his body, but could not hurt him. When worldly losses and crosses and trials and afflictions are the lot of the children of God, so that their worldly acquaintances cannot but feel a pity for them, these worldly friends cannot see how well secured they are from all harm in Jesus, their refuge and high tower. When they can experience his sheltering presence, then they can see that the heaviest worldly affliction "is light and but for a moment." When worldly friends turn against them, and despise and reject and persecute them for the truth's sake, their security and comfort remain unbroken in this secret place of the Most High; and even when storms

of sin infest and afflict the soul, so that they begin to tremble with fear, and to wonder what the end will be, they are made to know in the Lord's own time that the Lord Jesus is their hiding place even from sin, so that it shall not be allowed to hurt them. No charge can ever be brought against them, for the dear Redeemer forever shut out the possibility of that when he died and rose again, and ascended to the right hand of God. O what a blessed, precious hiding place is here, and in what sore trials and great afflictions and terrible dangers has my soul proved the security and sweetness of it. Fear and darkness and trials have been much my lot since the Lord gave me that "everlasting consolation and good hope through grace;" but hitherto the Lord has helped me, and his help has always come by giving my soul some fresh view and experience of Jesus as my hiding place and refuge; and there are times when I feel that it is a good thing and very sweet to tell of his wonderful goodness and grace and mercy to such a poor, sinful being, and to give thanks unto him, and show forth his praises.

Although the place of this assembly is secret, yet it is not narrow or confined. It is a "broad place," a "large room," infinitely large, when our feet are set.—Psalm xxxi. 8; cxviii. 5. The Lord in this "city of our solemnities" is "unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." Glorious liberty is here for all the first-born; room enough, with all that can be needed to satisfy every desire of the new heart.

How well I remember the night, more than twenty-two years ago, when I first realized unto what a great and glorious company I had come, and how wonderfully broad and far reaching was that sweet fellowship which had come into my soul from heaven. I was alone. Not only was no person with me, but I knew of no one in the town where I was who could fully understand and rejoice with me in this precious hope which had been raised up in my heart. But I was not alone. The new-born gladness and praise in my soul were still unchecked by those troubles that since then have acted like winter on the flowing streams. Little did I think then of ever trying to speak in the name of the Lord, or of the terrible trials that have come with that calling. As I read in the Bible, which was so sweet to me that I could hardly turn away from its pages, the writings of the holy men of old, their exercises, their trials and comforts and hopes, it seemed to me all at once that I was with them all. I felt that their hopes were mine, their trials and deliverances were mine. They felt just as I felt. I was sitting with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all those I read about, in the kingdom of God. I was with "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven." These Scriptures came to my mind with such power that the walls of my little room did not confine me. I think I was in the spirit. I did not realize the pres-

ence of my dear Savior at that time in the way I have been favored to at sometimes since, but was feeling most sensibly that love and fellowship embracing all the people of God everywhere, neither space nor time separating me from any of them.

When two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus, he is in the midst of them. Then they are two or three no longer, for where he is, all his dear children are. "He cometh with ten thousand of his saints." That is why it makes but little difference when we meet for worship whether there are many or few in the company gathered together; but it does make a difference whether we have the felt presence of Jesus or not. I do not myself know any difference between a large and a small church, except in natural things. If the Savior is manifest as in the midst of Zion in our assembly, then there are more together than those whom we see in the flesh. Paul sent word to two churches that he was or would be with them in spirit, though absent in the flesh (1 Cor. v. 4; Col. ii. 5); and there are times when we can realize the spirit of Paul and all the apostles and dear saints of God as with us, and our love goes out to them, and we are comforted in the comfort that was given to them. It is not always mere, dry, formal reading that we hear when the Scriptures are read in our meetings; not always just the words, the illustrations, the strong expressions, the clear arguments of the preacher who is speaking to us, that engage our attention; not always merely the words of the hymn and the melody to the natural ear of the tune we are enjoying. It is not always with us the mere formal meeting together and worship of the two or ten or twenty that make up our visible number. There are holy seasons of refreshing from the presence of the dear Savior, who always, when he appears in our midst, says, "Peace be unto you." Then from the pages of the Scriptures, as they are read in our hearing, the holy men of old are talking to us of their hopes and fears, joys and sorrows; and we find that they are not so far above us as we have often felt they were, but just poor, trembling sinners like ourselves, who have been blessed with a precious hope in the Lord, and who have been given faith to see that they are righteous in him. Then through the preacher we receive the testimony of Jesus; and through the earthen vessel our souls receive the refreshing word of truth as from the Lord. Then our songs are true praise unto the Lord. We sing with the spirit and the understanding also, and the melody is in the heart; and in our worship we join with all whose words of praise we hear, or whose songs of devotion we sing, and with all in all ages whose spirits are in that heavenly worship of the true and living God.

To the natural mind these will be regarded as fanciful thoughts; but those who have experienced these things know that they are divinely real. When the seasons of refreshing

and of soul-exaltation have passed by, we are sometimes left to wonder if such things can have been real with us; but while those seasons last there is no room for doubt. And it is then that we realize fully what it is to have come unto the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Feb. 4, 1887.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Canada.

"THE truth as it is in Jesus" (Eph. iv. 2) is precious, and I feel in my soul to say that it is increasingly precious. During the sixteen years that have passed since the time that I hope the Holy Ghost did, according to the everlasting covenant, according to the eternal purpose and immutable counsel of Jehovah, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, shew me my sinful, undone condition, and was pleased to discover to my soul the things of Jesus, my pathway has been through many a snare, many bitter trials, to allure, to carry me away from "the truth as it is in Jesus;" but though the great red dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, has in many ways cast out of his mouth water as a flood, I hope the blessed God has been pleased to keep me, and has been pleased to root and ground me in his truth. Often and often have I wondered, as I have looked back over the way, and seen how subtle, how cunning, were the devices of the devil, that I was not carried away by damnable delusions. Praises be to the adorable God for his marvelous loving-kindness to a poor sinner like me. Shortly after the time that I first was made by the power of the Holy Spirit to rejoice in the forgiveness of my sins, and redemption from them in the precious blood of the dear Lamb of God, in conversation with my parents I had presented to me certain points of the doctrine of Christ, such as Predestination, Eternal Election, Particular Redemption. I felt a spirit rise up in me of indignation, and enmity against such doctrine. I fought against it with all the arguments and speech that I was capable of. I raged, and gave utterance to very violent, blasphemous speech against the blessed God. But when my father took the Bible in his hands and read a few verses to me my mouth was stopped. I was amazed that such things were recorded in the Scriptures. The tempest of my carnal mind, which the devil had worked up most furiously against God's eternal election, in a measure abated. A trembling fearfulness came over me, and something seemed to fill me with sadness, in the feeling that my conduct and awful speech that I had used in opposing what my parents had contended for, and which the few texts of Scripture seemed to set forth, were wrong. There were sighs and moanings within. I retired that night in great distraction of soul to my bedroom. I could find very little utterance in prayer to the Lord. Sometimes I felt hard, and rebellious

thoughts in my mind against the Almighty God; and then I thought that perhaps this doctrine of election may be true; and if it is true, at this thought I felt abased and humbled, and wept. Thus the war raged within between the old and new man, the flesh and the Spirit, the law in the members and the law of the mind, over Jehovah's election, predestination and atonement. The next day I was filled with peculiar feelings. I felt angry and gloomy against the doctrine; but amid all this confusion and rebellion there were desires to the Lord that he would himself teach me the truth, and not suffer me to be led astray by what my parents were contending for. I commenced reading the Bible very diligently, having the idea that I should soon discover that the doctrine of election was not therein, and then I should be able to withstand my parents. I read and read, and as I perused the Scriptures I must confess that many were the hard rebellious feelings that worked in me, when I saw such Scriptures as, "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." I read that "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;" of "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," and "vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory;" of the potter having power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor. Look where I would throughout the Bible, I saw that predestination, election, Jehovah's sovereign acts, were recorded therein, and all my caviling, murmurings and opposition could not annul or cause a shadow of alteration in the unalterable decrees and sovereign acts of the eternal God, who is in one mind, and none can turn him; and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. Who saith, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Several weeks were spent in much reading of the Scriptures, during which time I was in a dark, unhappy frame of mind. The joy of salvation, the sweet comfort that I had been favored with in the dear Lamb of God, all seemed to be taken away. I saw in the letter that Jehovah had an elect and eternally loved people, and these Christ died for.—Eph. i. 3-5. They were the ransomed of the Lord, predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus, the Son of God.—Rom. viii. 28-39. That these he foreknew, predestinated, called, justified and glorified; that nothing was able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. But in my carnal reasonings and creature judgment of the ways of God, a sad and terrible change had come over me, as to the aspect of my affairs in things pertaining to God.—Heb. v. 1.

But I had yet to taste what gracious things the Lord had in store for me, and in a little measure I proved the fulfillment of such words as these that Jehovah speaks, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer."—Isa. liv. 8.

As time rolled on, my exercises of mind underwent many changes. I began to see some beauty in God's election of his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, giving them salvation in him, and predestinating them in unity with Christ, their Head, to an inheritance of incorruptible and eternal glory.—Eph. i. 11; 1 Peter i. 4; 2 Cor. iv. 17. And I was led to consider what I had experienced, of what I hoped was the knowledge of salvation by the remission of my sins.—Luke i. 77. Was it, I inquired, of the sovereign will of God? Was God the author and beginner of my trouble, the bitter experience of guilt, of my crying for mercy, seeking his face, and relief to my sin-burdened soul, in the precious blood of Christ? Was it of the sovereign will of God, or did my will originate and carry it all on? I had to confess that I had not originated these things, and I felt that surely it was of the Lord; and if so, why? I had no answer but, Because of God's election. And if one of the elect, why was I elected? Not for any thing in me. O no, I cried; for I am nothing but a vile sinner. I saw that all flowed from the eternal love of God, and he loved his people because he would. I delighted in and began to love the doctrine, and was filled with desire to be instructed more deeply in "the truth as it is in Jesus." But while in the midst of these sweet feelings, in which for a little space grace had been shewed me from the blessed God, the question arose in my mind, Am I one of God's elect? How do I know that I am? And if I am not, I am a vile sinner, and will be damned forever from the presence and glory of the everlasting God. I was troubled, and began to sink, and was soon in deep waters. I tried to comfort myself in the thought that what I had tasted and felt was a proof of Jehovah's delight in me; but I was helpless in the matter; for I would say to myself, Is what I have passed through the experience of God's people? Is it an experience of the grace of God? If I am not one of "the very elect," all is in vain. I had no power to determine and settle these anxious questionings, doubts and fears, which as a tempest tossed me to and fro. Then the feeling sense of my sinfulness greatly cast me down. I sighed and wept over these matters, and it became my cry, day and night, "Give me some token for good." Perhaps some who in their own esteem are firm believers in and champions for the predestination of all things, election, rebaptism, &c., may inwardly sneer at these emotions, my childish weakness, as

they might call it, and mock at all such sore exercises. It is true I was but a few months past the fifteenth year of my age; but mock on. It will not undo; it cannot annul, what my soul has passed through, nor alter my relation of the same. At length (as I feel I have reason to believe) God heard my cry, and gave me, even me, a poor, vile sinner, this gracious answer, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. I then rejoiced in the electing, everlasting love of God. Since this time I have firmly believed that God has a people, eternally loved and chosen, and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ; but I have many times had fears arise whether I was one of them. Was Jesus' blood shed for the remission of my sins? In my love of the doctrine, and the delight that I felt in my soul's blessed inheritance therein, I was ready to talk of "the truth as it is in Jesus" to all professors of religion that I met with, thinking they would surely see eye to eye with me, and that we together would rejoice in the truth that "Salvation is of the Lord." "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;" that the saints are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. But all that I met with in those days, I found to be haters of God, and of his eternal, unalterable decrees. I was warm in contending for the doctrine which I saw was clearly recorded in the Scriptures, and had been made so very precious to me by the Holy Spirit, the blessed Comforter. But the religious folks that I talked with all opposed me bitterly, contending for man's free will, of God giving every man a chance, and that Christ had died to save everybody, if they would only accept of his offered grace, believe, and do their part. Many carnal, cunning arguments they used to oppose the truth of God; but I stuck to the testimony of the Scriptures; and then they would get angry, and because of my youthfulness would speak very sarcastically to me. This many times hurt my feelings, and I thought, Can I be right, and all these be wrong? It seemed unreasonable for me to think so. Could it be that I was mistaken? I was younger in years than any that I had held discussions with; was I presumptuous, and carried away with things too high for me? Thus I was exercised. But when in private, I read the Scriptures, and with great longings in my soul to know the truth, as it is in Jesus. The eternal election of the church in Christ, the predestination of the elect unto everlasting glory, and all the good pleasure and immortal power of Jehovah, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, in the everlasting covenant, engaged to fulfill the eternal pur-

pose.—Eph. iii. 11. This was made sweet to my soul. I was strengthened, and found this strong meat full of consolation and nourishment, so that I was able to endure the sneers and bitter speech of carnal religionists. But trials from other sources than that which is merely external assailed me, and wearied my soul a great deal, and but for the grace of God I should have made shipwreck of my faith. I have known some who seemed to know and love the doctrine of election and predestination, and the sweet and comfortable theme of the salvation of poor sinners being of the sovereign grace of God, who apostatized from the truth as it is in Jesus, and have become bitter opponents of the same. As I look back over the many temptations and assaults that I have suffered, I see that my feet were almost gone and my steps had well nigh slipped; and I am comforted in the thought that if I truly know and love the doctrine of God our Savior, and have continued therein, it is of the abounding grace of God to me, a poor sinner. No thanks to me. But O that I could praise the Lord for his goodness and his wonderful works wrought in and revealed unto me.

I found I not only had external foes to deal with, who would, if they could, wrest the truth from me, but foes internal and infernal; so I proved that the bitterest wrestlings in which my soul engaged were "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."—Eph. vi. 12. And truly I had need to put on the whole armor of God, that I might be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

As I have already mentioned, I took great pleasure in reading the Scriptures, and I was much indulged by the Holy Spirit with profitable meditation therein. I read, believed and rejoiced in the record that "Great is our Lord, and of great power, his understanding is infinite."—Psa. cxlvii. 5. Therefore he saith, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country. Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isa. xlv. 9-11. "The Lord is great, and our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places."—Psa. cxxxv. 5, 6. "His kingdom ruleth over all." "The Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."—Daniel iv. 32. God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. I rejoiced in the absolute and everlasting dominion of Jehovah (Daniel iv.); that in heaven, earth, and all deep places, the almighty God accomplished all his

pleasure, and fulfills all the thoughts of his heart, which stand forever.—Psa. xxxiii. 9-11. In the midst of all this, I found many queries in my mind. It might be, when doing some very trifling thing, such as turning my hand, treading upon the grass, crushing an insect, the question would arise, Was this foreknown and embraced in the eternal purpose and predestination of God? I spent days and weeks, and such thoughts (no matter what I might be engaged in, or beheld in others, especially frivolous things) occupied my time. I was worried and harrassed very much, for all these queries seemed to arise to bring the truth into contempt and ridicule. Then again my mind was much exercised in considering some of the dark and awful transactions that take place in this world, bloody, cruel battles, murders, oppressions of the poor and weak, acts of cruelty, things over which my heart has felt pained, and of which I have said to myself, "Had I the power, I would stamp out of existence." And in some measure "I considered in my heart," that "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath."—Eccl. ix. 2. And while my heart would be sad in contemplation of so many distressing scenes of which the earth is full, this thought would come into my mind with a shock, And yet you pretend to believe that the Bible teaches that God, in his eternal and unalterable decree, has predestinated all things; that all things in the heavens, the earth, the seas, and all deep places, are the unfolding and fulfilling of the eternal purpose and immutable counsel of Jehovah, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost. How can this be so? Is it just? Is it worthy of the blessed God, who is righteous, merciful and gracious? O what internal strugglings, fierce conflicts and debates exercised my soul. There was war within, thank God. There was that which still clave to the God of Israel, and which only found rest and delight in the revelation that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."—Rev. xix.

But I will proceed, for I have yet to relate temptation more powerful and bitter, to draw me away from "the truth as it is in Jesus," and in which I was well nigh confounded, and wherein, but for the sovereign mercy and grace of God, I should have been swallowed up in damnable delusions, and should now be wallowing in the mire of all manner of vileness, and should have given myself over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But says the Holy Ghost by the mouth of the apostle Paul, "Ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus."—Eph. iv. 19-22. Newton has written the following verses, which

many times I have felt described my condition:

"I asked 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 answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair.

I hoped that, in some favored 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."

While being made to feel the hidden evils of my heart, and each day and week nothing bettered, but rather feeling I was worse, becoming more and more vile, O what vile thoughts, what fleshly lustings, plagued my life. And then, to aggravate my condition, I was much assaulted with the following temptations. The first that I will mention came in this way. I found the flesh lusting after the things of the flesh. I felt ashamed to find myself the subject of these terrible notions of sin. But Satan came, transformed as an angel of light, and reasoned thus with me, "You are one of the elect, your sins are all forgiven, you are safe for heaven, you cannot fall from grace, Jesus has died, and has put away all your sins, the past, the present, and all the sins which in the future you may commit; he has made a complete atonement for all your sins, and you are eternally justified in the blood and righteousness of the dear Lamb of God; and you will never come into condemnation, for you have passed from death unto life; therefore it will not signify much if you do indulge your fleshly propensities; and though the Lord may chastise you, it will all be right in the end; for has not the Lord told you that he has loved you with an everlasting love?" I was besieged for a long time with this temptation, and between this and my own felt vileness I was in a terrible strait. I found something within ready to listen to and follow the doctrines of devils; and if it were not for the abounding mercy of God I should have fallen into great wickedness. At this time also it seemed that I encountered so many things to entice, so many allurements, so many opportunities. I fell into a very wretched state of mind. I felt so very sinful, and so ashamed, that I felt afraid to pray; for I feared if I did, the Lord would spurn me from his presence as a base hypocrite. But some few cries would break forth from me, such as, "O Lord, do keep me from sin. O do not let me fall into wickedness." And then, in a few moments I would find that I was thinking of all manner of vileness and scheming, under temptation, how I could accomplish this and that. Then I would reproach myself for insincerity in asking the Lord to keep me from evil. How could I be sincere, when the very next moment "every imagination of the thoughts of my heart was only evil continually?"

But the Lord did not give me over to a reprobate mind, for I found the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.—Prov. xiv. 27. Nehemiah on one occasion said, "But so did not I, because of the fear of God."—Neh. v. 15. I was brought with much self-loathing before the Lord. I showed before him my trouble, and found relief and consolation in the doctrine of Christ, which the Holy Spirit showed me my interest in; and for the love that I felt to the blessed Lord Jesus for all that he had done and suffered for me, I felt, How can I sin against the love and blood of the dear Lamb of God? I proved the very doctrine of the gospel of the grace of God, when ministered to my soul by the Holy Spirit, to operate as described in Romans vi. 1-14. But when made a handle of by the adversary, the devil, to tempt me to sin, this, in league with my vile nature, I have found to work much distress, and to make sad havoc of the peace and comfort of Jesus. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe."

"My nature discloses to view
More vileness than I can declare,
And were not the promises true,
I'm sure I should sink in despair.

"But Jesus, my Savior and King,
My constant protector will be;
And, led by the Spirit, I sing,
He saved a sinner like me.

"My conquest is sure through his blood,
Though now there's a warfare within;
And Satan comes in like a flood,
To draw my poor heart after sin.

"Fresh succor from Christ I receive,
Who did all my conflicts foresee;
And, through his rich grace, I believe,
He saved a sinner like me."

Dear children of God, bear with me while I continue this long, rambling letter. I have found trouble with such suggestions arising in my mind as, There is no use of praying to the Lord if the doctrine of predestination be true; for if I am to come out of troubles, I shall come out; and if certain blessings are stored up for me, in the set time I shall come into possession of them. If every breath I draw, every step I tread, if all my pathway, and all things therein, are foreknown and predestinated by Jehovah, and to which nothing can be added nor anything diminished, all will be fulfilled. Then what use is there of praying? I reasoned the matter over and over, and finally came to the conclusion that I, such a firm believer in predestination as I accounted myself to be, had no need to pray. But the Lord knew how to deliver me out of this vain delusion and self-confidence, and I had to wade through some tribulation before I was delivered; for in a time of trouble I sought the Lord, the spirit of supplication was given to me, and pray I must, and pray I did. All my carnal wisdom and reasonings were laid aside, and O how sweet a privilege I found it to tell the Lord all my complaints, to unbosom my difficulties, temptations, sorrows, and my joys, too, at the feet of the blessed God. And I have found that the blessings the Lord has appointed as my inheritance, for such I have been

made to feel my need, and have prayed to the Lord to bestow them upon me. And this I find is the doctrine recorded in the Scriptures. Jeremiah, by the Holy Ghost, foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of the same for the space of seventy years. This was the predestination of the Lord God of hosts. At the expiration of the time, the angel of the Lord (the Son of God, the Mediator), said, "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?" &c.—Zech. i. 12. The prophet Daniel had the same spirit (Dan. ix.), and this very prayer (as much so as the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of it for seventy years), was in fulfillment of the unfrustrable predestination of God.—See Jer. xxix. 10-14. How very blessedly is this also declared in Ezekiel xxxvi. I have found that the truth of God's election is at variance with our natural affections and judgments; and I have had my natural affections stirred up considerably over this doctrine; for when some one, near and precious to me, has been brought up before me under this consideration, suppose this one is not one of God's chosen people, and is a vessel of wrath. My natural feelings would forbid this, and I have proved that the grace of God was needful to keep in subjection the rebellion of my proud, fleshly nature, which would dare to judge and weigh in carnal, creature balances the unsearchable ways of the most high God. O! is this not horrible, that a worm, a vile, sinful creature, should rise up in judgment of the eternal acts and infinite wisdom of the eternal God? "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins: let them not have dominion over me."—Psalm xix. 13.

About a year after I had first tasted that the Lord is gracious, out of mere curiosity I read the infidel Volney's works; but I paid very dearly for it, for I was many a time put to my wits' end, and plunged into much perplexity, by his cunning arguments against the religion of Jesus Christ. Some years after this I came into possession of a package of books upon erroneous, blasphemous subjects, and I promised myself that I would thoroughly read them and sift their arguments, so that if I ever should meet any that advocated such doctrines I would know how to overthrow them and put them to silence. I put the books aside for the present, but before long, one evening, I thought I would commence reading them. I took them out and began reading the title pages of the several books; but while doing so, this Scripture came into my mind, "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?"—Prov. vi. 28. Remembering also what I had suffered before through reading Volney's writings, I was afraid of being burnt, so I opened the stove door and burnt up the books. There is something very much like reading pernicious

writings, that is, going to hear those whom we know will preach nothing else but false doctrine, "just to hear for myself what he has to say, so that I may be able to oppose those that advocate such doctrine. There is no fear of my being carried away by such nonsense." O believer! "Thou standest by faith: be not high minded, but fear." What right have you, beloved children of God, to go after such, to lend your ears to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils? I never found any profit in it, but have experienced annoyance, bitterness and damage by going to hear those who preach false Christ's.—Matt. xxiv. 23.

Though years have passed since I first experienced these trials, I find at the present that I am not impregnable to the temptations of the adversary, or rather that I am invincible only when the Holy Spirit sustains, and in the sweet evidence of "the truth as it is in Jesus" revealed with comfort in my heart, exalting a poor sinner like me above all the caviling and wisdom of my carnal nature, and beyond the cunning, the fiery darts and rage of hell.

Perhaps some might think that all these temptations to depart from the truth are but trivial, to be banished with a shake of the head, or wave of the hand. If this has been so with any, it has not been thus with me. But when tried, and harrassed, and much tossed about, O I do feel that I can say, The Lord did not utterly forsake me, but I was led to search the Scriptures, and to ponder them over, with many cries to the Lord that I might be taught by the Holy Spirit and guided by him into all truth, and that he would take of the things of Christ and shew them unto me. I was led to see that the very temptations that befell me were numbered among the all things that work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose; that they were predestinated to befall me, to try me; and though I have been in heaviness through manifold temptations, the trial of my faith (which is the precious gift of God) has been found unto the praise and honor and glory of God. Thus it has been, and is, and shall be, with the faith of God's elect. God shall be glorified. The Son of God was led up out of the river Jordan, and driven by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. He suffered being tempted, and was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. We have therefore a compassionate High Priest, and one who is able, and in his tender love does succor us in every trial. The doctrine of God, over which I have endured so much internal fighting, has been a rock out of which in times of trouble and affliction I have sucked the sweetest honey. When my way has appeared dark and crooked, when I have had to endure hard things, the bitter waters have been sweetened, and a well of strong consolation I have found in the opening up of the doctrine that Jehovah alone is God; that

"the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."—Rev. xix. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.—Eph. i. 11. Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?—Isa. xl. 13. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.—Psa. cxlvii. 4. Jehovah's will and power alone upholds and directs all their movements.—Isa. xl. 26. And he that created them shall cause them to be dissolved.—2 Peter iii. 10-12. The winds blow at his command, fulfilling his word, and at his voice there is a calm.—Psa. cvii. 25-29. He has appointed the destination to the falling raindrops, to the snowflakes, to the hail, and to the lightnings of thunder.—Amos iv. 7; Job xxxvii. Yea, all the universe and all things therein are governed by his eternal power. The creeping things, the crawling worm, the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the heavens and beasts of the field, are governed by the Lord.—Ezek. xxxviii. 20. And without him, not all the power of the entire offspring of Adam can cause a sparrow to fall to the ground.—Matt. x. 29. Neither could Pilate put Jesus to death.—John xix. 11. Angels, principalities, powers, thrones and dominions, over all the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. How very precious, dear child of God, is "the truth as it is in Jesus." "The very hairs of your head are all numbered."—Matt. x. 30. Your steps are numbered.—Job xiv. 16. There is an appointed time for your sojourning here in the earth.—Job viii. 1. Yea, is it not blessed to be able to realize and say, "My times are in thy hand?"—Psa. xxxi. 15. If the sword smite, and we suffer from the wickedness of men (Psalm xvii. 13; Acts xx. 23); if the devil sift us as he did Peter (Luke xxii. 31), buffet us as he did Paul (2 Cor. xi. 7), tempt us as he did David (1 Chron. xxi. 1), cast us into prison (Rev. ii. 10), and plunge us into a sea of afflictions, as he did Job, Jehovah reigns! Beelzebub, the prince of devils, and all his angels, lying, evil spirits, cannot alter our times, for they are in the hand of our God. O what a mercy is this! Not a dog can move his tongue (Exodus xi. 7), not a lying spirit go forth (2 Chron. xviii. 20-22), not a devil speak (Mark i. 34; 1 Sam. xviii. 10-16), without the Almighty Lord God of hosts. O what a deep is the crucifixion of the Son of God! It was the hour of the power of darkness.—Luke xxii. 53. Satan entered into Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus unto the chief priests and captains.—Luke xxii. They slew the Prince of life.—Acts iii. 15. But these murderers, "both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy [God's] hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. "Why do the heathen

rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision."—Psa. ii. The crucifixion of Christ was the most wicked, the vilest deed that men and devils have been guilty of. But though the Gentiles and people of Israel murdered the dear Lord Jesus, they thus fulfilled the Scriptures.—Acts iii. 18. They transgressed and violated the law which God, the Creator, had placed them, his creatures, under; and all that they did was described and declared beforehand in the Scriptures. The determinate counsel of Jehovah stood, and was fulfilled in the transgression of the law.—Acts. ii. 23; iii. 18. And shall we, poor, sinful, puny creatures, arraign the everlasting God before our bar? God forbid! he is not accountable to us. "God is greater than man. Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters."—Job xxxiii. 12, 13. There are deeps to us unfathomable, mysteries unsolvable, judgments unsearchable, and ways past finding out, belonging to the Lord our God. Happy are we if led by the Spirit of God to reverently inquire of, and worship the Lord, that we may be in sweet submission to all his revealed will. "He is the Rock; his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment, just and right is he."—Deut. xxxii. 4. "Great things doeth he that we cannot comprehend."—Job xxxvii. 5. O that it may ever be our heritage to sing, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

FRED. W. KEENE.

HEPPNER, Oregon, Jan. 28, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am through with the business part of my letter, I feel a desire to write a few lines for the readers of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Myself and all who write should try to write of the things which make for peace, and of the things whereby one may edify another. This would always be the result if we could always speak and write in the proper or right spirit, and speak as the oracles of God. I believe, with Elder Durand, that there is nothing wrong in controversy, provided flesh can be kept out of view; but where it has a hand, it seldom fails to set on fire the course of nature, and often, ere we are aware, the sad result is upon us, "Defileth the whole body." Brethren who are in controversy with their brethren on any point of doctrine should write with a view to God's honor and glory, and the comfort and edification of the children of God. I would also suggest that we have greater reason to fear and watch self than our opponent.

I was well pleased with brother Benton Jenkins' reply to his inquir-

ing friend, published in the SIGNS for January first. It seemed to me that the arguments used would meet the hearty approval of all who have been taught of God; and it would seem that all who have been given a reason of a hope could see that the ground of that hope was not in self, but in the God of all grace. In all that he teaches his children, he teaches them this truth, "By grace are ye saved." I was well pleased with Elder F. A. Chick's article in the last number of the SIGNS, on the order of the Old School Baptists relative to receiving the baptism of other denominations as valid. It seemed to me that the argument set forth in brother C.'s letter could not be controverted; and we can but wish that all who know the truth, and have been caught in the nets of Mystery, Babylon, and their baptism being in the way of uniting with the church of Christ, could read this article.

Your unworthy brother,
G. E. MAYFIELD.

HIGGINSVILLE, Mo., Dec. 24, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find post-office money-order for two dollars, the amount of subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year. It contains all the preaching we have, and we are often made to rejoice in reading its contents. There is no church in this county that we know of that believes the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If there is, we would be glad to know it, as we miss our church privileges very much. We would be highly pleased if the brethren passing this way would stop with us for a while, especially the ministering brethren, that we may hear the joyful sound once more. This is a fine country, and healthy. The lands are very rich, low in price, and both for rent and sale; and Baptists who contemplate moving west would do well to take a look at this county.

I have written this as though I expected it published, but I feel it is not worthy a place in our family paper. Do with it as you think best, and all will be well with me. We are all well at this writing, for which we feel thankful.

From a poor, afflicted brother, if one at all,

R. P. ASHURST.

BURDETT, N. Y., Dec. 12, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I see by the date of my last paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that my subscription is due for another year; and as I cannot well get along without the SIGNS, I will send you two dollars for another year. I hope to be able to send you your price for the SIGNS as long as I live, and therefore I hope you may have enough subscribers to enable you to publish it as long as you live; and when there are none of G. Beebe's sons to publish it, there will still be some of the sons of God that will continue to publish it. The last ed-

itorial was worth the price of the paper, to say nothing about the communications contained therein, which were excellent and instructive. I should be lonesome and lost in my home without the SIGNS. I am so glad that there is such a people as the chosen of God, a poor and afflicted people, whose God is the Lord. I feel strong in the Lord.

"Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee."

I often think,

"Why was I made to hear his voice,
And enter where there's room,
While thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?"

It was even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. But I am often grieved, and lament my coldness and unworthiness. Still I want to live and die with the people of God; my home is with them. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, the things that God hath in store for them that love him.

Dear brethren, remember me at the throne of grace when it is well with you. I will not attempt to write more at this time, but believe me ever your sincere brother in the Lord, if a brother at all,

HIRAM B. ELLIOTT.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

WE now have the cloth bound books mailed to all who answered our card of inquiry of last August to know if we had their address correct. We still hold about four hundred of the cloth binding until we hear from the parties, as we do not deem it safe to send books to addresses sent in from two to five years ago, until we hear from them again, to know whether their address is still the same or not. We sent out postal cards last August to all the subscribers of the book, to inquire if they were still at the same place as when they ordered their books, but from about four hundred we have received no reply. From all such we withhold the book until heard from. Any one to whom a cloth bound book is due should have it before this notice reaches them, and if they have not received it they should immediately send their name and address to us.

THE LEATHER BINDING.

The demand for this style of binding has so far exceeded our anticipation that we shall run out of them before we can fill what orders we have on hand; but the binder is at work on the sheets, and we expect in about two weeks to have a new supply, sufficient to fill all orders now in, and leave a surplus of about two hundred copies.

The Morocco and Imitation are all mailed, and a few copies left.

For prices and styles see notice on last page.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS.

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

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

(Written by R. S. Banks).

To the messengers and members composing the Bethel Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with Salem Church, Reynolds County, Mo., Sept. 25th, 26th and 27th, 1886, to the churches and associations with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the tender mercy of our covenant-keeping God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, we are again blessed with the privilege of meeting as an association.

Your attention in this Circular is called to the language of him who spake as never man spake, recorded Luke xxiv. 25-27. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Has there ever been a mortal man that could preach such a discourse? Not one. There has never been as able a sermon preached since then.

We know not anything of the gospel, only as taught by the almighty Preacher. We are so ignorant that we cannot preach the gospel in its purity, only as directed by Christ. He is the Rock. All his works are perfect. Nothing can be added to them, nor anything taken from them. We cannot write this Circular to the edification of his body, the church, unless directed by the Head of the body, Christ. Our finite, limited minds are not able to comprehend all that was contained in that discourse of Jesus. Think of it. He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." No one else could do that then, nor now. Only the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, could open the book or loose the seals thereof. When locked, the wise and prudent cannot open it. When unlocked by Christ, even babes can read it, because he reveals it to them. "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops." Christ said in that discourse, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." For his elect are scattered among all the nations. It is written, "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." They all are little ones. Paul said he was less than the least of all saints. Are any greater than Paul? They are all born into that fold of Christ, not as grown men, but as babes. They have

one Father, God, and one mother, Jerusalem which is above, and she is the mother of all God's sons and daughters. "There are three score queens and four score concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled, is but one." She is "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." The apostle John saw a great wonder in heaven; a woman (the church) clothed with the Sun (Christ), and the moon (the law) under her feet (her Husband put it there), and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (the twelve apostles). "Behold, a King [Zion's Husband] shall reign in righteousness, and princes [the twelve apostles] shall rule in judgment." Let us be governed by their writings, and not add to nor take from them. Their decisions are final. As a faithful Husband, Christ paid the debts of his bride. As he was her life, he laid down that life for her. As her High Priest, he atoned for her sins. As her Shepherd, he gave his life for his sheep. He gives unto them eternal life, so they can never perish, neither can any pluck them out of his hand. He and his Father are one, and he and his bride are one. Farewell.

R. S. BANKS, Mod.

WM. J. BAKER, Clerk.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ARTICLES of faith of the Licking Association, of Kentucky, adopted in 1812.

1. We believe in one only true and living God, and that there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghosts and these three are one.

2. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God and the rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe in the doctrine of eternal, particular, unconditional election.

4. We believe in particular redemption by Jesus Christ.

5. We believe in the doctrine of original sin.

6. We believe in the utter inability of man to save himself in whole or in part.

7. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

8. We believe that God's elect shall be called with an holy calling, regenerated, converted and sanctified in time.

9. We believe that the saints shall persevere in grace, and never fall finally away.

10. We believe that baptism and the Lord's supper are ordinances of Jesus Christ, and that true believers are the subjects of these ordinances, and that the mode of baptism is by immersion.

11. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and the eternal judgment, and that the punishment of the wicked will be eternal.

12. We believe that no person has a right to administer the ordinances, only such as are regularly called and come under the imposition of the hands of the presbytery.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1887.

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

TREASURES IN HEAVEN.

"LAY not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—Matt. vi. 19-21.

An esteemed patron has requested an article on the sermon on the mount, of which this text is a part. If we had the ability requisite to expound the whole of this divine discourse, neither the limits of our paper nor the brief span of mortal existence would suffice to give a summary of what is included in the teaching which astonished those who heard these gracious words of our Lord Jesus. The mere letter of the doctrine embraced in this marvelous sermon cannot be understood without the light of revelation; hence, the only proper interpretation of this instruction is that which is given by the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto his disciples. In other words, the only correct understanding of this portion of revealed truth is that which presents the same testimony of Jesus which in all inspired Scripture is the spirit of prophecy.—Rev. xix. 10. If the things which pertain to the kingdom of Christ Jesus were to be literally understood, they could not be hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes, as was solemnly declared by our Redeemer in his thankful confession to which he responded, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 26. Therefore it is evident that all the truth revealed in the Scriptures is concealed from the natural man, who receiveth not these things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.—1 Cor. ii. 14. This forbids the literal interpretation of any of the doctrine of Christ, and clearly shows that while his words were full of light and comfort to those who were led by the Spirit to see and receive their gracious truth, they were incomprehensibly dark sayings to all the wise and prudent of the world. Indeed, it is definitely recorded that this discourse was spoken to his own disciples, after Jesus, seeing the multitudes, had gone up into a mountain, and his disciples had come unto him. Then "he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." All the instruction there given was to them exclusively who were identified as his disciples. It is wresting the Scriptures to make any other application of anything in this sermon. He expressly forbade such perversion of his teaching when he said, "Give not that which is holy

unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." The unclean nature of sinful man is well typified by the dogs and swine, and the saints are thus forbidden to apply the holy doctrine of Jesus to the corruption of the carnal mind. Because of the impossibility of showing to reason the truth of divine grace in saving sinners from their sins, they who are led by the Spirit to rejoice in that salvation find even their own natural reason continually suggesting doubts and objections against the clear manifestation of that truth which they have received by faith. This is the reason of the unceasing warfare experienced by them between the Spirit of truth which they have received and the carnal mind, which is still enmity against God.

The instruction given in this whole discourse is that truth of God which can only be received by revelation of the Spirit of truth; and while it is so clearly shown in them unto whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, that they are fully qualified as witnesses of its reality, yet they never can communicate the knowledge which they have received even to their own natural mind, much less to any other sinner in the ignorance of death. The pride of man is thus stained, and the sovereign grace of God in salvation is magnified. The enmity of the carnal mind is shown in its opposition against the truth in which the saints by faith are made to rejoice. This difference between faith and sense was strikingly expressed by that pillar which led and shielded the nation of Israel when they were brought out of Egypt. While to Israel the light of the presence of God appeared in that symbol of divine protection, to their enemies it was impenetrable darkness. So the very light of revelation, in which by faith the saints can read their salvation accomplished in the perfect work of Jesus their triumphant Redeemer, is the most incomprehensible darkness to the natural man. "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. These deep things of God are not to be discovered by the eye of reason, nor yet by the hearing of the natural ear; therefore every one who has seen and heard that salvation is of the Lord alone is certainly taught of the Lord, and that teaching is an abiding witness that every one who is so taught is born of God. To them exclusively is the whole truth of God revealed, and these words of our Lord apply to no others.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." It is far short of the deep meaning of this positive prohibition to limit its significance to

the merely material treasures which are accounted valuable by the natural world. One may have great possessions of worldly wealth as Abraham or Solomon (Gen. xiii. 2; 1 Kings iii. 13), and yet he may not have violated this direction; and one may be destitute of earthly possessions, and yet be a transgressor of this injunction. The selfish principle of covetousness which reigns in the carnal mind has all its treasures upon earth; and that subject of divine grace whose heart is set upon selfish advantage, whether it be in worldly wealth or honors, or in the desire for personal exaltation even in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus, has disregarded this caution so emphatically spoken by our Master. As idolatry was a deadly sin under the law of Moses, so this principle is fatal to the enjoyment of the answer of a good conscience toward God in the experience of the saints.—See Eph. v. 3-6. There is nothing of permanent value in all that earth can give. Its best enjoyments are fleeting vanities. Not only its wealth and honors perish with the using, but the very "fashion of this world passeth away."—1 Cor. vii. 31. All that pertains to this earth must with its doomed existence pass away. So all treasures of whatever character which we can lay up here must perish. Even to natural observation the folly is manifest of those who seek to lay up treasures upon this perishing earth. The records of time are strewn with the ruins of nations and of physical and mental toil and evanescent triumphs. Even if successful in attaining our object in earthly desires, we are such ephemeral creatures that we cannot hope to enjoy the results of our labors. Well does the Preacher sum up all things under the sun as "Vanity of vanities." Then, even in this limited application of the admonition the wisdom of the divine direction is manifest. Especially is this evident in the case of those disciples to whom the Lord spoke directly; for it was but a few months until they were driven into exile, without so much as a place where they might safely lie down to rest. No accumulated treasures upon the earth could then avail them anything. And in many cases since, the saints have realized literally the folly of laying up for themselves treasures upon the earth. But the deeper and more important application of this solemn caution finds a place in the experience of every saint in his pilgrimage through this present evil world. The treasures which exceed in value all else with the saints are found in the answer of a good conscience toward God, in obedience to the commandment and example of our Lord. The alluring suggestions of the natural mind promise great treasures in following the devices of reason instead of implicit and immediate obedience to the word of the Lord. In yielding to these carnal reasonings they who are captivated by them are laying up for themselves treasures upon earth. When the living children of the kingdom thus sow to the flesh, it is certain that they

shall of the flesh reap corruption; and there is no more severe death to the real subjects of salvation than that which is felt when they are left to be filled with their own ways. Ephraim is typical of the spiritual Israel when it is said of him that he is joined to idols, and the command of the Lord is, "Let him alone."—Hosea iv. 17. So Paul warns the saints and beloved of God, saying to them, "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."—Rom. viii. 13. This death and life is experienced in their present sorrow in disobedience to the word of the Lord, or joy in walking in the footsteps which their Leader has marked out for them. When in their idolatrous worship of their own works the awful sentence of their Judge is visited upon them as upon Ephraim, they feel that it is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. As a consuming fire his judgments burn up all their dross and sin, and they are made to know that all their idols are vanity. None ever know this severe punishment in their idolatry but the redeemed subjects of salvation. So in the type it was to Israel that the Lord sent the message, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. Yet the Lord declared of Israel when they had destroyed themselves in backsliding, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found."—Hosea xiv. 4, 8. And after visiting upon Israel his chastening for all their iniquities, by the same prophet the Lord declares concerning them, "And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land; and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God."—Amos ix. 14, 15. So in the antitype the chastening rod is visited upon his chosen people, and they are made to know by experience the folly of trusting in their earthly treasures of self-dependence and good resolutions; yet they are not finally lost, nor is their eternal life ever cut off, for it "is hid with Christ in God."—Col. iii. 3. Jesus gives eternal life to his sheep, and they are kept securely by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, so that they shall never perish.—John x. 28; 1 Peter i. 5. Yet their daily experience teaches them that no treasures upon earth are secure against the corrupting power of moth and rust; and they often find all their care and vigilance unable to guard against the thieves which break through and steal their

comfort and enjoyment of rest in the perfect righteousness of their Redeemer. All their treasures of self-righteousness and trust in their own works or merits are laid up upon earth, and they shall be made to feel the loss of all such possessions. When they see these earthly treasures swept away it seems to them that all is lost; but they shall find that their Lord is only removing these perishing treasures that they may more clearly see the eternal riches of his grace, in which they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Suffering the loss of all things, they receive the assurance of a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in their redeeming Lord. Thus even the moth and rust of earthly corruptions, and the thieves of doubt and unbelief, are confined in their assaults upon the saints to the corruptible and perishing dust of self-confidence; and when they have consumed all that treasure upon earth in which the saint had trusted, they can do nothing more, for they cannot touch the eternal life of the tried saint. So, when Satan had tried Job even to the affliction of his body, the command of God restrained him that he could not touch Job's life. Hence Paul could say with perfect assurance, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." In contrast with the course forbidden in the preceding verse, it is here enjoined that they who love our Lord should lay up treasures in heaven. As shown in the foregoing, the saints to whom this injunction was given already had received the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus, so that it is not to be understood that they were directed to do anything in order to secure their salvation in the ultimate glory of eternity. The heaven in which they are commanded to lay up for themselves treasures is in their experience of the answer of a good conscience toward God, in obedience to the commandment of the King in Zion. This is that of which David sings, "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."—Psalm xvi. 11. The presence of the Lord is to them that love him the joy of heaven, and his right hand signifies the divine approval of those who are favored to be accepted in his sight. Thus Jesus in separating his sheep from the goats, "shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."—Matt. xxv. 33. This obedience is called "your treasures," for it is the peculiar privilege of the obedient child to enjoy this blessed answer of approval. They never have to grieve on account of disobedience to the law of Christ when they have walked in the way which that law enjoins. So the Lord says to Israel, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the

good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—Isaiah i. 19, 20. There could be no richer treasure to them under that typical dispensation than obedience to the requirements of that covenant which the Lord had given to them; and in the new covenant it is provided that there is great reward in following as dear children in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord. There is no room in this narrow way for anything in which the disciples of Jesus may claim to themselves any glory. The first step in following the Redeemer is to deny self. The publican thus glorified God when he prayed, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." But the boast of the Pharisee declared the treasures in which he trusted to be upon earth, where all his good works were done. The treasures in heaven, where the destructive power of moth and rust cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through nor steal, are laid up in the self-denying and cross-bearing experience of those who walk in the Spirit and do not fulfill the lust of the flesh. In this way they follow Jesus, who pleased not himself, but "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Thus they suffer with him, and thereby have the assurance that they shall also reign with him.—2 Timothy ii. 12. To attain this rich treasure in heaven Paul suffered the loss of all things, as he says, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."—Phil. iii. 10, 11. It was not that Paul expected to gain eternal life by this sacrifice of all things, but that he might in present experience realize the glorious knowledge here stated. This rich treasure he did lay up in the heaven of the full assurance of faith in Christ; and its celestial glory enabled him to triumph over the last enemy, saying, when the time of his departure was at hand, "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."—2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. It is manifest that this clear confidence of the apostle did not rest upon any works or merits of his own, for it equally embraced "all them also that love his appearing." But the treasure laid up for himself consisted in the assurance here expressed, while the power of Christ alone was magnified in keeping him, as well as all them for whom Jesus died.

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." This reason assigned by our Lord for the command given, confirms the application which has been briefly presented. The direction perfectly accords with that in verse thirty-three of the same chapter, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;

and all these things shall be added unto you." As the carnal mind always demands the first place for self, it is only by the power of the Spirit of Christ that the saints are enabled to obey this injunction; and it is not with their carnal mind that they render this obedience, but with the mind of Christ which dwells in them. Since it is God that works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, it is only to him that the glory belongs. When the saints are driven by necessity to rest in the sure mercies of God, they are led by a way that they knew not. It all seems to them to be leading them to destitution, instead of manifesting to them that they have treasures laid up in heaven. But when they have been utterly cut off from all their own resources, then they are shown the rich treasures of divine grace given them in Christ before the world began. Their heart is enraptured with the revelation of this inestimable treasure. Yet to their fleshly mind this revelation is not manifest, and consequently with that mind they still seek their treasures upon earth; but with their spiritual mind by faith they seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. In the spirit their treasures are only in the way of obedience to their Lord, and there is their heart also. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." To all who have that Spirit the only treasures they can appreciate are found in the heaven of his divine will. So that while the saints have still their old carnal mind with its affections and lusts, they long for deliverance from its bondage of corruption, that they may be perfectly conformed to the image of Christ. His law is their treasure, and in it is the delight of their new heart. May the grace of God enable us with all who love the Lord to give earnest heed to the admonition of the text, and to him be glory evermore. Amen.

INDEPENDENCE OF CHURCHES.

[In compliance with the request of several brethren we reproduce the four following editorial articles of the late editor, as they embrace subjects on which we receive many inquiries, and will, we trust, be of edification and instruction to our readers in general.]

MUCH has been said about the independence of churches, and we would infer from the position taken by some that they regard the churches absolutely free and independent, as a sort of free agents, having an unquestionable right to do as they please, without reference to the judgment and concurrence of sister churches or aggrieved brethren; and they regard it as an infringement of their independence for any to question the validity of any of their proceedings. But to us it really appears that the saints of God, whether considered individually or collectively, are the most dependent of all beings. Not only are they dependent on God for everything, but they are by his wis-

dom and grace so peculiarly organized as to be dependent one on another, so much so that no one member can be independent of any or of all the other members belonging to the body of Christ. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles; whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?"—1 Cor. xii. 13-16. Can the ear perform the office of the eye? Or is the hand independent of the foot? Are not all the members dependent one upon another? How vain to talk of independence!

It is true the church of God has all her resources in Christ her exalted Head, so that she needs not the legislation of the princes of this earth to make laws for her government, nor their armies for her protection, nor the schools or sciences of this world to instruct her in divine things; nor does she need the dictation of councils claiming ecclesiastical power to preside over her. For as the body of Christ, in vital union with him as her Head and Lord, she has everything amply provided; she need not go outside of her gates, or legitimate boundary, for any aid. It is not of this independence of the world and dependence on Christ that we object; for although God has ordained that sometimes the "earth shall help the woman," it is not the earth, but our Lord, that she depends upon to bring about such results.

As in the structure and organization of our natural body, the head, the heart, the hands and feet, and every member, however small, is indispensable to make the body perfect, even so in the body of Christ there is a mutual dependence of the members one on another. The eyes, however necessary to see for the whole body, cannot chew or masticate our food, and prepare it for the stomach; and while the ear can do the hearing for all the other members of the body, it could hear nothing if it were cut off from its connection with all the other members. There must needs also be harmony in the body. The feet cannot go one way, and the body another. In the body of the church God certainly has not been less wise in setting the members than in the organization of the natural body. He has set all the members in the body as it has pleased him. To attempt, therefore, to make any change or transposition, cannot please him nor profit us. How awkward and inconvenient, should the body attempt to make improvement by any change of the arrangement of the members.

The necessity of a clear understanding of the relationship of churches of the same faith and order, or branches

of the one church which is the body of Christ, bear to each other, and what obligations that relationship involves, is sometimes but too painfully felt by those who sincerely desire to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. If all the local branches of the church bear the same relationship to each other, as so many members of one body, can they then be so independent of each other as that they may disregard the concurrent judgment of their fellow-members in their proceedings? Are not the commands given to all, to be of one mind, and of the same judgment, and to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, and to follow the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another, as binding on all the branches of the church as upon individual members of any one branch? We think it will be readily admitted that the whole church of God in all her branches—the entire body of Christ in all its members, are under the one and the same law of Christ; and what that law says to one it says unto all, commanding all, both individually and collectively, to watch and be sober, to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. If all the members of a body are supplied with the same vital blood which flows from the same heart; if all are animated by the same vitality; how then can they be independent of each other, or say to any part of the body, We have no need of thee? The interest is identical; and what concerns one branch or one member, also concerns all. Can this position be scripturally controverted? We think not. If we are not mistaken, the word and the Spirit confirm the position; and the experience of the church in all her history proves that the relationship of sister churches cannot be sustained if any of the branches declare independence of the others. How can two or more walk together except they be agreed?

Some churches who in faith and practice, and in almost every other particular, agree, have objected to associations, on the alleged ground that an associational relationship infringes on the independence of the churches. This objection is based upon the fact that with the New School Baptists, and perhaps some others, associations have usurped an undue authority over the churches, and come to be but little short of legislative councils, assuming the right to enact laws, levy taxes, and in every way domineer over the churches. Now, while we solemnly protest against all usurpation of authority over the churches, and while we hold that the church of Christ, when in gospel order, governed by the laws of Christ, and led by the spirit of the gospel, is the highest court under heaven, still we deny that the church and her branches are either infallible or independent. Just so far as they are governed by the word and Spirit of Christ they are approved of God, and what they bind on earth is bound in heaven. But just as far as they diverge from the

word and spirit of the laws of Christ, and make laws and regulations for themselves, or are swayed by human policy, prejudice or ignorance, their acts are unjustifiable by the divine standard.

But while we should studiously guard against any departure from the laws of Christ, or yielding of the authority which he has vested in the church to any ecclesiastical organization, the relation which sister churches bear to each other calls for the association, correspondence, love, fellowship and union of all the branches which compose the one body or church of God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth.

There is seldom, if ever, any difficulty or disagreement among churches when they are led strictly and exclusively by the divine rule; and then they are not only willing, but desirous, that all their sister churches and all who fear God may behold and know of their order. As "he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."—John iii. 21. The union and fellowship which should characterize all churches of the same faith and order imperatively demand this open, frank and unreserved readiness to come to the light, especially where the propriety of the course pursued by any one church is questioned by others. But the declaration of our Lord is broad enough to include both churches and individual members of churches, in which he says, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

When churches become disorderly by any departure from the letter or spirit of the word, they are apt to grow heady and high-minded, and to place themselves upon their dignity, and claim that they are independent, and have a right to do their own business in their own way; and if any of their sister churches ask for an explanation, they are considered inquisitive and obtrusive. But how else can union and fellowship be preserved? Suppose one church in our connection should introduce infant sprinkling for baptism, or to receive to their communion without scriptural baptism those who have been sprinkled or immersed by those with whom we have no fellowship, and say, We are an independent church; you have no right to interfere with us. It is true we have no power to forbid them, but are we not commanded in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to withdraw from all who walk disorderly? Others may claim a right not only in the reception of members, but also in putting them away, to depart from the order held and practiced by apostolic churches, and under some excessive excitement make fearful slaughter of those who in the judgment of unbiased brethren and churches are not lawfully put away, and yet refuse to submit to a calm, dispassionate investigation, on the assumed ground that as independent churches their acts are not to be questioned: can such claims of

independence be sustained without destroying the union and fellowship of the churches?

Or where churches of our order have excluded members, and challenge an investigation, and are ready and willing to have the whole matter fully investigated by any of the brethren or sister churches who entertain fears that such exclusions have not been perfectly justifiable, for other churches or individuals, without asking for such investigation, to pronounce upon the merits of the case, without asking for an investigation on the plea of being independent, and to extend their fellowship to the excluded parties, do they not in doing so identify themselves with the excluded, and become partakers of their disorder?

Such cases as we have supposed have actually been sadly witnessed in the history of the churches of the saints; and frequently the error has grown out of a mistaken understanding of what has been called the independence of churches, or of ministers or members.

In our estimation and understanding of the subject, a member cannot be either received or excluded from any branch of the church of Christ on the face of the earth that all the branches are not interested in, any more than an extra member could be added to or a living member taken from our natural body without affecting all the body. None properly belong to the church of Christ but those who are baptized into his body; and all such are members of Christ, and members one of another. However remotely these members may be located from each other in the flesh, the body is one, for Christ is not divided; and so vital is their union that no one member can suffer without the sympathy of all the other members. Whatever may be said about independence, the church of Christ is the most dependent of all bodies; and whatever may be said of our rights, our rights extend no further than to do right; we have none of us a right to do wrong. The only reliable standard by which our rights and our wrongs are to be weighed and measured is the law of Christ recorded in the New Testament, and written also, if we are the true members of Christ, in the fleshly tables of our heart.

A few questions which seem to us very important suggest themselves, which we will submit to the prayerful consideration of those who are of the household of faith.

Can any branch of the church of Christ be in a healthy condition, and at the same time indifferent to the approval and fellowship of her sister churches? Has any branch of the church of Christ any rights, gifts, doctrine or ordinances which do not belong alike to the whole church and all her members? What has the church of Christ that she has not received of God? If she has anything that she has not received from above, would she not be better off without it? We are informed that every good and perfect gift cometh from the

Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. If then the church or any of her branches has in possession anything which has not come from the Father of lights, it can be neither good nor perfect, and she has no gospel right to entertain it. Admitting then that all the gifts, rights, power and authority are the gifts of God to the church, are they not the common inheritance and property of all the church? If so, how can any branch or portion of the church of God be independent of all the other branches or parts which make up the whole church?

If our view of this subject be correct, all the branches of the church, which are members of the body of which Christ is the Head, are interested in the general welfare of all the body, and have a right to inquire into the faith and order of every religious organization that claims to belong to the same commonwealth of the spiritual Israel of our God; and under no assumption of independence or exclusive rights has any branch of the church a gospel right to refuse to let their order be known. And further, it does appear to us that any professed church refusing to have her acts scrutinized by her sister churches must necessarily be dropped from the connection of recognized churches in fellowship, for christian and church fellowship cannot work in the dark. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 3.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been taking your paper, the SIGNS, more than thirty years, and have never asked your views on any Scripture till now. If convenient, I would like to know where we will find Scripture to prove an immortal soul belonging to the non-elect. My mind has been running on that subject, and if you will please give your views, you will oblige one of the least of all saints, if I am one at all.

I. S. PRICE.

CANTRAL, Iowa, April 8, 1875.

REPLY.

We do not know of any Scripture that says in so many words that the soul, body or spirit of either the elect or non-elect are immortal; but the Scriptures very clearly prove, to our mind, that all the human family possess a being or existence, call it by what name we may, which must continue to exist after the death of the body, and in an existence of interminable duration. There most certainly will be a resurrection, both of the just and of the unjust, in which all they that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, 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.

We do not find the term "immortality" in the Scriptures anywhere used to simply express an endless duration of existence, for the word "immortality" is, in its scriptural application, only used in reference to

that eternal life which is brought to light through the gospel, and is only possessed by him who is the only and blessed Potentate; for he only hath immortality dwelling in the light. It is only by vital union with him that any of his members possess immortality; for that eternal life which God has given them 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. He is our life, and our sonship is in his Sonship, if we are the sons of God; for he is the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and of his fullness have all we (who are born of him, as the incorruptible Word) received, and grace for grace. Now all that is born of Adam is mortal, because death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned; but all that is born of God is immortal, because it is born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. In this sense of the word "immortality," or eternal life, which we regard as the scriptural meaning of the word, none possess it only as they possess it in Christ, who is their life; nor can any man have any experimental knowledge of it till he is born again, of incorruptible seed; or in other words, until Christ is formed in them the hope of glory.

But to the question of brother Price. So far as we have light and understanding in the Scriptures, there is no distinction stated between the souls of the elect and the non-elect, as to their mortality or immortality, simply as souls. We are told that the earthly, natural man, Adam, was made a living soul (1 Cor. xv.); and in Genesis ii. 7 we are informed that the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. As the seminal head of the human family, Adam became a living soul; his posterity into which he is multiplied must necessarily possess the same elements of soul and body which he possessed when he became a living soul. There is no distinction spoken of between the souls of the elect and those of the non-elect. By nature, therefore, the souls of all who have descended from Adam, which includes all mankind, whether elect or non-elect, are precisely alike. The elect of God were by nature children of wrath, even as others, and have an existence which is perpetual and interminable. We cannot, nor will we attempt to, define the soul of man, in distinction from the spirit of man. The term is sometimes applied, as in its first occurrence (Gen. ii. 7), to the entire earthly man: "Man became a living soul." That soul was a man, and that man was a living soul. As the progenitor of his whole race, he was made a living soul; and "As is the earthy [progenitor], such are they also that are earthy." All of Adam's children were begotten and born in his image and likeness. But the soul is in some cases spoken of in distinction from the body, and as that which after the dissolution by death may be cast into

hell. But we know of no Scripture in which the souls of any of the human family are called immortal; for as we have before said, that term is nowhere in the Scriptures applied to any other life than that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested when Christ abolished death and brought immortality to light through the gospel.

A QUESTION OF ORDER.

ELDER BEEBE—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I desire your views in regard to persons partaking of the Lord's supper. If a person is at meeting, and declines to commune with the church, has the pastor or any of the brethren a right to ask his reasons for declining? Please answer through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Yours in much love.

REPLY.

In our judgment, it is not only the right, but the duty of the pastor, or deacons, or any of the brethren or sisters, to inquire of any member of the church why they decline to travel with the church in the ordinances of the Lord's house.

A member of the church, or of a sister church of the same faith and order, being present at the time of the administration, and declining to participate, expresses, by so doing, either a want of fellowship with the church, or that he is himself under some cloud of doubts or temptations; and as the brethren are solemnly bound to watch over each other, it is their imperative duty to inquire why a brother or a sister should give such open evidence of departure from the travel of the church.

In the pattern given by our Lord, he blessed and brake the bread, and commanded all his disciples present to take and eat of it; and likewise the cup, when he had given thanks, he commanded them all to drink of it.—Matt. xxvi. 26, 27. "And they all drank of it."—Mark xiv. 23. See also Luke xxiii. 19, 20 and 1 Cor. xi. 23-25. It is therefore disobedience to the Savior's command for any recognized disciple to be present and decline to unite with the church in the celebration of this ordinance in remembrance of their Lord.

No doubt some of the children of God feel such a sense of unworthiness and self-abasement that they are for the moment tempted to conclude they have no right to eat with the saints, whom they esteem better than themselves; but should their feelings deter them from obeying the command to "Do this in remembrance of him" who bore their sins in his own body on the tree? It is not our own vile bodies which we are to discern and set forth; but discerning his precious body which was broken for our sins, and his flowing blood which was shed for the remission of our sins.

We think it were better, if there be insuperable barriers in the way, which we have labored unsuccessfully to remove, that we should not be present at the time, than to give a public expression of disability to walk in fellowship with the church. But whatever may be the cause of one declining, or absenting from the com-

munion, they that are spiritual should inquire after, and endeavor to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.

While on this subject we will say that we regard it as an imperative duty of every member of the church to be present at the seasons appointed for attending to this most sacred ordinance, unless providentially prevented. It is left with the church to judge and decide as to how often the church shall assemble for the breaking of bread; but as often as it is proper to meet for this purpose, every member is solemnly bound to see to removing every barrier out of the way, that all may not only be present in person, but in the unity of the Spirit and bond of peace.

A QUESTION OF ORDER.

ELDER G. BEEBE AND SON—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Myself and many other brethren desire your views on the following point of order, viz.: When an association has dropped correspondence with another association, is it gospel order to invite ministers from such dropped associations to sit in council at their sessions, or to administer ordinances in churches of that association after having dropped her from correspondence? Your views on this subject will oblige myself and others. Yours in hope of eternal life,

E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, Iowa, Jan. 11, 1881.

REPLY.

As a formal associational correspondence is not indispensable to gospel fellowship, the opening or dropping of such correspondence does not, in our judgment, necessarily affect christian fellowship. We may be in full fellowship with churches which are unassociated, or with many associations with which we have no direct associational correspondence. But when an association, a church, or even an individual, has so far departed from the faith and order of the gospel as to require that they should be dropped from our fellowship, it cannot be orderly for those who have so withdrawn fellowship, or for any who have fellowship with those who have withdrawn fellowship, to extend tokens of fellowship where such fellowship does not actually exist. The extension of fellowship to an association, church or individual that stands excluded, is a virtual withdrawal of fellowship from those who have withdrawn their fellowship from the disorderly parties.

Associational correspondence is intended to express fellowship and unity, and certainly does imply a oneness of faith and order; but still that unity and oneness is not created by a formal correspondence, though it may be expressed and promoted by correspondences.

When dissensions disturb the peace of associations to such an extent that fellowship is broken and separation becomes inevitable, and a sacred regard for the laws of Christ and the order of his house demand a withdrawal of fellowship and correspondence, it is not unfrequently the case that there are in the offending associations or churches a minority who disapprove the disorder of the majority, and, although they may re-

main with the offending majority, in the hope that they may be reclaimed, we see no just cause why they should be ignored or deprived of the fellowship of their brethren; but of this the churches, in our opinion, are the most competent judges.

When we consider the shortcomings and imperfections of the most orderly, forbearance and long-suffering is forcibly suggested, as suitable and proper to be cherished and exercised among brethren, churches and associations.

Associations are sometimes called *creatures* of the churches; but that the churches are divinely invested with any such *creative* authority is justly doubted, especially if they are to be considered as ecclesiastical bodies holding authority *delegated* by the churches, either legislative or executive. But we think it will not be doubted that any or all of the branches of the church of Christ may, and should, as far as they have opportunity, meet for correspondence, and the cultivation of union, fellowship and peace, exhorting and admonishing one another in the fear of the Lord. In all such meetings and correspondence they should cautiously avoid biting and devouring one another, lest they should be consumed one of another.

TO OUR DELINQUENTS.

IT IS a long time since we have published anything under the above head, and nothing is more distasteful to us than to be obliged to call the attention of some to the fact that their subscription is in arrears. By reference to the date opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper containing the paper, each subscriber can tell just how his subscription stands; and we now appeal to all who find their date in arrears, if they can without too much inconvenience, to send in their remittances, as we are in need of the money. We do not wish any who are not able to pay now, but expect shortly to be able to pay, to discontinue their paper on that account, as we would rather continue their subscription and await their convenience than to lose their support altogether.

We would rather suffer being discommoded ourselves than to crowd our patrons, but we know that with many it is mere thoughtlessness, and to all such we would say, Don't forget us.

MARRIAGES.

JAN. 19, 1887, at the home of the bride's mother, in Southampton, Pa., by Elder Silas H. Durand, Mr. Howard L. Lefferts and Miss Elizabeth H. Hegeland, both of Southampton, Pa.

JAN. 20, at the house of the bride's mother, by the same, Mr. Jacob S. Leedom and Miss Mary J. Lefferts, both of Southampton, Pa.

NEAR Smithsville, Va., Feb. 1, 1887, by the groom's father, Mr. Fred L. Cox, of Charlotte Co., Va., and Miss Louise Hunton, of Fauquier Co., Va.

AT the residence of the bride's parents, on Jan. 2, 1887, by Elder Uriah Trumbo, Mr. Perry H. Beery and Miss Cate Blosser, all of Putnam County, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEPARTED this life, in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, on Friday morning, Sept. 24, 1886, at five o'clock, at the residence of her son-in-law, brother John W. Magee, four miles north of Platte City, in Platte Co., Missouri, our dear mother in Israel, and beloved sister in Christ, **Amanda M. Murdock**, relict of the late Deacon John T. Murdock, aged seventy-nine years, ten months and twenty days. Her maiden name was Hodges. She was born in Virginia, in Spotsylvania County, according to one account; but another has it in Standardsville, then in Orange County, but now the county seat, Green. Her father died when she was but six years old, and a few years later her widowed mother with five little children emigrated to Bourbon Co., Kentucky. She was married to John T. Murdock in 1837, and in 1847 emigrated with him to Platte Co., Mo., and soon afterward settled on the farm where she died. Sister Murdock was blessed with a good hope through grace more than fifty years ago, and joined the Particular or Old School Baptist Church called Elizabeth, in Bourbon Co., Ky., and was baptized by the late Elder Thomas P. Dudley (I have not been able to obtain the exact dates), and remained a member of that church until after she removed to Missouri, when she, with her husband, joined the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Unity, in Platte Co., Mo., under the pastoral care of Elder Philip J. Burruss, where she continued a member in good standing, and much beloved and respected to the end of her pilgrimage. Her last sickness was complicated and protracted, she being confined to her bed about two months, and toward the last she suffered greatly, but bore it with remarkable christian resignation, acknowledging the justice and righteousness of God, and confessing the kindness and mercy of our heavenly Father. Sister Murdock was one of those humble little ones, that have ever an abiding sense of their own unworthiness and weakness. She often spoke to me about having a fear of death, and feeling a shrinking from meeting it, and was much troubled because such was the case. I tried to comfort her by telling her that a feeling, the same in substance, though it might vary in form, was more or less with all the subjects of grace. It might be the "thorn in the flesh" that was buffeting her; or the "weight and the sin" that was besetting her; but the Lord would surely deliver her in his own good time; for we are assured that "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." This seemed to comfort her, and the last time I was with her, which was the day before she died, she told me that the fear of death had left her; that, although she did not have those bright manifestations that some spoke of, yet she was satisfied, and was ready and willing "to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." And often, when in extreme suffering, she would call on her dear Lord to come speedily to her relief. Perhaps I should explain that I had been absent several weeks, attending associations, &c., but the dear Lord spared her and me till we should see each other once again ere she departed this life.

I tried to preach on the occasion to a very large congregation of sympathizing friends who were gathered to pay the last solemn tribute of respect to her who was so dear, and for the comfort of the bereaved and sorrowing ones; using the twenty-ninth and thirtieth verses of the second chapter of Luke, which was most forcibly and sweetly impressed upon my mind during the last precious interview with her. Her children and stepchildren were all with her during the latter part of her sickness, doing all that love could prompt, or affection suggest, to alleviate her sufferings, and to soothe and comfort her in the last hours of her mortal career. She leaves four children (two sons and two daughters), two stepchildren (a son and daughter), all except one son married and settled in life with estimable companions, and respectable families; many of whom we believe entertain a hope in Christ of a better life, several are members of religious societies, and one daugh-

ter and the stepdaughter with their companions are members of Unity Church. She leaves also several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, quite a large circle of sincere friends and the brethren and sisters of Unity Church, to mourn her departure. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others, who 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."

"Welcome, sweet hour of full discharge,
That sets our longing soul at large,
Unbinds our chains, breaks up our cell
And gives us with our God to dwell."

R. M. THOMAS.

NEW MARKET, Mo., Jan. 27, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It becomes my painful duty to send you for publication the obituary notice of a dear nephew, son of James M. and Frances Thomas.

The subject of this notice, **Charles H. Thomas**, was born Oct. 5, 1861, and died Jan. 4, 1887, being twenty-five years, two months and twenty-nine days old. He was born in Johnson Co., Mo., in which county he lived until the spring of 1881, when he moved with his parents to Henry Co., Mo., where he lived until the God of all grace saw fit to call him home. He leaves a father, mother and two brothers, one older and the other younger than himself, besides many relatives and a large number of friends, to mourn his loss. While we are made to weep and mourn over the loss of one so near and dear, yet we do not mourn as those who have no hope of a better land beyond this vale of tears, but we are made to rejoice to feel that our loss is his eternal gain, and that his spirit now rests where moth and rust doth not corrupt and thieves do not break through and steal. While he did not belong to any church organization on earth, we are made to believe that he was one of that innumerable host that John saw while an exile. During his last illness he was unconscious the greater part of the time, to such an extent that he could not tell us of his feelings; while he had made no open declaration of his feelings, we know that he at repeated times asked an interest in the prayers of the christian people of his community, and said that he felt himself a sinner above measure, and without God's mercy he was lost forever. We have this consolation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save just such creatures as Charles felt himself to be. Christ says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," and that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. The unworthy writer of this notice was the only one of his relatives outside of the family that was present when he was laid away. His remains were followed to their last resting place by a large concourse of weeping friends, and were buried in Good Hope Cemetery, Henry County, Mo., in the presence of many friends who had assembled to witness and assist in putting away all that was mortal of their dear friend Charley (as he was called). To the bereaved family, while we know it is hard to give him up, a son just in the vigor of manhood, we know that he is in the hands of one who is able to say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; and that he doeth all things well; and he has said that he will not suffer his little ones to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, and with every temptation he will provide therewith a way of escape; and may the God of all truth lead, guide and direct us in such a way that when it is ours to die, we shall meet the departed where there is no parting, in that upper and better kingdom, at the right hand of God on high, is the prayer of your unworthy servant,

L. B. THOMAS.

KNOBNOTER, Mo., Jan. Jan. 6, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request of the family and of her pastor, Elder Hiram Campbell, I send you the obituary of my wife's mother, **Lois Ann Williams**, wife of Deacon N. H. Williams of Bowdoinham, Maine, who quietly fell asleep on the morning of last Thursday, Jan. 27th. Our mother was born Nov. 22, 1819, and was in the sixty-eighth

year of her age. She was married to N. H. Williams in Sept., 1844. To them have been born twelve children, six of whom survive her. Five years ago she was partially paralyzed, and since that has never fully rallied either in mind or body. A few days before the end came she suffered from two successive shocks and then the lamp of life rapidly grew dim until it went out altogether.

Words can never tell what our mother was to her children. They in return loved her as children seldom do a parent, and it was their joy and delight to call her "the mother." I have known her for the past twenty-two years and can bear testimony to her goodness, truth and worth. I do not think that I have ever known any one who lived with more humble, steadfast trust in God day by day than she, both in things spiritual and things temporal. I have heard her older children say that when they were little and their mother would become tired and wearied with abounding cares, she would call them into her room and kneel down and pray to God, and they could see her face as she came out from her room shining like an angel. I recall many times in the past years when I have joined with them in their family worship, and have heard her pray, when it seemed to me that she saw God face to face, and talked with him as a friend. Amid the constant care of a large family, she lived a quiet, submissive life of constant trust, and realized much of the peace that accompanies such trust. Her whole hope for salvation and for help was in God. She lived this out, and all knew it; while at the same time she strove, in every relation she filled, to adorn her christian profession. She leaves a sacred memory and an influence for good to her husband, to her children, to her neighbors and to all who knew her. She was cheerful, but never trivial; strict in her views of right, but never fault finding nor censorious. The heart of her husband did safely trust in her; and she did him good and not evil all the days of her life. Her children rise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her. Truly grace does still have its victories in the hearts and lives of men.

Myself and wife were unable to be present at her funeral. But they write to us that her mortal remains were gently and lovingly laid away last Sunday, Jan. 30th. The hands of loving children performed the last offices ere she was laid away. Elder H. Campbell, their long time friend and pastor, was with them and read in Proverbs xxxi, from tenth verse to the end, as being specially applicable to her, and made remarks from this chapter and from Isaiah lxiii. 9. And then gentle hands carried her to her grave. One of her daughters writes to us that while their hearts are very tender and sore, yet there is comfort in remembering that the dear mother is with the Savior she loved so well and trusted in so entirely. To the husband bereaved so sorely in his old age, and to the children who loved her so well, the hearts of all who knew them will go out in sympathy. And I am glad that they know where true comfort is found. For many years the bereaved husband has trusted in him who can save.

I remain as ever, your brother in hope of life eternal.

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Feb. 2, 1887.

My dear brother, **Jesse S. Smith**, died at Bay View, Northampton Co., Va., Jan. 2, 1887, of typhoid fever, in the forty-eighth year of his age. My heart is full of sorrow, but I believe that our loss is his gain. If it were not for this blessed hope, I feel as if I would almost sink under this affliction. It was a great shock to me, as I did not expect he was so near death, though he had been delicate for a long time. Soon after he was taken ill I was sent for. The first day I was with him his mind seemed to be clear, though he was very sick. I asked him if he was trusting in the Savior, and his answer was, "Yes. All my imperfections were laid on him." The next day I was standing by his bedside and weeping, thinking he was not noticing me, when he told me not to weep, and said, "The Lord will take care of me." From that time his mind seemed to wander till he passed away like one falling into a gentle sleep.

Brother was baptized Oct. 18, 1863, and

united with the church at Indiantown. Sister Parsons' house, at Salisbury, Md., was the first place he stopped at while on the way to the association, the time he was baptized. She writes me, "My mind goes back to your brother's first visit here, and to the meetings I attended with him at Indiantown, when he talked to the church, was received and baptized; also the good letters I received from him afterwards. How many have passed away since then, who were there on that occasion. Brother Timmons, who was baptized at the same time, passed away last summer; brother George W. Staton passed away years ago; brother and sister Adkins, at whose house we stopped, were both removed in two weeks, in 1871. We have been spared to see the beginning of another year. The Lord knows whether we shall be permitted to see its close. O how uncertain is every thing here below."

Your sorrowing sister,

FANNIE A. THOMAS.

NORFOLK, Va.

ELDER BEEBE'S SONS:—It is with a heart filled with sorrow and grief that I write the obituary of my beloved daughter, **Anna C. Hecker**, wife of John G. Burch, Jr., who departed this life Jan. 3, 1887, aged twenty-four years. The deceased was born in Albany, N. Y., Aug. 2, 1862. She never knew what sickness was from childhood until two years ago, when she was taken with pneumonia. She recovered again, but it left her with a cough ever after. She never complained of having any pain, and was able to do her housework until a week before she died. She was taken suddenly with Bright's Disease, and suffered very much; but never a murmur or complaint escaped her lips. About eleven years ago she joined the German Baptist Church in Albany. My wife and I were very much against it, for we knew at that time already how easy young people are deceived in the religious excitement of the present day. But when we asked about her hope of everlasting life, she told us that she was a great sinner, and for a long time was troubled about it; and one day the hymn came into her mind,

"Hallelujah! 'tis done;

I believe on the Son;

I am saved by the blood of the crucified one." Then she felt that her burden was removed, and we did not object any more, as we thought it was the Lord's work. We have reason to believe from what she expressed during her short sickness that the Lord had revealed himself to her. About four days before she died I asked her, "Anna, if you should not get well, can you believe in your heart that Christ saved you from your sins by his precious blood?" She said, "Yes, father, I can, and for a long time ago." Another time, when her sufferings were very great, and my wife told her about it, she said, "We all have to come to that. We dare not murmur." Then she exclaimed, "O Lord, not my will be done, but yours." When she felt her end was near, she took farewell of all of us. She said she felt it coming. "I am going. I feel it coming. I am willing and ready. Give me a plain funeral, and private, and come and visit my grave." Then she said to her husband, "Good-by, John; be good, and take good care of little Mandie, and bring her up good." The last ten hours before her death all her suffering left her. About ten minutes before she died, she said, "I want to go to sleep," when she softly breathed her last, without a struggle. She leaves one child, two years and four months old, together with her husband, father and mother, four brothers and five sisters, to mourn their loss. May the Lord sustain and comfort us in our great sorrow, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother,

L. HECKER.

ALBANY, N. Y.

DIED—January 22, 1887, after a distressing illness of cancer in the breast and right side for five years, **Mrs. Mary A. Frazier**, in the forty-fifth year of her age. Sister Frazier was brought to a knowledge and love of the truth in early life. Her rather remarkable experience was published in the SIGNS, Oct. 15, 1863. She gives as the date of her bap-

tism Sept. 30, 1860, at which time she was in her eighteenth year. The church was known as Harris Mills, in Sussex Co., Del., long since been gone down. At that time it could scarcely be regarded as a church, as there was preaching there but seldom, and little or no attention paid to church discipline. The prospect for an ardent and devoted young disciple in whose heart the love of God dwelt was dark indeed. When she afterwards removed from that neighborhood to the vicinity of Cow Marsh Church, in Kent Co., Del., she was received upon a relation of her experience, there not being enough church left in the old place to give her a letter. She stood connected with us at Cow Marsh about twenty years, steadfast, sincere, and devoted to the last. She was a granddaughter of Deacon Elijah Laws, formerly of Indiantown. Her maiden name was Truitt. Her parents were both members, and her father survives her. She leaves a husband and (I believe) five children to mourn an irreparable loss. At the time of her death the family residence was near Frederica, a long distance from the place of worship. I have always considered sister Frazier an ornament to her profession and an honor to the cause. We may entertain the hope that the faith that guided her through life and sustained her in death may be a legacy to which the bereaved husband and children may be made heirs. The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself, and we have no right to complain.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Jan. 11, 1887, sister **Eliza A. Ford**, wife of Mr. Caleb Ford, aged forty-nine years, six months and three days. She died very sudden, being sick only one day and one night. They buried a daughter just five weeks before the day that she was buried. I baptized her about twenty-seven years ago, and she has from that time until her death been a firm believer that there is but one way that God saves his children, and that one way is by grace alone. We have ever believed her to be a child of God and a worthy member of our church. She has left to mourn her husband, eight children, one brother, one sister, and many other relatives.

There was a large gathering of people at her funeral, and I spoke to them from the words in Eph. ii. 8, 9.

WM. QUINT.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1887.

NO. 6.

POETRY.

WHY PREDESTINATION COMFORTS ME.

BECAUSE I am helpless, and sinful, and vile;
With a heart fill'd with evil, with mischief
and guile;
Which naught but the arm of the mighty I
AM
Could draw to the feet of the crucified Lamb.
Because in myself doth no good thing appear;
If I wish to do well, evil always is near;
The good that I would, I find not how to do;
But the evil I would not, am fain to pursue.
Because I am carnal and sold under sin,
With no strength to resist foes without or
within;
With a heart above all things deceitful and
vain,
And desperately wicked I own it with pain.
Because what is needful for me God knows
best,
Whether trouble and trials or quiet and rest;
For all my path was marked out by his hand,
And all of my journey his counsel hath
plann'd.
Because if predestinated to life in his Son,
'Tis for nothing at all I can do or have done;
In the present, the future, or yet in the past,
'Tis of grace, all free grace, from the first to
the last.

ABBY G. CLARK.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNTO WHAT AND UNTO WHOM THE SAINTS ARE COME.—HEB. XII. 22-24.

NUMBER FOUR.

"AND to God the Judge of all."

What an unspeakable wonder and blessing is this, that poor, vile sinners are come unto God, the infinitely wise and holy Judge of all, and that they live in his sight. "He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity;" and yet those who come unto him are made to "be holy and without blame before him in love." Under the old dispensation the people were not allowed to come near him. Bounds were set about the mountain from which the Lord spake unto them, so that they should not approach; and even after this was done the Lord sent Moses down to warn them again, lest they should try to break through unto the Lord to gaze, and he should break forth unto them, and many of them should perish.—Exodus xix. 21, 24. Thus it was shown that those who are under the law cannot come unto God, for "he will in no wise clear the guilty;" and when he enters into judgment with them they are found to be under the curse. The law is as the flaming sword which the Lord placed at the east of the garden of Eden; it prevents the possibility of any one approaching unto the light where our God dwells.—1 Timothy vi. 16.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. No man knoweth the Father save the Son, "and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. xi. 27. Unto all the dear children of God in this gospel dispensation this blessed and glorious revelation is made. Those unto whom special revelations of God were given under the former dispensations, as Abraham and Jacob and Moses, and the Elders of Israel, saw him in such a way as represented him in Christ in the salvation of his people. Jesus is the way. "No man cometh unto the Father but by him." "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified;" and so all are justly condemned. But the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man (John v. 22-27); and he has executed judgment for the people in bearing their sins, and in being made a curse for them, and so has filled Zion with judgment and righteousness, and has made his people all righteous.—Isa. xxxiii. 5; lx. 21.

"The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."—Isa. xxxiii. 22. It is the same glorious person, the Lord our Redeemer, who is the Maker, the Judge and the Executor of the laws of Zion; and he "has prepared his throne for judgment," and that "glorious high throne" is in Zion. "They shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord."—Jer. iii. 17. "The Lord is in the midst of her." "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne," and therefore no unclean thing can enter there. What a sweet and glorious place to dwell in, where God the Judge of all "sits in the throne judging right" (Psalm ix. 4), while "mercy and truth go before his face." "He has executed righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed." No one will ever feel oppressed by sin but that he will in the Lord's own good time learn to his soul's surprise and joy that judgment has been executed for him, and will know by experience "the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works."

The precious doctrine taught in those portions of Scripture which declare the judgments of God to be in favor of the poor and meek of the earth, is not discovered and understood by searching, but is made known by revelation to the soul in time of need. As a traveler in the

desert, fainting with thirst, and having no hope of finding water, is surprised by the sudden appearance of a spring of cool, refreshing water rising up before him out of the dry sand; so a poor soul, who has given up finding any way of righteousness for such a guilty wretch as he, and sees no hope but that he must perish, is made to cry out in amazement and delight when a portion of Scripture is opened up to his mind revealing Jesus as his righteousness. Such a portion is to him a well of salvation, out of which he draws with joy the refreshing water. "O what a vile, undone creature I am," he was just crying. "I am so black, so unholy, that it seems a sin for me to pray unto such a holy God, or even to wish to be where he and his holy angels and blessed people are." But now his soul is amazed to find the judgments of God in his favor. Righteousness has been fulfilled by the dear Lamb of God, and his sins taken away and cast into the depths of the sea; and he greatly rejoices in the Lord, who has "clothed him with the garments of salvation, and covered him with the robe of righteousness." Now let the enemy undertake to load the conscience down with a long, black account of his sins, as it was loaded and oppressed so long, and by reigning grace he will feel in his soul the triumphant voice of faith saying, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" Our glorious Judge has pronounced the judgment in our behalf, and has sealed it in our hearts with the Holy Spirit of promise, and our sins no longer keep us away from him. No bounds, no bars, are placed around this holy "mountain of the Lord's house," to prevent the near approach of those who have eyes to see it. He has given unto them to experience clean hands and a pure heart in their precious Jesus, so that by faith in him they can ascend into the hill of the Lord, and stand in his holy place.—Psalm xxiv. 3, 4. This blessed Jesus is the King unto whom God has given his judgments; and also in his resurrection he is the King's Son, unto whom the righteousness of God is given (Psa. lxxii. 1-3); and he judges his people with righteousness, and his poor with judgment; and in them "the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."—Isaiah xxxii. 17.

Those who have come unto God the Judge of all have thorough work done in their hearts; for he lays judgment

to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and sweeps away the refuge of lies with which the devil has been deceiving the poor soul, and causes the waters to overflow the hiding place of their own works and drive them out.—Isaiah xxviii. 17. He searches the hearts by his law which is written there, rebukes them for iniquity, and causes their beauty to consume away like the moth.—Psa. xxxix. 11. Thus are we prepared in the Lord's own right way to rejoice in the revelation of Jesus as our righteousness. How full of grace and truth he is seen to be. He has brought forth judgment unto truth in his resurrection from the grave, having left all the sins of his people in that land of forgetfulness when, as Truth, he sprang out of the earth, while righteousness looked down from heaven.—Psalm lxxxv. 10, 11.

The peculiar mark of those who have come unto God the Judge of all is, that they acknowledge all the account that stands against them. They do not wish to hide anything in the secret of their hearts from the Lord. However black the depths they feel to be there, they want him to know it all. They would freely confess all to him if they could express it; and are glad that he knows not only all the evil, but also all the groanings and sighs, and all the longings after holiness. They cannot wish for the rocks and mountains to hide them from him, as the enemies of his truth do, but wish to lie before him just as they are, and receive their sentence from him while pleading for mercy. They cannot but have a trembling hope that he will save them, and in the way of his judgments they wait for him.—Isa. xxvi. 8. The feeling of their souls is expressed by the prophet, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause;" and at times faith enables them to say further, "He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness."—Micah vii. 9.

The judgments of Moses were unto condemnation necessarily. His was a ministration of condemnation and death.—2 Cor. iii. 7-9. In the judgments of God under the gospel dispensation the law is magnified and made honorable, and yet the poor sinner is saved from under its curse. In this ministration of righteousness how much more glory there is than in the ministration of condemnation. Sometimes the wonders of this salvation so fill the soul that we can say, with the psalmist, "I will rise up at midnight and give thanks unto thee,

because of thy righteous judgments." "I will sing of mercy and judgments." These judgments are above, out of the sight of the wicked (Psalm x. 5), but they are seen and rejoiced in by all the meek of the earth. "Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still, when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth."—Psalm lxxvi. 8, 9.

It is only in the church of God that his judgments are truly felt, known and understood; and it is only there that they are known to be a great deep, "unsearchable, and his ways past finding out."—Psalm xxxvi. 6; Rom. xi. 33. Although the redeemed sinner is freely justified by grace, and comes within this glorious city which is inclosed by walls of salvation, as one unto whom the Lord will not impute sin, and is forever free from the law of sin and death, yet he is "under law to Christ." The law of our King which goes forth from Zion is as inflexible as the law of Moses, and more enduring; for the law of Moses, being fulfilled by our dear Redeemer, came to an end, but the laws of our Savior shall remain forever. They are written, not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart. They are all included in "the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus." The letter of the precepts and commands of Jesus any one could commit to memory, but only those in whom Jesus dwells can know the spirit and power of them; and their recognition at any time depends not upon our memory, but upon the Spirit of Christ in us. By his Spirit we are enabled to walk in obedience to them, and to experience that rest to our souls; and by that Spirit we are made to feel distress and anguish of soul when we transgress them.

As it was with Israel under the law of Moses, so it is with those who are "under law to Christ," of whom Israel was a type; they who transgress the laws of their King, and walk not in his judgments, shall be visited with the rod.—Psalm lxxxix. 30-32. "If they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven."—Hebrews xii. 25. "For if the word spoken by angels [ministers of the law] was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."—Hebrews ii. 2, 3. No one can neglect anything which does not in the sense in which it can be neglected belong to him. He cannot neglect another man's wife, or children, or business; so he cannot neglect a salvation unless that salvation is his. The salvation of God embraces every precept, ordinance and doctrine of Christ; and those who have been quickened by divine life may neglect those precepts and ordinances, and that doctrine, and in so doing they neglect that salvation. For this they must necessarily feel the weight of

the righteous judgments of God. Place a living member of our natural body in the fire, and pain will result; so if a living member of the body of Christ transgresses his law and walks after the flesh, great loss and suffering must necessarily result. "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."—Heb. x. 26, 27. This can be true only of those who have spiritual life; and only those of the Lord's people who have experienced it truly understand the depths of the meaning of this declaration. The punishment is sorer for transgressing this holy law than it was for transgressing the law of Moses.—Heb. xi. 29. That was natural death; this is death to the joys of God's salvation on the part of one who has known them. If this death, this sorrow, this fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, this visitation with the rod, should last but for a day, or even an hour, it would still be as much sorer in its nature than any temporal punishment as the heavens of God's truth and love and righteousness, from the enjoyment of which they are now separated, are higher than the carnal ordinances and worldly sanctuary of the first covenant, and than all the pleasures of this life. The natural man does not know this. All of the Lord's people do not fully understand it, for all have not been let down in their experience into the full depths of the iniquity of their hearts, nor subjected to all the fierce and terrible temptations of the enemy. It is only through the bitterest soul afflictions that the meaning of such portions of Scripture is learned. They were written for time of need.

Esau was not a child of God; but as the first-born of Isaac he had a birthright to Isaac's blessing and estate, and this birthright he sold. The apostle refers to him to illustrate and give force to his warning and admonition to the children of God. No one can sell what does not belong to him. No one can have a birthright without having been born to it. Esau had a birthright to temporal things. A child of God has a birthright to the privileges and comforts of the church of God, because he is born of God. If he lives after the flesh, seeks first the riches or pleasures of the world rather than the kingdom of God and his righteousness, or takes up with false doctrine and joins with carnal worshippers in order to be esteemed by the world, he sells his birthright for a morsel of meat. He cannot dispose of or lose his relationship as a child, but loses his birthrights and privileges. If he turns from the path of life, he must necessarily be in the region of death. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin."—Romans viii. 10. When therefore we follow the "desires of the flesh and of the mind," we sell our birthright, and receive in return only that which pertains to death. But in walking in the spirit,

however great the conflicts and afflictions may be, we experience that "the spirit is life because of righteousness."

If the Lord has written in the heart his command to be baptized, then trouble and gloom will be experienced, instead of rest and comfort, while that command is neglected. This is one of the many ways in which the child of God may neglect this great salvation. If one gives way to the evil passions of his carnal nature, pride, covetousness, lust, anger, and the like, what bitter anguish of spirit and darkness of mind follow this subjection to the flesh. It is truly a fearful thing to fall by such transgressions into the hand of the living God.—Heb. x. 30, 31. But although a fearful thing, the poor soul does not want to hide from his God. It is the sin by which we fall into his hands in this sense that is the fearful thing; and the vileness and awful nature of this sin and transgression we shall be made fully to know. But this is the Judge by whom we want to be tried, for we know that his "judgments are true and righteous altogether." And O how tenderly compassionate he is, while causing us to feel the awful weight of his judgments! In his just and yet most merciful dealings with us we learn that "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."—Psalm ciii. 13, 14.

When we are left to ourselves to follow after the flesh, it is for a wise and gracious purpose, to teach us how vile and untrustworthy we are, and to show us that our God is justified when he speaks, and clear when he judges.—Psalm li. 4. When we have once wept bitterly, like Peter, we shall never fully forget the cause. If we have been delivered unto Satan, it is for the destruction of the flesh (to make us so to feel its weakness that we may have no confidence in it), that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.—1 Cor. v. 5. When under the chastisements of our God we become "feeble and sore broken," while we mournfully contemplate and bewail our sins and corruptions, then comes the enemy with his awful temptations, roaring against us as a lion, telling us that we were never in the secret, never had life, are only hypocrites, and that we shall be more awfully and fearfully punished on account of having deceived the dear people of God. O the sighs and cries and groanings that rise from our poor hearts! What a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation!—Heb. x. 27. But blessed be the name of our God, we shall find that "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."—Psa. ciii. 10. While we shall see his judgments fully executed, we shall also see an exhibition of mercy "as great as the heavens are high above the earth." The fiery indignation shall only devour the adversaries, not the poor soul who has been fearfully looking for it. Our God will not suffer

any of his dear children to be tempted above that they are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it.—1 Cor. x. 13. Jesus is that Way. When he appears every perplexity is removed, every crooked thing is made straight, and all darkness is made light before this trembling, astonished soul, who has been so wonderfully delivered from going down to the pit. Now he finds that it was good for him to be thus chastised and afflicted, that he may ever be ashamed of his depraved ways, may lose all confidence in self, may know that he cannot direct his own steps, and that he may rise through his fall to a knowledge of the greater heights and riches and wonders of the redeeming grace and love and mercy and faithfulness of our dear Savior, and may render unto our God the acceptable sacrifices of a broken and contrite heart.

What great reason we have for rejoicing that we have come unto God; that he is our Judge, and not Moses; that he is our Judge, and not men of the world; that he is our Judge, and not our brethren, not even ourselves. Moses cannot but condemn when he judges. "Men look on the outward appearance," and neither their praise nor condemnation is given according to truth. Brethren can render perfect judgment only when controlled entirely by the Holy Spirit of God. It is only by what the Lord has put into their hearts of the light of truth, only by "the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind," that they are qualified to judge. Then will their judgment be in meekness and love, with no harshness or coldness in it. To them it is said by their King, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." When we judge ourselves we can see only ground to condemn. We are not allowed under the light of truth to indulge self-pity, nor to regard excuses for our transgressions. But how sweetly the apostle comes to us when we have thus rendered judgment against ourselves: "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."—1 John iii. 19, 20. The natural heart does not condemn us, but will always find something to excuse or extenuate everything that must be acknowledged as a sin; and will invariably cover it with a credit of some good work and good resolve, and generally leave a generous balance in our favor. But the quickened soul can find nothing to lessen the debt a hair's weight, until the dear Savior's righteousness is revealed to cover the whole account of iniquity.

What thanks and praise are due unto our God, the Judge of all his people, that he will not judge them by Moses, but by Jesus Christ. This is the gospel day which God has appointed, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.—Acts xvii. 31. This is the judgment day. The Lord's people are in that day,

and children of it.—1 Thess. v. 5. The judgment seat of Christ is set up in each of them, and every work, with every secret thing, is brought into judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil; and the sure judgment, whether for or against, is recorded in their consciences.—Eccl. xii. 14. The Lord's people love the light, and desire to come unto it, and to be searched and tried by it. But the natural man, whether professor or not, hates it, and so is judged or manifested by it as not of the light. So in this sense the whole world of mankind is judged by Jesus Christ, both the godly and ungodly, both the wise virgins and the foolish; that is, they are discerned and distinguished from each other by him who is the Light.—John iii. 20, 21. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin."—John xv. 22. This dear Savior, this man that was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead (Acts x. 42), does "not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears," which is the only way the natural man can judge and reprove; but with righteousness he judges the poor in this precious gospel day, and re-proves with equity for the meek of the earth; and he smites the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he slays the wicked.—Isa. xi. 3, 4. He does not condemn the world; but by his righteous judgment those who do not believe on him, and who will not come unto him that they might have life (John v. 40), are manifest as already condemned.—John iii. 18. His word of truth, that is so precious and comforting to his people, is the rod of his mouth, with which he smites all that is earthy in them, and smites and destroys all the vain works and false doctrine and self-obtained hopes of men; and that same breath of his lips, which is so sweet and fragrant with love and salvation to the poor, trembling sinner, who loves and rejoices in the truth thus breathed with power into his heart, becomes as a flame of fire to those who hate the truth, and who trust in an arm of flesh.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Feb. 25, 1887.

COVETOUSNESS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My attention has been called of late, more than ever before, to the frequency with which this sin is mentioned and denounced in the word of God; and some very solemn reflections have rested upon my mind with regard to it. Perhaps we are all in danger of this sin, as much as of any other, and so it may be profitable to spend a little time in speaking to one another about its nature and sinfulness and consequences. This is all that we can do. The Holy Spirit alone must reveal this sin in us, give us repentance for it, and help us to crucify it.

By the Scriptures themselves must the exceeding sinfulness of this sin be judged. They declare its de-

formity, as it appears in the view of infinite holiness. They declare it to be idolatry; that is, the setting up of the temporal before the eternal, of the creature before the Creator, of the gift before the giver.—Col. iii. 5. Idolatry is the most arrant exhibition of the folly and rebellion of fallen man. It is not only turning away from God, but it is a turning against him. It is not only a careless indifference to his claims, but it is a transferring of our allegiance to another. Idolatry says, "These be thy gods, that have saved thee, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Idolatry is base forgetfulness and black ingratitude; and covetousness is idolatry.

The Scriptures also call it the root of all evil.—1 Tim. vi. 10. It is not only an awful thing in itself, but it is a prolific source of all other sins. They also declare it to be a bar to the kingdom of heaven. No covetous man shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, or hath any part in it.—1 Cor. vi. 10; Eph. v. 5. They associate it with murder, theft, falsehood, fornication, and the vilest of sins.—1 Cor. vi. 10; Eph. v. 5. According to these Scriptures, a man may say, "I have done no murder, I have committed no theft, I have declared no falsehood, I have not been guilty of fornication," and yet, if he has been a covetous man, he is just as vile and guilty in the sight of him who searches the heart as though he were stained with all these crimes. Yea, if he have coveted his neighbor's ox, or house, or land, or wife, he has been guilty already of all these crimes. They are in his heart, and, if unrestrained, they will all be brought forth.

Covetousness was the cause of Laban's churlish treatment of Jacob; of Jacob's deceit in supplanting his brother; of Baalim striving to curse Israel; of Achan concealing the golden wedge and Babylonish garment; of Saul reserving the best of the flocks and herds of the Amalekites alive when God had commanded him to destroy them; of Judas betraying his Master; of Ananias and Sapphira lying to the Lord; of Felix keeping Paul in prison after he was well assured of his innocence. From all this Scripture testimony may we not judge that it is a most grievous crime against God, a most daring blasphemy of his name? See how David, when his conscience was probed by the heaven-inspired and heaven-directed words of Nathan, after his covetousness of his brave captain's beautiful wife had led to murder and adultery, cries out, in the fifty-first Psalm, in words of the humblest contrition for pardon and cleansing, and confesses his sin. The root of it all was covetousness. O that we all may see its heinousness, its exceeding sinfulness, as did David then! Would we not all be compelled to say, as did he, "I have sinned?"

But perhaps it is well to define covetousness, that we may know just what this thing is that is so vile in the sight of God. There is hardly a word relating to the passions of men used in the Bible but what is sus-

ceptible of a double meaning. There is a good and bad anger, hate, love, jealousy, &c. Even so the word "covet" is sometimes used in a good sense, as, "Covet earnestly the best gifts."—1 Cor. xii. 31. This is a lawful, a heaven-inspired desire to be in that place wherein we can be of the most service in the house of God. This the apostle commends. But the most common sense in which the word is used is evil. Covetousness is not merely to think a thing lovely or desirable; it is not merely to desire the possession of a thing. This may be lawful, because the thing may be lawfully desired. It is not merely a spirit to diligently labor for a competency. This may also be lawful and right. But it means to have a desire in our heart for the very thing that belongs to our neighbor; it means a spirit to take it from him; it means greediness or avarice.

Thus we have seen how evil the Scriptures declare it to be, and what evil company it keeps, and what an evil meaning is in its very name. Its exceeding sinfulness will also appear when we consider its source. It is the child of unbelief, of worldly mindedness, and of self-love. It is based first upon a lack of confidence in God; for if we fully believe in the providential care of God over us every day and hour, we shall be sure that he will provide all that we need, and so cannot see any reason to covet that which he gives another. Covetousness denies to God the right to distribute his bounties as he will; and therefore, though we covet and rob the goods of our neighbor, and cause him suffering, yet the sin is against God. This is what David meant in the fifty-first Psalm when he said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," &c. Covetousness denies that God is all-wise, almighty and good, and refuses to believe that he is our friend. It buffets Jehovah in the face, and declares all his faithful promises to be lies. Again, an underestimate of the things of this life, and an extreme worldly mindedness, incite and arouse covetousness. The world, this present evil world, is all and in all to its sin-bewitched gaze. Another source of covetousness is a Satan-born desire to excel others of our fellow-men in riches, reputation, honor, power, pomp and ostentation, which is the very reverse of that meek and lowly spirit which becomes creatures and sinners. All these things are condemned in the word of God. An improper fear of want by-and-by, also often characterizes this spirit of covetousness. I say improper fear, because we are bidden not to be careful concerning this, as our Father knows that we have need of all these things. Surely if we may know a thing by the company it keeps, there is not one redeeming trait about covetousness, not one word to be said in its favor, when it fastens upon the things of the world.

Since its sources are so evil, and it is so evil in its own nature, and its associates are so evil, may we not justly conclude that its results must

be evil, and only evil, and that continually? It robs God and man. It robs God, in that it denies him the honor that is his due; it refuses to trust him or to praise him; it deifies human power and wisdom and worldly riches instead of God. When we covet, we do these things. It robs man, in that it is the parent of all theft, and of all slander and lying and cheating. It also robs our fellow-men, in that it withholds from the poor and needy that which God has committed to us for them. By reason of it we embezzle the Lord's goods committed to our trust for others, and the voice of our brother's distress cries to God against us. It causes the heart to be hard, and shuts the eyes and ears to every call of distress. It stupefies the conscience, and kills every generous emotion. It leads to sins of omission and commission. It is the first parent of all wars, persecutions, debates and robberies. It fills all our jails, and supports all our judges, courts and lawyers. In the house of God it is the chief cause of all dissensions, coldness and alienations. To love our neighbor as ourself is the law of God; but covetousness loves self first, last, and all the time, and the neighbor's goods rather than himself. It is the rebel of heaven and earth, the deadliest foe of God and man, and the most fearful weapon of the prince of darkness himself. Because of covetousness the poor are hungry and naked and cold and shelterless, often the pastors of churches suffer want, our houses of worship are not made neat and comfortable, and the ways of Zion languish.—Mal. iii. 8-10. It insinuates its subtle form everywhere, often under the garb of an angel of light, calling itself "prudence," "foresight," "economy," &c. These are all good things, but let us beware of being deceived by this child of the arch-deceiver.

These are some of its outward effects, as regards our relation to others; no less fearful are its effects upon a man's own soul. No one of us, brethren, can harbor wrong, or do wrong to others, without it reacting upon ourselves. The covetous man is a poor man. He is poor in his own estimation of his goods, for he thinks he has not all that he needs. And this is to be poor, though his riches can be counted by the million. He is of necessity poor in happiness or contentment. What does the covetous man really have, even of this world? Poor as his neighbor may be, yet if he can say, like Paul, "I have coveted no man's gold or silver," he is happy. He has what his covetous neighbor cannot buy with all his riches. But this is all purely natural, and is as true of the natural as of the spiritual man. The spiritual man who falls under the dominion of a covetous spirit meets with greater loss still. From such a man it cuts off all growth in knowledge, love and peace. It shuts its deluded slave away from all his rightful and blood-bought privileges, both of communion with God and with those who love him. It cannot be otherwise. What

child of God is there but knows that this is true in his own heart? Who has not witnessed its truth in the life of others? Some did run well, whom you and I have known. Where are they now? Afar off, backslidden from God, and alienated from his church. They neither speak of Jesus nor enjoy the theme. They are not dead, but they sleep, and have lain down among the dead. The love of money they have indulged till they have coveted after it, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. May God bring such ones back, and heal their backslidings, and remove the covetous spirit. If the soul be filled with covetous practices, it cannot be filled with the love of God. If we seek the friendship of the world, we cannot have the tokens of the friendship of God at the same time. If we trust in uncertain riches, we cannot be sensible of the sustaining power of the everlasting arms at the same time. If we are studying by every craft to increase our worldly wealth, we cannot expect to increase in the true riches. God's bounty felt in the soul will produce riches of liberality, not the poverty of covetousness.

"Thou shalt not covet" was one of the first revealed commands; and afterward, through all the pages of inspiration, by precept, warning, reproof and example, God put the seal of his condemnation upon this sin. This same law has been written in the hearts of his willing people, so that they abhor it, and pray to be made free from it.

Since it is such a fearful, God-dishonoring sin, ranking in the catalogue with murder, lying, theft and adultery, ought it not in our pulpits to be rebuked, and dealt with in our churches, just as is the case with these other crimes? Ought not those members of churches who, while equally able with others, yet bear none of the burdens, which therefore fall doubly upon the rest, to be reproofed and rebuked, and dealt with as though they had been guilty of these other crimes? We should start back with horror at the thought of robbing our brother; and yet are we not doing so when we bear none of the expense of the church, while he bears a double share? This is covetousness. May God, for his own name's sake, for the sake of his cause, for our own souls' sake, remove far from us this grievous sin.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Feb. 18, 1887.

BURCHARD, Nebraska, Jan. 25, 1887.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—

While on a visit to Illinois some months ago a number of my friends asked me to write my experience for publication in our dear family paper. I have thought often since of their request, and have had a willingness to reply, could I believe that in so doing I should comfort any of God's people; but when I view my sinful, imperfect self, I do not see what I could do or say that would be of any comfort to the little ones.

I can state no time when I first began to seriously think of religious matters. From early childhood until twenty years old I had at frequent times very serious thoughts concerning the question of my soul's salvation, but at no time did I have fears of an everlasting punishment in hell. I was married when quite young. My husband was a firm believer in the Baptist doctrine, but as yet had made no public profession. He seldom spoke on the subject, although he had received a hope several years before; but feeling his unworthiness so much, had never told any one. The first year of my married life I was in company a great deal, and thought very little about religious matters, fancying myself free from my former serious thoughts. I went often to Baptist meeting, and heard the truth of the gospel preached; and the way of salvation through the grace of God appeared just to me. I could see the justice of the eternal decree of free pardon to others through the atoning grace of the crucified Savior, but for myself I saw no hope. Tears would flow unbidden from my eyes when listening to the preaching of the gospel. I was constantly in fear that the dear people of God would observe my tears, and speak to me concerning my thoughts on the subject of religion; for I would not have them to know for the world how sinful and worthless I felt myself to be. I had always lived in the society of Baptist people, and loved so well to hear them talk. I thought, too, they were the last people on earth to be deceived, so I dared not conclude that I was fit company for them any longer. Thus time went on until a mother's love crept into my bosom. I thought perhaps the helpless and feeble life of my darling babe would have some effect to change my stubborn heart, and teach me a lesson of humility. I wanted so much to feel myself in a state of true conviction. I thought I knew just the way every child of God had to travel from nature to grace. O! could I then have realized how high God's ways are above our ways. My little darling babe was loaned to me for five short days only. The death messenger came, and my earthly treasure was snatched from my arms. I earnestly resolved at that time to try my utmost, so far as was in my power, to live a better life, to live a christian life; not that I believed by good works I could save myself, but I wished to live better just because it was my heart's desire to do better. I did not intend to join any church, or tell any one of my resolution; but in my own secret heart I was going to try to live a christian life, so well as I knew how. I felt all this while to say, Lord, do with me as thou wilt. On the third Saturday in May, 1884, my husband went before the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church called Union, of Johnson County, Nebraska, and related the Lord's dealings with him, and was received for baptism the next day. After he had finished talking, Elder

James M. True, who was present, came and talked with me, asking me if I did not think it my duty to go forward and talk to the church too. I told him I had nothing to tell. If he could only have known my feelings at that moment, he surely would not have asked me to come. There seemed no room with those dear people for me. Again, that evening, at the home of Elder Isaac Irwin, did Elder True approach me on the same subject. He related some of his experience, speaking of his as a little hope. I could not understand him. I felt so poor, so little and unworthy. I fancied that if I only had the little hope he spoke of I should be perfectly happy. He talked very tenderly and kindly to me, but his words were an unknown language to me. I had not yet received the key that unlocks the mysterious beauties of spiritual conversation, enjoyed by God's people when comforting one another by a relation of their travels in this life. The members of this church would call me sister, and seemed to esteem me as one of their number. I was led to reflect whether indeed my past troubles were truly the Lord's dealings with me. I prayerfully wished as I retired that night to my couch that ere the morrow came I would be shown my true situation as pertained to my having a hope and true christian experience. Was I fit and prepared to join my husband in the beautiful ordinance of baptism next day? Poor, sinful creature was I, not willing to wait the Lord's own good time. Our weak efforts cannot change his great and perfect plan. The next day, when I saw my husband emerge from a watery grave, possessed of a humble and satisfied mien, the whole church standing about the water's edge, singing their praises to him whose example of obedience in the lovely ordinance was approved by the descending dove, the scene appeared to me to be the most heavenly I ever witnessed. I felt entirely alone. There was no one else in all that crowd like me. I could not refrain from weeping, yet I was ashamed to be seen shedding tears. I felt that my tears would only the more deceive these dear people. O how I longed to be alone, where I could give vent to my feelings, and offer up a feeble prayer to the throne of grace. My trouble now was ten fold worse than it had ever been before. I had always expected that some time the Lord would open my spiritual eyes to see the truth and the way of my own salvation, but now that hope had gone; the day had passed for me. There might be hope for others, but none for me. The sympathy of others could not give me peace. Surely there was none like me. There was quite a number went to the same place with me to dinner on that day. How I dreaded to be in the company of these dear people now. I felt so wretched and undone, and did not want the people I loved to know what a sinner I was. I felt sure they could read my feelings, and would speak to me on the subject. I wanted to hear them talk, if they

would only let me listen unnoticed. We returned to our home next day, and I felt more calm and easy on the subject; and I again firmly resolved to dismiss the whole matter from my mind. As my husband was now a member, I felt relieved from the fear that I was keeping him from doing his duty. He had said several times that he would offer himself to the church if I would accompany him; and I resolved to attend the meetings with him, and do what I could to render his associations with Baptist people pleasant. I retired to sleep that night greatly relieved, but what a change came with the morning. The very subjects I had resolved should never concern me any more, now crowded themselves upon my mind. I was not feeling well in body, and the condition of my mind added to my sufferings. I had no interest in my household duties, and was sick indeed. I desired only to be alone.

"The worst of all diseases
Is light compared with sin;
On every part it seizes,
But rages most within.

"'Tis palsy, plague and fever
And madness all combined;
And none but a believer
The least relief can find."

I feared the light of day, and sought seclusion in my own dark room, there to weep and mourn where no human eye could see me. I placed my hands over my eyes to completely shut off my vision, for I so abhorred myself that I felt my presence a disgrace to even the inanimate things in the room about me. I felt that every person on earth was tired of me, and I was weary of life. I arose and went to the window. People were passing and repassing on the street, looking happy and contented. I was wounded in spirit, and could find no healing balm. The shades of night brought the welcome darkness, and after a wearied effort I fell asleep. When I awoke the next morning these words rang in my ears, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." They came not in audible sounds, but with such strength that I was forced to repeat them aloud. I could not recall where I had ever heard them spoken. I went to another room and asked my husband where and by whom those words were used, if ever used by any one at all. He kindly related to me the occasion when they were spoken by Moses to the complaining children of Israel; how they murmured, and complained that it had been better for them to have remained in Egyptian bondage than to suffer death in a strange land at the hands of their former masters. O how those words went home to my heart. It seemed so plain to me that I was one of the complaining ones. I had asked his own good time to be changed; and as my prayer was not answered, I had, as one of old, asked to be left in bondage. O why had not a just God cut me off in my wickedness!

I returned to my room, wishing to be alone. What a poor, miserable, self-condemned being I was. As I fell upon the bed my sins arose like mountains round about me, and I

was indeed, as the children of Israel, hemmed in on every side. I felt my condemnation just, and could freely say,

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

What a rebellious, unthankful being I had always been, opposed to God, and all that was good; but as the Lord showed me myself in the true light, he also showed me that his holy presence was with me, and how he had loved and kept me as the apple of his eye, and I was made to cry in wonder, O what a God! It seemed true that the sea had opened, and I had crossed on dry land; and then the words came to me again, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." I lifted up my hands, and said, Yes, Lord, I will. I could see for the first time the awful dangers through which I had passed, and how I had rolled sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel. When I reviewed the past I trembled with fear and wonder how God had spared my life; but the same kind hand that had led me so near the gulf of destruction in sin, now smiled a token of forgiveness. I had stood just on the brink, ready to fall at the least crumble of my foothold; but God's everlasting arms were underneath. With what patience and tender care he had guided my erring way; and all the time that I deemed myself my own keeper, he had been my protector. Now I could put my whole case in his hands. I could now feel that, do what he might, I would submit without a murmur. I thought I would never again ask a wish of my own to be granted, but would trust in his divine will forever. O what a calm, peaceful, trusting feeling possessed my soul. I felt such peace of mind as I had never felt before. How helpless and dependent, a poor, weak worm of the dust, to be remembered by the great God of Israel. Like Mary, I could fall at his feet, and wash them with my tears, and wipe them with the hairs of my head. Banishment from his presence could not now have destroyed that love I felt for my redeeming Savior. I arose and walked to the window, and as I passed the table my eyes fell on the Bible and hymn book which I had so lately been searching to find something that could reach my case. I picked up the hymn book and opened it at these words:

"You may sing of the beauty of mountain
and dale,
Of the silvery streamlet and flowers of the
vale;
But the place most delightful this earth can
afford
Is the place of devotion—the house of the
Lord.

"You may talk of your prospects, of fame or
of wealth,
And the hopes that oft flatter the favorites
of health;
But the hope of bright glory, of heavenly
bliss,
Take away every other, and give me but
this."

O what beauty there was in this song. It seemed surely written for me. I coveted no one's happiness, no one's wealth. My soul's inmost desire was,

"Give me my Bible in my hand,
A heart to read and understand,
And I desire no more."

After reading several hymns I pressed the book to my breast and wept tears of thankfulness. I passed several days without a shadow or cloud cast upon my calm and peaceful mind. Suddenly I was left alone. The smiling face of a pardoning Savior was withdrawn from me, and I stumbled and groped in darkness. My great burden of sin was removed, yet I could not feel that peace of mind which I so shortly possessed. I could have endured a return of my former troubles, were I sure that a removal of them would bring back to me those sweet moments of peace I so momentarily enjoyed. I took up my Bible and tried to read, but it was a sealed book to me. The same words that but yesterday gave me much comfort, now were meaningless and void. I sought earnestly to recall my deliverance from the gall of sin and disobedience; but "my love, my undefiled," had flown from me. I was about to give up in despair, when these words met my gaze, "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."—1 Peter iii. 15. How quickly my mind ran back to the time when the plan of salvation through the atoning blood of the crucified Savior was revealed to me. I remembered that sweet peace of mind which I enjoyed "when first I saw the Lord," &c. Was I indeed a subject of this grace? I feared I had seen the substance and caught only the shadow. I dared hardly to conclude that I was justified in proclaiming to others the reason of my hope. Could I justly claim a hope at all, little though it might be? I thought that those able to proclaim a reason of their hope must be forever relieved of any doubts. I considered that the hope of a christian would always be so bright that doubts would never come. I prayed God that he would undeceive me, if I was deceived. I dared not speak on the subject to any one for fear of deceiving them. I spent several days in this sad condition of doubts and fears. I searched the Scriptures to find comfort in the experience of the saints, and these words gave me much relief, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities."—Rom. viii. 24-26. After reading these words I resolved to go to my husband and see if my doubts were like those of his experience; but I had told him in part only, when fearing he might be deluded in believing my story, I hesitated about telling him more. His reply was very comforting to me. I thought if he really had been deceived he would regret to tell me so, and I felt sorry that I had ever spoken to him about it. I resolved to tell no one else, nor mention the matter to my husband again; but I could not rest in peace

until I had an assurance from some person that mine was a true christian hope. I concluded that when I saw my father I would tell him all, and his opinion would settle my doubts; but when should I see him again? He lived in the far off state of Illinois. (My father is S. M. Kennedy, a deacon of Union Church, Regular Predestinarian Baptists, situated in McDonough Co., Illinois.) I thought he would be perfectly honest with me, and that if I was deceived he would plainly tell me so. On the next Saturday a highly esteemed and precious old friend, B. W. Magee, also a deacon in Little Flock Church of Predestinarian Baptists, situated in Richardson County, Nebraska, came to visit us. I had great confidence in him as a true father in Israel, yet I resolved to tell him nothing of my late troubles; but I ventured to ask him a few questions. I asked him how small might the hope of a christian be, and yet be such as could be safely relied upon as a true and genuine hope. He answered that a little hope was all the kind he knew anything about; a little hope was all he possessed. He related some of his experience, and I was surprised to find that this venerable saint had traveled the same road that I had. Before I was aware of what I was doing, I found myself telling him the very secrets which I so shortly before had firmly resolved to tell no one excepting my father, and to him only in the distant future. When I concluded, he arose and extended to me his hand, saying that he understood my language, and that my case was that experienced by every child of grace. I was much comforted by the kind assurance that he gave me that I was a subject of God's redeeming grace.

At the following July meeting I offered myself to the church, and tried to tell them something of what I have written. I desired them to deal honestly with me, and if the church esteemed me worthy to walk with them I desired such privilege; but I felt unworthy of the lowest seat in my Father's house. To my surprise I was received without a question, and was baptized the following day by Elder Irwin.

I have tried in my own simple language to relate what I hope the Lord has done for me, and if there is one word of comfort in it for any of God's little ones I will be doubly repaid; but, dear brethren editors, I wish you to use your own judgment in publishing this, being sure that it will not crowd out better matter. If deemed unfit, cast it in the waste-basket, and all will be well.

Your unworthy sister,
SUSIE BLOOMFIELD.

GRANT'S PASS, Oregon, Feb. 6, 1887.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE—And all the household of faith who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. It is with a feeling of unworthiness that I attempt to add my little mite, by trying in my feeble and scattering manner to tell you

why I enjoy that hope which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.—Heb. vi. 19. I have no gospel preaching here, and therefore take the more interest in reading the communications of the brethren and sisters published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have very often been edified and taught thereby, and felt like obeying Paul's words to the Galatian brethren, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."—Gal. vi. 6. If we shall, by the grace of God, be able to comfort any of the saints by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God (2 Cor. i. 4), then our joy will be full.

I was raised by Baptist parents, yet I do not remember of ever having been instructed by them in any particular doctrine or belief, further than having their views set forth in my hearing, and at their meetings, which I had the privilege of attending from my earliest recollection, as well as many of the other denominations of the day. When I was about thirteen years old some of my schoolmates professed religion under the protracted efforts of the United Brethren, and on arriving home that night I felt as though I was going to be left alone; and as I had rather settled down in the belief that religion was of God, I knelt down by the bedside before retiring and tried to ask God to give me religion, which I can now see was only a mere selfish, childish desire in me, as I did not realize that I was a sinner, or that I was in need of a Savior. This feeling soon passed off, as most of the new converts "backslid," as it was then called, very soon. Two years passed without any more thought of the subject, when I, with my parents, was sailing on the ocean on our way from Illinois to Oregon. One day there was a rumor started that our ship had sprung a leak; and as we were out of sight of any land, I verily believed, with some others, that our days here were about drawing to a close. While some ran to and fro to ask of the truth of the rumor, some cried, and others prayed, but I felt very considerate, so much so that I promised God if we should again be permitted to land safely I would cease from sinning, as I felt it was on account of our wickedness that we were liable to be drowned. I had just been playing cards that day, with some others, for pastime; but I now felt as though God was angry about it, and I promised him to never play any more. I tell these incidents to show what seems to me now as selfishness, as I did not love God, but loved my own life, and looked at God as ruling as a tyrant. The rumor of the leak proved false, to some extent, and we were landed safely; but my resolves were soon forgotten.

Thus I went on in sin for fifteen years, enjoying it all the time. Then the Missionary Baptists held a protracted meeting near father's, where I was visiting, having been previously married. My wife joined the

Christian Church, or Campbellites, as they are sometimes called, before our union. While at this meeting, all who desired to go to heaven were asked to rise. I arose, feeling that, if there was such a delightful place as they had pictured out, one would surely be very unwise to not desire to go there; but I was not interested further. When I was seated one of our neighbor girls, who had just made a profession and joined the church, arose and asked in a sarcastic tone, "Sinner, how can you ask to be prayed for, when you will not pray for yourself?" This made me feel retaliative, as I then felt that I was her peer, so far as being a sinner was concerned. I decided at once to go no further, lest I should act the hypocrite, which I had always promised myself I would not do. About a year after this the same parties were holding another protracted meeting at Turner, Oregon, where I lived. The meeting had been in progress several days and nights before I paid any attention, as I was very busy starting a new home. I asked my brother, who was doing some carpenter work for me, to go down to meeting with me at night, merely to see who was there and to hear what was going on. He objected, on account of having no suitable apparel with him; but I prevailed, after much persuasion, and we started. While we walked toward the meeting I said to him, "We are as good as the best of people who will attend to-night, and much better than the majority of them, as many who wear fine clothes owe for them, or own nothing more than the clothes they wear. While we are ordinarily clad, we can wear better if we prefer, and are able to pay for them, too. Then why feel beneath others in this respect?" He made me promise to take a back seat, which we did. When the minister arose he read John iii. 16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." While he yet read I began to consider the condescension of God, and the sacrifice he had made in the behalf of sinners, or all mankind, as I then looked at it, and I viewed God for the first time in my life as a tender, kind, merciful, all-wise Father, which melted my eyes to tears; and just here sprang up a desire within me to be pure and holy, so I might come into the presence of such a pure being as I now viewed God to be. At the same time I viewed myself as a guilty sinner before God, and felt that to be saved we must be perfectly free from sin. Therefore my inmost desire was to know what I must do to be saved. I verily believed that if the members were true christians they could tell me. The next day, when opportunity offered, I arose and said, "I feel myself a guilty sinner; I have sinned against heaven and before thee;" not knowing that I was repeating the words of the prodigal son when he returned to his father, saying he was no more worthy to be called his son. Neither did I know that my Father would say "to

his servants, Bring forth the best robe [Christ's righteousness], and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet."—Luke xv. 18-22. After the meeting several of my neighbors, members of the Missionary Baptist Church, came to me where I was weeping, and tried to point out the way, or what I must do. Some said, "Accept Christ." Others said, "You must believe on Christ, and give up entirely, and then you will receive a blessing." One old brother, in whom I had (and still have) full confidence as a true christian man, namely, William Miller, said, "All I can do is to point you to Christ, that taketh away the sin of the world." But how to believe on Christ I knew not. I believed him to be a Savior, but could not see how he could be my Savior. I went home feeling as though I must search the Scriptures, and see if I could find what I must do; and so eager was I to know that I read (or rather glanced over) the New Testament Scriptures entire inside of twenty-four hours, for the first time in my life, as I had never read the Bible an hour in my life before, except at Sunday School, when I was too young to care or try to understand what I read. I read that "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and many other passages, which only condemned me. I felt that I must cease from sin, and then God would be merciful to me; so I resolved to try and not commit any more sin, but before the day was spent I found myself again doing things and using words which condemned me. That night I was urged to go with others to the anxious-seat; and as I felt that I was willing to do anything to be saved, I went, feeling like I was acting the hypocrite in so doing, as I had no faith in it; and even while we knelt for prayers I had no confidence in the minister who prayed (it was not the same one who preached the first evening I attended), and felt if God would only forgive me for the act of coming up there for prayer I would never be seen there again. I went home feeling much cast down. My wife was in bed, and I said to her, "If I only was as pure and good as you are, I should have hope;" but I felt that never could be, as I could not cease from sin even one day.

After returning from the meeting, the next day, feeling as though I was tired of laboring to keep free from sin, and being heavy laden with the weight of a guilty conscience, and that I was without hope and without God in the world, I felt that if I had to trust in my own merits I was forever lost. I thought I would open the Testament once more, and it might be I could yet find something that I must do. Feeling so condemned, I did not care much where I read. I opened the book, and my eyes rested on these words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy,

and my burden is light."—Matt. xi. 28-30. On reading this passage, light seemed to take the place of darkness, and I could now see Christ as the way, the truth and the life. I could see how I was to be justified by entering in by a new and living way. My burden of guilt was gone, and I felt to cease from my own works, and rest in the finished work of Christ. As God rested from his labors after he made the worlds, and it was the sabbath, so I felt it truly was a sabbath day with me; and I yet feel as though this is the true sabbath, prefigured by the old Jewish sabbath. It was then that I hope I learned that salvation is of the Lord, and I felt that all I had to do was to be obedient. My mind was exercised in regard to baptism and uniting with some church. It was then that we "endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used."—Heb. x. 32, 33. There were many things transpired that I would like to mention, but forbear for want of space, as I am afraid I shall appear tedious already. At the next Missionary meeting that I attended several offered themselves for membership on their experience. The minister asked one candidate if he loved God. He said he thought he did. He then asked him why he loved God, and he could make no answer. While he hesitated I felt like I would be glad to answer the question, that it was because he first loved me; yet at that time I did not think it was Scripture. In the following August (this was winter time) I tried to tell the nearest Old School Baptist Church what great things the Lord had done for me, whereof I was glad, but it seemed as though I could not say very much to the point; yet I was received with tears of joy, and I felt the force of the Scripture, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I was baptized by brother Abner Shanks. I then thought that I should never have any more conflicts; but how differently it has been with me. I soon found, with Paul, "that when I would do good, evil is present with me;" which often causes me to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But I can say, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

With christian love and fellowship to all the brethren and sisters scattered abroad, I am your brother, I hope, through the righteousness of Christ,

RICHARD D. SANFORD.

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn., Jan. 23, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—There are some noble lives which should not be forgotten. Among these was Elder John A. Thompson, whose life was a beautiful one; a light that shineth brighter and brighter until the perfect day; a light that went out so soon. In looking over old letters, I find one from him, too good to be hidden away in a small box; and

though written fourteen years ago, it has lost none of its peculiar beauty and purity—childlike purity that is both pretty and comforting. The receiver has grown somewhat older, and changed her name, and has a brown-eyed girl of three years, and a blue-eyed boy of one, calling her "Mamma;" yet the letter is comforting so often as it is read, and so it may be to readers of the SIGNS who knew him better than the writer, and who were more capable of appreciating his beautiful character and eloquent addresses.

MRS. AMY B. BEERY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Nov. 9, 1873.

MISS AMY B. SMITH—RESPECTED LADY:—Your very interesting letter reached here in my absence, and I did not get to read it till just before I started to meeting, from which I have just returned. And I now hasten to answer yours, with a feeling of great joy in my heart. I feel sure that God has begun a work in your heart that he will perform until the day of Jesus Christ. Repentance which is unto life, and which God gives, is a sorrow for sin. At first it is a distressed feeling that will not allow us to be satisfied with our former course of life. Sin loses its power to please us, and we cannot enjoy its vanities. But we do not know what it is that has thus disturbed us. We cannot enjoy that which once pleased us well; and if we try to go back into gay company, and to shake off our trouble and be gay, we cannot do it. We feel alarmed, and wonder why we cannot be as others, who seem to enjoy life, around us. We know we were once like others, but now we can no more enjoy the things we once loved. The question often comes to us, "What is the matter with me?" and as often the answer comes to us, "You are a sinner." O how painful is that answer to us. Yes, we say, I am a sinner, a great sinner, and I shall never be any better. My case is an awful one. I shall soon die, and then I shall be lost forever, where I can never hope to be holy, nor see God in peace. O how sad we feel. We sigh, and groan, and pray; but none of these things bring us relief, and we give up in despair, with the thought in our heart that we are unfit even to live among men, and God will surely cut us off. We dare not hope that one so vile as we are shall ever be forgiven. All our feelings condemn us, and every person seems to be a witness against us. We feel that we have no friends, and that we do not deserve any. Christians appear like a lovely people, but we are unfit to be near them. We love to hear them talk of Jesus, but we feel to say, in despair, I shall never know the blessings of the salvation of my soul. O if I only could hope in the Savior! but alas! alas! I am ruined. These feelings grow stronger as we are led along in our experience, till all hope seems to be clean gone forever, and God's time comes to show us the power of his love and grace, in the sweet words of Jesus, "Daughter, thy sins are all forgiven

thee." O sweet, transporting words! What peace, what joy, what love, they pour into the soul! It is no delusion; it is not imagination; it is just what saints have felt in all ages of the world, when Jesus has been revealed unto them, the gracious, loving Savior. But we think, if this be real, it will always be thus with me. I shall always love his people, and be happy with them. But alas! the time soon comes when Satan begins to worry the little child of God. He says to him, You are deceived; you only dreamed what you felt; you only imagined that you were pardoned and saved; you are deceived; you are a hypocrite. Here begins a new trouble. We know we are not as we were before, but we now fear that we are deluded and deceived. Wicked thoughts come into our minds, and we are sometimes tempted to not only throw our own hope away, but even to doubt the hope of others. Yes, Satan suggests to us that there is no hereafter, no heaven, no God. O cruel deceiver that he is! Now he says, You know you are deceived, for you have doubted all things that God's people love and enjoy. We want to know just how it was that our grief was first removed, that we may know whether it was real or not. We try to get back where we were before, but cannot. We are now in a new trouble, because we cannot mourn and feel oppressed just as we did at first. We feel greatly to fear lest we are reprobate, and hardened so in sin that we are past feeling; and we cry unto God to soften our heart, and make us feel deeply all our sins, and mourn his love to know. At his time, not ours, he shines again within us, and O! it is a time of love indeed. The doubts are all gone, Jesus is precious, the saints are lovely, baptism now becomes a beautiful ordinance, and we long to walk in it. How happy to be buried in the water, like our Lord Jesus Christ was. We can hardly wait for an opportunity, we want so much to follow Jesus. But before the opportunity comes to us, Satan says to us that we should be careful what we do, lest we disgrace the church. O, I see, says the poor child. I see that I would have indeed disgraced all the church, I am so unworthy. O I am glad I thought of this in time, to avoid the shame that would have come upon the church, had I joined it. But the Spirit says, Go. We are drawn by it to Jesus. He stands in faith's view most lovely, saying, "Come to me, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly; and you shall find rest unto your soul." But Satan says, No; you are unworthy; you will dishonor him and disgrace his people. Now, daughter, as Jesus has spoken to you in love, and pardoned your sins, and bid you follow him, do not let Satan hinder you by telling you that you are not fit. All your fitness is in Jesus. Let me hear from you again. My prayer is for you, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your sincere friend,

JOHN A. THOMPSON.

ATWATER, Ill., Jan. 2, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have been impressed with the thought that it was my duty to write what I trust have been the Lord's dealings with me in the travels of my soul; but I have put it off from time to time, because I felt that one so weak and ignorant as I am could not write anything worthy of space in your paper. But this is your property as soon as it comes into your possession. Do as you see fit with it. But if you publish this, I would like to say to all God's dear children that Jesus is all my hope. It is by his grace alone I must be saved, if saved at all. Ever since childhood I have often thought that at some time I would join some church and live a better life. I thought that if I would turn away from sin God would forgive me and save me. But about the last of February Elder Turner preached at Atwater, and we went to hear him. My husband always believed the Primitive Baptist doctrine, but I always thought I wanted to be a Methodist. After hearing Elder Turner preach, we had some argument on predestination as he preached it. I thought Jesus died for everybody. I did not believe he had a chosen people. I thought he wanted to save all, and would, if they would only believe and try to do right. I began to search the Scriptures, to try to prove my views; but every time I saw that Elder Turner was right. Still I did not want to believe that way, and I kept reading the Bible till I began to be troubled in mind, and saw myself a sinner in the sight of God. I thought, If it is true that Christ has a chosen people, am I one of them? Did he die for me? I hardly dared to hope that he loved such a wretch as me. Sometimes I would cry, and try to pray when I was alone, but it seemed to do no good. Then again I would try to get it off my mind, and to think about other things; and for awhile I could do it; but after a short time the trouble and heaviness would come back. It seemed to me like I was in the dark, and all the time the cry of my heart was, "O God, forgive my sins and lead me into the light." Sometimes I was so troubled and grieved about my sins that I could not sleep at night, or hardly do my work. My thoughts were not on my work. Then we went to hear Elders Dobbs and Querry preach at Atwater. I knew they preached the truth, and I thought I would like to unite with the church and be baptized, but knew I was not worthy. Elder Querry said something about baptizing my husband and myself, when he was talking to us after the services closed, and it almost frightened me. I thought if he only knew how wicked I was, he would not think of such a thing. I do not know what made him speak of it, as I had not said anything to him about my trouble. I thought I was not fit to be among God's people. That night, and for two days and two more nights, I was more troubled than ever. Sometimes I cried, "O what can I do?" Often the

lines of the hymn came to my mind,

"Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no respite know,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone."

I could hardly do my work at all. Sometimes when I was cooking, and wanted something from the cupboard, I would walk two or three times across the room before I knew what I wanted. I thought I would surely go crazy. I could not get the trouble off my mind. It was the week before the May meeting at Little Flock Church, and on Wednesday I sent for sister Johnson to come over. It seemed like I must talk to some one about it. But after she came I said but little. I could not say what I wanted to say to her. That night I was in such agony of mind and heart that I could not sleep. Though my tears wet my pillow, I could not pray till about midnight. I got out of my bed, went out on the porch, and down on the walk, with bare feet, and in my night dress. I walked up and down the walk, and it seemed as if the heaviness of my sin and guilt would crush me, when for one brief moment it seemed like I could see God in his power and majesty. I held up my hands towards heaven, and cried, "O my God, my God, save me." Then I felt lighter, the heaviness seemed suddenly to have left me, I went back to bed, and exhausted nature would have rest. I fell asleep and slept for two or three hours, and when I awoke the first thought that flashed into my mind was, God has forgiven my sins. Then O what light seemed to be all around me, although it was not yet daylight. It was as if he had said to my troubled soul, "Peace, be still." I got up and went to prepare breakfast. I began to sing a hymn of praise to God. When my husband got up I told him I felt better, but did not tell him why. He knew something of how I had been troubled, though I had not told him much. I think he knew why, for I think he had something of the same trouble himself about a month before. When I asked him if he was ready to go with me and unite with the church and be baptized, he said he was, though I did not know whether the brethren and sisters would receive us or not; but I felt like I wanted to be with them, and that I loved them. All that day I felt so happy, and everything seemed so light and beautiful. It seemed like old things had passed away, and all things had become new. The next day I still felt that God had forgiven my sins; but sometimes I would think, How do I know he has? Am I not deceived, and deceiving others? Was it not only my imagination? But the heaviness and trouble would not come back, and something seemed to tell me it was true, that God had forgiven me, the chief among sinners, as I felt myself to be. The next day was Saturday, and we went to meeting and heard a splendid sermon by Elder Vanmeter. When the door of the church was opened, my husband went forward, and I followed. I hardly dared to go, for fear I was

not worthy; but it seemed as if I must, and I could not help it. The brethren and sisters received us into the fellowship of the church, though my mind was so full that I could not tell them half what I wanted to. I could not express my feelings. The next day we were baptized by Elder Querry. When I came out of the water I felt so happy; I felt like I had just begun to live, and like I had been dead all those years. I thought of what a loving Savior I had been disobeying all those years, and felt that my heart was full of love for him, for what he had done for me.

I am making this too lengthy, but I wish to say that we receive the SIGNS OF THE TIMES regularly, and I receive much comfort from the writings of many of the brethren and sisters. Hoping you will always contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, I subscribe myself,

Your unworthy sister,

LUCY J. HUDDLESTON.

BLANCO, Tex., Dec. 23, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Brother Douglas, of Sarepta, Miss., requests my views on John xiv. 12, which reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Although I have no satisfactory views on the text, I submit the following for the consideration of brother Douglas, and for others of your readers, and hope that some brother having light upon the subject will write and give it through your columns.

Revelation and christian experience concur in assuring us that we derive nothing spiritually good from our natural head, Adam; therefore the "greater works" in the text are the result or fruits flowing from the relation or spiritual unity or oneness of Christ and the members of his body, the church. And to evince that this view of the subject is in harmony with revelation, I will adduce, as a sample, a few of the many passages that treat upon it. "Because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."—John xiv. 19, 20. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." "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 hast sent me." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

Thus we see that the Savior taught the doctrine of vital unity or oneness of himself and bride, or church. I will now refer to the epistles of the inspired apostles. Paul says to the saints at Ephesus, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." "And gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." "For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." We are quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He is the head, from whom all the body, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. We are therefore complete in him. "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—Eph. v. 30; Col. ii. 10, 19; Heb. ii. 11; 1 John v. 11.

Brother Douglas, I have adduced a few of the many passages of Scripture that teach the doctrine of vital or life union. Therefore no mere creature can do the works referred to in the text. But our adorable Surety met and canceled every claim of justice against us, or his elect children; and as Mediator, he procured for and clothes them with an everlasting righteousness. So that all he did, in his active and passive obedience, was for his bride, and is as much hers as though she had performed it in person. Therefore he acted for and in behalf of his church in his mediatorial character, from the beginning to his final coronation or glorification in heaven. And as Christ says that the greater works to be done was because he went to his Father, we conclude that he had reference to his glorification, and the glorification of his chosen people in him. And if these are not the "greater works" referred to in the text, I admit that I have no light on the subject. I have had but little time to write since I came to this place. I hope some brother will write on the subject for publication, for the satisfaction of brother Douglas, and others of your readers who may feel interested.

Yours in gospel bonds,
JAMES WAGNER.

BATAVIA, N. Y., Feb. 17, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I had the privilege of attending a two days

meeting held at Caroline a few days ago, and I think it was a meeting long to be remembered by the brethren and sisters present. If I had been sent there by the editor of a newspaper, to report the proceedings of such a meeting, I should have to notice one circumstance which was quite prominent, and that is, in language of one of old, "See how these love one another." Coming from various places in the state of New York, and some comparative strangers, one could but notice that there was something in the doctrine they preached and believed which drew them very near each other in fellowship. Their preaching, which was delivered without notes, had one noticeable feature, and that was, they gave all the glory of their salvation to God their Savior. It was also apparent that when meeting was out the brethren did not talk of business or politics, but the time for intermission seemed too short to talk of religious matters. A faithful reporter could but notice also that both the preachers and the people did not claim to be any better by nature than others, and were anxious to make it appear that their hope of salvation was in Christ, and not in any works or worthiness in themselves. When the meeting closed, and the time came to part, there was manifest a feeling which could not have been merely assumed for the occasion. As one who hopes in the mercy of Christ for his salvation, I considered the meeting a very precious opportunity. Elders Vail and Bogardus seemed lifted above themselves, and evidently preached, "Not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and in power." If they had known the thoughts and feelings of the brethren and sisters for months before, they could not have chosen more suitable words of comfort and instruction. While this so plainly gave joy and consolation to those who heard, it also gave evidence that these brethren who spoke were called to preach the glad tidings of salvation. Amid the peculiar trials to which the ministers are called, it would seem that it might prove a comfort to them to know that through the Spirit they are able to preach deliverance to the captives, to comfort a poor and afflicted people. The preaching of Elder Vail from the text, "But we have the mind of Christ," seemed very appropriate and timely. The wonderful work of salvation, and what the children of God are in Christ, was presented in very plain and convincing language; and the remarks of Elder Bogardus, following him, seemed to make the subject complete in all its parts; showing, as he did, that "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Thus I believe these Elders were led by the Spirit to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, and that Christ "loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having

spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." I have sometimes thought that ministers have abundant reason to say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" when they meet with disappointments, trials and persecutions; yet there are encouragements. If they were obliged to go in their own strength, they might well despair; but going in the strength and power of God, they speak not the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. In this teaching, and in his power, they are able to "Feed the flock of God." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."—Isa. lii. 7.

Yours in sincere fellowship,

B. F. HAMILTON.

OTEGO, N. Y., Feb. 20, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I seldom ask for space in the SIGNS for any of my opinions or views; but as I was favored to meet with our dear brethren in Canada, at their quarterly meeting in Duart, on the 5th, 6th and 7th of this present month, it being my first visit among them, and meeting with such a warm cordiality and hospitality by them all, I want to make this acknowledgment of their untiring kindness to myself, and to all who attended there. I could not feel that I was among a strange people, but felt a calm, restful feeling, that I was at home among them. Not only was this generous welcome extended by those who are members of the visible body, but also by many of those who are not identified with the church, but who evidently prefer Jerusalem above their chief joy. May they be

"Gathered into the fold,
With believers enrolled,
With believers to live and to die."

I had the pleasure of meeting Elders P. Sawin, of Kentucky, and Thomas Wyman, of Michigan, who gave evidence not merely that they had been to a human school, but with Jesus, and had learned of him.

After the close of the meeting at Duart, on Monday, brethren Wyman, Sawin, Keene and myself, with others, went to High Gate for meeting, where one brother Johnson and family reside, who procured the use of the hall, where we enjoyed another refreshing. Again, on Wednesday, at Dunwich, was another pleasant assembly of people, and where we again met with Elder Pollard, and also parted with him there. On Thursday we met again in the city of London, at the house of brother Keene, where but few were present, the night being stormy. On Friday I left for Brantford, for meeting on Sunday, and found a kind reception in the family of our friend, J. A. Leitch, who is a fast friend and lover of the cause of truth.

I take this opportunity to say to the many dear brethren and friends that I met, Your kindnesses to me

are, and I trust will be, remembered; and may the God who led Jacob be your leader and guide until death, and afterward receive you to glory.

While it is quite seldom that I write for the SIGNS, be assured it is not because of any lack of appreciating it; but because I do esteem it so highly, I do not wish, by my productions, to make it of less worth to any. I am much pleased, satisfied and edified with the matter contained in the SIGNS, and have been for more than thirty years; and to-day the same dear, precious truth is found on its pages as was then; and may our dear Lord give you of his wisdom and grace to endure the hardness that comes in your path as editors, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

BALAS BUNDY.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have read nearly all the papers published by the Primitive Baptists, and while all contain some precious truth, I cannot give up the SIGNS. I have been reading it so long, and it is such a welcome visitor, that I long for the time for it to come to us, as I derive so much comfort from the various communications of the Lord's dear children from different parts of the country, all speaking the same language, salvation by grace, through the atoning blood of Jesus. May they, by the help of God, continue to write for the comfort of the dear little ones of the Lord's house.

Yours in hope,

ALLEN HAINES.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

WE now have the cloth bound books mailed to all who answered our card of inquiry of last August to know if we had their address correct. We still hold about three hundred of the cloth binding until we hear from the parties, as we do not deem it safe to send books to addresses sent in from two to five years ago, until we hear from them again, to know whether their address is still the same or not. We sent out postal cards last August to all the subscribers of the book, to inquire if they were still at the same place as when they ordered their books, but from about three hundred we have received no reply. From all such we withhold the book until heard from. Any one to whom a cloth bound book is due should have it before this notice reaches them, and if they have not received it they should immediately send their name and address to us.

THE LEATHER BINDING.

The demand for this style of binding has so far exceeded our anticipation that we shall run out of them before we can fill what orders we have on hand; but the binder is at work on the sheets, and we expect in a few days to have a new supply, sufficient to fill all orders now in, and leave a surplus of about two hundred copies.

The Morocco and Imitation are all mailed, and a few copies left.

For prices and styles see notice on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1887.

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

JOB XXVII. 13, 14.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please give your views on Job xxvii. 13, 14, and oblige yours, &c.,

J. S. BURNS.

PRENTISS COUNTY, Miss., Sept. 15, 1886.

REPLY.

"THIS is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty. If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword: and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread."

While it is expressly declared by the Lord that his servant Job spoke of him the thing that was right, in contrast with the things spoken by his three friends, it is not to be understood that they did not say some things which were in themselves true, though by their perverted application they turned even such truth into a lie, as they used it to sustain the false doctrine of self-righteousness. So, in this text, as in many other instances in this wonderful book, Job speaks the truth of God in using nearly the very words in which Zophar the Naamathite had closed his false testimony, Job xx. 29. This is too mysterious for reason to comprehend; but it is revealed through faith to the comfort of those who are led by the Spirit to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. That truth which they have heard, have seen with their eyes and looked upon, and their hands have handled of the Word of life, they can truthfully declare; and in its proclamation they glorify God, by the exceeding riches of whose grace they have received the revelation. Such as have only seen by natural reason the mere outward theory of this truth can neither know nor witness its living power. When they, like Zophar, speak words which are abstractly true, their testimony is false, because they do not by personal experience know the truth which they affirm. Of these it is written, "And though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they swear falsely."—Jer. v. 2.

In the whole book of Job is presented the experience of the church of Christ as standing justified in the righteousness of her Redeemer, and yet subject to the vanity of the body of this death in her sojourn here in time. Of this general view of this whole record it is not our purpose now to write, as time and space would fail; and we should have to repeat much of what our esteemed brother, Elder S. H. Durand, has well expressed in his book on the "Trial of Job," which is advertised on the last page of this paper. It is important to observe, however, that the truth designed to be set forth in this account of the "patience of Job" cannot be known by contemplating any detached portion without seeing "the end of the Lord" in it all, in which it is shown "that the Lord is very pitiful

and of tender mercy."—James v. 11. Much confusion arises from improperly separating words or sentences of Scripture from the connection in which they are placed by the direction of the Spirit of Christ, which moved holy men to write the testimony of Jesus. May we be kept from such vain speculation on this subject, and may the light of divine truth direct us in considering the text submitted.

In the opening sentence of this answer to the argument of Bildad the Shubite, Job asks, "How hast thou helped him that is without power? How savest thou the arm that hath no strength? How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is? To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?" These questions expose the fallacy of all systems of religion which require of the guilty sinner any effort to secure the favor of God. All the arguments of his three friends were directed to the one object of convincing Job that his sins had brought upon him all his afflictions, and that his only hope of relief was in making himself righteous by doing something acceptable to the holiness of God. Evidently there could be no relief in any such system for him that is without power; nor could such a conditional plan save the arm that hath no strength. The sovereignty of God is presented in the further answer of Job as including the regions of death and hell, which have no covering to hide them from his all-seeing eye. Then this chapter opens with the continuance of his parable, in which Job solemnly avows the righteousness in which he trusts. It is not stated as a matter of volition with himself, for he says the living God "hath taken away my judgment, and the Almighty [who] hath vexed my soul." It was in refutation of the false accusations of his counsellors that he asserts his determination to hold fast his righteousness, and that he will not remove his integrity from him. That righteousness and integrity was in the Lord, in whom all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory.—Isa. xxiv. 24, 25. In himself he was ready to confess before the Lord, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." In the perfect righteousness of Christ Jesus that new heart which is given to the redeemed people of God shall never reproach them; for in him they are complete, having all of his perfect righteousness in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.—Col. ii. 9, 10. Then Job shows the vanity of the hope of the hypocrite, which is without the assurance of the grace of God; that even though he hath gained all his desire, he is not trusting in anything which can bear the test when trouble cometh, when God taketh away his soul. All that his three friends had said was in advocacy of that hope which Job thus describes. They had urged him in his affliction to do something to con-

ciliate the God under whose hand he was suffering, saying, "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee. Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart. If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks."—Job xxii. 21-24. This is the substance of all the religion of this world. Its motive power is the work of sinful man, and its object the gratification of carnal selfishness. This is manifest even to the natural mind, as is said in the verse preceding the text. The religion of this world, with all its motives and aspirations, can be seen; but the hope of the children of God is not visible even to their own natural eyes. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

The portion of a wicked man with God is very different from what it appears in the sight of men. Even the inspired psalmist said, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men: neither are they plagued like other men."—Psalm lxxiii. 2-5. No wonder that these things are too painful for the tried and afflicted saints now, when they look only at the things which are seen. But this is a very limited application of the subject. The individual and solitary experience of each saint is the record of the whole church; and the individual enemy of righteousness is but the representative of the whole embodiment of iniquity in that antichrist which is the man of sin. It is this man of whom the inspired word declares the awful doom, that the Lord shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming.—2 Thess. ii. 8. While in the estimation of men the portion of this wicked man seems in every way prosperous, so that he even opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; yet with God he has a very different portion. That system of religion which is highly esteemed among men as exactly suited to foster the pride of the sinner, seems to flourish as the multitude join in its praise and pour their earthly treasures upon its shrine. This is its portion with men; and the natural reason of the saints sometimes is moved with envy at the prosperity of these ungodly characters. It was a mystery which caused Habakkuk to cry unto God, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest

thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" The eye of reason cannot see their portion with God. It seemed that the portion of Babylon was established prosperity when the heathen king would mock the misery of the captive Jews by profaning the consecrated vessels of their temple; but in the midst of his revelry his terrible doom was written upon the wall of his palace by fingers of a man's hand, and the king saw the fatal decree. This was but a shadow of the infinitely more fearful judgment which assigns to the workers of iniquity their portion with God. In his final sentence of those workers of iniquity who constitute the wicked man in the text, "How are they brought into desolation as in a moment; they are utterly consumed with terrors." There is no uncertainty in their case with God. Their "judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."—2 Peter ii. 3. In the sight of men this wicked man may and does flourish and prosper, but not so with God. His award is strictly just, and he gives the heritage to the oppressors which is appointed to them. This is not an offered gift, which they may accept or reject according to their choice; it is positively declared that they shall receive this heritage of the Almighty. Under chains of impenetrable darkness they are reserved unto the judgment of the great day.—Jude 6.

The boast of this "wicked man" is in the multitude of his children. They are multiplied so that to the judgment of men they seem to prosper. But there is no escape from the justice of God which assigns them to the sword. They are so utterly unconscious of their true condition that they rejoice in their iniquity and glory in their shame, while they are ever ready to exult in witnessing the many afflictions of the righteous. Their popularity and prosperity in the world give evidence that they are of the world, and with the world they must perish; for the sword of infinite justice cuts off all them who are not justified by the grace of God which is revealed in Jesus Christ. These children are the offspring of that enmity against God and his grace, which is the characteristic mark of all the religion which is of the world; and as these children are devoted to destruction by the sword of truth and justice, that same sentence declares that they shall not be satisfied with bread. This was manifested when our Lord preached his own eternal truth, by the multitude who went back, and walked no more with him.—John vi. 66. The bread of life did not satisfy them. They preferred the food which their own labor could produce. Not so, however, with the true disciples, who had nowhere else to go; for they were satisfied with that living bread which Jesus gave, and could live on no other meat. But in another application it is true that the offspring of this wicked man are not satisfied with bread. They are

ever toiling to find food to sustain their ravenous appetite for the praise of men and the gratification of their own pride and self-esteem; and even with this selfish bread they can never be satisfied, being described by the prophet as "greedy dogs which can never have enough."—Isaiah lvi. 11. In the sight of men the rich man in the parable was bountifully fed, while the afflicted Lazarus was in that destitute condition where he could not be satisfied with bread; but the divine testimony shows the beggar in the enjoyment of rest in being blessed with faithful Abraham, while the man at whose gate he had lain was the finally destitute one.—See Luke xvi. 19-31. In their selfish pride the Pharisees enjoyed all their own observance of the ceremonial injunctions of the Mosaic law; but there was no bread there to satisfy the hunger of such as desired justification from sin. The law could not give life; neither could any efforts of the guilty sinner make himself just in the sight of God. All the works of man are polluted, because he is himself under condemnation. Justice cannot accept anything at the hands of the sinner but the life which it demands; and though this "wicked man" has ever taught his multiplied children that they can escape the death which is due to their sins, the falsehood of his doctrine has always been exposed as it was when in the garden of Eden he taught the woman, saying, "Ye shall not surely die."

The children of this "wicked man" are all who are led by the spirit of enmity against God, which is the element of all such as love sin. It is not confined to those who have developed that wicked spirit by actual crime. To those who boasted of their legal righteousness our Lord said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."—John viii. 44. All who look to their own works for acceptance in the sight of God are included with those Pharisees as of the same parentage. While they were by natural birth the children of Abraham, the spirit by which they were led proved them to be the offspring of that wicked man, "the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."—2 Thess. ii. 4. This relationship was not dependent upon the natural parentage of these Jews; for the Lord himself admitted their claim to be Abraham's seed in their natural relation, though in the same connection he showed that they were not the children of Abraham in the spirit.—John viii. 37, 39.

As the "wicked man" is the ever-present enemy of the "perfect man" in the experience of the saints, it often seems to them that the powers of iniquity prevail, and that they have no

ground of hope that the perfect man will triumph in the conflict; but the decree of the Almighty has determined the end of the strife. It is not an uncertain matter with God, however it may seem to be a doubtful case with the tried saints. In their own hearts the multiplied children of the wicked man are seen in the innumerable suggestions of evil thoughts and feelings which are found welling up from their sinful depths. These often appear in such multiplied hosts as to terrify the little children in whom they are shown; but they shall all be cut off by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. None of these enemies of the peace of the saints can stand before this glittering sword; for the Lord has said to his chosen people, "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."—Isa. liv. 17. Thus they are qualified to bear witness to the unspeakable riches of that grace of God, by which they are not only redeemed from the death under which they were fallen by sin, but raised to walk in newness of life above the power of sin, and forever secured in Christ Jesus, so that they can no more come into condemnation. These children of God are satisfied with that "bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die." Their desire for this bread is the witness abiding within them which proves that they are led by the Spirit of God; and all who thus hunger shall be filled." But they who trust in their own merits for justification can never arrive at the perfection which can satisfy them with rest in the assurance of acceptance with God. Hence it is said of them that "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."—Isa. lvii. 20, 21. The ungodly may indeed prosper in the world, and thus seem to attain their desire so as to be satisfied; but the very spirit by which they are animated is that covetousness which can never be quieted. Therefore they shall not be satisfied with bread.

BACK NUMBERS.

WITH this issue we discontinue the sending of back numbers to the first of the volume to new subscribers, unless so requested. We still have some of each number on hand, and those new subscribers who so desire may have the back numbers by stating that they desire them.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS.

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

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

MARRIAGES.

ON Feb. 16, 1887, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Ira B. Drake, of Hopewell, and Miss Ida M. Leigh, of Princeton, both of N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Through the solicitation of sister Martha Lee, I send you for insertion in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary of her father, brother Benjamin Walden. You will find inclosed a printed slip taken from a newspaper, which gives a historical account of the family connection from the year 1765, until the demise of our dear brother, Benjamin Walden, which please insert in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

"Benjamin Walden, who died November 18, 1885, at Prescott, W. T., was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on the 28th of December, 1820. The family history is traceable to the Waldenses of the thirteenth century, from whom the name is derived. Three brothers came from England to America about the year 1765, one of whose estates, known as Harlem Commons, is now in chancery in New York. The maternal grandmother was Dorothy Labourgho, who accompanied two of her brothers from the city of Paris, to engage in shipbuilding at Philadelphia. Their dock-yards and unfinished work was destroyed by British captors. Soon after this reverse one brother died of brain fever and the other escaped with the sister to Trenton, New Jersey, where she married Peter Schmidt, of New York. After seven years they removed to Cincinnati, arriving at that place in 1805, at which place their eldest child, Catharine Schmidt, was married to Ebenezer Walden, in the year 1818. Of this union there were two children, Benjamin and Peter Walden. In the year 1832 they removed to Indiana, where Benjamin attended the Wabash College, until he became a teacher in the public schools of that state. In 1843 he went to St. Joseph, Missouri, where he married Jane Lemmon, whose father and mother, John and Jane Lemmon, were honored citizens of Marion County, Oregon, their home being near Brooks. The two families crossed the plains to Oregon in 1845. From the Dalles nine of the party were to cross the Cascade mountains. Among these were Benjamin Walden and wife and Lemuel Lemmon, a boy nine years of age. When near the summit an Indian took their pack horse and provisions. From that time they were nineteen days with three biscuits each, and such portions of beef as they dared to eat after the cattle had eaten poison laurel. Losing their way in the blinding snow storms, they wandered far up the south side of Mount Hood, being three days on the perpetual snow. The sun shone on the fourth day. They were guided by the slopes of the western side of the range, and finally all reached the comfortable home of Peter Hatch, well known to all pioneers. During twenty years' residence in Marion County he was twice elected county judge. The office of secretary of state, also that of governor of Oregon, was tendered, but he declined political preferment, devoting his time to making a home on the donation claims six miles east from Salem, in the Waldo hills. In 1871 he removed to Umatilla County, Oregon, for the benefit of his health, and for a few years improved so much that a ripe old age seemed to await him. In that county he was twice elected member of commissioners' court, and at the time of his death was justice of the peace in the town of, Prescott."

My first acquaintance with brother Walden was in September, 1848, soon after the arrival of myself and family in the Willamette Valley, in the (then) territory of Oregon. He, in company with brother Zechariah Pollard, having learned that my wife and I were Old School Baptists, came on a visit to see us, which on our part was very acceptable. Brother Walden as yet had not joined himself to any church, but was a substantial Old School Baptist in principle. He was then living in the French Prairie. (So-called in consequence of being settled up mostly with Roman Catholic Frenchmen, with native Indian wives and half-breed children). Sub-

sequently hereto I purchased a small improvement in Waldo Hills, or rather the right to six hundred and forty acres of land in case the United States would donate that amount of land to each family settler. There being six hundred and forty acres of land lying between my donation claim and old brother Spring's donation claim, and brother Walden not liking his Catholic French and half-breed neighbors, sold his possessions in the French Prairie and took up the piece of land lying between brother Nicholas Shrum and me, as a donation claim. Our dwellings were now within sight of each other, and our intimacy became very great. The then called Hillsborough, but afterwards Siloam Church, held her meetings at brother Shrum's. Brother Walden previous to this lived fifteen miles from any Old School Baptist Church, but now only one-fourth of a mile. So he came before the church, and gave a relation of his hope in Christ, was received by the church and baptized by the late Elder William Simpson, who was then pastor of Hillsborough Church, which took place late in the year 1847. Soon thereafter he was chosen clerk of the church, which office he filled for many years, or as long as he remained a resident of Marion County. His health became greatly impaired. He was very corpulent, weighing upwards of three hundred pounds. He had an eating sore on one of his legs, which would hemorrhage profusely at times, which rendered him unfit to follow the plow; and having a goodly number of sheep, he concluded to take them east of the Cascade mountains, where a great portion of the land is unoccupied, and the pasturage undisturbed, and live the life of a shepherd. Here he and I were separated from each other by ranges of lofty mountains for the space of about two or three hundred miles. I saw him only once after his removal. His health then appeared greatly improved, and good would it have been for him had he continued in the capacity of a shepherd. Living an out door life, breathing the invigorating air that blows calmly over these prairies, was very conducive to his health. This, as stated above, was in Umatilla County, Oregon. And being twice elected member of Commissioners' Court, he left his healthful employment as a shepherd, and removed into the town of Prescott. Here his health began rapidly to decline. He had been a sufferer from Bright's disease in a chronic form for some years; but now it assumed a malignant type, and his sufferings became intense and very aggravating. Sister Martha Lee writes thus:

"Pa could then walk about the town, and he attended to a vast amount of writing and law business. On the 3rd of July he called on Dr. Blalock, of Walla Walla, who pronounced his sickness Bright's disease. He grew rapidly worse, and for two months his sufferings were of the most excruciating nature I ever witnessed. He then gave up all hope of recovery, inquired for Elder Mayfield, and requested me to write to you and others, and to see that an obituary be prepared and sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. After this he recovered so that he walked about town, resumed his business affairs, and seemed hopeful of recovery. I returned to my home, and sadly took my leave of him. He lived more than a year after this. But it is all over now."

Yes, the last enemy, so far as he is concerned, is destroyed. Death itself is dead.

"No more to sigh or shed a tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear;
But God, and Christ, and heaven, appear
Unto his raptured eye."

JOHN STIPP.

Donald Galbraith, of Dunwich, Ont., was instantly killed by a tree in the bush on his own farm, two and a half miles north of Dutton, on the 20th instant. He was in the seventy-fifth year of his age. The deceased, with his father, mother and sisters, came from Scotland in 1842, and shortly after settled on the farm on which he lived till the time of his lamented death. The place was then practically a wilderness, and doubtless he experienced his share of the privations incident to early settlement; but by hard toil, untiring industry and good management, with the blessing of providence he succeeded

in making a good and comfortable home for himself and family, and has left his widow, one son and three daughters, all grown, in easy and comfortable circumstances. He was an exemplary man in many ways. His thorough honesty, sterling integrity and unvarying punctuality in the faithful discharge of every obligation gained him the full confidence of all who knew him: He was really a man in whom there was no guile. He will be greatly missed. We did not know how much we thought of him until he left us. His grief stricken family can only realize by degrees the full extent of their loss, for to them he was in deed and in truth a husband and father. They mourn, but not as those without hope, for they know that while with them he lived in firm hope of a glorious immortality beyond the grave; and they fully believe that his death, to them so sad, sudden and unexpected, was to him but the messenger of peace to release him from the fleshly tabernacle and to call him home to the full enjoyment of that everlasting rest reserved for the people of God. The full persuasion of this is to the family a source of lasting consolation, infinitely above what can be derived from anything of an earthly nature; and may they be enabled to bow in humble submission to the lot of providence assigned them. The deceased was a Baptist. Not long after coming to this country he professed to have received a hope, and united with the church of which his uncle, the late Elder Thomas McColl, was the pastor, and continued a firm and consistent member of it for upwards of forty years, till the time of his departure. The esteem in which the deceased was held was evidenced by the large number of relatives, friends and acquaintances who came from every direction on Saturday, the 22nd instant, to attend the funeral, and to extend their sympathy to the sorrowing family in their sad bereavement. At the house, Elder Pollard preached a short but appropriate discourse, and then the remains were taken to the family burying plot at Brock's Creek, where they will rest in sweet repose till time shall be no longer.

EKFRID, Ont., Jan. 31, 1887.

DIED—At her residence near Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., Nov. 4, 1886, **Mrs. Laura Rumner**, aged thirty-four years and one day.

Sister Rumner was a member of the church at Rock Springs, having been baptized and received into the fellowship of that church on Jan. 31, 1875, where she remained in full fellowship until called away by death. She was baptized by the writer of this notice under circumstances calculated to make a lasting impression. The weather was very cold, and the ice in the creek was very thick, which was cut to suit the occasion. She being in a delicate state of health, it was thought by some enough to cause her death; but others were led to think there must be some reality in the ordinance, which encourages its subjects to endure. Her disposition was mild and patient, but decided and firm. She enjoyed the privileges of meeting with the brethren and hearing that kind of preaching which presents Christ as the ground of hope for poor sinners, of which she seemed to feel her need. The loss seems irreparable to her husband, and to her three little daughters, all quite young, and at a time when a mother's care seems more particularly needed. They had purchased a home near her place of meeting but a short time before her death, which she was pleased with, but enjoyed only a short time. I am not aware that I have ever visited a family that filled me with more sadness than did a visit to this house. The little children gathered around, as if to hear every word that might be said in relation to their departed mother. The Lord's ways are not our ways, neither are we able to trace his footsteps. The dispensations of his providence seem at times to fall heavily upon us, because we see and know but in part. But there is a day approaching when they who know in part shall know even as they are known.

The church has lost a good member, the afflicted husband a good companion, and the children a good mother. They have the sympathy of the entire neighborhood, but all

this cannot restore to them their sad loss. We are but poor, helpless creatures. It is experience that teaches us all we know, and it is true in this case also. But the Lord is able to deliver and to save, to bind up all broken hearts, and to comfort all that mourn. May it be the privilege of the bereaved to feel his tender care and comforting presence.

Her funeral was attended at Rock Springs, where the remains were laid, in hope of immortality beyond the grave.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

DIED—In Circleville, Ohio, January 27, 1887, **Mrs. May Kennedy** (a widow for forty-two years), aged eighty-three years, eleven months and six days. A little over sixty-eight years ago she was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Hopewell, in Perry Co., Ohio, by Elder Christian Kaufman; and though her earthly place of abode has been frequently changed since that event, yet her spiritual abiding place, dating from eternity, before time, was and is in that Rock that is, and was, and is to come, the Almighty.

"On the Rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou canst smile at all thy foes."

She belonged to the humbler and unnoticed class in the world. No booming of cannon signaled her birth, and a piece of crape on the out-door knob was the only outward advertisement of her death. Like the kingdom of heaven, she came without observation, and departed the same way, so far as the world would notice. But he who feeds the young ravens, who notices the sparrows, and sends his dews upon the flowers that are born to blush and die unseen by mortal eyes, has said that such are of more value than many sparrows.

Two daughters and a few immediate and kind neighbors, some Catholic and some Protestant, assembled in her late humble home, where, by request, I spoke a few words from Romans iv. 25, after which her body was quietly laid away in the old Circleville Cemetery.

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

THOMAS COLE.

TIME in its steady march is continually carrying us to our eternal home. It becomes our painful duty to send you the obituary of our beloved sister, **Mary A. Longfellow**, who departed this life May 30, 1886, aged forty-four years and thirteen days. She was born in Henry County, Indiana, and became a member of the Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church, of which Elder Joseph A. Johnson served as pastor, where she remained a worthy member, loving, kind and tender hearted to all, until about three years ago, when, with her parents, J. R. and J. E. Longfellow, she moved to Madison County, Indiana, and united with the First Fall Creek Church. While in our midst she was truly a fellow-citizen with God's dear children, always devoted to the cause of her blessed Redeemer and to her parents. The doctrine of salvation by grace, through Jesus Christ, to lost and ruined sinners of Adam's fallen race, she always loved. But the Lord has been pleased to take her from our midst. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She died in the faith of a glorious resurrection beyond this life, where neither sin nor sorrow shall ever annoy the dear children of God.

B. M. ZION.

DIED—January 1, 1887, **Elder Preston Doty**, in the seventy-ninth year of his age. He was born in Kentucky, and with his parents moved to Iowa, in 1854. Elder Doty joined the Primitive Baptists about the year 1834, and commenced preaching in 1856. He has been a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and earnestly contended for the faith. His death was caused by a throat and lung disease, which troubled him for several years. He endured his suffering very patiently, never murmuring, and passed away very quietly, making no requests. But by request of his two sons that were present, the writer preached a short discourse at his late residence, from these words, "Blessed

are the dead, which die in the Lord," for the comfort of those that were there. Elder Doty leaves three sons and their families; but we are sure that our loss is his eternal gain. His membership was with Middle River Church, Madison County, Iowa. He was at the November meeting of Council Bluffs Church, at Loveland, Iowa, and preached very ably for a man of his age. But he has gone to reap his reward in heaven.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

ISAAC SKELTON.

DIED—At the home of her daughter, Mrs. Richard A. Conkling, at Port Jervis, N. Y., on October 18, 1886, **Mrs. Jane Baird**, widow of the late Victor E. Baird, in the eighty-first year of her age.

Sister Baird had been a great sufferer with inflammatory rheumatism for about twenty-five years, during the greater part of which she was almost helpless. She received a good hope through grace about fifty-five years ago, and was baptized by Elder Henry Ball, in the fellowship of the Greenville Primitive Baptist Church, in Orange County, N. Y., from which church she never removed her membership, and was, we believe, the last surviving member of that branch of the church of Christ. Since the death of her husband, which occurred in October, 1884, she has visited and made her home with her three children, sister Nancy Robertson, of Middletown, N. Y., Duer W. Baird, of New York City, and Mary A., wife of Richard A. Conkling, of Port Jervis, N. Y., her last sickness and death occurring at the home of the latter. Besides her three children, she is survived by two brothers and two sisters. She was a precious mother and sister, and was held in high esteem by her kindred in Christ, as a humble follower of the Lamb.

The funeral was held on Thursday, Oct. 21, 1886, when a very comforting discourse was preached by Elder Marvin Vail, of Waverly, N. Y.

"Welcome, sweet hour of full discharge,
That sets our longing souls at large,
Unbinds our chains, breaks up our cell,
And gives us with our God to dwell."

BENTON JENKINS.

DIED—On Monday morning, Feb. 21, 1887, at his residence in New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., of hardening of the liver, brother **Theodore Graham**, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. Although he had been in a decline for several months, yet we did not suppose that the end was so near, notwithstanding he had said that he thought he would not survive the winter. Possessed of a warm, kind heart and a happy temperament, he had a host of friends outside the church, as well as within, and his departure is sincerely mourned by all. Seldom has a larger congregation gathered at New Vernon of late years, than that which assembled on the occasion of his funeral, on the 23d, when a discourse was preached by his pastor, from Rev. xx. 11-15.

Brother Graham received a hope in Christ, and was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, a number of years ago, in the fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church. His house has been a pleasant home and stopping-place for his brethren, and many from a distance will remember his hospitality, and will sorrow when they learn that they shall see his face no more in the flesh. He is survived by our dear sister, his widow, one son and his wife, two grandchildren, one brother and one sister; but their loss is his gain. May the Lord comfort the mourners.

"Fearless he entered death's cold flood,
In peace of conscience closed his eyes;
His only trust was Jesus' blood,
In sure and certain hope to rise."

BENTON JENKINS.

My cousin, **David Thompson**, son of David Thompson, deceased, and Mrs. Mary E. Thompson, was born at Martinsburg, W. Va., Oct. 3, 1862, and died Feb. 7, 1886. He was a bright and affectionate boy, the youngest of the family, and was much beloved. His disease was blood poisoning, with which he suffered intensely for six weeks, which he bore very patiently. In the first of his sick-

ness he desired very much to get well, and watched the clock so that his mother and sister might not fail to give him his medicine at the exact time; but in the latter part of his sickness neither the family nor the doctor could persuade him to take it. His sister said to him, "If you do not take your medicine you cannot get well." He replied, "Well, I did not say that I could." Evidently he was reconciled to die, which shows the power of God. On the morning he died he asked his mother to come and lie down with him and go home with him. He passed peacefully away, manifesting that

"Jesus can make a dying bed

Feel soft as downy pillows are,

While on his breast he leaned his head,

And breathed his life out sweetly there."

The stroke falls heavily upon the widowed mother, sisters and brothers; yet they have not been left without some token of God's love. While he afflicted, the everlasting arms were underneath, to bear up and support.

The funeral was preached by Elder E. V. White, on the fourth Sunday in February, 1886, from the words, "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Yours in hope,

MARY S. MILLER.

KERNEYSVILLE, W. Va.

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, Jan. 14, 1887, **Mr. Hosea Allen**, aged eighty-eight years and six months. He was raised in North Berwick, Maine, and at the age of twenty-two went to the state of N. Y., and lived there about sixty years. He then, as his family were all dead, and not having any relatives there, except one grandchild, came back to his birth-place and spent some months at different places among his distant relatives; but finally it was his choice to make his home with Alonzo Allen, in Sanford, and he lived there until he died, which was five years; and if he had been their own father they could not have done more for him than they did. He was confined to his bed for months. As he had attended our meetings a number of times, and became acquainted with me, at his request I visited him a number of times while he was sick, and found that his mind was on the Bible, and he talked well about the same, and said that he had a hope in the mercy of God, and hoped that he should not be disappointed.

I preached at his funeral from the words in Phil. iii. 20, 21.

WM. QUINT.

DIED—In Fayette Co., Pa., Nov. 28, 1886, **Martha Jobes**, aged seventy-five years, six months, and six days. Her maiden name was Grandon, was born and raised in Greene Co., Pa., but when grown came to Fayette Co., where she was baptized in the fellowship of the Red Stone Church, by Elder James Fry, November, 1830, and continued a worthy member until death. She was married to brother Samuel Jobes, Dec. 9, 1830, who survives her, and by whom she had several children. Sister Jobes had been afflicted with a nervous disease for many years, though generally able to attend meeting and to her household duties until within six days of her death, when she was stricken down with paralysis, from which she never rallied, but passed away from earth as if falling asleep. She leaves her husband, our aged brother, and several children, to mourn their loss.

The funeral took place on the 30th, and though a stormy day, many attended, when the writer tried to speak to the comfort of the friends, in the use of the words, "I have fought a good fight," &c.—2 Tim. iv. 7, 3.

In fellowship,

J. BEEMAN.

DIED—At his home, in Muskingum Co., Ohio, on Jan. 7, 1887, **Wm. F. Baker**, in the forty-seventh-year of his age. He was born near Vicksburg, Mississippi, in July, 1840, and was brought by his parents in infancy to Ohio, and since 1853 his home has been in Licking County. In 1861 he volunteered in the army and served in the seventy-eighth regiment of Ohio volunteers, when he passed through the incidents of war until January,

1865, when he was honorably discharged and returned to his former home and engaged in farming, and on Sept. 27, 1867, was married to Miss Hannah E. Huff, who has become the mother of seven children, two of whom departed this life before him, leaving two sons and two daughters to survive him. In October, 1873, he and his wife united with Falls of Licking Church of Primitive Baptists and were baptized by Elder Thomas Cole, of which church he has remained a faithful member until his death. He was exemplary in his walk and a firm believer in the doctrines of the word of God as taught by the Primitive Baptists. He was taken ill on December 28, when the best medical aid was called, but his disease seemed very severe from the beginning and baffled the best of medical skill, and in spite of the kindness of his dear wife and all that could be done by human effort he passed away, the spirit taking its flight to that better home, where sorrow and pain will be felt or feared no more. But we rejoice to know that our loss is his eternal gain. Then, dear sister Baker, look up to him who doeth all things well, and who has promised to be the widow's God, and may he enable you to see in this sad bereavement the hand of the Lord. In the death of brother Baker the neighborhood have lost a faithful friend, the church one of its best members, the wife an affectionate, kind and loving husband, and the surviving children an indulgent and affectionate father. All of us will miss his melodious voice in the sweet songs of Zion, as we were wont to hear them, and the vacant seat will bring sad reflections to those who had the pleasure of his acquaintance.

On Jan. 9, the remains were taken to Ervin M. E. Church house, where the writer, in company with Elder E. Barker, talked to a large concourse of sorrowing friends, after which they were laid away to await further orders, when the trump of God shall awake the sleeping dead. Sister Baker, you may be assured that you have the sympathy of all the dear brethren, sisters and friends, and may his gracious presence be with you in this your sad bereavement is the prayer of the writer.

D. T. POYNTER.

My son, John Smith, was killed by the explosion of a sawmill boiler, on Dec. 23, 1886. He was thrown thirty feet. His head was torn off, and his thigh and one hand broken. He was found by his heart-stricken wife within three minutes after the explosion, with no signs of life about him. His age was thirty-six years, ten months and twenty-three days. He was a firm believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a true lover of the Old School Baptist cause. He often said to his wife that he was ready to go when his time should come. He leaves his wife, three sons, three brothers, two sisters and his father to mourn. His funeral was largely attended on Dec. 25, and a discourse was preached by our beloved Elder John Lawler, after which his remains were buried in the South Hill Cemetery, Vandalia, Ill.

E. SMITH.

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Opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper will be observed a date, this date denotes the time at which such subscription expires, and when a remittance is made to renew the subscription the date should be watched to see that it is forwarded to such time as the remittance pays to, and if neglected, by informing us, it will be corrected. By this method each subscriber has his own account, and can see that the proper credits are given for his remittances.

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The Fifth Edition of our Baptist Hymn Books (small type) is now ready for distribution. We have now received from our Bindery in New York an ample supply of all the variety of Binding.

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ON

CHURCH IDENTITY

We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size as the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each or the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1887.

NO. 7.

POETRY.

THE DEVOTED CHRISTIAN.

O how happy is the man
Who walks in wisdom's ways,
And measures out his span
To God in prayer and praise
His God and his Bible
Is all that he desires;
To holiness of heart
He continually aspires.

In poverty he's happy,
For he knows he has a Friend,
Who never will forsake him,
And on whom he can depend.
He rises in the morning,
With the lark he tunes his lyre,
And offers up a tribute
To God in praise and prayer.

And then unto his labor
He cheerfully repairs,
In confidence believing
That God will hear his prayer.
Whatever he engages in,
At home, afar, abroad,
His object is to honor
And to glorify his God.

In sickness, pain and sorrow
He never will repine,
While he is drawing nourishment
From Christ, the living Vine.
When trouble presses heavily,
He leans on Jesus' breast,
And in his precious promises
He finds a sacred rest.

The yoke of Christ is easy,
The burden always light;
He tires not, nor is weary,
While Canaan heaves in sight.
A pilgrim and a stranger
Upon this earthly ball,
There's nothing he possesses here
That he his own can call.

His gold and his silver,
His raiment and his food,
Are favors lent by providence,
To do his neighbor good.
His bosom glows with charity,
To the poor he lends relief;
The widow and the orphan
In him will lose their grief.

'Tis thus you have his history
Through life from day to day.
Religion is a mystery;
It is the shining way.

And when upon his pillow
He lays him down to die,
His soul in hope rejoices,
For he knows his God is nigh.

And when life's lamp is flick'ring,
His soul on wings of love
Flies 'way to realms of glory,
To dwell with Christ above.

And now his spirit's happy,
For he's joined the holy band;
A crown of glory on his head,
A palm is in his hand.

With saints and priests and prophets
He strikes the golden lyre,
And shouts loud hallelujah
With all the heavenly choir.
He's happy now eternally,
His joys are all complete;
With angels he is bowing
Around the Savior's feet.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LONGVIEW, Texas, Feb. 23, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have for some time past felt an inclination to pen a few thoughts on the important and much-controverted subject of predestination, for your consideration, and if in your judgment worthy or expedient, to be published in your much esteemed paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. There has been much said and written on the subject of late, so it will be impossible for me to write those things that I have felt most desirous to without repeating many things already written by others. Indeed, all that I may write, for all I know, may be a repetition of what some one else has written within the past year (I mean in substance); for I know that I have not read all that has appeared in the papers, or even in the SIGNS, on the subject. But in case it should be a mere repetition, it may be a consolation to those who have before set forth the same glorious truth to know that there is one more poor sinner who does believe and rejoice in these things. To all who feel interested enough to read this, I wish to say that I do feel and hope that I have nothing in view but the welfare, individually and collectively, of the Zion of our God; and I do hope that the Lord will enable me to pen all that I shall write in love to his little ones. We read in his sacred word that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." So then if I should be ever so able to set forth the truth of his word, and believe it ever so firmly, yet if not actuated by love for the truth, or if the love of God has not been shed abroad in my heart, no profit do I gain. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.—1 Cor. xiii. 1. I may believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and openly confess the same; yet devils did the same long before my day. "I may bless Israel; yet the false prophet Baalim did the same. So then if I have not 'the faith of the Son of God' implanted within, or have no 'love of God shed abroad in the heart,' my effort is vain, and I am not prompted by a good motive. In consideration of these things, I often shrink from what I feel to be my duty. Leaving the motive or prompting cause of the appearance of this article to be decided by the reader, let us briefly consider the necessity of a close investigation of the subject under consideration.

It is a well known fact that there

are at least two different opinions among the Old School or Primitive Baptists in reference to predestination, and in some places strife and contention have been the result. Both sides have been set forth by their ablest advocates, and it seems to me that language unnecessarily harsh has at times been used. I do not think that when actuated by that meek and lowly spirit which characterized our Lord and Master we will fall out with and call our brethren by hard names, or ridicule them, because they do not see as we see in all points. The necessity of a close investigation consists then in, first: It is a subject of vast importance to the household of faith, and one that has been opposed and hated by a vast majority of the world in all ages. Second, there are, as I have already stated, two different opinions among us on the subject. One glories in the predestination of God in all things; another would not believe it though an angel declared it. I am of the former class, and do firmly believe in the predestination of all things. Now, my dear brother or sister, if you disagree with me, come and go along with me, and hear my reasons for so believing; and if you do agree with me, come and let us rejoice that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." If there is some poor, little one who is, as it were, "halting between two opinions," or who can hardly eat so strong meat, that is, cannot understand the subject to his or her satisfaction, let him ask wisdom of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not. Let us first consider the subject as shown forth to the natural understanding of man in creation; for "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Again, "The invisible things of him [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."—Psalm xix. 1; Rom. i. 20. The Scriptures inform us that "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."—Eccl. vii. 29. Notwithstanding the eternal power and Godhead are plainly set forth in what our natural eyes behold, so that man by that reason imparted by his Creator is forced to acknowledge the existence and power of the Supreme Being, yet his inventions have been so numerous and so cunningly devised, and his reason thereby so traditionalized, that he has gone far into idolatry.

All nature to-day strictly harmonizes with the inspired account of creation in the first chapter of Genesis; also, the certainty of the accomplishment of the decrees of the eternal God stands evidently set forth in his handiwork. It was he that made and set the sun in his place, decreed his place of rising and his place of going down; and man, with all his ingenuity, has never been able to cause that he rise one moment sooner, or that he set one moment later. He also made and set the moon and stars in the firmament, to give light upon the earth by night; and so regular are their movements that astronomers are able to tell us hundreds of years ahead when the one will pass the other. It was also his decree that the animal and the vegetable creation should multiply, and all bring forth after their kind. To-day we have but to cast our eyes out on the forests, and we see in every plant and tree that his word stands verified. Here is the oak tree. The little acorn drops from it in the fall season, and there it lies until the heavy winter rains have covered it; and spring time returns, when the ground begins to warm, and in due time the acorn begins to swell. A tender bud puts forth, and soon its little leaves are developed, and are exactly like the parent tree; and never has it been known that one of those little acorns brought forth a plant of any other description. So it is with all the creation of God; and so strong is the belief of man in these decrees of the great "I AM" that (though he may with his tongue deny a belief in predestination) we see it practically manifested from childhood. The ten-year-old boy never plants pumpkin seeds expecting to gather therefrom pop-corn. None of us go to our gardens and plant squash seeds, expecting to gather from them cucumbers; nor do any of us go to our farms and deposit beans, expecting to gather therefrom corn, nor do any of us doubt but weeds, grass, &c., will come up and grow among our crops; for the same God that has created and placed in the earth the plant that we nourish, and from which we get our food, has also created and placed in the earth that which is to human happiness a most bitter enemy. There are many things in God's creation that are deadly poison to man, by which thousands of the human family have been taken from the earth. This is beyond dispute. God made man, and God made that which causes his death. All the means by which he removes man from the world are his (see Psalm xxiv. 1), and the breath of all mankind is in

his hands.—Job xii. 10. As his life, his breath, is in so secure a place, all the days of his appointed time he must wait (Job xiv. 14); for “Is there not an appointed time to man on earth?”—Job vii. 1. God has appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.—Job xiv. 5. Yet who dares say, Jehovah, what doest thou? Is there an individual who would limit God’s predestination, and say that if he has predestinated all things he is the author of sin? That would arraign him before the same bar of human reason, and say that he is the author of evil, because he has created those things that are to humanity an evil. We read, “For by him [Jesus Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”—Col. i. 16.

Having briefly glanced at that “which may be known of God” “by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead” (for I repeat that all nature bears corresponding testimony with the inspired record, that God “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will,” so that all men not only believe, in some sense, in the existence and power of a Supreme Being, but also daily show forth a belief in him, as one who works by appointment), by man in a natural sphere, let us examine some of the things that are known only by revelation. For while to the natural man the things of nature declare nature’s God, “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.” Man, of himself, can by no means understand or receive him as a three-one God; God the Father, God the Son, the Mediator between God and man, and God the Spirit, whose office work it is to bring the heirs of promise to a knowledge of their interest in the inheritance of the sanctified. In this character he can only be known by revelation; for when the Son of God made his advent into these low grounds of sorrow, notwithstanding it was according to that testimony which was read in the synagogues of the Jews every Sabbath, and notwithstanding the fact that he performed many miracles in their sight, which they knew that nothing short of a supernatural power could perform, they did not believe on him as the Messiah. On one occasion he asked his disciples, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered [for all the disciples] and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father

which is in heaven.”—Matthew xvi. 13–17. Again, “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”—1 Cor. xii. 3. Then if in the days when he was “God manifest in the flesh,” the Jews, his own people, to whom were committed the oracles of God, and to whom he said, “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me,” and before whose eyes he performed a variety of miracles, such as turning the water into wine, raising the dead, restoring sight to the blind, healing the leprosy, casting out devils, &c., could not receive him as the Christ, how preposterous for Gentiles of to-day to claim that they can do so. It is alone by that Spirit which enabled the prophets in the days of old (for “holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”) to look forward to and testify of the coming of the blessed Redeemer, that men can look back to his advent, death and resurrection with any spiritual understanding of the matter. Our Savior is testified of by one of old as a King that shall reign in righteousness, and his apostles as princes that shall rule in judgment. One of those princes tells us that “whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning.” Again, the same one tells us that “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.” So then the church of God, or those individually who are spiritually taught, have nothing to do to find a rule for any duty that their Master has enjoined upon them in doctrine or practice, but to search that code of laws which he has ordained for the government of his kingdom. Then, in order to see whether the predestination of all things that transpire is sound doctrine, or whether only a part of these things is predestinated, let us examine some of the things that were “written aforetime.” No doubt some will say, I have already done this; and perhaps will say that I have virtually charged them with not searching the Scriptures; but such is not my intention. I would say that I have never seen one so perfect in knowledge that he had no further need to search. Again, some may have their minds so settled on the subject that they would not believe (what I shall say), though an angel should declare it, or the Scriptures either.

Some tell us that this doctrine makes God the author of sin. I object, and say, Not so, because God is under no law; and we read that “sin is the transgression of the law.” A man may take a deadly weapon and murder his fellow-man. He has thereby sinned. Why? Because God’s law says, “Thou shalt not kill.” God has in various ways taken the lives of multitudes; yet God has not sinned, because all things are his, and he has a sovereign right to dispose of them as seemeth him good,

and none have a right to say, Jehovah, what doest thou? Again, some say, “I believe that God has predestinated all the things that are necessary for the salvation, glorification, &c., of the church.” So do I; and I most firmly believe that it takes “all things,” both good and bad (that is, what with us is bad), to accomplish this eternal purpose of the great “I AM.” For we read “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. Now if to predestinate all wickedness makes God the author of sin, does it not make him equally so to predestinate one wicked act? I think, prejudice laid aside, all will admit that it does. Then to prove that one (and the most wicked act ever perpetrated on this earth) was according to his “determinate counsel and foreknowledge,” we have only to refer to the crucifixion of the meek and lowly Son of God. But as I wish to say more about this hereafter, I will pass on to notice some other things.

We are told, Romans v. 20, that “Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound;” which I understand has direct reference to the law given to Adam in the garden of Eden. This conclusion I am forced to from the preceding and the following verses. But if it be true, as some affirm, that it has reference to the Mosaic law, it proves very fully one thing which some, who deny the predestination of all things, seem disposed to treat with contempt, namely, that God has given a law that it might be broken; and why? “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Can language be more plain or forcible? “The law entered, that the offense [that offense which hath reigned unto death: “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.”—Romans v. 8] might abound,” in order that grace might “reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.” One sage writer has said that if it can be proved that the first transgression was a decree of God, then it would be admitted that all subsequent sin was decreed. I take the above quotations as full and satisfactory proof of that fact. I have been asked to harmonize the law given Adam with the decree which went before that he should violate it. I sometimes answer this by reference to God’s command to Moses to go to Pharaoh, “Speak to him that he let my people go.” Yet he says, “I will harden his heart, and he will not let them go.” Now let the questioner harmonize the Lord’s command to Moses, and his word that went before, “I will harden [not permit it to be hardened] Pharaoh’s heart, that he will not let my people go.” Also, let him that would arraign the great God before the bar of human reason, account for his punishing the king of Egypt for not doing the thing which he hardened his heart that he could not do. Also,

account for the following, “For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?”—Rom. ix. 17–19. The same kind of reasoning is brought forward against the doctrine to this day, though at times clothed in different language, such as follows: If all this be the case, then “God should be as well pleased with his wicked creatures as with his good; otherwise you say he despises the work of his own hands.” Say, candid reader, is not this in sum and substance the very same argument as that brought against the doctrine in the days of the apostle Paul? Most assuredly it is. But hear his reply, and most withering rebuke to those who presume to call in question the works of Almighty God, even though he raised up a wicked Pharaoh, and hardeneth whom he will: “Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to 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?” Then of the above, besides much more in the same chapter, “what shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid” (that we should so say). No other reason should the child of grace wish to know for the Lord doing a thing than that “Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” His ways and his thoughts are as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth. The Lord told Abraham, long before the birth of Isaac, that his seed should be a stranger in a land that was not theirs, and that they should serve them, and that they should be afflicted of those strangers four hundred years.—Gen. xv. 13. It at once occurs to the mind that there must be a strange land in which Israel shall sojourn, serve and be afflicted for four hundred years; and shall we suppose for a moment that the preparation of this strange land is left to chance, or to some other power, to arrange the routine of causes to bring about the desired end? No. The Scriptures plainly tell us of that wicked king of Egypt, under whose afflicting hand the Lord appeared in behalf of and delivered the children of Israel, that the Lord raised him up; and furthermore, “When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.”—Deut. xxxii. 8. Again, we read in Acts xvii. 26 that God “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.” Thus we see that all nations had their bounds set, and

the sons of Adam were separated; and who did it? Surely the Lord did it; and when? He hath declared "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."—Isa. xli. 10. While all the circumstances connected with the bringing of the children of Israel down into the land of Egypt worked together for their good and for the glory of God, yet all the acts, even of the children of Israel, in bringing about these circumstances, were not meant for good by them; for it was through envy and malice that they sold Joseph to the Midianitish merchants; but while they meant it for evil, God meant it for good, to save much people alive. In this we see the Scripture verified, which says, "The wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." Here the Lord saw proper to restrain even the good design of Reuben; for it was his design to deliver Joseph from his brethren and return him to his father. It was necessary that there be a lying woman in the house of Potiphar, in order that Joseph be cast into the prison, in time to meet the butler and baker.

The Lord has appointed and brought to pass many things recorded in the Scriptures which were, in the instruments he used, wicked, and for which he punished them, but through which he brought much good to his people. Notice, for instance, the many wicked acts of men connected with the bringing about at the appointed time the advent and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was a very wicked act in David to take the wife of Uriah, and one for which he was severely punished; and he still added to this crime by causing Uriah to be killed by the sword of the enemy; yet it was through this very channel (and must we believe that it was without appointment, and merely permitted to be?) that the promised seed was brought about. It took exactly such a one as Judas to betray our Savior. His betrayal was according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Then shall we suppose for a moment that Judas' appearance among the disciples was only by permission? What saith the Scriptures? The Savior himself said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"—John vi. 7. The psalmist David spoke of him hundreds of years before the birth of our Savior. "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." Again, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed."—Matthew xxvii. 9, 10. There has never been a more wicked act perpetrated than that of the crucifixion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and yet it is said, "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."—Acts iv. 27, 28. Peter, speaking of certain characters, says, "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not," &c.—2 Peter ii. 12. Jude says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation," &c.—Jude 4.

I do not propose, as some seem to think, to argue that the Spirit of God leads men into wickedness; but I understand the Scriptures to teach that it is strictly in accordance with God's appointments that men are led to wicked acts by the "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;" full proof of which is the above quotation from Acts iv. 27. The prophet Micaiah said to Ahab, "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee."—2 Chronicles xviii. 22. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, one petition was, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." In his temptations, I believe, were embodied all the temptations to which his church individually and collectively have ever been or ever will be subjected in this unfriendly world; for he was tempted in all points like unto his brethren, yet without sin. One of these temptations was, when the devil had taken him up into the holy city, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, "and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." The "If thou be the Son of God" implies a doubt; and "cast thyself down" (as the Scriptures say, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee") tests the matter. The Savior informed him that such conduct would be to "tempt the Lord thy God," which was forbidden in the Scriptures. The same temptation, in substance, is brought against the child of God to this day by the devil and his servants, in this, "If I believed as you do, that all things are known and fixed of God, I would take my fill of sin." But the Son of God put Satan to silence, not only for himself, but in behalf of all his children, by telling him, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." I am glad to say that I have never known one of the Lord's children to violate his laws, and then plead his belief in the predestination of all things as an excuse. No doubt the usual plea will be brought forward by some, You have quoted only such Scriptures as refer to the sovereignty of God, which do not prove your point, &c. While I

most firmly believe that they show forth the sovereignty of God, I also believe that they prove his foreknowledge, predestination and sovereignty as inseparably connected; and it does seem to my mind that to take away one of these characteristics would leave a chance, at least, for a failure of the others. It is no more unreasonable to them who are predestinarians only in part, that God has predestinated all things, than it is to the full-blooded Arminian that he has an elect according to his foreknowledge.

While I fully believe and rejoice in what I have tried to set forth in this article, namely, God's absolute predestination and his sovereign rule over all things, I would not be understood as holding to all, doctrinally, that is held to by some with whom I am agreed on this subject, for such is not the case; and as has been previously intimated, I do not approve of the spirit in which some have written on the subject, for to me it savors of that disposition of the disciples in the case of the Samaritan village, as recorded in Luke ix. 54. I have every reason to feel thankful, and it is due alone to the sovereign grace of God, if I have anything like a just conception of his divine character. When I can feel no weakness myself, then I will probably blame my brother more for what I consider his weakness. We should ever be ready to "bear the infirmities of the weak," and to "bear one another's burdens," pray for and exhort each other, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. May the Lord in his mercy lead us into all truth, is my prayer, for his name's sake. Amen.

H. B. JONES.

STATE ROAD, N. C., NOV. 12, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am once more highly favored by our covenant-keeping God to try to write a few more lines concerning the way in which God has had me to go while a sojourner here in time, hoping that you and the brotherhood in general will continue to bear with me in my weakness. My last article closed in speaking of my ramblings in the woods in search of a place that would serve to solemnize me for prayer. Finally I thought I would go to my mother's and brethren's graves, and look upon them, and think of myself being there, and they lying beneath my feet, and I thought surely I would feel solemnized to prayer. I went to their graves, and I suppose I uttered a few words, and in the spirit of prayer; but I remembered nothing until about sixty or seventy yards from the graves, when I came to myself, and found myself praising God and singing, and going toward my father's house; for I thought that I would not stop until I reached the house and told my father, brothers and sister of the goodness of God, and how I loved Jesus. But I did not go far till my feelings changed, and I was ashamed of myself for acting in such a way; so I did not tell what I intended to go and tell. This one time of Jesus' inner appearing has often

refreshed my drooping feeling, when brought to my memory, in the times of doubting, fearing, &c. I will here give a few words in general as touching my ministerial life; for it has ever been the case with me at times, when some person would ask me concerning certain Scriptures, and when certain Scriptures would arise in my mind, they would be fastened upon my mind, and the daily labor of my mind would be to ponder over those Scriptures, especially when I did not understand them. Many times I would be driven to the woods to ramble around and to go to secret prayer; and sometimes while at prayer in some secret place, or rambling in the fields or woods, or sitting alone in some desolate place, those pondered Scriptures would be opened to my understanding in great light, and that light would be so brilliant to my understanding that I could scarcely refrain from speaking at the very top of my voice, and with ease and great celerity I thought I could preach from those Scriptures. O what precious seasons I have enjoyed at the times of those blessed revelations. Sometimes, when in the enjoyment of those seasons, all nature would become most beautiful to me, for it would appear to be all engaged in praises to God; yea, the very trees of the forest seemed to be engaged in praising God. Everything would seem to be in action in setting forth the glory and wisdom of God. O what glorious and delightful scenes are there in the special favors of God to his people; that is, when he reveals to them the wonderful lessons which pertain to the kingdom. O how happy are they who are the witnesses of those scenes. About the times of June and July, 1879, I attended several meetings of my own appointments, and was greatly blessed, as I thought, with a good delivery. But after this fruitful season with me, it seemed that I rather became exalted, and therefore had to be abased; for there were times that followed when I would arise to address the people, when I was dumb, and had to remain in silence, taking my seat in much confusion and shame. These disappointments seemed to put a kind of stubbornness and rebellion into me against God, and my condition became very horrible and miserable; for it seemed that Satan was turned loose upon me, a great storm of a furious battle was raging in me, and the fiery darts of Satan were being hurled at me. The principal dart which Satan did hurl at me was that I was not born again, or else I would not be so sinful and rebellious; that I was not born again, and had joined the church without being fit, and therefore had committed the unpardonable sin, in the act of joining the church and being baptized unworthily. When I would try to pray, and would say, "O Lord, if I am deceived, please undeceive me," then the tempter would say, "You are not deceived, but you are a hypocrite." Day after day were these suggestions poured into my mind; but I knew that these accusations were false, for I knew

that I had been persuaded that I was a saint, and that by an inner persuasion. But when I would look back over my past life, even since Jesus had revealed himself to me, I thought, O what a wretched being I have been, and where can I see one mark of a christian? O how many marks of a rebel sinner do I see; for I have been found with laughter crowds, and I have despised the reading of the Bible. And not only this, but I have neglected all that is good. With these reflections I would be made to cry, "O Lord, would that I had died when but a child, and thus escaped all these my miseries in this life, and also escape eternal damnation." And again I would cry, "O Lord, why was I ever born? O how I disdain the day wherein I was born. Let that day be of no remembrance; let it be a day of darkness; let it be hated of all men." The agony of my poor soul no one can express; it was beyond human description. But in all this God was merciful to me, and when he had purged me, he did in power deliver me from the horrible state of feeling which I was in. When he had lifted up my spirit, and revived it with many very sweet promises, those sweet Bible promises were so gloriously impressed on my mind that my spirit rejoiced exceedingly, and my soul was delivered with a very great deliverance indeed; for I felt that Satan's arms were grounded, and that God had delivered me from the power of Satan. I felt to say, Glory be to God forevermore. Amen. Now this feast of holy manna lasted for several days, and the joy over the victory was very great to me. But I finally lapsed into a state of sluggishness. I seemed to get into a state that I cared for nothing, and my disposition was to sleep and slug the time away. But there seemed to be a spirit in me that was inclined to war against the above disposition; and thus I passed several days, until the time came around that I should fill one of my appointments at the church where my membership was. There was no pastor of this church (Rock Spring) at this time, and the members had not met since I had been speaking in public; therefore I felt it my duty to drop an appointment at my home church, and did so. When the time drew near that I should fill that appointment, while thinking over my dull and sluggish state of feelings, both in mind and body, and having read the Bible but little, I could not quote a text of Scripture correctly, I would think and say in my heart, What a deplorable condition am I in to undertake to preach. Then there would arise murmurings in my heart against God; for I would say within myself, Why, O Lord, didst thou suffer or send me (which ever it may be) to preach, knowing my unqualifiedness to preach? Then I would cry, like Israel of old, O Lord, why hast thou brought me into this wilderness to die? But let God be glorified for my deliverance from all of the evils which are by the way; for he forgives my follies past, and gives me strength

for days to come. O how blessed is my Jesus, who shuts the mouths of lions, and the paws of bears are withheld by his mighty hand from preying upon me as I pass through this wilderness. For when I had come to my appointment at Rock Spring, and arose before the people which had gathered, it seemed that my faith was strong, that God would deliver me. When I had sung a hymn of praise, and had bowed down on my knees, God did strengthen me, and began to remove the clouds which had obscured my mind for so many days, and in the removal of those clouds he began to present to the eye of my understanding the whole structure of the celestial or gospel heavens, and thus enabled me to take a view of the gospel world, and more especially of its luminary and life, which is Jesus; and this view was made through faith, which is the gift of God. While I was viewing the gospel heavens, and the glory thereof, and telling the people about its beauty and glory, and describing to them the glorious system of this planetary structure, and how gloriously every orb fills its decreed place, and how sublimely and wonderfully the great luminary (Christ) controls and gives being, life and light to the whole structure (the church), I felt as though I had never committed a wicked act in all my life, and I felt as innocent as a little babe. I could preach with the greatest ease, and with the greatest love to Jesus and his cause. I loved everything that pertained to godliness; yea, my soul was filled with love and gratitude to God, and my whole desire was to praise and extol his great name. I thought, O that my voice could be heard from one end of the earth to the other, that I could cry out in magnifying tones, to the understanding of the whole world of Adam's race; yea, that I could set forth to their understanding the glories of the worthy name of Jesus. When I had closed this discourse, and saw the congregation so much affected, tears flowing down the faces of many whom I had never seen before, I then desired to glorify my covenant-keeping God. I said to the people that if they had been benefited any by the discourse which they had heard, not to give me any credit for it; for said I, "I claim not one word of what has been said in this discourse to-day, for of myself I am not able to make any such productions; for of myself I could not make a public speech of any kind, as my information and talents are not sufficient." I returned to my father's staying place, and was subject to him, laboring very hard on the farm, through wet and dry, cold and heat. But many glad and happy days, of a quiet mind and peaceful conscience, did follow the just described meeting. I must omit many things which occurred in my travail during the year 1879, and which are fresh in my memory still. While my membership was at Rock Spring we had no pastor, and met but seldom, being very few in number. But I would

just state that the most of Rock Spring Church met on the fourth Saturday in February, 1879, when our much loved brother and sister York called for their letters. Brother York first resigning his office as clerk of said church; and there being none that could write, I was chosen clerk of the church in the room of brother York. He and sister York took their letters and moved away, which left Rock Spring very desolate; but I met with some three or four of them a few times, and would try to sing and pray with them, and talk to them about Jesus. I remained a member of Rock Spring Church, and acted as their clerk until the third Saturday in May, 1879, when I resigned my office as clerk, and called for a letter, which was granted me in full fellowship. On the fourth Saturday in May, 1879, I laid my letter into State Road Church. During the week which I held my letter I was made to most strictly examine myself, to know whether I was worthy to attach myself to the church at State Road or no, or whether it would be a prudent act in me or no, though State Road Church had called me to preach for them previous to my joining them, and my labors there seemed to be blessed. From the time of my joining State Road Church, until Wednesday before the fifth Saturday in June, 1879, I was blessed with the happy privilege of filling my seat every fourth Saturday and Sunday in each month, and was blessed with health and strength sufficient to walk about nine miles each month; for this was how far my father lived from State Road, and I had to walk or not go at all, many times having to trudge through mud, rain and snow, cold and heat. On Wednesday before the fifth Saturday in June, 1886, we changed the time of our church meeting from the fourth Saturday in each month to the second Saturday in each month, and then I continued to fill my seat every month with but one or two exceptions, as long as I was a member of that church. I would work hard all the month in the support of my father and his family, and when the morning of the second Saturday in each month would come I would (by sometimes begging my father) be early on the road to my church meeting, and I think that I have been thankful to God for thus blessing me with those sacred privileges. Now I will just pass the time that passed with me from the time that I joined State Road Church, until we changed the time of our meeting, by saying that I was not without ups and downs during this period of time. On the day that we changed our meeting time, we had an ordained preacher to come to our church, who agreed to preach for us as often as he could. This preacher was Elder Shumate, from the Mountain Association. There had been no other public man attending this church, except myself, since the time I first began to come to State Road, and I do believe that I was greatly blessed during this time in preaching; for God surely did preach through me,

and there were several added to the church, who were waiting for a minister to baptize them. It was my desire for State Road to prosper, and I was drawn out in prayer for her prosperity. My prayer was that God would send her a pastor. During all this time I was greatly drawn out in love for the cause of my blessed Redeemer. When seeing the gross errors which my fellow-travelers were in, my bowels would yearn for them, for I saw plainly that the most of them were in gross errors. I would often be found shedding tears for my fellow-creatures. Day after day, when in the field at work, I would fall on my knees and beseech God in behalf of myself and my fellow-mortals, and plead most earnestly for mercy, crying, "O Lord, be merciful unto me, a sinner, and have mercy upon all that grace and gratitude have made it my duty to pray for, and give them repentance," &c. So time passed on, and on Christmas day I set out for State Road. In the evening I stopped at the house of a poor farmer, whose name is J. R. Moody, whose house is about two miles from State Road meeting house. Here it was that I formed the acquaintance with my wife. She was the second daughter of Mr. Moody, and her age was at this time about fifteen years. I had never spoken to a girl before, in the line of courtship, until now. After this (Christmas, 1879), Mr. Moody's house became my constant visiting place. When I had first flashed my eyes on Miss Array Laticy Moody, it seemed that God spake in my heart and said that he had ordained this girl for my wife. Notwithstanding I had set my resolution that I would never marry, and therefore had never kept company with any girl, yet now God said, You may settle down, for here is your wife. I tarried here for three or four days, and preached at State Road meeting house two days in Christmas week, and one night at Mr. Moody's house, and then returned home. When I had returned home the circumstances of the above named girl bore upon my mind, and I thought of a certainty I must have been mistaken about God's making known to me that she was ordained to me for a wife. O, said I, this will never do, for neither of us has a whole suit of clothing to our name. But in this there seemed to be an opposing suggestion, saying, What of that? Hath not God the same care for you as he has for the rich? Finally a determination seated itself in me, in spite of all my efforts to get rid of it, to wait until the girl grew old enough, and I myself became of age.

I will bring another of my scribbles to a close, with love to all the saints.

Yours in hope,
WM. R. WELBORN.

GIFTS.

My mind has been greatly exercised about the different gifts that are in the church. I have seldom seen anything on this important subject from any of the brethren, and thought

I would write a few lines in order to draw out abler minds on the subject.

The Bible teaches that in ancient times there were a diversity of gifts. What has become of them? God has not changed. He is the same to-day, yesterday and every day, and changes not. But now it is seldom we hear one pray in public, unless it is the preacher; and in many places the preacher does the preaching, praying, singing and exhorting, and the rest of the church does nothing, and will not hold a conference if the preacher be absent. Again, the church has taken some of our good deacons and tried to make preachers, which has proved a failure; hence they have the deacons serving churches, and the churches dying under their administration. While their gifts are useful in their place, they have gotten into a place where they are almost injurious. Because one can pray in public, and tell a good experience of grace, is no reason why he should be set apart to the work of the ministry. The church should be very careful indeed about whom she ordains to the ministry. David could not fight with Saul's armor on him: it was entirely too large; but he could take the armor which God had given him, and could slay his tens of thousands, while Saul slew thousands. Hence one whom the Lord calls to exhort might be ordained to preach, and the armor would be too large, and he could not fight successfully in it. Churches often get so uneasy, for fear that they will not have preachers enough, that they get in a hurry (like Sarah), and have one ordained to preach who has not been called. Ordaining a man to preach will never make him preach; and the best evidence that one is called to preach is that he preaches.

Dear children of God, we wish you to notice the great importance of the different gifts; not all one gift. See Romans xii. 4-8: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation." See First Corinthians xii.: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets,

thirdly teachers," &c. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 7, 8, 11-16. Hence you see from the foregoing that there is a necessity for every gift, and they are all for the edification of the church. Now, as I have remarked before, where are those different gifts now? Surely they are in the church to-day, for God's church is represented as lively stones, built up a spiritual house; hence there are no dead stones.

How many brethren there are who never offer public prayer in their families, nor anywhere else, who feel deeply weighted with some gift; but for fear the church will have them ordained, they live in disobedience all their lives, and die to their enjoyments as the children of God. I believe there are many gifts which have not been manifested on account of the churches failing to discharge their duty. It is the duty of the church to nurse her gifts, and not put them in a higher station than they belong. We should not conclude that the Lord has no use for gifts because they are not all preachers. If the church would encourage her gifts more to abide in their calling, and to be obedient, there would be more enjoyment among us. The church is sometimes so afraid of being called "Arminian," that she refuses to have prayer meetings. How pleasant it would be for the brethren all to meet at least once a week at some brother's or sister's house, and hold a prayer meeting; and if one feels impressed with a word of exhortation, let him exhort the brethren to duty. If one feels impressed to pray, let him pray for the brethren. If one feels impressed with a word of comfort, or to tell his experience of grace, let him do so; for it is all comforting to God's children. If this were done among God's children, it would encourage the poor, little child who is lying out of duty to come home to his friends and tell what he feels that the Lord has done for him. If the brethren would visit one another more, and be engaged in

talking of the goodness of God, and praying and exhorting one another to love and good works, and visit the old, infirm members, who are unable to attend meetings, how consoling it would be.

The church gets so proud, sometimes, that she is ashamed of the gifts which God has given her, because they cannot use "good language" or a multitude of words. Every gift is comforting to me. I have encouraged a number who were almost lifeless to discharge their duty, who are now exercising much to comfort. We need every gift. It encourages me greatly when I go to meeting and have one who will open meeting by singing and prayer. Every one is that much strength to the body. I have received nearly as much comfort from the sisters as I ever have from any one. They have often spoken many comforting words to me, and encouraged me to go on my way, doubting nothing. Yet I did not think they should be ordained to the work of the ministry, although they had useful gifts.

Dear brethren and sisters, we are taught that in the latter times perilous times shall come, and we are living in a day of darkness and idolatry. Let all who profess to be followers of God walk together in love, shun even the appearance of evil, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, live honestly in the sight of all men, and stop the mouths of the gainsayers. Whatsoever ye feel that the Lord impresses you to do, do it. Dear brethren, you who feel the weight of some duty resting upon you, do not wait to feel perfect, for you can never arrive at a state of perfection in the flesh. All your righteousness is in Christ. Go forward, brethren, in duty. You do not know whom you might comfort. God's children are blessed in obedience. He that is willing and obedient shall eat of the good of the land. If you feel impressed to hold family prayer, it is your duty to do so; and, sisters, it is your duty to encourage the brethren to exercise in prayer and exhortation, and all the duties which they feel enjoined upon them in your families. It has been a great cross to me to exercise in my family, and I have retired and wept nearly all night for failing to pray; hence my troubles became so great that I have been driven to it. I have many happy seasons in my little family devotion. I do desire to call upon the Lord at all times, and to live to his honor and glory; for without him I can do nothing. I look back upon the past year, and I can see the mercy of God bestowed upon me so bountifully; what can I render unto him for all his mercies toward me?

On December 25th I led my dear wife, her sister and a brother into the water and baptized them, which makes thirty-six I have baptized since the first of September. Praise ye the Lord. Pray for me.

Yours in gospel bonds,

LEE HANCKS.

OZARK, Ala., Dec. 28, 1886.

NEWMAN, Ga., Feb. 12, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR FRIENDS:—I have been thinking for a long time that I would like to tell you of the Lord's dealings with me, of my travels in this wilderness of sin, and ask you if you think I might be numbered among his chosen ones. I am twenty-nine years old, and for fourteen of them I have been trying to serve my Master, though it is a very poor servant that I make.

When I was about fifteen years old I began to think of what would become of me if I should die. I was greatly troubled about it for more than a year, and kept trying to do better, being taught all my life that I must be good, and do good, and cease from sin, in order to get to heaven; but at last, as I hope, the Lord showed me that my works were all in vain, and could do me no good. My prayers did not seem to rise any higher than my head, and I felt as if they were mockery. While in this state of mind I attended a Methodist revival, and asked for the prayers of the preacher and people; but it did me no good. I was in college at the time, but I could not study, as I was so troubled. I felt that if I died I would go to hell. In this state I went to hear preaching one night, and when the preacher invited those who wanted the prayers of the people to come to the altar, I went; but I could not pray. All I could say was, "Lord, be merciful to me. I am willing to give up all the world for Jesus' sake. All I am, or ever will be, I commit into thy keeping. Take me, Lord, and do with me as thou wilt. I believe thou art just, and cannot err; and what thou doest with me I am willing to abide." I was humbled. I knew myself to be a sinner, and knew there was no good thing in me; and feeling thus, I raised my eyes to heaven, and cried out in my anguish, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, as it seemed, everything was changed, and a bright light shone round about me. I saw Jesus on the throne, and saw the angels around the throne, and heard a voice, soft and sweet, whispering, "My child, thy sins are all forgiven thee." He smiled on me, he called me his child, and O how happy I was! There was no more trouble in this world for me, I thought. I was Jesus' child, the daughter of the King. I felt so happy that I could not keep from singing his praises, day in and day out; but alas! not long did I continue thus. I was sprinkled, and received into the Methodist Church. I had been taught all my life that there was none other right; but I was not satisfied with my so-called baptism. I never felt like I had been baptized, for I always thought the Bible taught immersion as the only mode of baptism, and I could not understand it in any other way. I was afraid to say anything about it for fear of displeasing my parents, and I thought perhaps the trouble would leave me after awhile; but it never has. I never believed in missions, nor in the

works of man; but I thought I could be a Methodist and believe what I pleased. I did not know what they did believe, or I should never have cast my lot among them. I had always been taught to hate the Old School Baptists, and to regard them as the most vile blasphemers on the earth. I never heard but one preach until after I was married. I married into an Old School Baptist family, my husband being a firm believer in the doctrine, though he has never joined them. We went regularly to meeting, and I began to notice the preaching, and to inquire into their belief; and the more I learned of them the better I liked them. I began to read the experiences of the brethren and sisters in the SIGNS, and found that they had all been to the same school that I had, and that their Father was the same Jesus that had spoken peace to my troubled soul. I wanted to live among them, and to be an Old School Baptist; but the thought will arise, You are not fit to live among them; and I am afraid to venture, for I fear I may be mistaken. Yet when these doubts arise I think of a dream I had a few years after I found myself to be a sinner. I dreamed that the last day had come. The stars began to fall, the moon to bleed, the rocks to melt, and the people were frightened, and began to cry for mercy. I was trembling in every limb, and looking up, I saw the Son of God descending, and the angels were round about him; and when he saw me he stretched forth his hands and said, "Fear not; thou art my child. Thy name is written in the Lamb's book of life, and thy sins are all forgiven thee." When I awoke I felt calm and happy, and felt that surely I could not be mistaken. Jesus surely loves me, not because of my goodness, nor anything I do, but because I am his child. I love Jesus, and I love the people of God, and I want to be good and to do good, but evil is ever present with me. I find that in my flesh dwells no good thing, and sometimes I feel very far from God, and think that in all the world there is not another like me; but in all my misery I never forget that bright smile I saw on the face of Jesus, nor the still, small voice that whispered, "Thy sins are all forgiven thee." Surely in this I cannot be mistaken. I find great comfort in these thoughts, and at such times I feel that the Lord is indeed my Shepherd, and I shall never want.

Now, dear friends, am I an Old School Baptist or not? Would they take me among them if I were to ask them? I am so vile, so evil minded, so impure, that I feel if I am saved at all it will be by the love and power of the all-wise and ever-loving Jesus, through the rich mercies of his grace, and for no good I have ever done or can do.

If I were not afraid, I would say, Your little sister, in hope of eternal life,
MARY BUNTIN.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 2, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETH-

REN:—I have for several days been

exercised in mind with this Scripture, "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."—Romans v. 3-5. To the Lord's afflicted and poor people this is certainly a great comfort, and in my meditations I believe I have found sweet and heavenly rests, and have felt the force of the apostle's words, "You that are troubled, rest with us." It is evident that the rest of the apostle was in his faith, or belief; for only the believer can or does enter into rest. And only those who are called of God can love God; and to such all things work together for good. According to the amount of trouble they have in regard to themselves and the way of duty, will their patience be; for tribulation necessarily works their patience. Then if one who is a christian has trouble, that same one will have patience, and will learn to be patient in tribulation. But some sorely tried and tempted child will say, "I am so impatient." Well, let us see what is the rest and comfort and patience of that one, even the weakest and dullest of apprehension, in their own view of themselves. Is this impatience, dullness and weakness likely to produce bad results? I think not. It certainly will not make one heady or high-minded; on the contrary, it humbles and abases. Ask that one at such times, while passing through great tribulation, What are your prospects? What about your hope and comfort? Unless they are unable to answer (and then their actions will often tell us), they will say, "The Lord is my hope, and all my help must come from him." Surely then there is some patience; for only such as trust in the Lord do in patience possess their souls; and only such as trust in and obey the Lord do let patience have her perfect work. The psalmist David said, "I waited patiently for the Lord." Nevertheless he was in great trouble. The patience of the saints is wrought by and through the most severe trials, and this serene trust, or rest, or patience, works the most full and clear experience of God's grace, leaving less room for doubting, and less liability to be attacked successfully by the enemy; and it certainly emboldens them to trust only in the Lord, and strengthens them to follow the footsteps of the Savior more closely. How necessary it is that the Lord's people should be tried; for only as they are tried shall they come forth prepared to act or endure. Only those who endure to the end shall be saved, and all must and will endure to the end who are led by the Spirit of Christ; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, or trouble, for it is through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom. I have sometimes thought I could see how men anciently hazarded their lives for the sake of the Lord Jesus, when they did not

fear the threatenings of men nor the laws that men made contrary to the law of Christ. While the fear of man brings a snare, the fear of the Lord is to hate evil. I conclude that as the Lord works in his people to will and to do of his own pleasure, each one with that fear in his heart can no more please themselves or dictate their own way than they can give themselves life to act; and every selfish motive is completely subdued by the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. As the law of God demands, so they with perfect hatred hate the enemies of God, which are the world, the flesh and the devil, and all that join hands against the truth. All must be forsaken to be a disciple of Christ, a follower of Jesus in verity.

What comforting evidences every saint has; and if they could only see their comforts as plainly and clearly as they see their depravity and sins, all would be well with them. I conclude that as all that is made manifest is the effect of light shining in (and not into) the heart, God himself being in the heart of his people, and himself being love, just as fast as that power moves them to see, know and understand, they will certainly feel quietude and submission, and will let their hope and experience and patience be known, because of the trouble they have felt. Each then can see and feel and know that "now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Affectionately yours,

J. D. HUBBELL.

WAVERLY, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the following experience of sister Johnson when convenient. I believe it has the right sound. The Lord works, and none can help or hinder.
M. VAIL.

JUSTUS, Pa., Sept. 21, 1886.

ELDER VAIL—DEAR BROTHER:—I have felt a desire to write you a letter for a long time, to tell of the dealings of the Lord with me. Since my earliest recollection I have felt myself to be a sinner in the sight of God. I would go to my room and read the Bible, to see if I could find anything there to give me relief, but found none. I went on in this way until after I was married, seeming to grow worse. I would take up the Bible to read, but could not find anything in it to satisfy me. In January, 1877, I thought I would surely have to give up all hope. My husband's belief was Methodist, as you know. His father came to see us, but did not like me very much, because my folks were Old School Baptists. He said he was afraid they would make his boy an Old Baptist. He wanted to know what I believed. I told him I did not think the Lord died for every one, but only for them that he would have saved. He said that if I believed that doctrine I would surely go to hell. That night I did not sleep much. I could not help but think that way. I went on in this way for a long time. I would try to pray, but all I could say was, "Lord, be

merciful to me, a sinner." One day I went to father's, and it seemed as though every one would know what was the cause of my feeling so badly. That night when I went home such a fear came over me that I thought I was surely going to die and go to hell. I thought I saw Satan standing before me, and I could not move hand or foot. I expected he had come to take me there. O what a wretch I felt myself to be. All I could say was, "Lord, be merciful, I pray." The Bible lay close by me, and I took it up and opened to Romans (I cannot tell just where), when these words came to me, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of God." My load of sin seemed to leave me, and I have never felt the fear of hell since. I felt to say,

"If my soul were sent to hell,
God's righteous law approves it well."

In the summer I went to hear Elder Pitcher preach. I never heard such a good sermon before. It did me very much good. While he was going through with his discourse I thought I saw the Savior standing in his place. I had all I could do to keep my seat. I wanted to shout, "Glory be to God in the highest." I was so afraid that some one would know how I felt, and was so afraid I was deceived and would deceive others, that I did not tell any one how I felt. I went once to Saturday meeting, thinking I would tell what I hoped the Lord had done for poor me; but when I got there I could not say one word. That was some years ago. The Lord has carried me through great trials and sorrow, and I know it has been his all-sustaining arm that has upheld me. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." O that I might live more to his honor and praise. I feel myself to be a poor, weak worm of the dust, not fit to be counted among God's people. I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. For the good I would do, I do not; and that I would not, that I do. I feel to lay my lips in the dust, and cry, Unclean! unclean! O wretched one that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? When I was lying on my bed of sickness, and you were here to see me, when you went away you said, "May the Lord be with you." I felt he was with me most of the time. I was not afraid to die. I felt to say, God's will, not mine, be done. I knew he would do all things well. When I got up and around, my mind was in darkness most all the time for over a year. I never received so much comfort as when I was up to Caroline to the association. There I saw my duty marked out to me so plainly, I thought I could not come home without telling you all my mind, and what I hoped the Lord had done for me. When Mrs. Brockway was baptized I could hardly stay out of the water. When we went up to brother Ira Hoose's, and you were talking with me, I wanted to tell you

of my mind. I thought then I would never have any more doubts. O what do we poor, weak mortals know? I said to myself, The next time Elder Vail comes down I will go and tell my story. I did not even go to meeting on Saturday. When I did go, I do not know what I said that you and the rest could receive me. I did not feel that I was a fit subject for baptism; but the day I was baptized was the happiest day I ever knew.

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

The word by John is, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If I know myself, I do love them, and to hear them tell of the goodness of God. It is but little I can say, but may that little be in harmony with his word. I know I have never done anything to save myself, and if I am saved it is all of the Lord from first to last.

I will close, hoping these few lines will find you and your family well.

I remain your unworthy sister,
OLIVE T. JOHNSON.

LACEY, Ark., Nov., 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—I hope the Lord of hosts does yet manifestly abide with you and make you a host in his hand. At our (the New Hope) association this fall, after hearing the precious truth of the gospel very ably defended by the spirit and power of Israel's God, I was requested by a very dear sister to write a communication for the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and hardly knowing what particular portion of Scripture to write about, I will try to say a few things about the insufficiency of man to do such works as are pleasing to God or profitable to man, without the divine power of God; that the same is in harmony with the holy oracles of God and the daily experience of his quickened and enlightened children; and that all things pertaining to life and godliness are wrought by God's divine and omnipotent power, and realized by his children by the same power; notwithstanding there are those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power of it. In one of the prophets it is said, "Cursed is man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." I understand that all power in heaven and earth is given into the hand of the Redeemer of his body, the church. Then he, having all the power, I see no reason why any power should be claimed or possessed by any other being; and Jesus predicates his commission to his disciples to preach the gospel upon that great foundation of truth, as we read, "Go ye therefore." As if he should say, If there were any power outside me, I need not send you to preach the gospel. But inasmuch as he has the power to send the gospel by whom he will, he doeth all things whatsoever his soul desireth. And when we speak of the gospel, we speak directly of that omnipotent being who made and governs all things; for Paul says that the gospel is the power of God

unto salvation to the believer. It is salvation only to the believer; and the believers are those whom he foreknew in his eternal, electing covenant love; for we read that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." We read also that he that believeth shall be saved, independent of ifs and provisos. Therefore those whom he foreknew as members of his body, them he also predestinated to be conformed to his image. Hence that saving power of God has use for the Spirit's work in the hearts, to conform them to his image, which is righteousness and true holiness. And those whom he predestinated, he also called with a holy calling; and whom he called, he justified; and whom he justified he also glorified. This is the doctrine that Paul was holding forth when he said, "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

I hope the dear sister who requested me to write, and also all who may read this, may have the light of the Spirit to guide them into all truth.

My best wishes in Christ for all the household of faith.

A. TOMLIN.

P. S.—I wish to say to brother W. L. Beebe, that I have not become tired of his editorials; neither am I tired of the letters of the dear correspondents. I hope they will still be moved and guided by the Spirit of truth to continue their edifying communications. I hope you, brethren Beebe, will set lasting gratitude on credit page of my account. I am still glad as ever to receive the cheering old SIGNS. I feel to be going down in vitality rapidly, not able to travel much. I want the SIGNS as long as I can read. This was begun in November last, but owing to affliction was not finished until February, 1887.

A. T.

VIBBARD, Ray Co., Mo.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been thinking for some time of writing for publication some of the travels of my pilgrimage in this world of sin and sorrow.

I was born and raised in England, in a town by the name of Malensbury. My mother's name was Mary Barrett. My mother never made a public profession, but was a kind and affectionate mother, and I hope and believe she is to-day resting in the arms of Jesus. My mother had two brothers and three sisters, James and William, Sarah, Charlotte and Elizabeth Barrett. My grandfather's name was James Barrett; grandmother's name was Chaney Barrett. There was no better woman lived than my grandmother. They both belonged to the Church of England. They both died about the year 1823. Grandfather was about eighty-eight years old; grandmother ninety-four.

I came over to America about the year 1844; was seven weeks on the sea. The little hope I am now living by I received in England, fifty-two years ago. This was about 1834. I joined the Old School Baptists in Ohio, in the year 1850. I have forgotten the name of the church. I was

baptized by Elder Henry Morris. I was ordained to preach about the year 1860, in the state of Iowa, by a church called Pilgrim. Elders Anderson Richardson and Benet Jacobs were present. My membership at this writing is with Bethlehem Church, in Louisiana. I had a letter from that church, but have lost it. I want to say here to my dear brethren and sisters who are living, I have, ever since I have had a hope in the Lamb, honestly tried to preach Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, and the only way. All I want is when I see him to be like him. I have traveled through twenty-three states in America, and have preached Christ, the blessed Lamb, the only way through which poor, depraved sinners obtain eternal life, in fourteen of these states.

My dear brethren, I feel that I have fought a good fight and have finished my course, and hope the dear Lamb has a crown laid up for me that I will soon wear. My dear brethren, I am almost eighty-three years old and very feeble. I am at present, and have been for some time, living with brethren Allen Sisk and R. Clevenger. The dear Lord has opened their hearts to care for me, a poor worm of the dust. And I can only give him, the dear Lamb, all the honor, glory and praise. I want to say to all my dear brethren and sisters that are yet living, that I have had sweet communion in worshipping the dear Lamb, and that I expect this to be my farewell address. Dear kindred, I hope soon to meet you where there will be no sorrow, no pain, no distress, and then we will praise him, the Captain of our salvation, through eternity.

My dear brethren and sisters, I am yet living in this old flesh that is by no means perfect, and I desire your prayers, that I may hold out faithful to the end. May God bless you, my dear kindred in Christ, and keep you from the evil, is my prayer, for his dear name's sake.

CHARLES BARRETT.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., March 7, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I send you the following letter from brother John Seitz, of Tiffin, Ohio. I was much comforted in reading it myself, and think it worthy a place in the SIGNS, as showing how the Lord teaches and leads his people.

As ever, yours,

J. D. HUBBELL.

TIFFIN, Ohio, Feb. 28, 1887.

ELDER J. D. HUBBELL—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter of the 22d has been received and read with much interest and pleasure. It is always grateful to be remembered by our friends, and especially by our brethren. We had not forgotten your visit to us, nor the sympathy and christian fellowship which made it to us a pleasant visit. If any words of mine have "stirred up your pure mind by way of remembrance," thank the Lord, from whom all blessings flow. Without the inspiration of his Holy Spirit I cannot even think a good

thought. There are but two forces moving the hearts and controlling the conduct of the children of men—good and evil spirits. I say spirits, because every person is controlled by an unseen power, which can only be traced by its fruits. "By their fruits ye shall know them." By this rule the children of light are commanded to "try the spirits, whether they are of God." "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Nay; for every tree beareth fruit after his own kind. Since the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither can be, there is but one source of good: "There is none good but God." So then, my brother, for every blessing, whether temporal or spiritual, our gratitude is due to the Giver of every good and every perfect gift. We sometimes hear of "self-made" men or women, and much credit and honor are accorded for self-made goodness or greatness; but how vain and superficial the idea! "Who hath made thee to differ from another?" For God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Here is nothing left to chance, nor to the will of man, but times and places were before appointed of God, the Creator and Ruler of all things that were made. Man has truly sought out many inventions, sometimes to thwart the will of Jehovah, presumptuously, and sometimes assuming to help the Almighty, who might otherwise fail to accomplish his own will. But what an idea is this! that he who has all power in heaven and in earth shall peradventure fail, because the puny arm of flesh may refuse to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Not only hath the Almighty determined times and places, but in most beautiful order. The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. What beautiful order in the material universe! But blinded by deceitful pride or unholy desires, the natural man fails to see his own place in God's economy, or the highway of holiness for the ransomed of the Lord. No; this way is far above the sight or comprehension of the untaught sinner. To see it he must be born again, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever. Now is the beauty, the excellency and the perfection of heaven revealed to the sin-sick soul. But, alas! I have seen the Lord, and "abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." O, my soul, what a contrast between the perfections above and my vile, sinful self. I can never enter there; for nothing unclean, nothing having spot or wrinkle even, is found in the realms of the blessed. In due time the quickened soul is made to see how the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. I was a condemned sinner; but he appeared as Surety and Redeemer when I was without strength. He by whom the worlds were made appeared as my Deliverer, and I was bowed down with grief, on the verge of despair.

My soul was lifted up as upon the wings of an eagle. Prayer is turned to praise, and sorrowful night to glorious day. Nevermore shall I want, for no good thing will he withhold from them that love him. In this hour of blessed deliverance I had no doubt about loving my Lord and my God, and no lurking doubt or murmuring thought obscured the light of his countenance. All is well. The Captain of my salvation is at the helm, and my safe voyage to eternal rest is assured. Why should I fear the storms or hidden rocks on the way? The Captain holds the winds in his hands, and no rock of peril is hidden from him.

"Now my remnant of days
Will I spend in his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem."

Such, brother Hubbell, were the seasons passed through in my personal experience until admitted into the church, and for several months after; but my journey since has been checkered with many ups and downs. Trials without and within have often beclouded my sky. I am still in the flesh, which insists daily upon having the mastery; and I am often made to feel that it has, and has had the mastery. If not, why this dull and lifeless frame? why so slow to duty? why so cold and ungrateful for all God's mercies and benefits? why questioning his goodness in my afflictions? Too much of my time have I been led through dark and devious ways apparently; but anon I trust the Sun of righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings, when I have been enabled to rejoice in my infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon me. With sweet assurance has come the voice of my Savior, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Then my trials seem clearly for my good, and not for my destruction. Then can I bless the Lord for the night as for the day; for the winter as for the summer; for humiliation of self, that Christ may be exalted. The Savior ever comes with a message of peace. The law, with its terrors, is but a school-master to bring us to Christ. In him we find the way of peace; in the world tribulation. You say truly, "Blessed is the people who know the joyful sound;" that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

My father still lives at the age of eighty-five. He speaks of his departure as a joyful prospect, when he can be absent from the flesh and present with Christ, which is far better. He has deliberately set his house in order, that none may be embarrassed when he is gone. He still lives where you found him, but now with a widowed daughter, sister Seiple.

Now, brother, I shall gladly carry your message of remembrance as you request, and thank you for your words of brotherly regard and encouragement to a poor cripple, who goes limping, sometimes stumbling; and O that I, who can never walk alone, may have the arm of my Beloved to lean upon all the way; and may you and all his dear children, thus led,

reach in safety the haven of eternal rest, is the prayer of yours in hope,
JOHN SEITZ.

ORWELL, Pa., Nov. 7, 1886.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—DEAR SISTER:—I desire to grant your request by writing a little more, but I do not feel capable or worthy of writing anything for publication, for I would rather read than write; yet if I could write anything of interest, or that would do any one any good, I would not hesitate.

Those dreams I had years ago seem pleasant to think of yet. One was this: I thought I had been to meeting, and the people were rising one after another to speak, and I arose and repeated this passage, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Shortly afterward the meeting broke up; and going home in company with some friends I saw a new house, from which there went four roads, one from each side. "A new house," I said to those I was talking with; "there is my mansion;" and kept right along, and am traveling yet. But Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you;" and I do sometimes feel that I "have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." But again I fear that my hopes are a delusion, and that I am a castaway; for my mind is so filled with the cares of this world, and darkness, doubts and fears inclose me round, till I am almost ready to give up. Then I am led to look back to the day "when Jesus washed my sins away," light springs up, and I am encouraged to go on my way rejoicing, waiting for the time when I shall be freed from all cares, and join with the redeemed to sing redeeming grace and dying love.

Another dream I had some years ago which gives me some pleasure to think of. I thought I was going on a journey, and took with me my Bible and a rule. I came to a place where the road branched; one went up a steep hill, while the other went around the hill and was smooth and level. I stopped to think which way I must go. I said to myself, This is the easier way; but I thought it was not the right one, and began to go up the hill. I think it was the hill Difficulty which Bunyan speaks of; for when I got to the top I became weary, and sat down to rest a little, and then went on some distance, and found I had left my Bible. I went back, and found it where I had stopped to rest, and went on my way rejoicing.

Once I dreamed that I was out after wood, and heard a noise that made me think the world was coming to an end. I looked up to the sky and saw two angels coming, and began to clap my hands and shout for joy; and if I am as reconciled when the time does come for me to depart, all will be well.

E. C. O.

WAVERLY, Iowa, Dec., 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been a reader of our family paper, the

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, many years. It has wafted me many sweet messages of love from the pens of gifted ones, and I am a little behind my time in sending the amount due you.

It is all the preaching I have, in connection with the Bible, as I am not near any church of our order; and as I feel that is the only place I can hear the truth as it is in Jesus preached, I stay at home. When I saw sister Sarah Blake's letter in the last SIGNS, I felt to answer her question, "Does it ever seem to you that you are past all tender feelings on religious things?" O yes, dear sister, I have been so dead that I gave up, and felt I had grasped a shadow, and felt that every one would say I had, could they know my heart as I know it. Gladly would I have recalled the words which had gone out of my mouth, for all were deceived in my case. In my great afflictions I felt, were I a chosen vessel of mercy, I would surely be made reconciled; and I mourned to think I was not brought low at his feet, that I could say, "Thy will be done." But I could not. But I felt I needed it all; not one stroke too many. But O how I did feel! The SIGNS came, and in it was Elder Rittenhouse's remark, in his great affliction, that he had not found the word reconciled in his trials. Well, hope sprang into my poor, aching heart; for I thought if he could say that, could I expect more than he, who am a poor, ignorant worm? It did my soul good, and I have not had those dark forebodings so much since. Yet in my meditations I have to ask, O! is there any one like me? His mercy and goodness have encircled my pathway in all my trials and afflictions, and I do feel to faintly hope the strong arm of the Lord has held me up, and has kept me from dangers seen and unseen. I had the blessed privilege of attending an association at Otego, N. Y., the place of my birth, and where my church membership stands, and a blessed meeting it was. My pen would fail me to undertake to tell what I would love to, in regard to it. I saw many whom I never expect to see again in the flesh. We heard able preaching, not a jarring note, but salvation by grace was the theme. I felt amply paid in my long journey from northern Iowa, to hear such able preaching, to meet so many of the Lord's children. It seemed like a family meeting together, and were loth to part. The parting caused many tears of sorrow. I feel my time here is not long, and all that is worth living for are things eternal. All of earth is perishable, and will vanish.

"Soon the appointed hour will come
When he to us will say,
Come hither, my beloved ones,
Make haste and come away."

And may I be one of that number, is my sincere desire.

A. SHEPHERD.

SPRINGTOWN, Parker Co., Texas,
March 7, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please let me say to brother Jones, of Longview, Texas, that I received the present of two dollars and twenty cents

for the benefit of those who are in destitute circumstances in this drouth-stricken country, and will do with it as he requested. I feel glad to think that the Lord is with his people, and that they are reminded of their duty one to another. We feel thankful to brother Jones for the gift, as it is very much needed. This is the first that has been sent to Springtown for the benefit of the poor saints. We will say that if any of our brethren or friends are minded to send anything to us at Springtown, for the relief of the brotherhood, we will divide it among those who are in need. We have a church at Springtown and at Poolville, and some of the brethren are very much in need of something to live upon until they can make another crop. The unworthy writer is pastor of these two churches, and has the care of the arm at Draco and Willow Point. My time is filled up in trying to preach every Sunday, and most of the time on Saturday, and often during the week. I lost my left arm in the war, in the year 1862, in the state of Virginia, and have not been able to work for the past six or seven years, being afflicted with rheumatism so badly at times that I can scarcely get up when down.

While the times have been so distressingly hard on account of the drouth, we have felt that the Lord was in the matter, and that it was all for the best. We desire to trust in him who rules all things according to his own will and pleasure, and who sent the ravens to feed Elijah. We pray for his blessing upon his poor and afflicted ones wherever they may be. I desire to have the confidence in God that Job had when he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I desire to be reconciled to his will in adversity as well as in prosperity.

Our churches have been prospering until of late, but some of the members have been compelled to leave here for the want of something to live upon. No one in this country has anything to spare to help their friends or brethren. Dear brethren, pray for us, that the Lord may lift the cloud of gloom from off us; and may we enjoy his smiles and blessings so much that we can walk in the sunshine of his grace, and travel in the strength of Israel's God, and feast upon that bread which cometh down from heaven, the which if a man eat he shall never hunger. I would rather feast upon the riches of God's grace, than have the treasures of Egypt and all the gold of Ophir, which can only be enjoyed for a season, or only in this life. But blessed be the name of the Lord, in Jesus we have peace, and he is our life. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." He gives his people eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. How secure is the life of God's children, being hid with Christ in God. Jesus said to his Father, "All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." The church was chosen in

Christ before the foundation of the world, and are called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. May God bless and save us all with an everlasting salvation.

As ever, your brother in the bond of love,

B. L. THORNEBERRY.

PATTERSON, Pa., Dec. 16, 1886.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The time has again rolled around for us to renew our subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes to us regularly, bringing us words of cheer and comfort in our destitute and isolated condition, seldom having the privilege of hearing the gospel preached to us. There are a few of us in the midst of a vast multitude who think they can do so much for themselves in the way of obtaining salvation by their own works. But, dear brethren, we feel that if our salvation depended on our works, or on anything we must do, we should come far short of obtaining it. We read that "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." For all our own righteousness is as filthy rags. If we are ever saved, it must be all of grace from first to last.

Our dear old uncle, John P. Shitz, who has just passed his ninetieth birthday, is in tolerable health, and though feeble, can sit in his chair and read a portion of his time without glasses.

As ever, yours in hope,

KATE ARNOLD.

HOPEWELL, N. J., March 8, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the following brief explanation?

Fearing that the brethren and friends, who have made requests for me to write on various portions of Scripture, might think I am indifferent to their wishes, I avail myself of this manner to answer them. For about two months I have been unwell, and physically weak and much depressed in mind; and should I attempt to answer any of their requests, instead of expounding Scripture, I might "drift directly into rationalism," and set forth "visionary notions," causing the readers of such articles to say, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

MT. STERLING, Ohio, Jan. 28, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—We wish to say that it gives us pleasure to get new subscribers for you. We will have some more, I hope, believing that the SIGNS is the only paper that stands firm in the doctrine. There are other papers which we have seen, but there seems to me to be manifested a desire to please a carnal desire. This we do not like in any one; and such are not serving God, but themselves, in our judgment.

L. BAVIS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1887.

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

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

THE SCAPE-GOAT.

WILL Elder Beebe please give his views on Leviticus xvi. 21, 22, and oblige an old patron of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES?

Your sister,

E. J. S.

REPLY.

"AND Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."—Lev. xvi. 21, 22.

While the whole ceremonial dispensation as given to the nation of Israel is said to have a shadow of good things to come, it must not be forgotten that the law made nothing perfect.—Heb. x. 1; vii. 19. Vivid and striking as are the types and symbols therein written by the finger of God, they all fail to express the full glory of the things which are signified by their use. Whatever exists in the heavens or on earth, visible or invisible, whether known to the understanding of created intelligence, or hidden among those secret things which belong to the Lord our God, it is all included in the declaration that "The Lord hath made all (things) for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Proverbs xvi. 4. This divine declaration is not improved by the word *things*, which is inserted in the authorized version of the Bible. The inspired statement, as God gave it, leaves nothing out of the purpose of God. If finite minds could comprehend that purpose it would not be infinite, and God would be altogether such as finite man. But while it has pleased God to reveal to his saints the riches of his grace, he has hidden his own eternal power and glory in impenetrable clouds and darkness, so that no attainments of natural searching can even approach unto him. In this way, "By his understanding he smiteth through the proud."

In manifesting his gracious will to the subjects of his electing love, God "at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." As much of that word thus spoken is transmitted to us as he has designed to profit us in our sojourn here in time. All the wonderful record of his providential mercies, as displayed in the choice and preservation of the nation of Israel, is only one of the manners in which he spoke to the fathers by the prophets. In the whole of the Scriptures given to that chosen nation the testimony of Jesus is the great truth, which is but faintly expressed by all the wonders there written. This is the true signification of the inspired law, the history, the prophecies and the psalms. The law as graven in stone by the finger of God spoke directly to Jesus in every pro-

phetic mandate; for in him alone was it all fulfilled. None but the holy Redeemer ever did obey in spirit and in deed that law in all its length and breadth; for he did answer its utmost requirements. Every ceremonial offering testified of his suffering for our sins; but all come far short of perfectly expressing his mighty works and exalted glory. Each particular appointment enjoined upon that highly favored people was the shadow whose substance is found in some portion of the gospel of God our Savior. These shadows are all full of instruction when the Spirit of truth takes and shows them to the saints in their personal experience. In theory they may be understood in a general sense as reflecting the light of truth; but it is only by the guidance of the Spirit that they can be received as the living testimony of Jesus. The whole history of the nation of Israel is one type of the church of Christ under the gospel dispensation. Then in each item that is specially recorded in that history there is some peculiar point in that type which is designed to represent the particular portion of the true church of which it is the shadow. It is possible that while we may see in the ritual of Judaism the type of the whole gospel organization, we may not so clearly see the particular point signified by some special part of that ritual. The history of the whole body of Christ is identical with his own experience as the Head over all things to the church, which is that body; and the individual experience of the members is the same in kind, while differing in degree "according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."—Romans xii. 3. Hence, in the things which were written aforetime are presented things "for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Seen in this light, the glorious gospel of divine grace shines in every ordinance, and is displayed in every event, in the inspired record which is given of that nation whom the sovereign choice of God selected from all the condemned and sinful race of man. It is this fact which gives to the history of national Israel the ever abiding interest to the saints which is not found in the most authentic accounts of other nations.

All the dealings of God with that typical people were manifestations of his sovereign election, from the calling of Abram and giving him the covenant of promise with the new name Abraham, down to the close of that dispensation with the coming of John the Baptist. Even the law on tables of stone was expressly limited to that nation (Deut. v. 1); and it is the failure to observe this fact which has led all the orders of antichristian religionists to try by that law to find favor with God. This they will ever continue to do, though they always find their efforts as vain as were those of the Philistines who sought to imprison the ark of God in the temple of Dagon.—1 Samuel v. But the whole system of ordinances given to Israel in that covenant is based upon

the recognition of their sinful character as under the condemnation which rested upon all the family of man by reason of their sin in Adam. It was therefore provided that certain specified sacrifices should be offered as a ceremonial atonement for the sins of the people, and by these offerings the obedient Israelites were legally justified; though the fact that those sacrifices could not make them perfect was declared in the law itself, which provided in addition to the daily offerings that there should be a remembrance again of sins every year, when the high priest entered not without blood in the Holiest of all. This type is explained by inspiration, "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."—Hebrews ix. 8-12. All the attending circumstances and details of this striking type must be understood in harmony with this application of the figure. The sin-offerings of the bullock and the goat must first be slain, and their blood must be sprinkled as directed in the preceding context, to reconcile the holy place and tabernacle of the congregation and the altar; then the live goat must be brought by Aaron. This is a very complex as well as a very expressive type; and as a deviation from the law cost the lives of the two sons of Aaron (Lev. x. 1, 2), so the true import of this type can only be seen in tracing exactly the specification of the commandment. It would not have done for Aaron to substitute a dog or even a sheep in the place of this goat; nor could any one else do the work assigned to the high priest. Even Aaron was not at liberty to deviate from the direction given by the divine law. He could not confess upon the head of this goat one sin of any other besides the children of Israel; and of all their iniquities he was not permitted to fail to confess a single one. However revolting the sins of an Israelite might be, they were laid upon the head of the goat; and no others could be thus confessed by Aaron, however kindly he might have felt toward the person of the Gentile sinner. As the antitype of both the slain goat and the scape-goat is found in Christ Jesus, so the clear declaration of the symbol is that our gracious Redeemer bore exclusively the sins of his own people in his body on the tree; and in the scape-goat he is revealed as having

put away forever all those sins which were laid upon him. There was no provision in the law authorizing any Gentile to confess his sins upon the head of this goat, even if he should happen to find him in the wilderness. Such a provision would have signified that the natural theory of a chance salvation for everybody might be true. But as Aaron could confess only the iniquities and transgressions of the children of Israel, putting them upon the head of the goat, so it was exclusively the sins and iniquities of his own people, the true seed of Abraham, that were laid by divine justice upon the head of Jesus, who both died for our offenses, and bore all our sins into the wilderness of condemnation and death. And as the goat in the type was made a curse for those whose sins he bore, and they were thereby legally delivered from condemnation, so in Christ they are made free from sin whose iniquities, transgressions and sins were laid on him. This is the principle upon which rests the justice of God in saving his ransomed people from their sins. As "without shedding of blood is no remission," so Paul says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."—2 Cor. v. 14, 15. And again it is written by the same apostle, "He that is dead is freed from sin."—Rom. vi. 7. Then it is clear that the only hope of salvation for any sinner consists in the revelation of that unity with Christ which makes his death the answer to the demand of justice for the life of that sinner, as in the type the scape-goat and the goat of the sin-offering legally bore the sins of every Israelite. While in the offerings under the law of Moses there was only a legal or ceremonial putting away of sin, that was all the justification the law could give; and it could never with those sacrifices which were offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. Therefore, the ceremony of putting the sins of the children of Israel upon the head of the scape-goat was not a real transfer of sin in any but a typical sense. The only sacrifice for sin ever accepted by infinite justice is the blood of Jesus Christ, the antitype of every victim offered in sacrifice from the bleeding lamb of Abel to the close of the prophetic dispensation. If any or all those offerings prescribed by the law could have made them perfect who brought them, then the law could have given life; but such was not the case. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law;" and in that case "Christ is dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 21; iii. 21.

Remembering that all the dispensation under which the text was spoken is but the shadow or pattern of things in the gospel heavens, there is strongly presented in this injunction the justice of God in the requirement of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ

for the sins of his body, the church. The wilderness, or land of separation, wherein the goat should be let go, well represents the death and wrath endured by our precious Redeemer in bearing our sins and being made a curse for us. In that land of darkness and of distress he said, "My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me."—Psalm lv. 4, 5. As the goat was not to return to the people whose sins he bore, so the curse which fell upon our Redeemer can never come again unto his redeemed people. Although it was indeed in the weakness of our flesh that he was "put to death in the flesh," yet he was "quickened by the Spirit." The life in which he rose from the dead was not that mortal life which could come under condemnation; but that glorious power of God displayed in his resurrection is the immortality which is exclusively his own, as Paul says of him, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see."—1 Tim. vi. 16. The eternal life of all his members is this same immortality; hence it is certain that they can never perish, because he lives.—John xiv. 19.

The specific injunction that "Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat," may well show how the justice of God was visited upon our Redeemer when he was numbered with the transgressors, thus bearing the condemnation of which the left hand is the symbol, as in Matthew xxv. Also the right hand of infinite power executed the just judgment of the holy law upon him. Then as the scape-goat bore upon him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, so Christ Jesus bore in his own body on the tree all the iniquities of all his chosen people. From that wilderness land, not inhabited (or land of separation, as in the marginal reading), there is no returning of those iniquities; for the Lord has declared in the new covenant, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jere. xxxi. 34. The same comforting assurance was manifested at the Red Sea, when the Israelites were told that they should see their Egyptian oppressors no more forever.—Ex. xiv. 13. This was but another testimony to the immutability of the promise and counsel of God. Not only must nations bow before the accomplishment of his gracious will, but the very elements of nature obey him; and it is triumphantly declared that "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall

drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."—Deut. xxxiii. 26-29.

It may be that the mind of our sister is troubled to understand why the goat is selected as the type in this case, since it is in some other portions of Scripture used in contrast with the sheep. By reference to Deuteronomy xiv. 4 it will be seen that the goat was among the beasts which were ceremonially clean to the Israelites. Doubtless there is some peculiar significance in the selection of this particular animal to represent the sin-bearing sacrifice, which would more clearly appear if we were more familiar with the characteristic traits of the goat; but we will not attempt to enlarge upon this point. As bearing the sins confessed upon its head, it was made a curse; and in being let go in the wilderness it was separated from the favored land of Israel. So Jesus, who was in himself separate from sinners, was made a curse for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The figure under consideration fails to show how that after our sin-bearing Redeemer took our sins away by the sacrifice of himself he rose again for our justification. Nothing in nature could display that glory of our Savior's triumph over death and sin. Nothing can be more clearly seen in this type, however, than the boundless sovereignty of electing love. It was not in consideration of any merit on the part of the Israelite that his sins were borne by the scape-goat. It was his birth which gave him part in the offering and confession of the priest; and as no merit secured this right, so no guilt could dissolve the tie which identified him as one of them whose iniquities were laid upon the scape-goat. Here is the refutation then of all the fierce accusations by which the cruel adversary assails the faith of the saints. Our birthright in the spiritual kingdom secures all the blessings of the new covenant, while our precious Redeemer as our Scape-goat has borne all our sins away into the land of separation; and in his own perfect righteousness he has clothed us with that complete justification in which the piercing eye of divine justice can find no defect.

As the scape-goat must be sent away "by the hand of a fit man," so our sin-bearing Savior was led by the inflexible justice of the perfectly holy law of God to the awful baptism of death, to which he humbled himself and became obedient. It was not by any man who might happen to be passing that the goat was sent away. It must be a fit man, signifying one exactly suited to lead him away. This clearly declares the truth that Jesus was made a curse for his people by the hand or power of God alone. Without that hand the enmity of hell and sin was powerless. This was plainly stated by Peter and John as

they lifted up their voice to God and said, "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."—Acts iv. 27, 28. The hand by which our Scape-goat was led away into that dreadful wilderness was not a mere chance; it was the fit hand of the eternal purpose of God, by which he was made a curse for us, that through his death we should receive eternal life. Thus his name is above every name, neither is there salvation in any other.

Trusting that our sister may be led to see more fully than we can write the glorious testimony of Jesus in this type, we must now leave the subject, praying that the Lord will comfort all whose sins were laid on Jesus, the true Scape-goat.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

ALL MAILED

To those who answered our card of inquiry of last August to know if we had their address correct. We still hold about two hundred and fifty of the cloth binding until we hear from the parties, as we do not deem it safe to send books to addresses sent in from two to five years ago, until we hear from them again, to know whether their address is still the same or not. We sent out postal cards last August to all the subscribers of the book, to inquire if they were still at the same place as when they ordered their books, but from about two hundred and fifty we have received no reply. From all such we withhold the book until heard from. Any one to whom a book is due should have it before this notice reaches them, and if they have not received it they should immediately send their name and address to us.

We still have a few copies of each style of binding on hand, and can fill orders immediately. For the prices and the number on hand of each style see notice on last page.

BACK NUMBERS.

We have discontinued the sending of back numbers to the first of the volume to new subscribers, unless so requested. We still have some of each number on hand, and those new subscribers who so desire may have the back numbers by stating that they desire them.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS,

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

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

MARRIAGES.

MARCH 2, at the house of the bride's grandfather, Deacon Henry Stout, in Southampton, Pa., by Elder Silas H. Durand, William Hobensack and Miss Mary A. Stout, both of Southampton.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request of Elder James Vallery, a highly esteemed brother, I send for publication the obituary of his little daughter, **Sarah Jane Vallery**, who was born October 22, 1879, and departed this life July 28, 1885. Sarah Jane was a pleasant little girl, very bright in intellect, sweet and pleasant in conversation, and seemed to try to do and say all in her power to make her parents happy, who appreciated her very highly as an excellent gift from God; but when the time rolled around when her grief-stricken parents were summoned to her bedside to witness the scene of her departure, it was indeed one of the most trying they had ever been called to endure; and as they had fondly anticipated a bright and happy future, it was a great cross for their fond hopes to be so soon blighted. It was very hard for them to give her up, but a great consolation to them to know that the blessed Lord had committed one of the precious jewels of heaven to their trust for even such a short time; for we have the blessed assurance that she is now a bright star in his crown of his eternal glory, and basking in the sunshine of his everlasting love. May the dear Lord reconcile to this and every other dispensation of his providence, is the prayer of the humble writer.

ALSO,

DEPARTED this life September 28, 1886, of swamp fever, sister **Hester Vallery**, aged twenty-nine years, two months and five days.

The subject of this notice was born in Coffee County, Ga., July 22, 1857, moved with her parents to Texas in 1871, and in 1876 back to this state, where she was baptized by the humble writer in the fellowship of Antioch Church, the Bay, Calcasieu Parish, on the second Sunday in June, 1882, and from thence to Rapides Parish, where she united with the Pilgrims' Rest Church of Old School Baptists by letter, and remained a worthy, constant member until death removed her from this world of sorrows, troubles, trials and sore conflicts, to her home of eternal bliss. Sister Vallery was united in wedlock to Mr. Benoist Vallery, of Natchitoches, January 21, 1886, who proved a kind and faithful husband, but was allowed the pleasure of sharing with her life's joys and sorrows but a very short time. It was with much difficulty that he was aroused from the awful stupor that he seemed to fall into from the separation, for in her death he lost a kind, loving and affectionate companion, with whom he anticipated spending the remnant of his days. A few days before her death she was taken by rail to the dwelling of her sister and brother-in-law, with whom she had lived many years, hoping the change would revive her and be the means of her final recovery, and where she could also share the comfortable care and conversation of long-tried friends. But when all the medical skill and close attention of kind friends was applied to no avail, and the time of her departure drew near, she told her dear companion and friends not to grieve for her, because she felt assured that she would soon enter the portals of eternal bliss; that her blessed Savior was near to comfort her, and cause all pain and sorrow to be turned into eternal joy. She was conscious to the last, and was peacefully resigned to the will of her heavenly Father. Thus she sweetly and peacefully passed away from her sorrowing friends on earth, to the bright mansions above, to chant forth the everlasting praise of her dear redeeming Lord, leaving behind a dear companion, brothers, sisters, church and many friends to mourn, but not as those who have no hope.

M. PATTERSON.

MILFORD, Rapides Parish, La.

At her home in Warwick, on March 2, in her seventy-seventh year, **Mrs. Elizabeth Pratt Welling** gently fell asleep in Jesus,

after having suffered intensely from chronic infirmities for almost fifty years. The immediate cause of death was typhoid pneumonia.

Sister Welling had been a member of Warwick Old School Baptist Church nearly fifty-six years, having been received and baptized in June, 1831. In the same year she was married to the late Wm. Welling, who was afterward baptized by Elder Hartwell. Brother Welling was called from earth in 1874, since which our dear sister has been a widow indeed. Her four daughters survive to mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope, for they feel that the change was infinite joy to their afflicted mother. The following verses, evidently written by her recently, were found by her daughters since her burial.

The days are long and weary,
When four-score years are past;
The nights are sad and dreary,
But they will end at last.

Let us with meek endurance
Our added trials bear;
We have the full assurance
We're in our Father's care.

'Tis he our days hath lengthened
Beyond full seventy years;
And he our hearts hath strengthened
Mid all our hopes and fears.

And this same Lord is near us
While still we struggle on,
With promises to cheer us
When earthly hopes are gone.

The funeral was largely attended at the Old School Baptist meeting house in Warwick, where Elder W. L. Beebe preached from the text 2 Cor. v. 1-3, after which her body was laid beside that of her husband in the village Cemetery.

DIED—At his residence in Franklin County, Indiana, Jan. 13, 1887, of heart and lung disease, **John P. Brady**, aged seventy-six years, six months and eleven days.

The deceased was born in Pennsylvania, July 2, 1810, emigrated to Indiana with his parents, William and Sarah Brady, in 1818, and till his death remained a resident of Franklin County, in that state. He was the oldest of his father's family of eight children, only one of whom (a brother) survives him. He was married in 1831 to Eleanor Nutt, who departed this life in 1846; and in 1849 he married Amanda Young, who still lives to mourn the loss of a loving husband. He was the father of ten children, seven of whom are living. In the hearts of the wife and children, and other dear ones, there is a feeling of great loss and of sorrow, which only those bereaved can understand. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Indian Creek Regular Baptist Church in 1829, by Elder Minor Thomas, but for fifty years past has been a member of Big Cedar Grove Church, which was nearer his home. He was always faithful in every church duty, serving many years as clerk and trustee. He was ever gentle and patient during the months of his affliction, and it can be truthfully said that he lived a consistent, earnest, christian life, and that a most useful man and highly esteemed citizen has been called away.

In the cemetery, near the church he loved so well, he was laid to rest on Jan. 16, after a sermon by his pastor, Elder A. L. Thurston, from those comforting words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

DIED—At her home near Osborn, Green Co., Ohio, Feb. 16, 1887, **Mrs. Amy Davis**, (maiden name Lippincott) beloved wife of Jacob G. Davis. Sister Davis united with the Regular Baptist Church in 1841, from which time she ever tried to live a consistent and christian life up to the time of her death. She was born in Licking County, Ohio, Feb. 23, 1822, making her age sixty-four years, eleven months and sixteen days. She leaves a kind husband, four daughters and one son, also grandchildren and great-grandchildren, three brothers and one sister, and many other friends, to mourn their loss, which is her eternal gain.

Services were conducted by the writer, at the "Christian Church," in the village of Enon, to an attentive and sympathizing con-

gregation of friends, taking as a text, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." The remains were interred in the Enon Cemetery, there to await the resurrection morn, when the trump of God will sound and the dead in Christ shall rise from a mortal to an immortal state, fashioned and glorified like unto the son of God. For says John, in his first epistle, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall see him as he is."

J. E. LEE.

URBANA, Ohio.

DIED—At the residence of his son Henry, in Putnam Co., Ohio, Jan. 29, 1887, **Jacob Derickson**.

The deceased was born in the state of Delaware, August 22, 1793, making his age ninety-three years, five months and seven days. He was married to Isabel Ruther May 2, 1816, and moved to Fairfield Co., Ohio, in 1817. He had six children by his first wife, and was left a widower. He was married to Mary Branem Aug. 10, 1825, who bore him eight children. Brother Derickson and wife united at the same time with Lancaster Old School Baptist Church, and then moved to Putnam Co., Ohio, in 1852, and both united by letter with Sugar Creek Church, Nov. 12, 1853. Sister Derickson died July 2, 1882. They both lived consistent members of the church up to their death. Brother Derickson was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination of all events, and loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as long as he could see to read. He leaves six children, fifty-eight grandchildren, eighty-two great-grandchildren, the church and a great many friends, to mourn their loss. But we mourn not as those who have no hope, for our loss is his eternal gain.

The writer of this notice tried to preach at the funeral, from 1 Cor. xv. 45, to a large and very attentive audience.

J. G. FORD.

RUSHMORE, Ohio.

DIED—Jan. 23, 1887, of hasty consumption, my son, **Sigel F. Nosber**, aged twenty-three years, ten months and twenty-three days. He was confined to the house nearly two months, but not a murmuring word did he utter. I feel that my loss is his gain, for he gave evidence that he had been taught of God to love his people and his ministers. I miss his sweet face, and the flesh can hardly endure it. But the Lord has been my strength, a present help.

Elder Wood attended his funeral and ministered great comfort to me. I can say that the Lord doeth all things well. He has wounded with one hand, and poured in oil with the other. There has been sweetness mixed with gall, and I have a great desire to leave myself, with all else, in his dear hands, knowing that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

He leaves a stepfather, his mother, one brother, one sister, and a great many friends, to mourn. But we believe he is now with the Lord, where sin and sorrow can never come.

Your unworthy sister,

VELERIA SMITH.

PELLA, Iowa.

By request of the afflicted mother I send for publication in the SIGNS the death of her darling son.

DIED—At Central Bridge, N. Y., Dec. 22, 1836, **Lester F. Pitcher**, aged twenty years, five months and seventeen days. He was buried Dec. 25, at Braymanville. I received a call to attend his funeral, but engagements from home at that time forbade it. But I am glad to be able to hope, from information received since his departure, that he was prepared by divine grace to meet death with a welcome, and as the end of all sorrow. This stroke falls heavily upon his dear mother, who was looking hopefully to him for a guide and helper in this sorrowful state. He was a graduate from the Normal School at Albany, and was succeeding admirably in teaching. But all our earthly hopes and prospects bloom only to fade and

die. May this deep and sad bereavement be overruled for the good of the sorely tried family, and may that grace of which we confidently believe the sorrowing mother has long been a partaker, be made to shine and reign in her, to effect submission to the will of the Lord, and cause her to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Yours affectionately,

B. BUNDY.

DIED—In East Pittston, Maine, Jan. 17, 1887, **Mr. Eli Little**, aged eighty years, seven months and twelve days. In the spring of 1839 he obtained a hope in Christ, and united with the Second Baptist Church of Whitefield in 1840. He remained there until 1861. He united with the Old School Baptist Church of Whitefield, where he has had the love and fellowship of all the saints. "Brother Little was a man of few words, but those few words were like apples of gold in pictures of silver," as Elder Campbell wrote in a letter to me; after attending the funeral, when he tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing wife and children. May God sustain the dear family in their sad and lonely hours.

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

BATH, Maine, March 4, 1887.

DIED—Feb. 5, 1887, sister **Catharine Knapp**. She was a worthy member of the Old School Baptist Church for thirty-eight years or more. She was a daughter of Frederick Moyer, and a sister of Elder Moyer. She died in the triumphs of living faith. May the God of all grace comfort the mourning friends and relatives.

ALSO,

SISTER **Charity Moyer**, wife of Elder Moyer (maiden name Ostrander), died March 25, 1881, aged seventy-four years. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for fifty years, and was an orderly and consistent Baptist until called to her heavenly home. May God bless the mourners.

Both were members of the Cherry Flats Church.

M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, N. Y.

My dear husband, **David H. Driskill**, died April 9, 1886, aged fifty-three years and about four months. He professed a hope in Christ several years ago, but never joined any church. He was an Old School Baptist in principle. He left nine children, his father, three brothers and one sister, with other relatives and friends, to mourn his departure; but we hope our loss is his eternal gain.

A precious husband I have lost;
A voice I loved is stilled;
His place is vacant in the house,
Which never can be filled.

PHEBE E. DRISKILL.

GIVENS, Tenn.

OUR babe, **Hanford A. Horton**, infant son of George B. and Amanda Horton, died near Otisville, N. Y., March 9, 1887, aged two months and nine days. He was a terrible sufferer for thirty-six hours, and died with colic and kink in the stomach.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep;
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes.

Asleep in Jesus! O how sweet
To be for such a slumber meet;
With holy confidence to sing
That death has lost his cruel sting."

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

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THREE DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with Sidling Hill Church of Old School Baptists, by Elders White and Chick, to commence on Friday, April 29, and continue over Sunday. We extend an invitation to all who may desire to meet with us at that time, especially those in the ministry. The church is twenty miles from Hancock, Md., the nearest rail road station. Any persons intending to come will please write to Abimaaaz Mellott, or brother Dennis Mellott, in time so that they can be met at Hancock on Thursday, about the middle of the day. The post-office address of the above brethren is Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa.

ABIMAAZ MELLOTT.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next session of the Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Warren Church, Baltimore Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (18th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent Co., Del., to begin on Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May (25th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (1st), 1887, and continue three days.

The next session of the Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (8th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (15th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of eastern Oregon and Washington Territory will meet this year with Big Spring Church, near Summerville, Union Co., Oregon, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, at 11 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with the church at Van Buren, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 10, 1887.

Those coming on the Nickel Plate R. R. will stop at Stuartsville. Those coming from the west on the B. & O. R. R. will stop at North Baltimore. Those coming from the east will stop at Bairdstown. Those coming from the north or south on the Toledo & Findlay R. R. (T. C. & S.) will stop at Van Buren. The above trains will be met on Thursday, June 9th, and the writer will meet and care for those who stop at Arcadia. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL.

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

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ON

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We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size as the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1887.

NO. 8.

POETRY.

LUKE XXIV. 21.

"BUT we trusted that it had been he which had redeemed Israel."

Once the hope of Christ's disciples
In the sepulchre was laid;
None of all of men's devices
Could their heavy spirits raise.

But the bands of death were broken;
Angels rolled the rock away;
Could they ask for other token?
Christ, the Lord, is risen to-day.

Can our thoughts conceive their pleasure
When they saw him face to face?
The mighty God, the risen Savior,
Filled their souls with joy and peace.

Once in gloom, and guilt, and sorrow,
In the grave our hope we lay;
But there dawns another morn—
'Tis the glorious gospel day.

Thus while thinking I had vainly
Hoped for years to see that day,
Came these words so very plainly,
All my doubts were swept away.

Thine iniquities are pardoned;
All the page is blotted o'er;
Thy sins are no more remembered;
Christ has canceled all the score.

He has burst our bands asunder;
Joyfully we hear his word;
Lifts the yoke that we were under;
Shows himself the risen Lord.

Now, when doubts and fears assail me,
Hope remembers well that day
When he said, "There's naught against thee,"
And my sorrow passed away.

Judgment day is passed forever,
And the books I plainly see;
Every page is blotted over;
Christ has died and rose for me.

He is leading all his children
In the pathway that he trod,
Through his death and resurrection;
Praise we then our living Lord.

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

MY GUIDE.

My soul would praise the God of grace
For all his love to me;
From child to youth, and youth to man,
He watched and guided me.

In manhood's prime his hand still held,
And when I would have strayed;
When Satan tempted, I was kept;
God's hold on me was laid.

I could not see, as now I do,
That then his loving hand
Was my defense and my support,
That made me safe to stand.

E'en when by sin I've been o'ercome,
And Satan proved his power,
The pardoning grace and love of God
Gave victory in that hour.

On me he has his grace bestowed
In thousand varied ways;
And surely that same grace shall guide
Through life's remaining days.

He me has led, when pain and care
Have bound my soul with grief;
When blighted joys my memory filled,
He then gave sweet relief.

He then to me, in tender love,
Said, "Child, now trust in me;
Thou canst not do without me now;
I will your comfort be."

So led he me, and to himself
He gently drew me near;
Since then by grace I walk with him,
Who daily grows more dear.

O for a voice to sound his praise,
To sing more loud his love;
To live and witness of him here,
Till him I praise above.

G. WILLOMOTT.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNTO WHAT AND UNTO WHOM THE SAINTS ARE COME.—HEB. XII. 22-24.

NUMBER FIVE.

"AND to the spirits of just men made perfect."

This expression is evidently understood by some who quote it to refer to the disembodied spirits of saints in heaven; but that the apostle did not use it with that intention will clearly appear when we consider that he is not describing the condition of the saints in glory, nor telling what they shall have come unto in that immortal state; but he is speaking of their condition now, as contrasted with that of the people of God under the law, and is describing what they have already come unto in this present gospel dispensation. In the preceding chapter he distinctly defines his own language, declaring concerning those just men who in the former ages spake and wrote and acted by faith, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, a long list of whom he names, that they were not made perfect without us who are under the gospel, not made perfect until the light of the gospel day opened up and made known to us the true, spiritual meaning of all they said and did, presenting them and their works, with us, perfect only in Christ. These just men (men justified by faith) were given to the people of God under the former dispensations as ministers and judges and prophets and examples; but the benefit of their ministry and example was for us, upon whom the ends of the world are come, upon whom have come the design and fulfillment of all the ceremonies and prophecies of the legal world. Speaking of these men, the apostle names Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and Joshua, and Samson, and Jephthah, of David also, and Samuel, and the prophets, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, more, of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflict-

ed, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.—Heb. xi. 33-40.

By all the teachings of the law and the prophets absolute perfection was required; but that perfection could not be attained unto under that dispensation, for "the law made nothing perfect." Neither was it possible for those who ministered under the law to show how that perfection would come, for they had to deal with carnal ordinances imposed upon a fleshly people, in which there was no power to make them perfect. These ordinances were all shadows of things to come, the substance of which those holy men could not explain nor themselves understand. They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost in parables, and declared mysteries which were hidden from themselves as well as from the rest of the Lord's people in those ages and generations. "The prophets inquired and searched diligently" concerning that salvation which they thus proclaimed, but it was only revealed unto them that it was not unto themselves, but unto us, that they ministered those things.—1 Peter i. 10, 11. It was not until "the bringing in of a better hope" (Heb. vii. 19) that their prophetic declarations and acts of faith could be fully understood. The "better thing" reserved for us is the gospel light, by which the riches of the glory of this mystery that was hid from them is made known to us, "which is Christ in us the hope of glory;" whom the apostles preached, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that they might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.—Col. i. 26-28. This better thing brings forth to view the perfection sought for, but never found, under the old dispensations. It reveals Christ, the end of the law, the reality of the types and patterns, the substance of the shadows, and fully interprets to the faith of the saints the "parables and dark sayings of old."

The Old and the New Testament Scriptures are necessary to each other. The New interprets the Old, and the Old confirms the New. Both are necessary to show the fullness of the perfections of God. There is not a saying nor an act of any of the just men of old (men of faith) that could possibly be understood without the light of the gospel to read it by.

How dark and inscrutable the plainest prophetic declarations appear to us even now, when we are not in the experience of the light and power of the Spirit, by whom alone they are unfolded to the people of God. How much further, we might think, from their true meaning were they upon whom the Sun of righteousness had not arisen. Without the light of gospel teaching what could be understood by the building of the ark, by the act of Abraham upon Mount Moriah, by the selling of Joseph into Egypt, and his afflictions and exaltation there, by the wonderful acts in which Samson's great strength was exhibited, by all the history of David, and the building of the temple by Solomon, and by all the acts and experiences of holy men recorded in the Old Testament? We have come unto the spirits of all these just men, unto what they felt, unto the spiritual meaning of all they said and did. The benefit of their teaching is to us more than it was to those among whom they lived.

Our Savior taught that the Old Testament Scriptures testified of him, and what he did and suffered was in fulfillment of what was written. At the very last he said, I thirst, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.—John xix. 28. Paul and the other apostles said "none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say should come." This gospel teaching, which was begun by John the Baptist, turned the hearts of the fathers, the prophets, to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, "the disobedient to the wisdom of the just."—Malachi iv. 6; Luke i. 17. That is, this teaching makes known that those who are called by grace under the gospel are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers (Acts iii. 26), and are the objects of that tender love and solicitude which the Lord put into the hearts of the prophets, impelling them to speak words of comforting power, the force and application of which they themselves could not fully understand. And in the experience of grace the hearts of these children, who are found in disobedience by the light of gospel truth, are turned unto these fathers, to the wisdom of the just men of old, and are made to rejoice in the blessed truth of salvation which they declared. Although they prophesied so many ages ago, yet now we find that "unto us they did minister the things that are now reported unto us, by those who have preached the gospel unto us with the Holy Ghost sent

down from heaven." Unto the spirits of all these just men, whose teachings are now, in the light of the gospel, made known unto us in their perfection, we have come.

What an amiable and glorious place is this church of our dear Redeemer, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. What rich blessings we find here, what priceless treasures, what lovely and profitable company, what wise and comforting teachers, who are at the same time dearest and most loving friends. The prophets as well as the apostles are here, communing with us in sacred intimacy, and telling us the deepest experiences of their hearts. Here are Peter and James and John, and their brethren of New Testament record, giving their precious testimony concerning Jesus, directing us in the way of wisdom, setting in order for us the commands and ordinances of our King, and comforting us with the words of gospel truth; and here also are Moses and the psalmist, and all the prophets and just men, whose words and acts of faith are recorded in the Old Testament. As the spirit of Paul was with the churches when they were gathered together, although he was absent in the flesh (1 Cor. v. 4; Col. ii. 5), and as the spirits of all the apostles are in the churches of Christ now, so also are the spirits of all these holy and just men of old. In our meetings for worship, and at all times, we have them with us. These are among the new covenant blessings which are enjoyed by all who have obtained an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They speak comfortably unto us, declaring unto us that our warfare is accomplished, that our iniquities are pardoned.—Isa. xl. 1. They speak no longer in parables, but openly and clearly and familiarly in this glorious gospel day, in which the mystery of salvation, which was hid from ages and generations, is now made manifest to the saints.

What a comfort we now find in communing with the spirit of Moses, in contemplating his teachings and commands, although when he lived in the flesh his words could not be endured by those unto whom they were spoken. They who were under the law could not look to the end of those things that are abolished; neither can any now except those who by a new and heavenly birth are come unto mount Zion. Unto all such Moses in his acts and words is now made perfect. They understand all he said and did as having reference to Christ, and therefore his doctrine drops like the rain and distills like the dew upon them. How clearly and blessedly Noah, in all his work and experience concerning the ark and the flood, speaks to us of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Ark in whom all his people are saved with an everlasting salvation. We go with Abraham as he leaves his native land by the command of God, and goes out by faith, not knowing whither he goes. "He looked for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and

maker is God." He never found that city while in this world, but he obtained a good report of it by faith; and now we have found it, and are come within its sacred and beautiful walls of salvation, and behold, we find Abraham here, too. We know by experience the loneliness of Jacob, and also what it means; and the wonderful vision he saw in his dream, when his only resting place was the cold ground and a stone like that on which the law was written, is now a blessed reality to us. Having experienced a precious hope in him whom that ladder represented, and who is "this gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter" (Psalm cxviii. 20), we can now say with Jacob, awakened to the heavenly reality of his dream, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Joshua is here, and as he crosses Jordan with all the hosts of Israel he is only showing to the saints in the church of God how Jesus, the Captain of the hosts of the Lord, when he passed through death, led all the innumerable company of his people through the overflowing river of judgment into the promised land of gospel liberty and rest; and in the battles that were fought and the cities that were taken in that land, we see the battles with the enemies that are in our own carnal nature, the warfare between the flesh and the spirit, and realize how the strongholds of the enemy are at times taken with the spiritual weapons of our warfare, and the victory always received by us as a gift of God by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Samson tells us how the lion of the law roared against the dear Redeemer, who met it in battle and slew the enmity of it (Eph. ii. 15, 16), and thus brought forth a righteousness that is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb to the soul that hungers for it. How sweet and comforting to us is the spirit of David, now made perfect; for in all the psalms he sings of Jesus, telling of his overwhelming sorrows, pains and afflictions, singing of his mercies which endure forever, declaring all his wonderful works, extolling his holy name, and speaking of the glorious majesty of his kingdom. When we read in the psalms our own sorrows on account of sin, how it comforts us to know that David is speaking to us of the sufferings of Christ when he bore the heavy load of our sins, and that this that we feel is a measure of the fellowship of his sufferings. And how our souls rejoice when we can join with the sweet singer of Israel in his songs of praise and thanksgiving to the Lamb of God, realizing that we are feeling a measure of the same holy and solemn joy that was set before Jesus, for which he endured the cross and despised the shame. Here are Isaiah and Jeremiah and Daniel, and all the prophets; and as we come unto them we find them all engaged in the one great and glorious work which employs all the saints in the kingdom of God on earth and in glory, which is to speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of his power.—Psalm cxlv.

11. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" and all that testimony, with the spirits of all the just men who gave it, are in this heavenly Jerusalem unto which we have come.

Brethren in the Lord, when we meet together in our little companies of "twos and threes" all over the land, to talk with each other of our dear Savior, and to join in his worship, and to tell of our sorrows and comforts, though we are poor in spirit, and subject to great trials and doubts and fears, and are despised by the world, let us remember what a rich and glorious place we have come unto, and how exalted the feeblest saint is in Jesus, and how infinitely great are the blessings thus bestowed upon us.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Mar. 30, 1887.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Jan. 3, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I forward to you for publication the first two of several letters which were written to me by sister Hannah Stimpson during the years of 1870 to 1872. She was a daughter of the well-loved Elder J. A. Badger, who was so well known as a firm Old School Baptist among all our eastern brethren, and who was one of the best fireside preachers that I ever knew. Sister Stimpson passed on before, soon after her last letter was written to me. There are eight of them in all; and because they are so rich in daily experience of grace, I feel like asking their publication in the SIGNS. I have been re-reading them, and they seem as though written yesterday.

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

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Nov. 4, 1870.

ELD. F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If it is not too much for one who is so full of sin to address a child and servant of Christ as brother. I will now try and write a few words in reply to your good and interesting letter of the 7th.

It came to me, my brother, at a day when I very much needed just such a letter. During the day my mind had been reviewing my past life, its joys, its sorrows, the sinfulness, and all the ups and downs through which I have passed. I was feeling, How can I possibly be a child of God? and was nearly ready to conclude, as I thought, that I could not be, and feeling, O that I could again see some of the dear ones, and hear the glorious truth from their lips, that I might thereby know my fate; for I felt that if I was deceived, those things would prove it to me. My mind was much with you, and upon the comforting words you had spoken to me in private, as well as in public, and I felt, O could I but have that privilege again! Then father came from the office, and gave me your letter. As I read it my troubles disappeared, my soul was comforted, and I felt to rejoice in the God of my salvation. I said, Can it be that the same spirit was indeed with us, dictating your words for the comfort of this poor, sinful worm? And, my brother, I then felt that it was indeed so. You

speaking of your visit here in Maine as one long to be remembered by you. I am truly glad you did enjoy your visit; and to me the past fall was a time of peculiar enjoyment. It has seemed to me since then that I had a little foretaste of the joys of the redeemed in that bright and happy life beyond this world of sin. Since that time, since our meetings closed, I have looked back to them as one of the brightest times in my experience. I felt sad as I read that perhaps it will be a long time before you will visit us again. I would, could I be permitted, ever live in the society of the children of God. Theirs is the only society I do love, and sometimes I fear I shall be unreconciled, because I am so little privileged to be in their company; but I know it is better as it is. I can sometimes feel to look away from this world, its toils and cares, to a brighter and better one, where all who love the Lord will dwell together, one unbroken family; but dare I hope to be one of the number? is a question I often, often ask. But notwithstanding all the causes I see why I should not hope to be there, I still, through the grace of our God, hope; yes, with a hope large and bright at times, when I am permitted to view the great and glorious plan of salvation through the atoning blood of Christ. Free and sovereign is his grace. We cannot command it; we cannot buy it; it is a free gift. I have nothing to do with it. Before this world was in existence my salvation (if I am a child of God), and the salvation of every child, was just as sure, just as safe, as God himself is; and as I read the glorious truths from my Bible, so plain, so sweet, I can at times rejoice in them, whether I can claim them for myself or not.

The question you ask, my dear brother, in regard to the friendship of earthly friends, or those we believe to belong to our heavenly Father's family, I do not know that I ever, before you wrote it, thought of it in just that way; but now it seems to me that the love I feel for the children of God far exceeds all earthly considerations. O! I could not live separated, if only in name, from a people I do so love as I do the Old School Baptists. I must say, with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c.; for indeed they are my people. How hard is the separation, after we have enjoyed sweet counsel together, as at our fall meeting. As I took the parting hand from one after another my heart sank within me, for they were all dear to me, and yourself and family, and those that were going so far from me. The task was doubly hard in anticipation of a long separation.

You ask me which of the precious promises is most sweet and full to me. The words that most often come to me in times of darkness and distress are these, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want," &c. The import is the same as you quoted. It is indeed a glorious promise, that the great Shepherd has promised never to leave nor forsake his people. What more can we ask, indeed?

And when by his power we are made to feel this for ourselves, we do ask for nothing more; it is enough. O, my brother, bright and glorious are his promises when applied personally to my mind; when the sweet Comforter says they are for me, yes, even me, so full of sin, so undeserving of the least favor, even my sins being cancelled and washed away by that all-atoning blood. O the wonder, the wonder, I feel when I contemplate these things. It is often a wonder to me that I am still living in this present world, but a far greater wonder that I have a hope in the mercy of God. Of all persons I feel that I have the greatest cause to sing praises forever to the name of Jehovah, for his great, unchanging love to his people, and the hope I have in his mercy. The text you quoted, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," is indeed a glorious text. I would like to hear you preach a sermon from it. It is full of gospel comfort to the poor, trembling child, so weak and feeble in myself, to know that God's foundation standeth sure. That communication from sister R. Anna Phillips was indeed a "feast of fat things." I do not know how I could live without the SIGNS, it contains so many, very many soul-cheering truths. Nearly all of the preaching I hear comes through the SIGNS, and I greatly prize it.

My dear brother, I have written such a long letter, when I only intended to write a few lines; and such a poor one, too. I feel really ashamed to send this to you; but my mind travels so much faster than I can write that I had this long letter written before I was aware of it. I had the privilege of seeing Elder Purington again after I returned from North Berwick. He spent one night with us. I was glad to read of the privilege (precious indeed it must be) of leading so many of the dear lambs into the water. O, my brother, what privileges you are permitted to enjoy! Will you sometimes think of this little speck when you are enjoying those glorious feasts? Only to remember that there is one whose heart loves these things above all others, and whose mind is often, O so often, with the assembled saints, longing for a place with them. But God knows what is best for me. O may I say, His will be done in all things.

Your unworthy sister,

HANNAH STIMPSON.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Dec. 22, 1870.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter, filled with words of comfort and cheer, came duly to hand. It is useless for me to say that it rejoiced my heart, for that you must already know. A word from a brother or sister in Christ is to me one of the soul-cheering things that buoys me up while passing along through this vale of doubts, fears, sorrows and disappointments. It is a command that the children of God should speak often one to the other; and O, my brother, is it not a comfort, too? You

say truly that it is a subject of which we never tire; the subject that lies nearest my heart, and yet the one I most seldom speak upon. Is not this strange to you, dear brother? I am a mystery, a great mystery, to myself. Why can I not talk as freely upon this all-important subject as I can upon worldly matters? To my nearest and dearest earthly friends I am the most silent. This one thing causes me great trouble, but it is something I cannot overcome. O, my brother, I feel like one alone; there can be none like me. I do feel that I have this peculiar trial as no other has ever known—peculiar to myself and my surroundings; but my God knows what is best for me (if it can be possible that I am one of his children). He knows just what kind of trials I need. He knows just how much comfort, and the kind, I need, and the best time when joy or sorrow shall be my portion. Therefore, knowing this, ought I not to be submissive, and feel to say, His will be done? Is not his almighty arm under and around and above me? Yes, I know this; but O the weakness of my sinful heart! Sometimes I am made to cry out, Can it be that a being pure and holy as God is, a being who cannot look upon sin with the least allowance, can have thoughts of mercy toward me? I know our dear brother Purington does not approve of these terrible doubts and fears; but they will come to me, because I experience daily that I am the chief of sinners. All the good resolves, the promises I may make, are of no avail; for no sooner are they made than broken. So I find myself perfectly helpless, and can trust only in the blood of Jesus for salvation. O to be rid of sin, is my daily prayer. You say that you feel a deeper interest in these things than you used to. O the high and precious privilege you have of mingling often with the dear saints! There is comfort, there is joy, in so doing. It is a duty and privilege, too, in so doing. I feel it, I know it, and yet I remain at home, with no preaching except my Bible and the SIGNS; but I find sweet comfort there at times. The peace of mind I enjoyed during the past summer and fall I am almost a stranger to now. Dark clouds have arisen, and I am plodding along in darkness and doubt. I know these things must be; but I cannot help feeling that could I often mingle with the dear children, and hear from them of their travels, it would be a comfort to me. But as I write this, a sense of the many blessings I am hourly receiving from the hand of my God, and the ingratitude, the forgetfulness of all these, cause me to blush with shame for repining one moment because I do not have more. O, my dear brother, could I only be rid of sin, that I might praise my God with a sinless heart. But it seems to me that every desire I have arises from self. I fear I have no aim for salvation but that I may be happy. I fear it is not to glorify my God that I am looking forward to. But if there is any comfort to be derived from a de-

sire, I do believe I do desire so to live that I may glorify the God of our salvation.

You ask me, my brother, if the salvation of God appears any less beautiful than when first I believed. I believe I can answer that more and more glorious does it appear. This precious and sure salvation of every child is a theme I should never tire of contemplating. It is the only plan that could reach poor, fallen man; this finished and sure salvation that is beyond the reach of man, all sure and fixed, without the aid of such poor creatures as we are. Were it not, I could have no hope. But when I contemplate that the God of heaven and earth is of one mind, and none can turn him, that he will do all his will and pleasure, that he has not done part and left the remainder for man to finish, I feel to say, Glory and honor and praise be to his name forever and ever. This salvation, that looks so glorious to me, to many seems hard. This plan is the only thing that causes me to hope at all, yet causes others to charge God with partiality. Why this difference? I often ask myself. Why cannot I feel like the greater part of those with whom I associate? I am compelled to say, It is not of myself; for could I have had my own way, how gladly would I have followed the multitude. But, my brother, I can find no comfort at all in their plan for salvation. They do not preach or talk what I have experienced, therefore how can I follow them? So, after all, I am led to hope sometimes that I may be one of the very least of those for whom Christ died; and it is his grace alone that causes me to differ. Sometimes the love I feel for that dear, precious people, called the Old School Baptists, causes me to hope that I know by the word of God that they are the people of God. They are the only people I could have a name with; and O that I could only feel worthy a place with them; but I so often fear that I am not. You spoke of an expression in sister S. J. Littlefield's letter. How often have I felt the same. It seems to me that I never do "praise my God as I ought;" nor can I do or think anything as I ought. It seems to me that I am the most helpless of God's creatures, and I am compelled to say,

"O to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrained to be."

I have just re-read your good letter, and I want you to know how comforting your words are to my fearing heart. They bring good cheer to my doubting soul. To know that a child of God and one of his servants can have some of the same feelings that I experience, strengthens my hope. I feel now to say,

"Dear Lord, why should I doubt thy love,
Or disbelieve thy grace?
Sure thy compassions ne'er remove,
Although thou hide thy face."

I have written much more than I thought to, and fear this will weary your patience; but I must beg for another letter from you, dear brother. I would that I could write more interesting, but I cannot express one-half I feel; and if I could, I would not

wish to weary you with it. How pleased I would be to receive a word from our dear sister, S. J. Littlefield. I hoped to do so, but have not as yet.

I think the last number of the SIGNS, December 15th, is filled with rich food for poor, starving souls. The first piece, written by brother Bezaleel Croasdale, the first part in particular, came very near me. O how could I live without that paper! I do prize it very highly. I feel that I am so blessed beyond what I deserve, or should expect, that I should spend my time in praises to my God. O that I could so live as to honor him in my daily walk; but I do not—I cannot; I am so filled with sin. I sometimes cry out, How can my God bear with me? O such love, such free, unmerited love, that he bestows upon his creatures!

Your unworthy sister,

HANNAH STIMPSON.

WAVERLY, N. Y., March, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have the consent of brother Keene to have the following letter published, and I would like to see it in our family paper. I feel that he has expressed clearly the experience of the saints, and I believe it will be of much benefit to those who are troubled in like manner.

Your sinful brother,

M. VAIL.

NEWBURY, Ontario, March 19, 1887.

ELDER MARVIN VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your letter was very welcome, for at the time I received yours I was much weighed down in my soul; and indeed I have been very much troubled, and at times plunged down into the deeps, for some months past; but I do feel that I have some little evidence that the Lord has not altogether forsaken me; and though meeting with sore temptations, and having to suffer affliction by the fiery darts of the wicked, again and again I have felt like Jonah, "Yet I will look again toward thy holy temple." A short time ago, one night I retired to my bed for rest, but could find no sleep. So dark was my way, so distressed my soul, I sank in deep waters. I thought my case was like that of Saul, forsaken of God. I feared that this assuredly was my condition. For "the Lord answered me not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets."—1 Sam. xxviii. 6. O how desolate I felt, and so disheartened. While thus tossed about, suddenly, as with the voice of a roaring lion, the adversary, the devil, said, "Persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him." So sharp and painful was this, that my distressed soul burst forth into a bitter cry. My dear wife asked me what made me cry out like that; but I could not answer her, so overwhelmed was my soul. I felt that the gates of hell would prevail and hold me down in the lowest hell. But I had a little ease given me, as I hope, from the Lord, in these words, which entered my mind, "Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you." I

told the Lord how weak I was, how powerless to withstand against such enemies; but I had an eye given me to look unto Jesus, and in his mediatorial work I had a comfortable hope of victory, of overcoming in his name. —Rev. xii. 11. The next day, though still in trouble, I found sweet comfort in this Scripture, "By this I know thou favorest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me." But the clouds gathered thick again, and in darkness I wandered, as a poor, sighing, groaning outcast from God. But in a few days the Lord again appeared, and said, "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." —Hab. ii. 3. I felt my heart melted before the Lord, and in the strength and encouragement of this word I journeyed on a little space. But soon I was cast down as much as ever. Sometimes I would exclaim, O what will become of me? But a few days before receiving your letter, while in a sorrowful state of mind, lying upon my bed at night, as a sweet, soothing, strengthening whisper the Comforter, the Holy Ghost (yes, I do believe it was the Lord), said in my soul, "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" A week ago to-day, a few hours after receiving your welcome epistle, these words I found encouragement in, "So, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." Does not all this seem that the Lord is very merciful to me, a poor sinner? It does indeed. But I am such a strange creature.

"Astonished, I cry, Can a mortal be found
Surrounded with troubles like me?"

Last Monday night a neighbor called in, and in course of conversation said, "How about those who fell in the wilderness?" In reply I said, "They could not enter in because of unbelief; and at present it seems I am just such an one; for I certainly do not enter into rest; and if I am not already dead, and my carcass lying in the wilderness, I am fallen down, and dying." Were I to enter into particulars of this outline of my soul's exercises, many pages of writing would not suffice. I should be wearied in writing, and you, dear brother, in reading. But though I am so changeable, the Rock of Ages changes not. Jehovah is immutable. This, within the past few days, has been my rest. Blessed be the name of the Lord. O how gracious, how very good, the Lord is to me, a poor sinner. O that I could praise him. Look at this sweet portion of the Scriptures, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath," &c.—Heb. vi. 17. This is the anchor of my soul, and that wherein the Lord has given me to find "strong consolation." Praise the Lord, O my soul. Is it not a wondrous mercy, my brother, that we should have a comfortably good hope through grace? that we have an incorruptible inheritance in

Christ Jesus? that we are among the number of those who are "taught of the Lord and know the truth?" I know that you, with me, will ascribe all the glory to the Lord. The truth that the Lord is God, is precious to my soul, and I rejoice in the revelation recorded in the Scriptures of truth, that "He hath done whatsoever he pleased."—Psalm cxv. 3. The enemies of truth assign causes for the acts of God. The Arminians speak of the will and doings of the creature determining the doings of the mighty God. Others in their vain philosophy have dared to blaspheme, and speak of Jehovah being under a law of necessity, and have spoken of what "it was absolutely necessary for God to do;" that "God was compelled;" that "the reason why he was compelled to have a hell, was in order to have a heaven; that he was obliged to have bad men, in order to have good men; and that good could not exist without its opposite, evil." O what a shame to speak thus of the blessed Jehovah, whose understanding is infinite.—Psalm cxlvii. 5. This carnal philosophy would dethrone the Most High; it would ungod the God of our salvation. Were the doings of the Lord necessitated by any necessity, then he would fail to be God; for this necessity, whatever it might be, would be higher than God, and would be the God of God. But the Lord himself has said, "Is there a God besides me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any."—Isa. xlv. 8; Deut. iv. 35-39. The good pleasure of Jehovah's will is the source, the cause, the origin, of all his acts; not some fancied necessity operating and necessitating the acts of God, "Compelling God." O, my dear brother, this carnal philosophy does not declare the glorious I AM, the God of Israel. Our God is free.—Psalm li. 12; Hosea xiv. 4. One "Thus saith the Lord" is infinitely of more importance to the people of God than all the philosophies of men. Look at this as recorded in Ephesians i. 5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." And in the ninth verse also, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself." Again, in the eleventh verse, "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." God will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.—Rom. ix. 18. And our dear Redeemer said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 26. The will of Jehovah is absolute. All his acts proceed from his sovereign will, and are absolute. God is not "compelled." No necessity reigns over the I AM, but "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

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

For he saith, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Happy are we, dear brother, if favored to fall down before God, and to say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11.

I must bring this long letter to a close. I wish you, dear brother, much of the sweet, enjoyable presence of the beloved Redeemer. May the Lord bless you in your ministry. Remember me at the throne of grace. I hope this may find you and your family in health. I shall not forget the kindness of yourself and family when I was with you last June. Write to me a few lines before long. I am, I hope, your brother in the affections of the gospel,

FRED. W. KEENE.

GOD'S WISDOM.

THE wisdom of God is far beyond the conception of the finite mind. He is a perfect Being, and all the works of his hands are perfect and harmonious. His purposes have all been fixed in eternity. His laws are irrevocable. He is of one mind, and none can turn him. The natural man, in contemplating him, brings him down to his own level, accuses him of being unreasonable, unjust, wayward, &c., entirely losing sight of the great truth that he is God, and man's own Creator as well as the Creator and designer of everything, whether animate or inanimate. The great disparity between the Creator and the created is not considered by the natural mind. We are prone to look upon ourselves as mountains of strength and wisdom; and when left to our own puffed up pride and vanity, we rely upon our own strength and works to bring about that salvation which is alone of the Lord. God alone is strength, and he alone is wisdom: there is no other source. All creatures live and move and have their being in obedience to his mighty mandate. We cannot breathe a breath of life other than that which has been fixed by his unalterable law, which was appointed for us ages before we were ushered into existence, even before the foundation of the world. There is no such thing as chance. The revolving earth, if by chance or accident could move one jot or tittle contrary to the great law by which it is governed, would cause its own immediate destruction. All nature in its growth and decay, from the bursting forth of the living germ in the tiny seed, until it reaches the sear and yellow leaf, from the advent of living, breathing creature into the light of day, until the hoary head and bowed form betoken life's short race almost run, all bear constant testimony to the perfection of God and to his infinite wisdom. We are told in holy writ that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" and the poor, trembling sinner can testify from his own experience

that the wisdom implanted in him through the fear of the Lord is not the wisdom of this world. But (sweet and precious thought) it is the wisdom which giveth us knowledge of God's unutterable love, of the riches of his grace, revealing unto us such of the mysteries of his kingdom as God in his wisdom sees fit that we should know. What is it to fear the Lord? Is it the abject fear of the natural mind, when apprehensive of impending danger? By no means. It is to be bowed down with awe and reverence, in consequence of a light that has shined in our souls (the light of the knowledge of the glory of God), revealing unto us that we are actually standing in the presence of our Creator, who is our just Judge. We behold his majesty, we recognize his greatness, we are amazed at his wisdom, power and glory. Then we look upon ourselves and exclaim with one of old, "What is man, that thou shouldst be mindful of him, O Lord?" We now see ourselves in the true light, all pride and vanity has vanished, our strength is all gone, our former righteousness is as filthy rags, we behold ourselves a mass of corruption, all the foundations upon which we formerly stood with confidence are melting from under us, or rather have done so, and we feel that we are sinking. There is not even a straw that we may grasp. Then our cry comes up from the depths, "Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner." Yet, in trembling accents, filled with godly fear, our lips are ready to exclaim, "Whether we be carried on the wings of his love unto the realms of eternal bliss and glory, or bound by the chains of his wrath and cast into outer darkness, his disposition of us will be just, and his righteous law will approve. The wise men that came from the east to Jerusalem in the days of Herod, saying, 'Where is he that is born King of the Jews?' were not imbued with this world's wisdom only. They could not have learned from any natural source that a child was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea (the holy child Jesus); nor could they have sought him out, except they were led by the wisdom and knowledge of God. When in Gibeon, the Lord appeared unto Solomon in a dream by night, and said, 'Ask what I shall give thee;' and Solomon said (after extolling the great mercy which the Lord had shown his father David), 'I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?' 'And God said unto him, 'Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment, behold, I have done according to thy

word: lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart." And he gave him also that for which he had not asked, both honor and riches. The child of God who prays for an understanding heart, and wisdom to discern between good and evil, has already received that precious gift, in addition to which all things are added unto him. True prayer is indited by the Lord, and redounds to his own glory. Those who depend upon their own works for salvation, to utter the truth would say, My will, not thine, O Lord, be done. And when they contemplate beginning that work, their thoughts might run something like this, I have become somewhat weary of sinful lusts and pleasures; some of my neighbors have lately dropped off without making the necessary preparation; visions of liquid fire and torment flit before my eyes; I think I had better change my course of life; I will accept the overtures of mercy, and permit myself to be saved; but I must have my own way about it; I am not a machine; I can think for myself. He is wise in his own conceit, and his assurance carries him at once into popularity. When Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath day, on one occasion, as recorded by Mark, many hearing him were astonished, saying, "From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" &c. They were not only astonished, but it was inconceivable to them that such wisdom and power could emanate from a man as lowly as themselves, and one of their neighbors. And no wonder at their astonishment. Every child of God can well remember when, as it were, a curtain obscured their mind from heavenly things, when the sublime character and attributes of our dear Redeemer had not been revealed to them, when all was Egyptian darkness to them, and they could not perceive the glorious way and plan of salvation, nor behold the glories yet to be revealed to them within the veil.

God in his infinite wisdom spoke the world into existence, and created man in his own image, placed him in the garden of Eden, and forbade him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Disobedience to the divine command brought about the downfall of man from his first and high estate, in consequence of which sin entered into the world, and death by sin; all in fulfillment of the wise plan of the Creator. And all that has transpired since that first disobedience, to the present day, is but a predetermined chain of events in the carrying out of the exact design of our glorious Lord, for his own praise and glory.

"Thou art, O God, a Spirit pure,
Invisible to mortal eyes;
The immortal and the eternal King,
The great, the good, the only wise.
Whilst nature changes, and her works
Corrupt, decay, dissolve and die,
Thy essence pure no change shall see,
Secure of immortality.

Thou art invisible! What hand
Can draw thy image, spotless, fair?
To what in heaven, to what on earth,
Can men the immortal King compare?"

These imperfect lines, dear brethren Beebe, I hope have been written with awe and reverence, actuated by the fear of God and love to the brethren, with a knowledge of my own imperfections, and a hope that when this decaying body of mine shall put on incorruption, I shall see him as he is, perfect in wisdom and glorious in holiness. With christian love to all the saints scattered abroad throughout the land, and with a feeling sense that I am the least, if one at all,

Yours in gospel bonds,
B. F. COULTER.
PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Feb. 28, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—We feasted upon the true manna while our dear brother, B. Bundy, was here, and he, and also our aged sister Wells, requested me to write again for the SIGNS.

The apostle says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." While Saul of Tarsus knew the Scriptures, at the same time he knew nothing of this faith which comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. What a great worker Saul was in his blindness. He had natural eyes only, and therefore was spiritually blind. He had natural ears only, and therefore was deaf spiritually. He had listened to one of the most powerful sermons ever heard by mortal man, and why did it not produce faith in him? Read Stephen's sermon, Acts vii. After hearing Stephen, he consented to his death; and not only that, but this same Saul, just after Stephen had been murdered, made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Saul heard Stephen preach that powerful sermon, yet it produced no good results unto him. Why was it thus? That sermon did not convert Saul. The reason was this, that the Lord, even Jesus, had not been revealed to him. Now we will hear Paul's own account of the matter. "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered,

Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."—Acts xxii. 3-16. My brethren, we perceive that this faith cometh through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The Word of God came to Saul, the deaf ears were opened, and he heard that Word. His blind eyes were opened, and he beheld that Word. He was convinced by the revelation which he had of God, through the Spirit, which produced living faith in him, that he was truly the Son of God. Notice, he says, "They that were with me saw indeed the light; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me." Therefore they heard not the Word, and could not therefore have that faith which comes by hearing. Saul heard Stephen preach the Word, but there was no revelation to him that Jesus was the Christ of God. Salvation does not come through the creature. Salvation is of God. How was the thief upon the cross saved? Was not Jesus revealed to him? How could he have had that strong faith in him, so as to recognize him as the Lord? Listen to his words: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." How was Abraham saved? Was he converted at a protracted meeting? Except we have the same faith that Abraham had, we cannot be saved. "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Now, in order to believe God, God must make himself to be heard; God must speak to us. Do not the Scriptures tell us to beware of false prophets and false teachers? Do they not tell us that Satan himself comes as an angel of light? How then are we to know, except we have a revelation of God? My brethren, if we have not had that revelation of God, that Jesus is the Christ of God, that Jesus is the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, 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,

if we have not heard the voice of the Son of God, if our ears have not been opened, if our eyes have not been opened, let us not be deceived, for then are we yet in darkness, although the light shines. "Faith cometh by hearing." Mark, faith does not come by seeing. You remember that the men who were with Saul saw the light, but did not hear the voice of him that spake to Saul. We must keep to the word. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." That word is spiritual, and cannot be applied to carnal ears. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." We did not produce our natural birth, and by that birth we understood only natural things. Can the natural man produce a spiritual birth? God says that the natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned. Then this new birth is of God. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." God is the author and finisher of all his works. He will do all his will. You remember that certain anxious ones came to Jesus and said unto him, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Therefore we will praise God, even the Father, who hath wrought in us this belief in his Son Jesus Christ, who hath given unto us a revelation of himself, and hath made known his will; that we, who were dead in trespasses and sins, being without God in the world, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Let us examine ourselves and see if we are in the faith. The very first mark of God's people is this examination of themselves. Is Jesus our only hope? Are we satisfied with the work which he accomplished upon the cross? Can we look upon him and say, He bore my sins? Can we say that we have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son? Can we say that the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin? Do we love to think of Jesus? Is he in our heart and mind? Do we love the name of Jesus? Do we love the people and servants of God? Do we love to hear the truth preached? Do we love to do that which is right? Is Christ precious to our souls? Can we look up and say, "Not my will, but thine be done?" Do we love to read the Scriptures above all other books? Do we give to the poor out of love to God? These are some of the fruits of the Spirit which are produced in the ones who are born of God. A man who only has experienced a natural birth, his desires and works are all for his own selfish ends, contrary to the Spirit of Christ.

If some poor sinner hears the voice of the Son of God through this letter, speaking to his soul in power, even to the salvation of his soul, realizing

Christ Jesus to be his Savior, and by the eye of faith perceiving that his sins have been washed away by the blood of Jesus, he will praise God for his unspeakable gift; for we are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God.

Yours truly, in Christ,
JOSEPH READ.

HOPEWELL, Ohio, Jan. 23, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I inclose a letter from brother Jehu Byrnside, which he requested me to copy and forward to you. I agree with what he has written.

Yours in hope,
G. D. BURLEY.

BYRNSIDE, W. Va., Dec. 5, 1886.

ELDER G. D. BURLEY AND WIFE—MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER AND SISTER:—I seat myself this evening to try and answer your kind epistle of love of Sept. 21, 1886, which found me in poor health. My long delay, I assure you, has not been out of disrespect, but wholly owing to my state of health and barrenness of mind. I would much rather have you express your views on the Scripture you refer to, than to give my own weak interpretation; but I will make the attempt, feeling that you will throw the mantle of charity around me. The Scripture you refer to reads as follows: "I will never forget thy precepts; for with them thou hast quickened me."—Psalm cxix. 93. You wish to know how I think God quickens his people with his precepts. There seems to me to be two prominent features in the text which I will first carefully examine. Webster defines precept thus: "A commandment, order, rule, direction, instruction." Now this may be oral or written, and the substance is the same. Now we will examine the word quicken: "To make alive; to vivify; to make quick or rapid."

Now, my brother, I infer from the tone of your query that you want my views as to whether the Lord uses his precepts as a means of imparting spiritual, eternal life, or of making alive from the dead, poor lost sinners of Adam's race. As there seems to be some difference of opinion among the family of God in relation to the use of means in quickening into life dead sinners, I suppose you want my views as to what kind of quickening the psalmist has reference in the proposed text. I take the ground, my dear brother, that David had already been quickened into divine life by the Spirit of God, which is thus described by Jesus: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."—John vi. 63. Until this quickening takes place, there is no desire for the precepts. A stream cannot rise above its fountain. Paul's preaching was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them that were called (quickened by the Spirit), Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. So none are prepared to receive the precepts, in a spiritual light, until they have been born, not

of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. Thus I understand David to have been born long before he used the words of the text above named. He had sown to the flesh and had reaped corruption. The prophet Nathan said unto him, "Thou art the man." I think David might well say, "I will never forget thy precepts; for with them thou hast quickened me." He, like us, had neglected his duty, and had fallen thus far into a dead state, by sowing to the flesh. I think it is this kind of a sinner the apostle is speaking about when he says, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—James v. 20. Not save from everlasting banishment, but from the dead state in the church; and when the sinner is thus recovered from this dead state, he is thus quickened; for you can now see a manifestation of life.

In proof of what I have written, my dear brother, you will turn to Psalm lxxi. 20. "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." This proves clearly to my mind that David had been quickened into life by the power of God before this quickening took place, and had been overtaken with sore troubles, as many of the dear saints are overtaken in our day and time, and often have great need of the precepts preached or written, to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance. My dear brother, how often are we made to cry as did Jonab, when the earth with its bars are about us, and the weeds are wrapped about our heads, because of our disobedience. But what sweet deliverance comes, with quickening power, when we can remember the precepts, and they are sweet to our taste as the honeycomb. We can then say with David, "I will never forget thy precepts; for with them thou hast quickened me."

My dear brother, if you will read carefully the whole Psalm (cxix.), I think it will give you more light than my poor, feeble pen can give. I will refer you to some things contained therein. "Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." "My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word." "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way." "Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness." "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." The psalmist was afflicted, and the word had caused him to realize a brighter manifestation of life. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but

now have I kept thy word." "Quickened me after thy loving-kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth." "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction. I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me." "I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word."

Dear brother, here you will see that the psalmist is yet feeling his need, and praying for a continuance of this quickening, or a brighter manifestation of life, as we ourselves do; not to make us children, but because we are children. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "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. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side."—Psalm lxxi. 20, 21.

JEHU BYRNSIDE.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Jan. 6, 1887.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—

With a fearful heart I once more take my pen to address the scattered saints of the most high God. The question arises in my mind, What shall I say? The answer has come, in the words of the psalmist, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power."—Psa. cxlv. 10, 11. Wonderful theme; so high that no mortal mind can attain to it; so deep that it cannot be fathomed. Well might the apostle exclaim, "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!" What is there in all the things that ever had an existence, or ever will have, that does not praise God? I answer, Nothing. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." When I view the starry heavens, with the many orbs of light, I am lost in wonder and amazement, as they present to my mind so beautifully the great wisdom and almighty power of God, the Creator. The trees of the forest with their beautiful foliage, the herbs, grass and plants of the field, the snow and rain, the thunder and lightning, the clouds, the wind, the proud waves, all, all proclaim the majesty and power of our almighty God. Yea, even the wrath of man shall praise him; the remainder of wrath he will restrain. And now I will ask a plain question. If God is perfect in knowledge and power, if he is sovereign, how dare we, how can we, limit his predestination? Consistency is a jewel. I have been very much pleased and edified with the writings of brethren Welborn, Parington, Wagner, and others that I cannot now recall, who have written upon the subject of predestination. Write on, brethren; you have not told all about it yet. Your whole experience is predestination. It is both honey and honey-comb to the tempest-tossed children

of God. And I want to say of the communications of the brethren and sisters generally, they are very savory, well seasoned with spiritual salt. I admire the spirit that is manifest in the writers for the SIGNS. I think I can see a spirit of forbearance with the brethren, where they have not seemed to see alike in regard to the application of certain passages of Scripture. Brethren ought not to think any less of each other because they do not see alike in every respect. If they stand upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, which is essential, I believe that brotherly love will continue. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

And now, for fear you have forgotten that I had a text in the beginning of this communication, I will call your attention to it. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." I have mentioned but a few of the things in nature that show forth his praise. Now, if the Lord wills, we will speak of the glory of that kingdom which is not of this world, of which Jesus is the true Light. The sun was placed in the heavens for a light, that man might see the things that were created. But we do well to remember that we had no use for the sun before we were born. But when we were born into this world, with eyes, by the light of the sun we saw some of the things of nature. The light of the sun did not create the things that we saw, but manifested them; for light makes manifest. So when we were in nature's darkness, before we were born again, we could not see the kingdom. And in order to speak of the glory of a kingdom, we must have some knowledge of it. And Peter says of the subjects of this kingdom, that they are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." "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 subjects of this kingdom are born in Zion. Jerusalem which is above is free, who is the mother of them all. But who ever knew a child to know its mother before it was born? "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Are not these saved sinners who cry, Abba, Father? Yes, saved by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. And the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Here we can plainly see the eternal vital relationship of Christ and his bride. We are all aware that the expression, "Born again," implies a first and second birth. Then the subjects of this kingdom are manifested by a second or spiritual birth. But were they not vessels afore prepared unto glory, previous to this second birth?

Certainly they were. Everything that has an existence was in the creation in the beginning, but were not all made manifest there. All the Adamic family had an existence in the life of Adam, when as yet there was none of them developed. In like manner the church of God had a spiritual standing in Christ in eternity, in that eternal life which was with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. But they are not manifest until they are born of God, and we can only know them as John did, by their fruits. A child of grace is a complex character; an old man and a new man; an outer and an inner man. Brethren, can you find a child of God separate from a sinner saved by grace? If you can, you will do me a great favor by explaining it to me. We are aware that the Saviorsays, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." But "what will ye see in the Shulamite? [singular] As it were the company of two armies." Paul says, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that do I." Who do you think Paul is talking about? I think he is talking about himself; and he says, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Again, "So then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." We will quote once more from the testimony of Paul, and close, "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."

I have lost my text again, as you will see. Brethren Beebe, do with this as you think best. Consign it to the flames if you have any fears that its publication would disturb Zion, and I will consider it a kindness in you. I mean just what I say. I do not mean that if you do not publish it I will not patronize you or give my influence in favor of your paper. God forbid.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
M. VAIL.

THE POOR AND DESTITUTE.

"I WILL also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord."—Zeph. iii. 12.

In all the scriptural accounts of the children of God they are represented as a poor and afflicted people, while the world is represented as being fat, rich, &c. I frequently see accounts of beloved followers of Jesus who are in cities, towns, and destitute sections, where they are deprived of going among Primitive Baptists or hearing the gospel proclaimed. They may go among the Arminians and try to enjoy their mode of worship, but they cannot see them as possessing that meek and humble spirit which Jesus possessed. Their fine meeting houses, organs, educated clergy, &c., are not a substitute for the gospel to the poor child of grace; and often while the christian is thus trying to enjoy himself, he feels condemned, knowing that he has no confidence in them, for his experience

and the Bible are two witnesses that condemn all such. He often feels like one alone, for he knows that the Bible forbids his mixing with such. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God."—2 Cor. vi. 14-16. You see from the foregoing that two cannot walk together except they be agreed. There is such a difference between the two characters that a child of God might tell his experience, tell of his doubts and fears, and it would all be an idle tale to the popular religionist of the day. Why? Because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Well, who has made the difference between the church and the world? God Almighty has made the difference. We see plainly that there is a difference between the Primitive Baptists and false religionists. Let us notice now who are the poor, despised, destitute and afflicted people. David says, "Their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish." We hear them saying, "I know I am a christian, and I have not committed a sin for years. I am determined to go to heaven when I die, and I intend to have a high seat." Is not that character very rich? Does he feel poor and afflicted? No. Jesus, in speaking of this rich sect, says they will come up in the latter or last day, and say, "Lord, Lord, open unto us; for we have cast out devils in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works." But he says, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; for I never knew you." Do we not hear them saying, "Lord, Lord, we have established Sunday Schools, Temperance Societies, Tract Societies, Bible Societies, Theological Seminaries, Young Men's Associations, &c., for which we thank thee, that we are not a do-nothing people like the Primitive Baptists?" But just notice Cain's offering, which was of his own production; but poor Abel had nothing but a lamb to bring. The child of God is so poor that he has nothing to bring as an offering, but Jesus. Isaiah says, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Joseph's brethren, before they went to buy corn in Egypt, exhausted their supply at home, and were compelled to go from the land of their nativity in search of food. The Lord's people trust in their own righteousness as long as they can, until the mountains are made waste, and the rivers are made islands, and the pools are dried up. The poor woman spent all her living with physicians, and grew no better, but rather worse. Does not every convicted soul try all his means and instrumentalities, and see all fail? Was not Peter, when walking on the

water, made poor? Was not the poor publican made to feel his poverty? Saul of Tarsus, and many others, in fact, all the children of God, get to see their poverty. David says, "He [the Lord] 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." You see David was so poor that he was not able to help himself; hence he felt the need of such a blessed Savior. Notice God's care of these poor and afflicted people. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." He is "nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."—Psalm xxxiv. 18, 19. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."—Psalm xxxvii. 25. The children of Israel wandered in a wilderness, and found no city to dwell in; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them; but they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry with good things. Dear saints, you who are crying, and feel to be so poor and cast down, remember that Jesus has been made poor for you; and while you cannot see the dear brethren as much as you would wish, and you may feel that you are surrounded by enemies, yet remember the language of David, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."—Psalm cxxxix. 7-10. No doubt you feel that the Lord has forgotten you, and sometimes say, "Surely the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and his mercies are clean gone." But, dear christian, remember his soul-cheering expressions to you. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."—Isa. xlix. 15, 16. If you feel hungry and thirsty, he says, "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." If you feel to be poor, he says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." If you feel to be heavy laden, Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Do you feel to be the very "ends of the earth," or that you are at your wits' end? He says, "Look unto me, all ye ends of the

earth; for I am God, and beside me there is none else." The foregoing sufficiently proves God's watchcare over the poor and destitute, who really feel as above described; but that is only an evidence of life, for the dead have not feeling. God has watched over his people through all generations. He says, "I am God, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." These poor and afflicted ones are watched with his fatherly protection.

"Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine;
And though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange."

Notice, the church through all her distress could say, "Salvation is of the Lord." They trust in the Lord from necessity. We have endeavored to show that he will never leave the poor and destitute; for he protected Daniel, the Hebrew children, John in the isle of Patmos, the church through all the dark ages, and he will still protect them.

Many thanks to the dear brethren and sisters for their comforting letters during my affliction.

Your brother, I hope,
LEE HANCKS.

ST. LOUIS, Mich., Jan. 31, 1887.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I would speak a little through our valuable medium, the SIGNS, by your permission, on the wonderful mystery of godliness contained in the salvation of the church of the living God, for whose instruction all Scripture is given, and which is, in a more or less degree, contained in the experience of every one that is born of God. The mystery of the "seven spirits of God," spoken of several times in the book of "the Revelation of Jesus Christ," is in my mind. These seven spirits are the fullness of the Godhead bodily which dwells in Christ, and through him is given to every member of his body, the church, according to their measure, and are the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, and which convinces us of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, sent down from heaven, by which we are sealed to the day of redemption; the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, and leads us into the doctrine of the resurrection, to wit, the redemption of our bodies; the Spirit of wisdom, which enables us to discern between truth and error, and is good to direct, as says the prophet Solomon; the Spirit of might, which enables us to walk in the truth and to overcome the wicked one; the Spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus, and enables us to testify of his truth in the churches; the Spirit of love, which enables us to love our brother for the truth's sake, whom we have seen, and also God, whom we have not seen. These are the seven spirits which are before his throne.—Rev. i. 4; iii. 1. They are also called the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.—Rev. iv. 5. Also the seven eyes of the Lamb, which are the seven spirits

of God sent forth into all the earth.—Rev. v. 6. For he hath a people in every nation, kindred and tribe on the face of the earth; consequently those seven principles or spirits of God are wherever he has a people, and which is nothing less than Christ in them the hope of glory. He is the same that is spoken of as a stone with seven eyes.—Zech. iii. 9. Those are the seven spirits which I have mentioned, and he gives them to his people. They are their complete armor, to defend them against devices of Satan and the cunning craftiness of men. They are the same that are spoken of again by Zechariah, saying, "For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven: they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." And, of course, behold the evil and the good, not altogether of the natural world, but of his people's works; for he knows what he has wrought in them, and what the flesh works in them. He does not expect any good from that source (the flesh), but his people sometimes do, and get deceived. But those seven spirits are all good, and they work all the good that is in the world; that is, in Christ's world. But in regard to the natural world, all that is in it, namely, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father; therefore his Son expects nothing from it.

Yours in truth,

DAVID TITMUS.

NEW MARKET, Mo., March 28, 1887.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—I will write a few remarks, which you can read or not, as you feel inclined, and do just as you please with them. I have taken as much comfort as my low, barren state of mind will admit of, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES during the year or two past, although I have not made myself conspicuous in the columns of the paper; but this has not been because of any lack or interest in the paper, or desire for its welfare, but rather because of a leanness and barrenness in my own feelings, which I cannot describe, and which I sometimes seriously think certainly was never felt by any other as it is by poor me. I go the most of the time with, as it were, my head bowed down, and cannot look up; groping in the dark, and not able to find the light; shut up in a dungeon, and cannot come forth; enveloped in clouds, thick, gloomy, ominous and terrible, and am helpless to penetrate them; and seemingly, at least, or in my own experience, sinking down in weakness and death, feeling that strength and life are almost, if not quite gone. It seems to me that I am a signal, dismal and dreadful failure, both as to earthly things and heavenly; especially as one claiming a hope in Jesus, and more especially as a servant of Christ and his church, or as a recognized minister of the gospel of the grace of God. The language of the Spirit of Christ in the psalmist comes to me with great force, and the faint hope that

it may apply to me, because it suits me and describes my felt condition, gives me a little encouragement and comfort, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying; my throat is dried; mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty. Then I restored that which I took not away. O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee. Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake; let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel; because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face." But whether I have the right to take the foregoing for my own comfort or not, the Lord knows; but my own case is inscrutable to me. Notwithstanding my forlorn condition, the doctrine of sovereign, unfrustrable grace clings to me. Though I am vacillating and tempest-tossed, the doctrine of eternal election and absolute predestination holds me fast. Though I am such a miserable little nothing, and less than nothing, and such a discouraging failure of myself, yet the truth that the Lord is everything, and cannot fail in anything, because in him is fullness and perfection, in wisdom and power, love and mercy, justice and holiness, is my consolation and support. Grace to all the saints.

R. M. THOMAS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 3, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have felt for some time that I must write to the SIGNS, and have tried hard to get rid of that feeling; but I feel more so to-day than ever. I have had such a glorious feast that I desire to express myself in some way. It seems wonderful that such a poor, miserable, undeserving wretch as I am is permitted to enjoy the blessed gospel, and also to enjoy the company of the children of God. But I think I can say from the heart that I am never more happy than when I am in the company of the dear Old Baptists.

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

I sometimes feel so happy that I want to tell everybody of it; but I am not long in that frame of mind; and then I think, How can it be that I can feel so happy, being so undeserving? I have been led almost to despair at times. I very often feel that I have deceived the church; and if they could see and know me as I do myself, I think they never would have received me.

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,

How perplex'd is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he received from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waiv'd,
And his best resolutions be cross'd;

Nor can he expect to be perfectly sav'd,
Till he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assur'd

Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is sign'd and his peace is procur'd,
From that moment his conflict begins."

I think I have felt the force of the above hymn. How sweet it is to be brought to know that salvation is of the Lord, that Jesus is the Christ, that he died to save his people, and none others. He finished the work on Calvary.

"Tis finished! thus the Savior cried,
And meekly bowed his head and died."

Let mortal men try what they please, they cannot help in the work of salvation, which is by grace. I remember a time when I would be where there were Old Baptists, and how I longed to tell them that I loved them, but dared not do so, for fear of being questioned. I thought when I joined the church I could live without any more trouble, everything went on so smoothly for a time. But alas! I have been up hills and down valleys. When I was in and with other denominations I would not read the Bible much, for fear I would see something that would make me think as the Old Baptists did; but I soon found myself sweetly drawn by the cords of God's love. Now I could not part with my hope, for it is my all.

Brethren Beebe, I hope you will pardon me for sending these rambling thoughts. I sincerely hope I have not written anything that I have not felt. Do with this as you think best. If it will not crowd out better matter you may publish it, if you see fit. If not, cast it aside, and all will be right.

I am your sister, I hope,

AMY J. STOUT.

DANVILLE, N. Y., March 20, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS. Late as I am, it may be acceptable. I wish I could be as prompt and regular as the SIGNS is in coming to me. In my coldness it is a periodical reminder that there is a warmth of love for the truth within me, that glows with comfort and satisfaction as I peruse the precious communications which fill its columns. It is the only preaching I have; and while life lasts I hope to be able to glean crumbs of comfort and nourishment that fall from the spiritual storehouse of christian experience through the medium of its columns. One thing I notice: as one set of correspondents disappears, another set fills its place. But though the names are new, the doctrine is the same as all through the past fifty years that I have read the paper.

With assurance of continued christian love and fellowship, I remain, as ever, yours,

P. WEST.

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INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

BUSSEY, Iowa, Feb. 25, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have been a reader of your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for about eight years, and have not bothered you with questions, I now come to you by asking Elder William J. Purington whether the six days spoken of in the creation of the world, in the first chapter of Genesis, mean six days of twenty-four hours each, as we now count time, or does each day spoken of mean an unlimited period of time, as scientific men tell us? Also, does the word *day* mean the same in the first chapter of Genesis as it does elsewhere in the Scriptures?

By answering the above inquiries you will confer a favor upon one who desires to know the truth as it is in Jesus, if I know my own heart.

WILLIAM J. REEVES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1887.

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

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

GENESIS II. 7.

DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please give your views on the above text, and oblige an old sinner who wants to know the truth? When the Lord God formed man, was that man Adam? If so, did he receive an immortal principle? If all Adam's race possess an immortal principle, and some of them are punished, is that immortal, which is of God, to be punished? For he, Christ, was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Were not all of Adam's race, Jew and Gentile, under the law? Christ came "to seek and to save that which was lost;" was not all Adam lost?

Now, my dear brother Beebe, these questions are of grave importance with me. Please answer through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and oblige,

W. D. LEE.

LONG STATION, Miss., Jan. 10, 1887.

REPLY.

"AND the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

The subject involved in the above inquiries includes the whole doctrine of Christ; and without a correct understanding of these principles of the truth of the gospel the saints themselves can have no clear conception of the glory of that salvation from sin which is revealed experimentally to each of them in their own deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Neither our views nor those of any other finite mind are of any value in respect to this all-important matter. The revelation which God has been pleased to give by inspiration is all that can be known of it. Whatever theories have been devised outside this revelation, however their authors may be worthily esteemed, all must be at best merely "words without knowledge." Therefore, as the Lord may be graciously pleased to give ability, we desire to do better than comply with the request of our brother and fellow-sinner, by giving inspired truth.

The text quoted by our brother has been the subject of much caviling by those who have sought by reason to understand the system of salvation. Doubtlessly some very gifted ministers of Christ have fallen into this error, and thus not only destroyed their own usefulness in the ministry, but sadly bewildered many of the dear children of God, causing roots of bitterness springing up to trouble the church, and thereby many have been defiled. In the consideration of this important subject may we be directed exclusively by that Spirit who alone can guide the saints into all truth.—John xvi. 13. Although the words of the text to which our brother refers may be variously construed by those who would distort them to sustain their own favorite ideas, they are not liable to any such misconstruction when taken in con-

nection with the whole testimony of inspired Scripture, in which they are fitly spoken by the Holy Ghost. Very early in the record given us, a preacher began the work of denying the truth of what God had said. May we not be deceived by his doctrines, but rather let us heed alone the doctrine which the saints have learned. In thus examining the subject "Let God be true, but every man a liar."—Romans iii. 4. The Holy Spirit unquestionably moved the apostle Paul to speak the truth when he declared on Mars' hill, "God that made the world and all things therein, * * * hath made OF ONE BLOOD all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."—See Acts xvii. 24-28. If there were no other expression given, this inspired testimony must be received as conclusive. But the whole Scripture is in harmony with this fact. So again Paul wrote to the saints at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, saying that they all, and himself with them, had their conversation among the children of disobedience "in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature THE CHILDREN OF WRATH, EVEN AS OTHERS."—Eph. ii. 3. From this inspired testimony it is settled that in their nature as of the creation in the earth, the elect who were chosen to salvation in Christ, differed in nothing from other children of wrath. Indeed, the very passages to which our brother refers necessarily imply the same truth. If the elect were not involved in sin and death, then they were not lost, and Jesus did not come to seek and save them. But if none were under that just condemnation but those in whom the life of Christ should be manifested, then the serpent told the truth to Eve when he said, "Ye shall not surely die." But again Paul has settled this point also, saying, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. These plain declarations are sufficient to establish the unity of the family of man in Adam as the father of all living, as Eve was their mother.—Gen. iii. 20. To the first question then of our brother, we answer that the man whom the Lord God formed "dust of the ground," as in the marginal reading of the text, is the same whom he created in his image after the likeness of God, as stated in the preceding chapter. The creation was first in order, and afterward he was formed; just as in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth which was afterward formed, for it is said that "the earth was without form and void" after it was created. If we are asked to explain this differ-

ence between creation and formation, we are free to confess that we are not competent to do it; but in accepting the positive declaration of God as truth we are not bound to explain what he has not defined. So God says, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."—Isa. xlv. 7. That which God has created may be "without form and void," but what he has formed, or made, has a definite form. If we could know what creation is, and how matter is brought into existence from nothing, it would be one step toward comprehending what is written concerning the work of God "in the beginning." Our minds cannot grasp the thought of creation as God has revealed it; but that fact no more leads to the denial of its truth than our inability to gaze upon the noon-day sun disproves the existence of natural light. The events related in the first five chapters of the book of Genesis are of more momentous importance than all the volumes of uninspired records which have ever been written. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the mere letter of the record may be unintelligible to the natural mind; but it is even to reason an inconceivable mystery that so much is concisely recorded there, which the wisdom of man but dimly learns in thousands of years of intense study. All this, however, is but the shadow of the true import of this wonderful revelation. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" and that prophecy includes all the inspired Scriptures.—2 Tim. iii. 16. By reference to "the book of the generations of Adam" it will be seen that it is said that "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. It is very important to observe that the purpose of God to make man in his own image was declared to be accomplished only after the transgression had brought man under the curse. Then "the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."—Gen. iii. 22. So Paul says of Adam that he "is the figure of him that was to come." Thus even in the creation and formation of man, as also in all that is written of him, there is but a type of Christ in his unity with his body, the church. Without the work of the serpent, would the figure have been complete?

To the question of immortality in the first Adam, we would not dare give an answer as our opinion or view. It is answered directly and with irresistible power by the apostle, who says in that most solemn charge to Timothy, speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who ONLY HATH IMMORTALITY, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."—1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. There

was no immortality in man as he stood in the garden the good creature of God. If he had been immortal he could not have died; hence the fact that he did fall under sin and death proves conclusively that he had not that deathless principle in himself. But the fact that the Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life only constituted the man whom he had formed "dust of the ground" "a living soul." "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living-soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."—1 Cor. xv. 45. By reference to the thirtieth verse of the chapter preceding our text it will be seen that the original text, as in the marginal reading, ascribes "a living soul" to the beasts, fowls, and creeping things. It will not be claimed that these have immortality. Evidently the natural vitality which made this dust an animated being is what is meant by the term "a living soul," as used in the text. The perpetual existence of the enemies of truth and righteousness is nowhere in the Scriptures called immortality; but it is called "the second death" (Rev. xx. 14), and "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."—Jude 7. That immortality which is the life of the saints in Christ Jesus can no more suffer punishment than God himself can suffer, for it is not subject to sin and death. All the suffering of the saints is in their relation to and identity with the earthly Adam, who was and is mortal, as is manifest in the universal reign of death. By experience every one who is alive in Christ can testify with David that in the presence of the Lord there is fullness of joy. At the appearing of our triumphant Redeemer sorrow and pain are turned into joy unknown to nature. In gloomy darkness the saints cry unto God for light; but when the Lord reveals his gracious presence for their deliverance, that very darkness glows with the radiance of eternal day in confirmation of their hope in Christ, assuring them by the fellowship of his sufferings that they are one with him in his glorious victory over all sin and pain. Thus is his prayer fulfilled in them as he said, "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."—John xvii. 24. Only through the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made conformable unto his death, do any know the Lord Jesus in the power of his resurrection.—Phil. iii. 10, 11.

In the reference to the text Galatians iv. 5, our brother has but to read the immediate context to see what law is spoken of, and who are the subjects of the redemption. If the law was intended to signify that commandment whose violation brought sin and death upon all men, there would have been no necessity of specifying that the Son of God was made under that law, for that was necessarily included in his being made of a woman. The law specified in the text was given four hundred and

thirty years after the promise to Abraham.—See Galatians iii. 16, 17. When Jesus Christ came in the flesh he was made under that Mosaic law, to redeem them that were under that law. In the Scriptures there are many different laws mentioned; and they are not to be confounded, or mistaken one for another. The law whose advocates had bewitched the Galatian churches was that law which was given to national Israel with the seal of circumcision. Certain men which came from Judea had taught that salvation was impossible except they were circumcised after the manner of Moses. But Paul testified to them that by that rite they became debtors to do the whole law, that is, the law of Moses. That law could not give life, and therefore righteousness could not be by that law. It was only our school-master unto Christ. By its perfect requirements the sinfulness of sin appeared. It was added because of transgressions; and by it is the knowledge of sin.—Rom. vii. 7. The elect people of God among that nation to whom the law was given on Sinai, were as powerless to fulfill its perfect demands as they were to deliver themselves from condemnation in Adam; therefore the Son of God was made under that law to redeem them that were under that law. He came down to the depth of condemnation where they were, that he might redeem them.

The word "redeem" has a definite signification. It is not possible that any original title should be acquired by redeeming property; nor can any one but the original owner redeem anything. This was clearly shown in the law of Moses; and the same principle is maintained in all natural laws in administering justice. A sheep taken in trespassing upon the land of a neighbor may be redeemed by his owner; but if that owner does not redeem the sheep, no other can do so. If another man should pay for all the damage done by the sheep, it would give him no title to the property. This was specially provided for in the typical law of Moses.—See Lev. xxv. Then, it seems evident that they whom Christ Jesus redeemed by the sacrifice of himself were his own people, who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Of his original title to them he says in his prayer to the Father, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me."—John xvii. 6. As they are not their own, they could not sell themselves beyond the power of the right of redemption in Christ Jesus. And that redemption does not embrace one sinner whose name is not written in the heaven of the everlasting covenant by the sovereign electing love of God. The fact that all the children of the first Adam are involved in the condemnation and death which passed upon all in him for their sin in him, does not constitute any claim upon the grace of God in salvation. It is true that Jesus came to save sinners; but it is not true that all sinners are included in

that salvation. He saved exclusively "his people from their sins." Hence he did not buy a people who were not his; nor did the sacrifice of himself give him the original title to them whom he redeemed; nor could one more or one less than "his own sheep" be included in "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." It is clearly declared that Jesus did this to the uttermost in being made a curse for us. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." It is too plain for argument that this does not include those who are said to be still under the curse which yet hangs over all those who are of the works of the law; but all who are of faith are thus blessed with faithful Abraham. They exclusively are redeemed as the consequence of that blessing which was not according to their merits, but "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, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. i. 4-6. Thus it is clear that they were not redeemed *for being sinners*, but because of the electing love of God, which ordained that they should by the blood of Jesus Christ be cleansed from all sin. If all who were under the condemnation of the law were redeemed, then there was no election in the matter; since to elect involves the selection of a portion only of the whole, while it is plain that the curse of the law rests upon all men, for that all have sinned in their natural father Adam. Hence death reigned from Adam to Moses, though no child of Adam ever had the opportunity to sin by eating the forbidden fruit; and as no other law was given before Moses, there was no possibility that any one could transgress in the similitude of Adam's transgression.

In the final question submitted by our brother, "Was not all Adam lost?" there is the same fallacy which seemed to perplex him in the text of which we have just written. It is not said by inspiration that "all Adam" was lost; and before we can accept the expression it must be known just what is intended by its use. If it is meant to say that in Adam all die, then he is certainly correct in that position; but it is explained by our Lord to what lost characters he was sent. "But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. xv. 24. These are defined again by Paul, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 29. Thus the lost whom he came to seek and to save were none but his own chosen people. These were all found and perfectly saved in his sufferings and death, in which he bore their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he

hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."—Isa. liii. 10-12.

We have endeavored concisely as possible to answer candidly the questions of our brother. We certainly have fellowship for him in claiming to be "an old sinner." For almost half a century the hope which alone has sustained us has been in that grace of God which brings salvation to lost sinners; and it is inexpressibly precious to know experimentally that God hath exalted our risen Jesus "with his right hand a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." If what we have written is of any comfort or profit to our brother or any reader, the glory and grace is all of the Lord. To him therefore would we render unceasing praises in time and in eternity, for he is the Author and Finisher of our salvation, as well as of our faith.

BACK NUMBERS.

WE have discontinued the sending of back numbers to the first of the volume to new subscribers, unless so requested. We still have some of each number on hand, and those new subscribers who so desire may have the back numbers by stating that they desire them.

CHURCH NOTICES.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish that hereafter the Shiloh Church, in Washington, D. C., will hold their meetings at a hall, No. 209 Pennsylvania Avenue, S. E. There will be preaching on each fourth Sunday at 3:30 p. m., and prayer meeting on each second Sunday at the same hour. Any one visiting Washington upon those Sundays is invited to meet with us.

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March, 1887.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMIANS,

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

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her home in Linn County, Iowa, Oct. 1, 1886, Mrs. Ellen Whitenack, daughter of our dear brother W. S. Gott, in the thirtieth year of her age. Her disease was consumption. She had never made a public profession of religion, but left every evidence of having received a hope in Jesus a good while before her death. The Old School Baptist Church was her choice of a place to go to meeting. She said it always seemed like home to go there. I think if our dear pastor, Elder James M. True, had been here during the last years of her life, she would have had courage to perform her duty. The last time she was here at meeting she was very feeble. She stayed all night with us, and said to me, "Aunt Martha, I like to hear all the Baptists preach, but it does not seem right to go to that meeting house and not see or hear Mr. True preach." She was a faithful wife and mother, a loving friend and a most dutiful daughter. I never saw a child so much attached to their father as she always was (her mother having died in her childhood), and from her youth up what her father said was just and right with her. In her last sickness her father staid beside her bed day and night for many weeks. She did not seem satisfied if he was out of her sight a moment. No one could do to please her as he could, and he did all in his power to make her last days comfortable. She leaves a husband, three children (one sweet babe having preceded her), her father, one brother, her step-mother and several half-sisters and brothers, with many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss; but we mourn not as those without hope, for we feel that her heavenly Father has only taken his own. We feel to say, God gave, and he took. He doeth all things well.

She requested that Elder Robert Speir should preach at her funeral. He was sent for, but being away from home he could not get here at that time, but came the first Sunday in November, and preached a very comforting discourse to the sorrowing relatives and friends.

ALSO,

DIED—At the home of her adopted daughter, near Center Point, Linn Co., Iowa, Feb. 10, 1887, sister Sarah Lavery, at the age of seventy-seven years, ten months and twenty-seven days. Sarah Martin was born near Dayton, Ohio, in 1809, and lived there until seventeen years of age, when with her parents she moved to Boone Co., Indiana. She was married to James Lavery in 1845, and with her husband moved to Linn County, Iowa, some time in 1850, where she lived until she died. She experienced a hope in Jesus in her young days, and joined the Old School Baptist Church of Christ called Walnut Creek, in Montgomery County, Indiana. She was baptized by Elder John Lee. She received a good letter in 1858, and with others was in the constitution of the Green's Grove Old School Baptist Church, in Linn County, Iowa, in March, 1859, where she remained a loved and honored member until released by death. She was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and would have nothing to do with the isms of the day. She was sick over a year before she died. She had no particular disease, but a combination of diseases, and a gradual breaking up of the whole system. She said in her last days that she could see her way brighter every day. As her poor body grew weaker, her faith seemed to expand, and her hope in the crucified and risen Savior to become brighter and brighter. She leaves her aged companion almost heart-broken, and her adopted daughter (Mrs. W. H. Stewart), and the little band of brethren and sisters, with many friends and acquaintances, to mourn. But we feel to say, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." Our little band here at Green's Grove are going one by one. Our number diminishes year by year. But we know that we are in the hands of an all-wise God, that he rules all things after the counsel of his own will, and that his decrees are just and immutable. May God bless this dispensation of his providence to the bereaved ones, is the prayer of the writer.

ALSO,

DIED—At his residence, six miles north of

Marion, Iowa, Feb. 28, 1887, **Theodore Vandyke**, aged seventy-six years, nine months and seventeen days. Brother Vandyke was, I think, born in Dark Co., Ohio, May 11, 1810, and with his parents moved to Johnson Co., Indiana, when he was a boy, and settled near a place called Greenwood. He experienced a hope in Jesus when he was about nineteen years of age. We find, by referring to his letter, that he belonged to the Old School Baptist Church called Mt. Gilead, in Indiana, and that J. A. Kemper was Moderator, and P. K. Parr Church Clerk. At the time he received his letter, in 1855, he moved to Iowa, and settled in Linn County, where he lived the remainder of his days. He was the last one living that was in the constitution of the Old School Baptist Church called Green's Grove, and now he is gone. He was here and stayed some two weeks with us last fall, and almost the last words he said to me were, that if it should be the Lord's will soon to call him home, he was more than willing to go to rest. He was very corpulent, and being old, was quite helpless, and was afraid of being in some one's way. Just three days after he left here he was stricken with paralysis, from which he never recovered, but lived until February, when he calmly passed away. I have been acquainted with him ever since I was a little girl, and thought as much of him as though a near relative. After I grew up and was married, he always seemed to enjoy himself very much in our house, particularly after he became so feeble. His case proves that God chooses whomsoever he will. Brother Vandyke was the only one in his father's family that belonged to the Old School Baptists. I have heard his mother say many times, "Well, I don't see why Theodore goes away off up there among those queer people, where they hold their meetings in a schoolhouse. He could come here to Marion and go to meeting with us in a nice building. But all I can say does no good." The dear old brother has gone home, and left one son and three daughters, with the church and many sorrowing friends behind.

MARTHA GOTTE.

TODDVILLE, Iowa, March 25, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request I send you for publication the obituary notice of brother **John Hogeland**, who departed this life August 10, 1886, in the fifty-third year of his age. He was a dear and highly esteemed member of the church in this place, and held the office of deacon. Concerning his character and the estimation in which he was held as a man, a citizen, and as a friend, I could not speak too highly. At his funeral the large meeting-house was filled to overflowing with mourning relatives, brethren and friends, who gave earnest attention while I tried to preach the gospel to them, using as a text 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. Our departed brother was clear and decided in his convictions and understanding of the truth; and while he was very backward in regard to giving any public expression of his exercises, it was manifest to those most intimate with him that they were very strong and deep. He felt greatly his weakness and unworthiness, but the interests of the church and the welfare of the brethren appeared to be uppermost in his mind. For some time previous to his sickness, on returning from meeting he would engage in conversation with his wife upon experimental things, and sometimes with an intimate friend or two. He began building a large barn in the spring, and that with his other business occupied his time very closely, and seemed to absorb his mind. But from the time he was taken with his last sickness he did not seem to be at all anxious or worried about the work, although it still went on under his direction. I visited him frequently, and once remarked that it seemed wonderful that he could feel so calm and free from anxiety about his work. He said it was not natural. His naturally nervous and energetic disposition appeared to be quite changed. He spoke to me freely of his hope, and told me more than ever before of his experience. His five sons, one of whom was summoned from the distant west, were with him, five children having preceded him to the grave. His faithful wife seldom left

his bedside. I will now give an extract from a letter of brother John Fenton.

"The last we were together previous to his last sickness, after returning from a conference meeting of brethren, he spoke of the hymn, 'My God, the spring of all my joys,' and especially of the line, 'And whispers, I am his' (No. 990, Beebe's Collection), with much feeling and interest. He read the second chapter of Ephesians, and repeated the words, 'And that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,' and said, 'I know one who had nothing to do with it. It is all of grace. I hope I know the way; but what a poor, weak creature I am.' I visited him in his last sickness, and it was very clear that God was weaning him from earth, his disposition in all earthly things being entirely changed, and the love of God shining through in his expressions and countenance. When he bade me good-by, he sent love to my wife (his wife's sister), and said, 'I hope you may be blessed with the presence of your Savior. He is not confined to any particular place, but can meet with you in your present home as well as when you were here, with the people you love, and can meet with me here.'"

In the death of our dear brother, the church, and I personally, have sustained a loss that is deeply felt, though I hope that we are enabled to rejoice while we mourn. To his family the bereavement in the loss of an affectionate husband and a tender, careful father was and is a sore affliction. The Lord has been merciful and gracious to our dear sister in giving her a spirit of humble submission to his will, and of thankfulness and praise to his dear and holy name for his wonderful and many mercies and rich grace manifested to her dear companion and to herself. May the sons, who are thus left fatherless, be favored to know the saving grace that sustained their dear father under all his trials, and in the solemn hour of death.

Your brother in the hope of the gospel,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 17, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I am now called upon to perform the painful duty of chronicling the death of our beloved brother, **John N. Mangum**, who departed this life March 16, 1887.

The subject of this obituary was born Jan. 13, 1827, in Gibson Co., Ind., where he was well and favorably known during all his life. He was married to Matilda Williams, Jan. 4, 1849. The fruit of this happy union was nine children born unto them, six of whom, with their mother, survive their father. In the month of February, 1861, he professed a hope in the Savior, and became a member of Big Creek Regular Baptist Church, and was baptized on a profession of his faith the following October. He served the same church as deacon faithfully and in great credit to the church for about fifteen years. He devoted much of his time in visiting among churches, and attending associations, and was considered by the Baptists worthy. He was known as a safe counsellor and peace-maker in times of trouble and difficulty among the brethren. The Lord had blessed him with a talent for singing that always rendered him acceptable among the brethren, either on occasions of public worship or in the social circle. I think I have never heard him surpassed as a singer. Brother Mangum was of that genial, social, unassuming turn that always endeared him to all who should be so happy as to become acquainted with him. It is admitted by all who knew him, either in the church or out of it, that he lived the life of an exemplary christian; that his life was an ornament to the profession he had espoused. The cause of religion seemed to be paramount to everything else with him. His life was devoted to the interest and welfare of his church. He was in every respect a high-minded, noble christian gentleman. But, as dearly as we had all learned to love him, we are now called on to give him up. Sad as this is, we can but say, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." In the death of brother Mangum the church sustains a great loss. The country is afflicted in the loss of one of its best citizens, and our dear sister Mangum is bereaved of a loving and faithful companion. The children, two of whom are

members of the same church he was, and a third one a member of another denomination, have sustained the loss of a dear and affectionate father. While we greatly deplore the loss of our departed brother, it is a source of great comfort and satisfaction that his life was well worthy the imitation of us all. He died of pneumonia fever, rather suddenly and unexpectedly. We humbly hope and trust that he has closed his eyes upon a world of sin and sorrow, difficulties and disappointments, to open them upon the paradise of God.

His funeral was one of the largest ever witnessed in this country. He was surrounded by a host of warm personal friends, who are left to mourn, together with the church and his bereaved family. The funeral sermon was delivered by Elder Joel Hume, from Job xiv. 14. In the remarks of this venerable brother we were made to look beyond to the time of the restoration of the dead bodies to a state of immortality and eternal life. After the funeral discourse the body was interred beneath the sod, to await the summons when the last trump of God shall sound, and he will be awakened to enjoy perfect bliss forever.

LEMUEL POTTER.

CYNTHIANA, Ind., March 25, 1887.

George McColloch Sr., died Thursday, August 5, 1886, aged ninety-six years, three months and four days. He was born in Ohio County, Virginia, May 1, 1790. His father was a soldier in the Revolutionary war, and an uncle, Major McColloch, served with distinction in the same war and became famous as an Indian fighter in the struggles succeeding the Revolution.

In the year 1800 the father of George McColloch removed with his family to Columbus, Ohio. After a short residence there, the family moved to this county and took up their residence on the land near Zanesfield, where the subject of this sketch has since made his home.

In June, 1809, George McColloch was married to Nancy Henry, and twelve children were the result of this union. Of this number only four sons survive the father. The mother died in December, 1869, aged seventy-eight years.

George McColloch served through the war of 1812. In his early manhood he identified himself with the Baptist Church. In the capacity of an itinerate preacher he traveled through central Ohio, and did much to strengthen and enlarge the church of his choice. For many years past his home has been the resort of those holding the Old Baptist faith, and in these gatherings he has endeavored to preach the truth as he understood it.

Possessed of the means to provide for the wants of his declining days, he spent the last thirty years of his life traveling through the county, visiting his children, relatives and friends. His visits were always welcome, and I well remember how the younger people of his acquaintance vied with one another in rendering him assistance and attending to his wants. He drew young people to him, and had a fund of stories to amuse and instruct them.

To him, and to others like him, Ohio is indebted for her growth. We, of this generation, should always hold dear the memory of the pioneers. He was amiable in disposition, earnest in his convictions, godly in his life, and the influence of that life, extending almost through a century, will long be felt in the community where he lived. In the death of this venerable man, Logan County loses one of her earliest settlers and her oldest citizen. All that was mortal of the aged pioneer was laid to rest by the side of his beloved wife in the Old Baptist burying ground at Tharp's Run, on Saturday, August 7.

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, March 2, 1887, **Mrs. Sarah E. Jellison**, wife of Moses Jellison, aged fifty-six years. She gave good evidence that she was a child of God, but never united with the church on earth. She was an Old School Baptist in belief, and took great interest in our meetings. She was confined to her bed some months, and at the first said she wanted to get well enough to go and hear me preach once more; but when she

saw it could not be so, she said it was all right. She was willing to die, and longed for the time to come, to be eternally at rest. She has left her husband, eight children, two sisters and many relatives to mourn. A large number of people attended her funeral.

ALSO,

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, Jan. 21, 1887, **Mr. Thomas Bennet**, aged about eighty-two years. His wife died about one year before. He was a fine man, and they raised a family of fine children. He never made an open profession of hope in Christ, but we have hope that he was born of God. He left children and many relatives and friends to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, Jan. 29, 1887, **Mr. Rufus Welch**, aged about forty-nine years. His wife was a daughter of the above named Thomas Bennet. I married them about twenty-five years before his death. They raised six children, two of them now married. He did not openly profess a hope in Christ, but told his oldest child, a son, that something told him a year or so before his death that he would soon die, and that peace would be unto him; but by his request his son did not tell of it until he was dead. He was a kind husband, father and neighbor. He bade his wife and children good-by, and then said, "Peace be unto me."

A large number of people attended his funeral.

These make nine funerals that I have preached at within about three months.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DIED—At her late residence near Occoquan, Va., Jan. 9, 1887, **Mrs. Martha A. Davis**, wife of John W. Davis, aged forty-seven years, three months and twenty-five days. The deceased died of dropsy. She was the mother of eight children, six of whom survive her, with her husband, to mourn their loss.

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

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

HER CHILDREN.

OCOQUAN, Va., March, 1887.

ON October 13, 1886, death visited the family of J. B. and Lizzie Young, and tore from their bosom a little two-year-old boy. He was a grandson of H. J. and Nancy C. Young.

Little **Lewis Young** was a very sprightly boy, seemingly older than his years, and was loved by all who knew him. To his fond parents we would say, Think of him as free from sorrow and pain, a bright angel in the realms above, and be comforted.

'Tis hard to part from one so loved,
But God, who knoweth best,
Causes the fairest of the flowers
To droop and wither first.

HARDINSVILLE, Ky.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

Wm Gore 2 50, J H Harris 2, T F Simmons 2, T W Pender 2 50, J Shelton 2, S W Eastes 2, Hannah Brewer 2 50, Wm L Nance 15, W F Hogarth 2, B Stripling 2 50, T H Marshall 2, Edward Vernulney 2, John Graham 2 50, Fred W Keene 2 50, D McCall 2, Wm L Nance 13 50, J T Campbell 5, W T Everitt 8, W C Trevathan 2, P A Walker 2, John Harmon 2, H H Hartley 2, Judge S G Sharp 2 50, Mrs C A Worthington 2, Wm Metcalf 2 50, B M Beamon 2 50, Amy Shaddick 2.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

J B Dawson 50c, Warren Woodard 50c, J R Money 34c.—Total \$93 34.

THREE DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with Sidling Hill Church of Old School Baptists, by Elders White and Chick, to commence on Friday, April 29, and continue over Sunday. We extend an invitation to all who may desire to meet with us at that time, especially those in the ministry. The church is twenty miles from Hancock, Md., the nearest railroad station. Any persons intending to come will please write to Abimaaz Mellott, or brother Dennis Mellott, in time so that they can be met at Hancock on Thursday, about the middle of the day. The post-office address of the above brethren is Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next session of the Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Warren Church, Baltimore Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (18th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent Co., Del., to begin on Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May (25th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (1st), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Walkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (8th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (15th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of eastern Oregon and Washington Territory will meet this year with Big Spring Church, near Summerville, Union Co., Oregon, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, at 11 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with the church at Van Buren, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 10, 1887.

Those coming on the Nickel Plate R. R. will stop at Stuartsville. Those coming from the west on the B. & O. R. R. will stop at North Baltimore. Those coming from the east will stop at Bairdstown. Those coming from the north or south on the Toledo & Findlay R. R. (T., C. & S.) will stop at Van Buren. The above trains will be met on Thursday, June 9th, and the writer will meet and care for those who stop at Arcadia. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

THE Turkey River Association is appointed to be held (God willing) with the Otter Creek Church, in Black Hawk County, Iowa, ten miles northeast of Waterloo, to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in June (4th), 1887, and continue three days.

Friends and brethren who will favor us with their presence will be met on Friday, June 3, in Waterloo. Should any be delayed on the way, they may inquire in Waterloo for Paul Sohner or John Garrett, both living four and one-half miles northeast of Waterloo.

PAUL SOHNER.

SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1887.

NO. 9.

POETRY.

SUPPLICATION.

THOU mighty God and King
Who reigns supreme above,
O condescend to bring
Some tokens of thy love,
To one who would thy constant care,
Thy favors and thy blessings share.

Thou never-failing Friend,
Help me my griefs to bear,
Thy Holy Spirit send
To chase away all fear;
May I from every creature flee,
And take my sorrow, Lord, to thee.

However dark the way
Till all my course is run,
Teach me, O Lord, to say,
"Father, thy will be done."
My all to thee may I resign,
Assure me, Lord, that I am thine.

At last may I be found
Among that happy band,
And join to sing thy praise
In glory's happy land.
Safe landed there from toil and pain,
Forevermore with thee to reign.

THE END OF THE WAY.

My life is a wearisome journey,
I'm sick with the dust and the heat;
The rays of the sun beat upon me,
The briars are wounding my feet;
But the city to which I am journeying
Will more than my trials repay;
And the toils of the road will seem nothing
When I get to the end of the way.

The hills that I have to climb over,
Make me weary and longing for rest;
But he who appoints me my pathway
Knows just what is needful and best.
I know in his Word he has promised
That my strength shall be as my day;
And the toils of the road will seem nothing
When I get to the end of the way.

He loves me too well to forsake me,
Or give me one trial too much;
All his people have dearly been purchased,
And Satan can never claim such.
By and by I shall see him and praise him
In the city of unending day;
And the toils of the road will seem nothing
When I get to the end of the way.

When the last feeble step has been taken,
And the gates of the city appear,
And the beautiful songs of the angels
Float out on my listening ear;
When all that now seems so mysterious
Will be plain, and clear as the day;
Yea, the toils of the road will seem nothing
When I get to the end of the way.

Though now I am footsore and weary,
I shall rest when I'm safely at home;
For I hope to receive a glad welcome,
As the Savior himself has said, "Come."
So when I am weary in body,
And sinking in spirits, I say,
All the toils of the road will seem nothing
When I get to the end of the way.

Cooling fountains are there for the thirsty,
There are cordials for those who are faint,
There are robes that are whiter and purer
Than any that nature can paint.
Then help me, dear Lord, to press onward,
Thinking often through each weary day,
That the toils of the road will seem nothing
When I get to the end of the way.

Gospel Standard.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Feb. 18, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Not long since I noticed an editorial from the pen of a Primitive Baptist which so startled me that I have felt an impression ever since reading it to write upon the same subject. The writer was writing upon the text found in Romans viii. 28: "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." The writer seemed to labor hard to prove that the "all things" spoken of in this portion of Scripture only had reference to all good things, and that it had no reference to evil things; that evil things could not possibly work together for good to the people of God, &c.

Now, dear brethren, I feel confident that the "all things" here recorded means just what it says, "all things;" and we have only to refer to the inspired testimony of apostles and prophets to substantiate this truth. It is recorded by an inspired man that "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Shall we say that the Lord has only made some things, even good things, for himself, &c.? It is recorded by an apostle that "All things are of God." Shall we say, Some (good) things are of God? I believe that when the Scriptures say "all things" they mean all things. When they say "all these things," the particular things are thus specified. Now let us turn our attention to the Scriptures of eternal truth, and see if we cannot find corroborative testimony to the fact that evil things as well as good things have worked together "for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I suppose that all recognize the transgression of Adam as an evil thing, together with all its long train of consequences. The introduction of sin into the world was the very beginning of the manifestation of all evil, from which all subsequent evil has resulted; and yet I feel sure that even this, with all other things, has and will work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. It is true, as the apostle saith, that "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," &c. The result of Adam's transgression is sickness, sorrow, pain, trials, tribulations, persecutions and death; but do not these very same things "work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?" The transgression of Adam

was an evil thing, and yet without this we should not have been sinners; and without being sinners we could not be saved. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." We must be sick before we can be healed. The ten lepers must have leprosy before they can be cleansed. Sorrow precedes joy. Tribulations, trials and persecutions, and even death, must all come before the final entrance of the saints into everlasting rest in eternal glory. After all the evil consequences of Adam's transgression, are they not among the things that "work together for good to them that love God?" The slaying of Abel by his brother Cain was a very evil thing (even murder in the first degree); but where is the child of God that has not often looked back to that period of the world's history with joy, when he remembers that "He being dead, yet speaketh?" Consequently the killing of Abel by Cain was among the things that must "work together for good to them that love God."

We will now pass to the children of Israel. It was an evil thing in Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt, and yet it was among the things that worked together for good, even to those who sold Joseph into Egypt; and all the things connected with Joseph's exile in Egypt, the shameful treatment he received at the hands of Potiphar's wife, and his imprisonment, were all working together for good to them that love God. And more than this, these things were embraced in the purpose of God. David committed an evil in putting Uriah in the hottest of the battle that he might be slain, in order that he might get his wife for his own wife; and yet these things were among the things that work together for good. The casting of Daniel into the lions' den, and the three Hebrew children into the fiery furnace, although evil in themselves, and most atrocious deeds, yet who will say that these evil things did not "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose?" The saints to this day can look back to trials, persecutions and afflictions, and take comfort in the thought that their God is with them even in the fiery furnace of affliction and in the lions' den. Only a few days ago I was reading the account of the casting of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into the fiery furnace; and when I came to the place where it is said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God,"

my soul was filled with joy, and I could hardly contain myself, or suppress the emotions of my heart. I was here made to realize experimentally that the Son of God is with his people even in the midst of the fiery furnace.

We might go on and refer to various evil things that are recorded in the Old Testament, and show conclusively that they were among the things that work together for good. We now come to the New Testament, and shall merely call the reader's attention to the slaying of the children in Bethlehem by Herod. This was an evil thing in Herod, and yet it was among the things that "work together for good," and no less embraced in the purpose and predestination of God; for a prophet had said, "In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children," &c. We now come to the terrible things connected with the betrayal and crucifixion of the Son of God, who walks in the "midst of the fiery furnace," and also "walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." O what evil things were these, concocted and put into execution! and yet these things were among the very things that were working together "for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." They were things which were "according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God"—"according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself." With what unerring certainty does the eternal and all-wise God make the wrath of man to praise him; and how completely does he overrule the wicked actions and designs of men, and bring to naught their wicked devices. Dear, trembling saint, can you not look back to all the evil things connected with the sufferings of Christ, and take comfort in the thought that these things were among the things that were working together for your good? Then turn to Paul in chains, and brought before Felix; see him as he goes bound in chains as a prisoner to Rome; and all this that he might preach the gospel "to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We might also refer to John's exile to Patmos, "for the word of God;" and how plainly we can see that his exile and sufferings were among the things that must work together for good to the poor and afflicted people of God. I might go on and mention many other things that are recorded for our comfort and instruction, but I suppose the foregoing will suffice.

I now want to come down to my own personal experience, and things that have come under my own personal knowledge within the past three or four years. Four years ago I belonged to a church with which my whole soul, mind and strength were bound up. So strong was my attachment for this church that I cared not to go anywhere else on their meeting days, although it was seventeen or eighteen miles from me, and four other ordained preachers belonged to the same church. Suddenly Satan sowed the seeds of discord among us. Persecution, slander, vituperation, prejudice and jealousy raged to a fearful extent, and the dear children of God were made to mourn, weep and groan. As to myself, I was brought down from a hale, hearty man of one hundred and eighty-five pounds to a mere skeleton, and the subject of a terrible nervous affection, from which I have no hope of recovery. My troubles and afflictions have been incessant almost ever since, and a great portion of the time seemingly more than I could endure. Many were the evil things said and done during this (to me) terrible trouble; but I have always believed that these were among the things that would eventually "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." My troubles drove me from that church, and in my afflictions I lay down, as I thought, to die and to perish. O the anguish of soul that I endured! I felt to be a "castaway," without a friend on earth or in heaven. My pen here falters and my tongue fails in the attempt to find language to even faintly express my sore troubles and afflictions; but out of them all the Lord has delivered me, and I have a faint hope that he will "preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom." Bless his holy name, I believe I have been made to realize that all these things were working together, not only for my good, but for the good of many others. After passing through many trials and afflictions, and feeling like one alone, and becoming so badly afflicted that I was not able to do any work, nor to go anywhere to meet with the people of God, I employed a brother, whom I had formerly baptized, to come and attend to my business for me. At that time there were only two other Primitive Baptists here beside myself and wife. The brother whom I employed came to work for me, and finally moved here; and he and his wife both being members, this brought two more to our town. At that time I was just able to walk backward and forward to town. About this time brother C. B. Welch, of Jersey City, New Jersey, sent me a box of drugs to sell. I rented a small shanty, and there I put my drugs, being just able to stay there during the day and sell to any one that wished to purchase. I subsequently added some few groceries to my stock, but became so feeble that I had to take to my bed. I then wrote to my brother (in the flesh), who at that time resided in Mississippi, to come and go in with me.

About the first of November, 1885, he came, and this brought two more Baptists to our town. My brother and I went into co-partnership; and after overcoming many obstacles, and passing through much tribulation, of which I forbear to speak, we succeeded in getting Elder J. T. Stewart, of the Mt. Moriah Association, with us, and we constituted a church of five members. I then put in my letter, which made us number six. I will not attempt to speak of the many trials and troubles we have had, and the opposition we have met from avowed enemies and pretended friends. It is enough to say that many have been the evil things that have been said and done; and our little church has often since its constitution (about one year ago) been seemingly in imminent peril, and threatened with destruction. But I have always felt that "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?" Blessed be his holy name, he has said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." To-day we are in peace and union; and since our constitution we have received four more, making our number now ten in all, with good prospects for more. I was permitted to bury one beneath the waves last Sunday, a week ago, the first one that I have baptized since I was taken sick.

My brother and I continued in business together till about October last, at which time we so disagreed that we separated. About this time real estate so advanced here that a brother Price, who lived two or three miles from town, sold his land and moved into town, and he and my brother went into business in Tuscaloosa, and also employed brother Champion as clerk. When my brother left me I was again at my wits' end. I knew not what to do, and there were hard feelings between us. Hard words had passed between us, and evil things were said and done; but the Lord came to my rescue in the shape of a man who is a lover of the truth, and this man became my partner in business, and has removed with his family to town. Then we found another lover of the truth, whom we employed, and he and his family are also living here; and to-day we have about nine Primitive Baptist families living here in Northport. We have services nearly every Sunday at some one of our houses, and also have a house of worship framed, and will soon have it where we can use it. Now, dear brethren, I know assuredly that many evil things have been said and done, which have caused trouble and sorrow; but to-day I do feel that even these evil things were among the things that were working together for our good; and I do feel that the great God has overruled all these things, and made them subserve his all-wise purpose. I do not charge God with folly. He is just and righteous in all that he does. "Justice and judgment are

the habitation of his throne." But "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 do wish above all things that I could take everything patiently, and wait for God to work "all things according to the counsel of his own will." I feel now that although I have been called to pass through many sore trials and afflictions, yet I have great reason to be thankful to my God that it is as well with me as it is. I would not be understood to encourage evil doings. God forbid. I would not say, "Let us do evil, that good may come." Not at all. But evil things do transpire; and as I have abundantly proved, even evil things are among the things that work together for good. The text does not say that all things work good, but that "All things work together for good to them that love God," &c. That is, all things work together for the good or benefit of the people of God, who are the called according to his purpose. I will now quote a passage of Scripture where the things intended are specified, and that is this: "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." Here are both good things and evil things mentioned, and the Lord declares that he forms, makes and creates them all.

I will now close this lengthy scribble. I have been scattering, but I hope I have not done violence to the subject. In all I do, think or say, I desire to "Ascribe greatness to our God."

Affectionately yours,

H. J. REDD.

POSEY, Va., March 29, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I promised my little friend, Dot. Woods, of Kentucky, together with many others of your readers, that I would give some of my reasons of a hope through the columns of your valuable paper; and now, after much delay, I will, by your permission, attempt to comply with those promises.

On the twelfth day of March, 1850, I was born of the flesh, and was flesh, as I am unto this day. That birth was according to the command of God to Adam and Eve, to multiply and replenish the earth. These progenitors being under the curse of a violated law, and I being in them when they transgressed that law, I, as one of their multiplied seed, was consequently manifested under this law and under its curse. In this birth I partook of the character and nature of depraved Adam, and was a child of wrath, and was darkness. Being of the earth, I was made to realize the life of the first Adam, who is of the earth, earthy; but now being privileged at times to entertain what I esteem as a good hope through grace, I trust that I have been made a partaker of the divine nature, which is from above, which is Christ in me the hope of glory. From all the evidences connected with my natural life

and character, and the likeness to those of mankind generally, I am confident of the fact that I have been born of the flesh, and am flesh, in my Adamic nature; and from the reasons which I am about to detail, I trust that I have been born again—born of God, or of the Spirit, in the divine nature, in which I have the life and fullness of Christ, whereby I am made to hope for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of my body, which shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ.

Now, my reasons of a hope within me are these. My boyhood days were filled up in the vanities of this life that are common to all in nature, until I was about grown, when I was suddenly brought, as I thought, nigh unto the gates of death by violent spasms. The thought rushed into my mind with much force, Suppose I had died in that condition, what would have become of me? I then felt for the first time in my life that I was a great sinner, and that my portion was with the nations that forget God if I died in that state. I immediately began to search for a way whereby I might escape the fearful flood of condemnation that seemed about to be sealed against me forever. The plan which I adopted was to drop off my bad habits, such as swearing, dancing, &c., and to try to do better, and to pray to the Lord for the forgiveness of my sins. These things I resolved to do; but to my great sorrow I could not keep my promise in anything that I resolved to do. I would swear at the least provocation, before I would think of the wrong or the promise that I had made to God to quit this ugly habit. I could not pray. I did not know how to pray. My words seemed to be full of sin, falling to the ground. My comrades would solicit me to join them as before in their amusements, whereupon on one occasion these words came to me with power, and before I thought I spoke them in reply to my young associates, "My son, when sinners entice thee, consent thou not." While I felt to be a great sinner, and could not see why I should thus speak, as though I were a son, yet I felt to heed the injunction, and that I must turn from these things. I desired to do better, but could not cease to do evil. When I tried to pray, my thoughts, like the fool's eye, were wandering to the ends of the earth, and were only evil, and that continually. In this condition I labored for some time, until finally I succeeded in making a kind of reformation, which I regarded as quite a good work; and my mind having become quiet, I settled down in a kind of rest and apparent ease. I thought now that I would try to pray every day, and would lead a better life in the future. In this I thought for some time that I was succeeding very well; but still I would find myself listening to christian people talk, and felt some desire to be like them, and would often leave the company of my young friends and seek that of the old people, that I might hear them talk, yet so as not to be noticed by them as being inter-

ested in their conversation. I desired to be like them, and thought I would be some day, but was not specially concerned as to how I should attain to that state, as I had been at times.

I remained in this condition until the first Sunday in June, 1873, when I went to hear Elder Owen Sumner preach, and spent the afternoon with him. During our conversation he asked me if I had not prayed; whereupon all my past life seemed in an instant to rise up before me, and the realization of the fact that I was a poor, miserable, condemned sinner so filled my heart with what I now trust was a sense of conviction for sin, that my eyes were filled with tears, so that all I could say was that I had tried. He asked me nothing more, but spoke of Jesus as the only way of life and salvation. My feelings for the next few days were such as I shall never be able to describe. I saw that I was in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, without God and without hope in the world, and without any reason to ever expect either. I saw that the course I had been pursuing in what I thought was profitable only tended to morality, which was good in its place, but could never reconcile me to God. I saw no way whereby I could be saved. Gross darkness seemed to settle upon me, and to fill my soul. I was shut out, I felt, from everything. Everything in nature seemed to be shrouded in gloom and despondency. Everything seemed to be out of season. O miserable boy that I was! There was no rest for me. I could not stop anywhere. I wandered over the fields and through the woods, trying to beg the Lord for mercy; but there seemed to be no mercy for me, and I realized that if mercy could not be extended I was gone forever. I saw no way by which mercy could be bestowed; but still the very breathings of my soul were in prayer to God for it. When I would try to pray my mind was so shut up that I could not think. My thoughts would not go from me when I could think. Finally, about the middle of the week, after I had retired, I was trying to beg the Lord for mercy, when all at once it seemed to me that my tongue was loosened, and my thoughts ran out in praise and thanksgiving unto God, and a calmness seemed to pervade my entire being. I soon fell asleep, and slept till morning, and when I arose everything was in its time and season, and was praising God. This was one of the happiest and brightest days of my life.

I remained in this delightful frame of mind until the following Saturday, which was the regular day of meeting at the church where my membership is, which meeting I attended, as I had been doing for some time. The preaching was good and the surroundings were lovely, like Solomon's chariot, which was paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem; and there was a glorious manifestation of love, peace and joy in the place. My mind enjoyed a degree of tranquility that is beyond description. When it

was announced that the door of the church was open for the reception of members, Elder Sumner remarked that the church at that place had been built up under his ministry, and that he had witnessed many refreshings there from the presence of the Lord in hearing many of his children tell what the Lord had done for them; that if it was the Lord's will, he would love to see one more ingathering before he left us, as he could not, according to nature, be with us much longer; that he believed there were some there who had something to tell of the dealings of the Lord with them; and that there was a certain young man whom he had been watching for some time who he believed could tell something (and it struck me that I was the man he referred to); whereupon he asked me if I did not have something to tell them. I never had known him to call upon any one before in that way. He did not ask me to join the church, but to tell my feelings, and that the church would act upon my case if I desired it to do so. I did not resolve to go forward, nor not to go, but as it was, I involuntarily went forward and told the church what I had seen and felt; during which time I became very desirous, if the church would receive me, to be with it. I requested the church to deal faithfully with me, for I did not know what I was. I was received, and baptism was deferred until next meeting. In a few days I began to realize a sense of uneasiness of mind, and dark clouds began to gather on the horizon of my mind. On and on they came, until the light seemed to be shut out, and all my joys were gone. My peaceful frame of mind was all broken up, and the thought rushed into my mind with great force, What have I done? I felt that I had done something without a parallel. I had joined the church without considering how important it was for one to be sure of the reality of the basis of his actions. I had made no decision in my case whether I was a christian or not. I had not had any doubts nor fears as to whether I was a christian. I had not been impressed to join the church nor to be baptized, and in fact I did not know that I was a christian. These thoughts so overwhelmed me that I readily concluded that I was deceived, and had deceived the church, and therefore I must not be baptized. I must have my name taken from the church book, and to do this I knew would cause the church to lose confidence in me, even as a man. Yet I could not live with such good people in this condition; and to live with the world, as I had in days gone by, I could not, for I had become dead to the world. I had been killed to sin, and fully realized that I could not live therein, and was not fit to live in the church. O what should I do! I had no place to stand upon, and could not remain there if I had. My feelings at this time I shall not attempt to describe. Of all the miserable boys in the world I was the most miserable. Finally it occurred to me that I would review my life,

which I did, and in tracing the way in which I had been led I came to the middle of the week before, when I had felt such deliverance, and I brought in this decision: I am not as I once was. I hate evil and its consequences, and I love the people of God and their fellowship. Whether I am a christian I know not, but one thing I do know, that whereas I was once blind, now I see; therefore I hope in the mercies of God. I then felt that I had a hope that my sins were pardoned. This was my first realization of the real character of a hope in Christ. Then I was again in my former standing, which was a broad place, and a new song was in my mouth, even praise unto God. I then felt that it was my duty to be baptized, so I went on and received that ordinance at the hands of my present beloved pastor, Elder Amos Dickerson, on the second Sunday in July, 1873.

I have given a brief sketch of what I hope the Lord in his abundant mercy has done for me, which is the reason of my hope in him. If the children of God can witness with me, the comfort be ours, and the Lord be praised.

P. G. LESTER.

ALBION, Ind., March 30, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The following is a lovely letter from our beloved and much afflicted sister, Mary Parker. I feel it will be a comfort to the readers of the SIGNS, as it has been to me, and so send it for publication.

EMMA L. SMITH.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, March 26, 1887.

DEAR SISTER:—I presume you, like others, have become discouraged in writing to one from whom you receive no response. I greatly miss your pleasant, cheerful letters; yet my condition has been such, my pain has been so great, that I could write no letters. Writing to no one, I seldom hear from any one, and the result is, I feel burdened, lonely, and like one forsaken, and am often annoyed with doubts and fears as to my interest in common in the blood-bought inheritance of the Lord's dear and chosen people. You requested me in your last letter to write my thoughts upon the portion of Scripture that reads thus, "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." How singular, dear Emma, that you should make such a request of me, who seems the very poorest, feeblest of the dear Shepherd's little flock, if one at all; who am so ignorant, and who has so long been deprived of the teachings of the blessed Scriptures as they are revealed to and taught by the Lord's faithful ministers and watchmen upon the walls of Zion. The passage to which you refer is found in Ephesians iv. 26. It would be well for all the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus to read the entire chapter over carefully and prayerfully, it matters not how often; for it abounds with useful instructions as to the walk and deportment of the followers of Jesus.

The dear apostle begins the epistle with an exhortation, earnest and fervent. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called; with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love." What anxiety the apostle here shows himself possessed of, that the saints should walk worthy of the high and important vocation wherewith they have been called, and that they grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption. That they "grieve not the Holy Spirit." How terrible the thought that we, poor, dependent creatures should grieve the Holy Spirit. How softly should we walk before him in love, in all lowliness and meekness, being careful of our walk, our actions and our conversation, that we grieve not our dear Lord and crucify our Savior afresh. O, my sister, how can we read the teachings of the New Testament and not be filled with a burning desire to walk worthy of the high and wonderful vocation wherewith we are called? The reading of the chapter in question fills me with such a multitude of conflicting thoughts and emotions that to arrange them on paper in an intelligible and satisfactory manner seems quite out of my reach. Memory takes me back to the happy, golden days when I was baptized, when

"On the wings of his love

I was carried above

All sorrow, temptation and pain."

And the almost unalloyed rapture of peace and bliss that came to me when I went down into the watery grave, was only surpassed by the dense darkness that soon after enveloped me, and seemed to effectually shut out every ray of light from the glorious Sun of Righteousness. I had thought to walk, O so softly. All sin, all earthly passions, seemed dead. But alas! how soon I knew they had but slumbered, to awake with renewed strength upon my startled senses. It was at this that the words, "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath," rested with great weight upon my mind, causing great disquiet and unrest. I was at this time young and inexperienced in everything. We (my father's family) fell into great domestic affliction. My mother became a helpless sufferer, my eldest brother lost his wife, bringing to our home two motherless little boys, who had whooping cough. I left school and assumed entire charge of the household. I had much care, that with my inexperience caused me often to feel and act irritable. In all the ignorance of babyhood my feet were continually slipping, and I was prone to look to self for help, instead of casting my burden on him who so tenderly promises to care for us. How Satan would come to me in cunning craftiness and strive to make me give up all for lost. How he would whisper in my ear, "Ah, you were such a fine christian, such a pious girl, hundreds of persons stood on the banks and saw you baptized,

with tears in their eyes. They thought you were changed, and believed you were redeemed; and O how you have deceived them and your dear father and mother." I could neither eat nor sleep, and I resolved to tell the dear saints at the next church meeting that I was deceived and had deceived them. But blessed be the name of Jesus, his footsteps were recognized upon the tempestuous waves, and his dear voice whispered, "Peace, be still," and I was enabled to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Never again, since that time, have the words, "Be ye angry," &c., seemed to me so like the rod of vengeance or correction, but more like an exhortation to a serene and christian deportment. All christians have alike their human weaknesses; but some seem naturally more given to fits of ill temper and anger. The mother with her many household cares, the training and care and burden of numerous offspring, has much to try her; her delicate organization becomes overstrained; she is nervous, irritable, and often angry. Such an one should be pitied and excused. But when we, with little or no provocation, give way to anger, and utter unjust, unkind accusations against our fellow-beings, let us quickly repent and beg forgiveness, both of God and those we wrong. Elijah, who had such power in prayer, and to whom the Lord on different occasions made himself so wondrously manifest, was a "man of like passions as we;" so that when we mourn our shortcomings we are not to give up our precious hope because of them, but rather seek to crucify them and to keep them under subjection. "Be ye angry and sin not," appears to me to mean that should we be angry (which we certainly will be at times), we should not sin by using bad language, by speaking bitterly, unkindly and harshly, by committing deeds of violence, or manifesting an angry, vindictive or resentful spirit; remembering that he whom we profess to follow, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he was buffeted, he threatened not. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath," also appears to me to mean that whatever may have been our cause for anger, whatever perplexities and vexation may have beset our pathway during the busy scenes of the day, let not the curtain of night, as it draws its peaceful shades about us, find our minds filled with anger and wrath. Let not the going down of the sun find us in this state; for if ever there is a time when the child of God feels the need of tranquility of mind, it is at the coming on of nightfall, when the body is about to be laid down to that rest so like and emblematic of the sleep of death. "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Whatever have been the trials and turmoils of the day, we should strive at least to lay that all aside, and to become passive and tranquil ere the sun withdraws its cheering rays, and the curtain of

night stretches its dark mantle over us. To me there seems no other hour in the day so fitting for quiet and peaceful communion with God, with our own heart, as twilight, or the coming on of nightfall. The busy scenes of the day are past; the sun, the great king of day, has performed his daily round upon the hemisphere, and sinks to another portion of the great world; the earth and its inhabitants take on a semblance of quietude and rest; and when we enter our closets and shut to the door of all worldliness, can we have anger or wrath or hatred in our hearts? If so, then our only cry must be, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." How wonderful the love that even then makes intercession for us. What a glorious Friend of sinners, who having been tempted in all things like as we, knows how to succor, how to forgive, how to love us also, though by nature we are sinners even as others. Yet O, my sister, how important it is for us to "put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of our minds;" that we be angry and sin not; that we let not the sun go down upon our wrath; and that we be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. Whilst I believe and know that "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God," and I do rejoice and sweetly rest in such a glorious doctrine, yet I believe in good works. I do think we should try very hard to adorn the profession, the great profession, by a well-ordered life and a godly conversation. "Let," says Paul, "no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." I care not how unlearned or illiterate a christian may be, how awkwardly their sentences may be arranged, if they be christians they certainly will have a modest, refined manner of speaking. Corrupt language is quite as shocking from the lips of a professed christian as is profanity, though it may not be quite so desecrating. Think you not, by my writing thus, that I am myself perfect in these things. O no; for often and often I mourn my deficiency in all christian deportment and graces, and am made to cry, as did Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and like him, I must say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." O how thankful we should be that amid the conflicts, the personal failures, the human weaknesses, and the many imperfections of our imperfect state, we have in the person of the glorious, glorified Redeemer an High Priest who is touched with our infirmities, and who is the wondrous Mediator, the glorious Intercessor between us and the God of justice. Let us seek him more and more, learn more of his beautiful, soul-cleansing, purifying lessons of humility, self-denial and love; and may his peace which floweth like a river, flow sweetly into our hearts, making them tender; and when our

last sun has sunk, our last day upon earth draws to a close, may it find us with eyes and affections uplifted to catch the gleam of that glorious, immortal dawn, whose gleaming shall gladden the hearts of all whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and who patiently wait, yet long for its appearing.

Dear sister, the Lord has graciously given me strength, during intervals of comparative freedom from smothering and pain, to write this letter. I write under a compulsory feeling as though it was the will of him whom I love to serve that I do so. If it is anything to you, and the brethren Beebe see fit to publish it, you may send it to them. I cannot, unless the coming summer and spring breezes increase my feeble strength, keep up a private, personal correspondence with those I so much love, and I may, if permitted, occasionally address them through the SIGNS. With a fervency of love, craving an interest in the prayers of the dear household of faith, begging those who feel so disposed to still favor me with their words of comfort, I now commend you all to the love and ever-tender watchcare of our ever-dear and blessed Shepherd, who careth for his sheep, and allows none of them to be plucked out of his hand.

MARY PARKER.

PANORA, Iowa, March 30, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I write to convey to you, and to the saints in Christ Jesus everywhere, the glorious intelligence of the doings of our blessed Lord in this country. It has been manifest for some time that the Lord has visited his people in these parts. Thirty-three years ago, on Saturday before the third Sunday in March, a little band of the saints, eight in number, met in Panora, Guthrie Co., Iowa, organized a church, and called it Sharon. One year and three months afterward, in June, 1855, the writer attached himself to the body by letter. We were then in a wilderness, among the red men. The Sioux Indians, a warlike tribe of very dangerous savages, were hovering upon our borders, with the Musquakas, a remnant of the Sacks and Foxes, who were among us, keeping out of the way of their more savage foes. Pages might be written of our early history, of our fears of the red men, and our dread of their scarcely less savage brothers, the white men, who used every device known to civilized people, to destroy our organization, calling us "Forty-nine Gallon Baptists," "Hard Shells," "Iron Jackets," &c. But out of all those persecutions the good Lord has brought us, and we are yet contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Though in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, the good and righteous God is delivering his people from the fear of death, and is bringing his sons and daughters forth, and they are coming with singing and rejoicing. Bless God, for his goodness and mercies endure forever.

Many years ago our little church was about thirty in number, but immigration, death and other causes decimated our ranks, while some were living so far away that they seldom met with us, until the number regularly meeting was reduced to about seven or ten; and it seemed as though the predictions of our enemies would soon be fulfilled, that the Old Baptists would soon be all gone. But who knoweth the mind of the Lord, or when he will return and visit his people? Bear with me a little; for it is seldom in the lifetime of a man that God visits his people with such power as we have seen of late. About or nearly one year ago the visible work began. A brother, having a good standing in an Arminian church, and a man of some prominence among them as a speaker, came to the church and related a bright experience, and asked to be baptized, though he had been immersed before. The church complied with his request, and he was buried with Jesus in the water. Within a few months thereafter a young Quaker, a man about twenty-four years of age, came to the church. He had been a speaker among his friends. He desired to tell the church of the travels of his mind. He had received a hope years before, was a great reader of the word, and a believer in baptism in water; but his friends in the Quaker church demanded silence from him on that subject. He heard of our meetings and came to hear us. No one knew of his troubles, and but few even knew him. Now see how the Lord works. Our church has two pastors, Elder E. W. Moore and the writer. And what should the Lord do but stir up our minds on the subject of baptism, the very thing that was troubling the young man, so that at the young man's second coming the whole tenor of the preaching was that subject. At the end of the meeting (two days) the young man came forward, rejoicing in the Lord and giving him praise that at last he had directed his steps, so that he had found a people who believed the gospel. He was buried in baptism at a subsequent meeting. At our October meeting another brother came and told how the Lord had showed him his weakness, and after many troubles had brought him to a knowledge of God's pardoning grace, and he was baptized. A few months later a husband and wife, of good standing in the so-called church of God, declared nonfellowship for the doctrine of self-righteousness, came to our body, told of the hope within them, and were baptized. This brings us to the time of our March meeting, just closed. Now for the glorious news of what the Lord had in store for us. You have, without doubt, brethren, all of you, seen anniversaries of different kinds; but this, our thirty-third anniversary, has been the most glorious our eyes ever beheld. Believing the Lord was doing a work in our midst, we advised the brethren to write to Elder Isaac Skelton, of Loveland, Iowa, to meet with us at our March meeting. Elder

Skelton came, and preached on Friday night at Monteith, about two and one-half miles from our regular place of meeting, on Beaver Creek, which is about eight miles south of Panora. From the very first a solemn interest seemed to take possession of all present. On Saturday three came forward, were received, and baptized on Sunday. At the close of the meeting on Sunday one more came forward and gave a relation of the hope within her. It was plain by this time that a wonderful work was going on. Nearly the whole audience was in tears. The brethren concluded to continue the meetings, and preaching was had at night and at eleven o'clock each day until Wednesday, by which time twelve precious souls had come forward and given a reason of the hope within them. This was a beautiful day. After services we repaired to the water, and seven were buried in baptism at this time. Notwithstanding the very busy season with the farmers, a great concourse of people gathered on the banks of the beautiful little stream to witness the solemn ritual; and at this time occurred the most glorious manifestation of God's presence that we ever beheld. Old and middle-aged, men and women, went into the water rejoicing, and came up out of the water shouting. I looked into the faces of the people, and nearly the whole audience was weeping. One man, a stranger to me, was shouting and praising God. The people seemed loth to leave the place, and remained considerable time, weeping and praising God together. At the Wednesday night meeting one more came forward and was received. On Thursday, at eleven o'clock a. m., meeting was held two and one-half miles north, at Monteith, where two more came forward and were received. Water being near, we repaired to it, and just as the last one came up out of the water, two more (a husband and wife) could stand out no longer, but came boldly forward and requested baptism, which, after they had given a reason of their hope, was attended to at once. Up to this time fourteen had been baptized, two were received by relation, and one was not ready; seventeen in all. By request, the place of meeting was removed about eight miles south, and was kept up at different places until Sunday night, at the end of which twenty-three had joined. A terrible storm of snow coming on, we had to defer the baptism of seven until a future time. Several of these people had standing in other so-called churches; but we receive not the work of Arminians in this country.

Now, dear brethren, we number forty-one, and the work is not yet done. Twenty-eight have been received within a year, and many more, to all appearances, have a hope, and we believe they will soon come forward. This is one of the most wonderful demonstrations of God's work and power ever brought to light in the west. Our enemies have been predicting our total annihilation; but if God be for us, who can be against us?

I will now close, in the language of old Simeon, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Rejoice with us, dear brethren, and give to our great and glorious God all the glory, for he has assuredly visited his people. Praise ye the Lord.

Yours in love,

JOHN CLINE.

WAVERLY, N. Y., March, 1887.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—As such I recognize you who write such precious things to our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. From some cause, of late I have felt an impression to write a few lines to my brethren through its columns, that is, if the brethren editors see fit to publish it; for I feel, as one has expressed it, that all communications, when in the hands of the editors, are theirs to dispose of as they think will be for the general benefit of Zion. At least I feel that way in regard to my own. Whether they are published or not, my fellowship for the editors and my interest in the paper remain the same.

Well, dear kindred, I want to say to you that I have you in my heart, and I love you for the truth's sake. Your joys are my joys, and your sorrows are my sorrows. It may be that I am assuming more than I should, but I do know that in your communications you express clearly what I have felt, far better than I can. Many times while reading it has seemed almost as though I had you with me, and occasionally I have found a silent tear coursing down my cheek. Perhaps we were strangers in the flesh, but I trust not strangers in the Spirit; and although many miles apart naturally, yet spiritually dwelling together. That spiritual tie which binds the children of God together cannot be affected by time or space. Even death itself does not affect it. How greatly I have been encouraged and built up in reading the troubles of my own soul as described by those who, I feel assured, are the children of the Most High. The apostle says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." As the one natural sun illuminates the whole natural globe, or world, so Jesus is the true Light that lighteth every one that is brought into the spiritual world, or kingdom of our God. "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 as light always makes manifest, it reveals to the poor sinner the hidden evils of the heart, his lost, wretched and helpless condition, and also the door of hope, through much tribulation; and in that precious Jesus they are made to rejoice all the day, and in his righteousness they are exalted. O precious truth, that the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. He

came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And the beauty and glory of this salvation is, that it is suited to the need of the helpless, lost sinner; and it comes to the sinner in just the right time. It came to David when he was in the horrible pit and miry clay; for he says, "He brought me;" therefore he must have been where David was, in order to bring him. Salvation was with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace; it was with Daniel in the lions' den; with Israel at the red sea. In the wilderness manna was given to satisfy their hunger, and water came from the rock to slake their thirst. Salvation came to the poor man at the pool of Bethesda, who had lain there thirty-eight years; it came to blind Bartimeus; it came to the man that fell among thieves; it came to Saul on his way to Damascus; it came to the house of Zaccheus; it comes to the house of every poor, destitute, helpless, undone sinner, that realizes that this is truly their condition. Zaccheus showed his desire and his faith by his works. He climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus; and we know that dead men do not climb trees. It is the living that seek the Lord, that call upon him. It is the living that ask and receive, that knock and it is opened unto them. The living mourn, groan, and lament their wretched, sinful condition. Dead children never cry. It is the living that praise the Lord. The poor Syrophenician (which signifies drawn to) woman worshiped the Lord. How? "Saying, Lord, help me." The thief upon the cross worshiped him, saying, "Lord, remember me." The man with the leprosy worshiped him, saying, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," or whole. The poor publican also worshiped him, saying, "Be merciful to me." Brethren, one and all, how far beyond the poor publican have you got in your worship? I have to cry for mercy every day of my life. You are aware, dear brethren, that you could not hope without doubts. If there is no doubt, there is no hope. To the law and testimony. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Those who say they never had a doubt, certainly never had a good hope in the mercy of God. Clouds and darkness will come, and the Christian has no more control over them than he has over the natural clouds that so often hide the sun from his view. But while passing through this spiritual darkness, it is a point the Christian longs to know, Do I love the Lord or no?

Brethren, excuse this long and (I fear) unprofitable letter. May God bless you all.

I would say to the brethren editors that I have seen no religious paper that fills the place in my mind and heart like the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It seems to me that it is all that could be asked for or desired. May God bless you with wisdom and

strength to continue it, as he has in time past.

Your sinful brother,

M. VAIL.

LONG GREEN, Md., March 6, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In answer to the leading of my mind, I submit the following to your judgment. It is with anxiety that I write for publication, for fear brethren may think I merely want, as one of old, to "show mine opinion," especially on such a deep subject, knowing that good and dear brethren differ from what I may write. But there is one thing certain, that if we attempt to write on any subject or passage of Scripture merely for speculation, or advance views which originate in our own or in other people's brains, they will amount to nothing, and are apt to be erroneous. It is through revelation from God the Father that correct views must come; and even then, not when we are trying to solve some mystery of the Scripture, through vanity or self-advancement. If ever it has pleased the good Lord to reveal or bring to remembrance anything for my comfort, it has been when I was patiently waiting, or in a manner I least expected; and while now writing I hope the Lord may lead my mind and give me the form of sound words, to the comfort of even one.

"But there were false prophets also among the people [of Israel], even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."—2 Pet. ii. 1. Before entering upon this important subject I wish to establish one fact in the mind of the reader. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: [what for?] that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Does this Scripture include any but the man of God? Does it not exclude all others? While all the epistles are filled with admonitions, they certainly apply to none but those that are under law to Christ; for none can transgress a law unless they are under or subject to it; and none are under law to Christ except those that are born again. "Sin is not imputed where there is no law." This law and obedience thereto is for the salvation alone of the manifest children of God; that is, a time salvation, and does not affect their eternal salvation, which was settled and fixed in eternity, irrespective of their course in this time state.

"But there were false prophets also among the people." The prophets of old "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and not by "the will of man, but of God." These false prophets were a part of national Israel, and prophesied in Israel. "They are not all Israel that are of Israel." Yet these false prophets were a part of national Israel, as the chosen people of God, in a typical sense, and as a nation were perfect as a type of a perfect antitype, which "are a chosen

generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people;" and in their standing in Christ are perfect, yet imperfect in this time state, and are as liable to go astray and turn from the holy commandment as were the pattern. As these prophets prophesied falsely, to the injury of the people of God, and to the sorrow of the "holy men of God," so "there shall be false teachers among you." The apostle, no doubt, saw or felt the necessity of drawing the attention of his brethren to this fact, and thus warning them. This would seem to touch our fleshly feelings, and we begin to inquire, How can this be, seeing we are the "chosen of God?" and immediately we give these admonitions away to the worldly religionist. In this we do greatly err. In order to find to whom and why the apostle is talking thus, we will go back to the beginning of the epistle. "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ," &c. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge," &c., and the end "charity." "But he that lacketh these things [not faith, for that is the gift of God] is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure [manifest]: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." This admonition would certainly not be needed if there were no danger of lacking these things, and becoming blind, and losing sight of the holy commandment.

"Even as [just as these false prophets were among the people of Israel, and of the people] there shall be false teachers among [or associated with] you." We shall try to show that these false teachers were among those who had "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," and were the children of God, born again, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. We are well aware that when those who are teachers in the church advance erroneous doctrines, doctrines contrary to the doctrine of the apostles, they become false teachers, and bring in heresies that are to be condemned; and unless they have added virtue and knowledge, &c., to their faith, they will not be likely to acknowledge their error, but will continue in "their pernicious ways." We have seen in our own day those who were teachers in the church, who gave satisfactory evidence that they were born again, and had been set apart to the work of the ministry, become false teachers, and answer to those here described, "who privily shall bring in damnable heresies." These false teachers shall work privily, secretly, slyly, by de-

greess, in such a manner as not to be noticed by the unwary, until many disciples shall follow them and their pernicious ways. All false teaching is heresy, and is "denying the Lord." "Even denying the Lord that bought them." I cannot understand how any one can deny the Lord unless they have known him. To deny that there is a God is very different from denying him. Peter denied him thrice in a very short time; and if so, can it not be possible that others shall do the same? "Denying the Lord that bought them." I know of no sense in which Christ bought any one except by his precious blood. "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Cor. vi. 20: "Ye are bought with a price: be not servants of men." "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts xx. 28. Have we not seen departures from the truth as it is in Jesus, by those that despised the government (discipline) of the church, and were not afraid to speak evil of dignities (of those that should receive double honor), and going on in their pernicious (destructive) ways, even denying the name they professed to love? "But these, as natural brute beasts [not that they are brute beasts, but as], made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not [not that they never knew]; and shall utterly perish [go to ruin, die to all spiritual comforts and blessings] in their own corruption" (the lusts of the flesh). "Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable [wandering] souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: [whose children?] which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." "These are wells [yes, wells] without water," &c. "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." If a man is overcome of the lusts of the flesh, he is in bondage of the flesh. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein [the pollutions, corruptions, that are in the world through lust], and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them [false teachers] not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." Can there be spots and blemishes in or upon a corrupt body? Can one be deceived who never knew the truth or way of righteousness? In short, can any one forsake the right way unless he has been in it? Can one go astray unless he has walked in

paths of righteousness? We have no authority to say from these Scriptures that these false teachers came in unawares or privily; but they are among you, and a part of spiritual Israel. But they have turned "from the holy commandment delivered unto them," and gone back to the "pollutions that are in the world through lust," and have "forgotten that they were purged from their old sins." The Scriptures abundantly prove that many in the days of the apostles departed from the truth. "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever."—Rom. i. 25. "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already."—2 Tim. ii. 18. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"—Gal. iii. 1. "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling."—1 Tim. i. 5, 6. "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Tim. iv. 4. In Paul's epistle to Titus he tells him to rebuke sharply those unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, "that they may be sound in the faith." Those Cretians who were so bad, and who professed that they knew God, but in works denied him, certainly were those over whom Titus was authorized to ordain Elders, and were children of God. These all had turned "from the holy commandment delivered unto them." This "denying the Lord that bought them" is not a new thing with the children of God. In Peter's denial of the Lord he brought swift destruction upon himself; and how many of us, if Christ should withdraw his presence, would be able to stand? Not one, if I should judge by my own experience.

"And bring upon themselves swift destruction." This is not to utterly destroy, in the sense in which men destroy, but to ruin or destroy their privileges in the church of God—to be cut off from all the privileges and the fellowship of the saints, and, worse than this, from the presence of God; and such are "delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh." The flesh must be destroyed before they can obey the holy commandment—before the Spirit can be manifest; and none can realize their situation in such a case until this destruction comes upon them. This destruction is nowhere spoken of as eternal; but it is a time salvation and a time punishment. "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall." And remember the admonition, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge," &c. "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." May we all be led by that Spirit, which never errs,

and give heed to its teaching; and "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

In conclusion, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death [to all spiritual enjoyments], and shall hide a multitude of sins."—James v. 19, 20.

It has been suggested to me that this view of the subject might be construed to mean that Esau was a child of God, and as such sold his birthright. Esau certainly sold his birthright, but it was only a natural one, and was determined beforehand, that Jacob should take hold of Esau's heel, and that the elder (Esau) should serve the younger (Jacob). Yours,

MILTON DANCE.

"He will save."—Zephaniah iii. 17.

What a gracious declaration is this! How full of gladness, and O what sweet melodious strains arise in our hearts, ascribing blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, unto the Lord, when the Holy Ghost, according to the eternal purpose, the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, is pleased to reveal in us the precious knowledge of salvation by the remission of our sins. Then it is not presumptuous (in our joyous confidence) for us to exclaim, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation."—Isa. xii. 3. Let us consider the Savior. Look at the connection in which these words are found, and there we find that he who "will save" is none other than Jehovah, the God of Zion, the King of Israel. And the "taught of the Lord" are brought to feel and to acknowledge the truth of what the Lord has spoken, saying, "I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Savior."—Isa. xlii. 11. Have you not, dear reader, found this true? Is it not in the Lord alone that all your hope of salvation is anchored? All those, no matter who they are, how high their attainments, whose hopes of salvation are anchored in anything beside, in anything short of Jesus, the great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, will find no sureness, no steadfastness; but all such hopes will perish, will be shipwrecked. Happy are we if we have met with storms and tempests, and by the searching blasts of the law of God have been tossed, and driven away from all creature anchorages, and the God of hope has filled us with joy and peace in believing in Jesus, in whom there has been given us a good hope through grace. O what a vision, what a revelation, to such a poor sinner like me, even to me, the Rock of Ages, even Jesus, to whom I am anchored by the life, the love, the eternal power of the eternal God. The Rock of Ages is within the veil, "having obtained eternal redemption for us."—Heb. ix. 12.

Well may we feel to possess "a strong consolation," and rejoice that our hope is sure and steadfast, when the gospel of Christ proclaims these glorious, unspeakable tidings, that Israel, saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, is united to Jesus by the threefold cord of everlasting love, eternal election and eternal life. And the immutable counsel, sworn to by the eternal God, is engaged that all shall be sure and steadfast.—Heb. vi. 17-20. O the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths, of the love of God to his people! In the development of eternal salvation, in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law; and the Word being made flesh, and taking upon himself the seed of Abraham, was forasmuch that the children of God (whose sonship is bound up in God's dear Son, who is the brightness of God the Father's glory, and the express image of his person), the whole family of the Lord, who are named in Christ Jesus our Lord, "are partakers" (not to be) of flesh and blood; therefore he also 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. They were given to him. "Wherefore in all things it behoved 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."—Heb. ii. 9-11. He who "will save" is God manifest in the flesh, Immanuel, God with us. The blessed Jesus, born in Bethlehem, of the Virgin Mary, was the Word who in the beginning was with God, and was made flesh.—John i. 1-14. His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.—Micah v. 2. When the virgin brought forth her first-born son, this was not the beginning of the goings forth of the Son of God. O no; but "from everlasting" his goings forth have been. His goings forth did not originate in the early moments of time, in the garden of Eden, when God said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." But before the world began, in eternity, God promised eternal life.—Titus i. 3. And how sweetly true, O believer, this is; for in due times it has been manifested, much to the consolation and strength of the poor and the needy. Before the world began, the covenant ordered in all things and sure was made. The eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ our Lord embraced all things. Jehovah's counsel determined all things.—Acts iv. 28. And the eternal power and Godhead of the one God, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, is given, and is gone forth in the accomplishment of the salvation of the elect of God. Salvation has its origin, its foundation, in the eternal mind, in the immutable counsel of

the will of Jehovah. O what a Rock is our Rock! Well may the inspired apostle declare all things pertaining to the salvation and everlasting glorification of the people of God to be "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 11. "He will save." This the Lord has published from the foundation of the world, to the joy of his people. To them in due times the arm of the Lord has been revealed, and they by the faith of the operation of God have believed the heavenly report. Abel was one of these favored ones, and many, many others, down through the course of time, as mentioned in Hebrews xi., are set forth as examples of the kindness and mercy of the Lord. In divers manners the Lord made his salvation known, in prophecies, visions, types and shadows, and in due time, the fullness of time, the Son of God came into the world to save sinners. "When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 5-7. To Simeon it was revealed by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.—Luke ii. 26. He, like all who are taught of the Lord, had felt himself to be a poor, lost sinner, and many were his sorrows under the heavy burden of his sins. Where could he find a spring of consolation? Not in himself, not in the deeds of the law, not in any creature; but a well of consolation was given to him in Christ Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, who alone is "the consolation of Israel." Jesus is not the consolation of Edom. O no! Is he, poor, trembling sinner, your only hope of consolation? Is all your desire centered in Jesus? Then you are one of the Israel of God, one of God's loved, chosen and saved people. Jesus, the Word made flesh, the Lord's Christ, was Simeon's consolation; and as no other could afford the consolation his soul yearned after, than the promised Messiah, in whom was all his hope of salvation, he therefore, it is said, waited for the consolation of Israel. Is this not what your soul waiteth for? Then you are like Simeon, and all the spiritual seed of Abraham. Blessed art thou of the Lord. You shall yet praise him, and like blessed old Simeon, sing of the mercy and salvation of the Lord. From the manger in Bethlehem, to the cross upon mount Calvary, how dear to God's own people is the life of Immanuel. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; the King of kings and Lord of lords; yet none of the princes of this world knew him. He was despised and rejected of men; to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them whom God called by his grace, and revealed his Son in them, "Christ

the power of God and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 24. The salvation of his people was in his heart. Jesus "will save." "He shall save his people from their sins." He bare their sins, was made sin for them. And when we come near the closing scenes of his wondrous life and sufferings while here in the world, it is recorded, "It came to pass when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem."—Luke ix. 51. And again, "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth."—John xviii. 4. Our blessed Savior set his face like a flint.—Isa. l. 7. The language of eternal love is, "For Zion's sake. [Can this mean, can this embrace, a poor, vile sinner like me?] will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."—Isa. lxii. 1. "He will save." He went forth for the salvation of his body, the church, "mighty to save." "His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power."—Hab. iii. Our blessed Jesus went to the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. In his precious blood all our sins were purged away. He vanquished all our enemies on the cross, redeemed us from the curse of the law, satisfied all the claims of the justice of almighty God, paid the last mite of all our heavy debt, cried, "It is finished," bowed his head and died.

"How willing was Jesus to die,
That we, fellow-sinners, might live;
The life they could not take away,
How ready was Jesus to give."

Though death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered all the children of God, the whole family. Glorious Deliverer! Mighty Savior! Immortal honors rest on Jesus' head. In his resurrection he triumphed over death, hell and the grave. He passed into the heavens, and reigns on high, our Savior, God. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Heb. vii. 25. "He will save." Whom will he save? "God will save Zion."—Psa. lxxix. 35. "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end."—Isa. xlv. 17.

Many a dear child of the free woman has been mocked and bitterly persecuted by the children of Hagar and their Ishmaelish doctrines. Shun all such, dear child of God, as you would desire to shun the very devil; and be not, O believer in Jesus, carried away and enticed by the cry of the world, "They are doing some good; they have some truth among them." The same carnal saying might be said of Mohammed and the doctrines of the Koran, and other religious systems of the world. Happy will it be for you if you are

ever found as a humble disciple at Immanuel's feet, and in the strength of Israel's God "valiant for the truth upon the earth."—Jer. ix. 3; Jude 3. If this be your heritage from the Lord, then you will have "to suffer affliction with the people of God." But one smile, one glance of everlasting love from the God of thy sorrows. This will revive the drooping spirit, will be more sweet than all the bitters, and will sweetly reconcile you to the will of our Father in heaven, that your lot with all the taught of the Lord is to be "a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God."—2 Tim. i. 8; Phil. i. 29. In the revelation of the salvation of the Lord by faith to the saved, how gloriously is this proclaimed, "He will save." The Lord does not come and parley with his chosen, and tell them how he longs to save, and make overtures of mercy and offers of salvation to them. Such thoughts are not Jehovah's thoughts, and such doings never issue from God, who says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Our Lord Jesus Christ having vanquished sin, death, hell and the grave, ascended on high, leading captivity captive, and received gifts for men; for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. He is a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.—Acts v. 31. The Lord by his gracious, sovereign power sheds abroad his love in the hearts of his elect, fills them with joy and peace in believing that their sins are blotted out, and that there is therefore now no condemnation to them in Christ Jesus. Having begun a good work in them, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.—Phil. i. 6. God ever knew his people. Before he fashioned Adam's clay, Jehovah foreknew all the chosen, and in his Son, their spiritual living Head, they were with God. In the Son, who is the eternal life of all the elect of mankind, Jehovah beheld his chosen people, holy and without blame before him in love.—Eph. i. 3, 4. His infinite and eternal delight was in them, in his dear Son. These loved ones, these elect ones, of Adam's race, he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. "We shall be like him."—1 John iii. 2. Moreover, whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate; whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.—Rom. viii. 28-30. The Lord will save. Will the Lord save me? This important question has often exercised my soul, and it has been profitable, when at length I have been able to cast myself, and my all, at the feet of the Lord, and to reverently inquire of him. Are you, dear reader, burdened with a load of guilt? do you know what it is to mourn and sigh over your iniquities? have you felt, and do you feel a crying going on in your heart, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner?" Have you felt

such poverty that you have realized to your bitter grief that you did not possess as much as one good thought, that all your creature clothing was filthy rags? Have you felt so afflicted with a vile, sinful nature, harrassed by vile, O such wicked thoughts, that have plunged you in sorrow and shame, so that you have loathed yourself in your own sight? And in the midst of all these, have you had fervent hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, and yet painfully feeling that you were without strength to save yourself and relieve your soul? Then you are a true citizen of Zion. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing."—Zeph. iii. 17. Poor and afflicted are the inhabitants of Zion. This they often feel to be their condition. "He will come and save you."—Isa. xxxv. 4. Though thine enemies be round about thee, though the gates of hell assail, "Thy God reigneth, O Zion." Yes, dear children of God, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, all our misgivings, doubts and fears, sinfulness, murmurings, rebellions; though numerous foes infest our pathway, though earth and hell our way oppose; out of all our afflictions, and through tribulations, the Lord will save his people. Read that precious chapter, the seventeenth of John. How exceedingly sweet, comforting and strengthening. O to be favored more and more to feast upon it. Look also at these gracious words that Jesus spake, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. In the resurrection, changed and fashioned like unto our dear Lord Jesus Christ, and glorified together with him, so shall we ever be with the Lord.—1 Thess iv. 17.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Canada.

MACOMB, Ill., March 16, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I proposed some months ago to copy some letters, or at least some extracts from letters, written me by the late sister Mahala Spurgin, and have, I believe, sent you but twice some of her thoughts for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I now copy some more of her very deeply interesting expressions in her private correspondence with me. I hope you will give it space in the SIGNS, that her surviving friends and your readers generally may be comforted as I have been. I remark further, that in looking this morning over some of her many letters to me (over twenty), I find them all so rich that I am at a loss to decide which to copy from; but after she came to Shreveport, and was making her home with Dr. Dillard, she writes as follows:

"Very dear and precious brother in the Lord and Savior, and in the love of the Spirit and truth of the gospel, as I humbly trust:—I had for

some time been thinking the time long, and had taken up a number of the SIGNS in which was a communication that you had written. * * * Well, just at the time my mind and thoughts were running away back, Dr. Dillard brought in my mail of several letters, and O how glad I was! A few minutes afterward his wife came in and said, 'Is there bad news?' 'No, O no; good news.' 'Well, what are you crying for? Is it something so good makes you cry?' I said, 'Yes; I am so glad I cannot help it.' Truly, my brother, as you say, time is passing swiftly away; and even if our time is lengthened out to four score years, it seems, to look back over it, as but a short space of time. I have on some occasions felt that I should be glad to go and be at rest; but one thing I have besought the Lord for more than for any one request I have made, that he would resign me to all his will concerning me, and cause me to be wholly submissive, and thankfully take whatever comes. For whatever comes from his hand we know is for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose. But Satan and unbelief say, How do I know that I love him, or am one of the called according to his purpose? Well, if I do not believe that, I do not believe the Scriptures. And now I feel willing to go or to stay just so long as he sees fit. * * * Dear brother, I have not the power of language at command to tell you my feelings and travels, but you have told it all for me. Indeed, I have felt so insignificant that I have for a few moments at a time felt that the insect worm filled its station here, and no more of it; while I, blessed with intellect, came so far from filling my station. But I desire to humbly thank and praise his adorable name, I still hope that I have a hope, and an interest in this great salvation, wrought out by the dear Redeemer on the cross for his people. Notwithstanding all my unworthiness and sinfulness by nature, I know he is worthy, and he of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Therefore all he is, all he has, and all he has promised, is ours, if we are his; and we may go to the Father in his name, and boldly, yet humbly, ask for grace to help in time of need.

"I have within the last few weeks enjoyed more of the sweetness of the blessed Spirit's presence than I have for a long time. I seem to get nearer in prayer, and feel to rejoice with trembling; for, as you say, I have more temptations, and stranger than any one else I know of, except yourself. But, dear brother, it will soon be over, when we shall cross the river to join the song of the redeemed in singing the praises of God and the Lamb, who hath washed us in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto our God. We shall rest with him, see him as he is, and be like him. This is all we desire, just to be like him. Farewell, dear brother. Give my love to sister Vanmeter and all

your family. Pray for and write to your unworthy sister."

The foregoing extracts are but a small part of her letter. Much of the rest was so personal and complimentary to myself that I have left it out. Again, in concluding a lengthy and deeply interesting letter to me from Palestine, Texas, after alluding to the many trials and fiery temptations of the saints, she says:

"Although storm after storm may arise, darkness enshroud us, our little vessel totter, hope almost hidden; when lo, we hear the soul-cheering voice of the ever-blessed Jesus, 'It is I; be not afraid.' My dear brother, I fear that I shall weary you with such a scattering and badly written letter. I cannot write long at a time because of nervousness. * * * I hope to be found thankful to our dear Lord for his great goodness and mercy bestowed upon me in continuing my eyesight, and enabling me to write, and to read the holy word. I feel that it may not be long till I shall lay aside this old, worn out tabernacle of clay, and at times am anxious to be gone, so that I may be with Christ, which is far better; but I desire to be resigned to his blessed will, and suffer on those other years, till my Deliverer come and take his exile home. * * * None of us have suffered outwardly as the early christians did, but nevertheless we have inward conflicts, some of us almost daily; and having a sinful nature to contend against, and the world and Satan, if left to ourselves we could not stand alone. But in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, and therefore we are safe in putting our trust in him; and when the mind is stayed on him he keeps us in perfect peace. * * * Now, my brother, may God our Father abundantly bless you in all things, give you grace according to your day and trial, uphold and sustain you while you stay here, and at last grant you a peaceful hour in which to die, and a happy admittance into his glorious kingdom, is the sincere desire of (as I humbly hope) your sister in hope and tribulation, although unworthy."

This is but a tithe of the letter from which it is taken, but enough is copied to show how she was led by the Spirit in her declining years. May the God of Zion be with you, brethren, in conducting the SIGNS, and with your readers.

I. N. VANMETER.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Dec. 30, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—While I may feel a desire to write, I do not feel competent, and within myself and my own efforts, apart from the true spirit to write to edification, I know it will be of no use, except to exhibit creature effort. When I read an article that builds me up and strengthens me, I feel to thank the Lord and take courage, and still hope in God, who does impress the minds of his children to communicate to edification. Without specifying, I would say to the dear correspondents, Write on. The Lord's people anciently spoke often

to one another; and Paul also tells us to exhort one another, and to provoke one another to love and good works; and one way of provoking to love and good works is by writing in the spirit of love and humility, when we feel so impressed. I have passed through some fiery trials, in which I have felt almost to despond and give up, feeling so unworthy, and feeling that I come so far short of what I ought to be. Yet under these trials, or rather from them, I have found deliverance, and have thought I would never doubt any more; but alas! it returns, I am again in doubt, and feel that if the Lord had ever made himself known to me, I would not be in such straits. I doubt my call to the ministry, and seriously question whether I have been of any comfort to any one; and like Job, I feel to say, I wish I had never been born. I see my own frailty, that I am but dust. I become lean and barren, and can find no pasture. The letter of the word is dead; no food there. It seems that the promises may be applicable to the Lord's children, but how can I feel to be one? But when I read of brethren whom I believe to be saints, and also able ministers of the word, communicate the same, I have some reason to hope. We cannot direct our own steps, nor can we order our own cause before God; and but for our Advocate at the right hand of God, what would we do? Sometimes the Lord gives me seasons of refreshing, and sometimes I am cast down, and David's expression comes, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him." Sorrowing, mourning sons of Zion, this is our stay, and our hope is in God. Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart. Jesus says that our sins and iniquities shall be remembered no more against us.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

SPRINGTOWN, Parker Co., Texas, }
March 28, 1887. }

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Permit me to say through your paper, to brother Benton Jenkins, that I have received the twenty-five dollars he sent to me for the destitute ones in this part of Texas. I have distributed some of it, and will put the rest of it where I think it is most needed. Dear brethren, we appreciate your kindness, and feel thankful to you for the present, and hope you may feel in heart that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

It has not rained a drop here in six weeks, and it is getting very dry. Wheat and oats are dying. The people are done planting corn, and are very much out of heart. A great many are leaving here, and not many can remain if there shall be another failure in crops. What to do we know not. A great many have neither bread nor meat, only as they draw from the Government or State. We have had but two showers of rain in twenty months or upwards, and it

will be impossible for us to live here much longer without rain to wet the ground.

Now, dear brethren, if any one, friend or brother, wishes to help the needy and destitute, now is the time. The brethren here cannot help being in this needy condition, and they say they want to feel reconciled, as it is all right, or it would not be so. Providentially we are in this drouth-stricken country, and what to do we know not. A great many of us would leave here if we could, but we have to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble: and were it not for the glorious presence of the Lord being felt and realized in our poor hearts, we certainly would falter by the way. But God's people are kept by his power, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

May the God of heaven bless you, brethren Beebe, and enable you to discharge your duty in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in defense of the truth. When it is well with you, remember a poor sinner at the throne of grace.

L. B. THORNEBERRY.

WASHINGTON, Minn., Dec. 29, 1886.

DEAR EDITORS:—I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for January first, and I see my time is come to send my remittance for 1887. I live near the town, and I have had many invitations to attend their meetings; but I have never been to any of them, although I have lived here three years. I read the SIGNS, and that is all the preaching I hear, and that is better than all the conditional salvation to me. The people call me a critic, and some a novelist. I tell them the names are all familiar to me, because Jesus bore them before me. But these things disturb my mind like this, Can all the world be wrong, and me right? Then I fly to the Bible and it tells me that the friendship of this world is enmity with God. And then I look into my own heart, and see how it wanders from God, and thoughts arise like this, If you were a child of God, he would not have taken you away here alone, far from all the brethren. It makes me feel as though I have sold myself for a morsel of bread, and forgotten the God I say I love. And when I see pride so strongly rooted in my heart, it makes me fear and tremble, and I go about my labor with my head bowed down, and my heart laments because of the sin that is in it. I could freely pray to God to take away this thorn of the flesh, but the answer is, "My grace is sufficient for you." Now I feel if I could enjoy the privilege of meeting with the brethren, it would be dear to me. I have no real enjoyment here, only to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the Bible. If there is anything I love besides, it is to hear the Old School Baptists tell of the way the Lord leads them, and point out his goodness and mercies to them. This delights my heart with more joy than all this world's goods can give.

Now, dear editors, I fear I am intruding upon your time, so I must close.

Yours in love,

HENRY JAMES.

DAYTON, W. T., April 3, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Business being disposed of, I would like to say a word in season to that little lamb of Jesus who is bleating around the fold at Newman, Georgia. She says, "I have been thinking for a long time that I would like to tell you of the Lord's dealings with me, and with the chosen ones." Now, dear child, go and tell it to the church of God. She will not say thee nay. Her doors are always open to receive such as feel their own sinfulness and the Lord's goodness. The church, with the Spirit of Christ, is the proper judge in such matters.

Your brother unworthily,

I. E. NEWKIRK.

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Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1887.

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

PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

DEAR BRETHREN: I do hope we appreciate your labors, and would not add to them by asking questions; but, with others of the family, I am anxious that you should give your views on the parable of the sower. Your compliance will oblige

Yours in gospel bonds,

JAMES M. BARBEE.

PRINCE WILLIAM CO., Va., Feb. 9, 1887.

REPLY.

"AND he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them; but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."—Matthew xiii. 3-9.

Although we are not specially drawn to the attempt to explain those parables, in which our Lord at once taught divine truth to his disciples and hid the same glorious things from them that are without, in compliance with the wish of our esteemed brethren we will give such thoughts as we have in reference to this subject. The parable is recorded in Mark and Luke also, but we have quoted the text from Matthew, as our inquiring brother does not specify the precise version to which he refers, and there is no essential difference in the three accounts. As the parable has been somewhat extensively discussed in our columns recently by very highly esteemed brethren, we will say in the beginning of this article that we do not claim to decide in favor or against any views presented by them; and only as our views are solicited should we now write on the subject.

In considering a parable it is always necessary to observe that it requires the whole parable to be taken together in order to see the truth which it contains; for a parable is only a word picture of the subject. As well might we expect to grasp the beauty of a painting by tearing it into fragments, as to see the true import of a parable by disjoining it from the connection in which it is stated. Especially is this true of those parables which are recorded by inspiration. Thus, in Nathan's parable (2 Samuel xii. 1-6), there is presented the divine condemnation of the sin of David, while that sin is not mentioned; nor have the flocks or the lamb in the parable any significance except as taken together in the parable. It may be observed further in reference to parables generally, that while they are specially designed to illustrate the case to which each is directly applied, they may in many particulars present strikingly other points which will apply to cases en-

tirely distinct from their original design. It is this peculiarity of parables which often leads to differences of understanding among brethren, where all are alike desirous of presenting nothing but gospel truth. Hence, it is of the utmost importance that whatever views seem clear to any saint, they should be held subject to the correction and instruction in righteousness, for which all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.—2 Tim. iii. 16.

When Jesus spoke this parable he addressed the great multitudes who had been gathered unto him, "so that he went into a ship and sat, and the whole multitude stood on the shore." Even his disciples could not comprehend the truth spoken in this parable, as appears from their coming to Jesus for the explanation of it. As he expounded it to them, so must the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, reveal its deeply important meaning to his saints in the present age; and as that revelation edifies, so it always humbles its recipient, instead of puffing him up with pride and self-confidence. This is another difference by which this revealed instruction is distinguished from the knowledge which is acquired by toil and study. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." No familiarity with the letter of the Scriptures, nor intense study of expositions given by the most gifted ministers of the gospel, can enable any one to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Every saint must be taught of the Lord by personal experience; and all who are so taught have to confess that they know these things only because it is given unto them, and not by reason of their own efforts and study. Hence there is no room for boasting, since the highly educated Saul of Tarsus received this divine knowledge by the very same revelation which showed it to the illiterate fishermen Peter and John. This manner of teaching places the infant and the ignorant and even the feeble minded on a level with the most brilliant intellects; for the knowledge of divine truth is not imparted to the intellect or natural mind, but it is written in the heart of those who are led by the Spirit of God.

Although the Lord expounded this parable to his own disciples, and the letter of that explanation may be read by any one who is able to read the Scriptures, yet none can understand the truth contained in this wonderful discourse without the guidance of the Spirit of truth. Doubtlessly the sower who went forth to sow is the same as in the parable of the good seed and the tares. The Lord told his disciples plainly in that case, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man."—Verse 37. They who are represented by the various kinds of soil upon which the seed fell must be the hearers of his word; and the manner of their hearing shows what is their true character. In nature, the seed falling upon the ground makes no change in the character of the soil; so in the application of the parable, as expounded by our Lord,

they who hear are not changed in their nature by the sound of the gospel, but the effect which results from their hearing that "word of the kingdom" demonstrates their own character. They whose hearts the Lord opened to receive the spoken word were they who received it in good ground; and even when the Lord himself preached his own truth, this difference among literal hearers was manifested. Thousands followed him for a season, who were soon satisfied to go away and walk no more after him. This seems to have been the primary application of this parable, in which the different motives influencing his followers are exposed; and in this application it still discriminates among the literal hearers of the word, for this gospel of the kingdom is preached in all the world for a witness, and in its proclamation the secret thoughts of the hearts of the hearers are made manifest. Often carnal enmity rages against the servant by whom the truth is spoken, when the real object of that hatred is the truth itself; and it may be that for a season some merely selfish motive may attract one to follow after the Lord, when really destitute of that divine love by which alone faith works.—Gal. v. 6. Such followers are never troubled by anxiety or fears lest they have not the true love of God in their hearts. They are either conscious hypocrites, pretending to what they know they do not feel; or they are deceived by Satan, and he does not tempt such to doubt his deception. Thus the very darkness of doubts and fears is made to bear testimony to the truth of the saint's hope in Christ.

It is stated in the text that "He spake many things unto them in parables." In every word from the lips of this divine Teacher there is an unsearchable depth of wisdom. The plainly spoken words are full of literal significance; but there is a far more important meaning hidden from finite intelligence in each gracious word of Jesus, which can be seen alone by the revelation of that holy and blessed Spirit who takes of the things of Jesus and shows it unto his little ones. In every parable uttered by our great Instructor there are "many things" spoken. So, in this parable he not only tells of the discrimination among the literal hearers of the word of the kingdom, but in the very same figure he shows the different conditions of them who are qualified to hear the life-giving gospel of salvation, and the results produced in each case. In this application of the text it must be observed that the subject is not the giving of life to the dead. In the quickening of the dead there is no such difference as is described in the text. They who receive the gift of eternal life in hearing the voice of the Son of God, are in no wise better than the other dead sinners from among whom they are called, since they "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Hence the parable does not apply to the hearing of that word which gives life to the dead. There is no possible failure to

understand that word, for it is itself spirit and life. The subject illustrated in this application of the parable is the instruction of living children; and here the experience of the saints explains better than any words of ours can do, just what is expressed in each of the kinds of ground upon which the seed fell. Not many years can pass in the pilgrimage of any subject of grace until he will know personally something of each of these conditions as defined in the explanation given by our Lord. Whether the hearing be of the word of inspired truth, or of the same truth in preaching, or in prayer, it is no strange thing for the saint to realize a failure to understand that which is heard. They may indeed earnestly desire to hear and understand; but they must feel the loss of that comfort and instruction, as expressed by the wicked one coming and catching away that which was sown in his heart. While thus suffering it is common for the suggestion to be presented to the tried one that if he really loved the Lord he could hold the precious word in his mind or heart. To this plausible thought he readily agrees, and then that wicked one has succeeded in catching away all the comfort of the seed sown in his heart. In his case the consolation of the gospel is lost to him at the time when his understanding is thus darkened.

In the case of the seed received into stony places, in the application to the living children of God it is also best understood by reference to what they have learned in their own experience. When one has enjoyed a season of light in hearing or reading the word of truth, and in that light he has felt to rejoice, then he thought the sweet interest in that blessed truth could never leave him; but after a little while he finds trials and persecutions in his pathway, and then his joy is swept away, and he learns that he hath not root in himself. This does not signify that such as suffer thus are destitute of eternal life in Christ Jesus. It was on the behalf of the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus that Paul bowed his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in the prayer, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."—Eph. iii. 17-19. It is evident that there is such a thing as the saints being weak in the faith, and such having not root in themselves are liable to be soon shaken. No gifts nor ability in themselves can render them independent in this particular. Even to the highly favored John the Baptist Jesus sent the admonition, "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me."—Matt. xi. 6. This did not signify that John was in danger of losing his life in Christ by reason of his darkness and doubts, nor yet that his being blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ was in any sense dependent upon

what John might do or feel; for all this was settled in the eternal election of grace before the worlds were made. That blessedness of which Jesus spoke was in the present experience of John in not being offended in the sufferings of Christ. It is in a similar sense that we understand the stony ground hearer to be offended in Christ when tribulation or persecution arises.

The hearer represented by the thorny ground will be readily recognized by such as know the penetrating power of "the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches." These thorns are too sharp to be avoided by all the caution and prudence which they can command. When they would have their thoughts and affection set on things above, these thorns cause them to feel wretched because they cannot do the things that they would. None but they who are born of the Spirit can know this utter wretchedness. When left to the power of these dreadful thorns there is no experience of growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The word is so choked by these thorns that it yields no sweet assurance, and the very desire for the grace of God is almost if not quite concealed by the rank growth of carnal thorns. The case of Demas is not the last of those who have left the company of the saints in consequence of "having loved this present world."—2 Timothy iv. 10. Happy is that saint who has not something of the same defection over which to mourn. The deceitfulness of riches includes all earthly treasures and honors, as well as its fleeting wealth. Whatever is attractive to the natural mind is embraced in that comprehensive expression; and if there can be any earthly consideration which is not included in these thorns, "the care of the world" certainly covers everything temporal. These thorns cause the hearer in whom they prevail to become unfruitful. He does not show in his walk and conversation the fruit of the Spirit; and God is not glorified in his body and spirit.

In the seed which fell into good ground the Lord explains that he is represented who "heareth the word and understandeth it." The hearing and understanding of the word are results produced by the blessing of the Lord resting upon those who are so highly favored as to come within the description given. So Jesus said to his inquiring disciples, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." To them he says, "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower." These unto whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom are the good ground in which the seed produces fruit to the manifest glory of God, for it is the work of God that they believe on him whom he hath sent; and therefore they do

glorify God in that believing which is wrought in them by his own power. So David sings, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee."—Psalm cxlv. 10. In the application of the parable as discriminating between the saints in their various changes, this good ground represents their condition when the Lord has opened their hearts, as he did the heart of Lydia, to receive and attend to the things spoken by the servants of God. It is in obedience to the commands of the Lord that his people are blessed. All the fruit they can bear and bring forth consists in working out that salvation which God worketh in them both to will and to do.—Phil. ii. 12, 13. If anything originating with themselves seems to be fruit, it can only be to their own glory; and all such glorying is vain. The fruit produced in the saints always humbles them just in proportion as it manifests the glory of God. As he is the author and finisher of our faith, so every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from him; therefore God is glorified in the fruit borne by his saints in obedience to his commandments. Jesus says, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."—John xv. 8. This fruit does not consist in works of righteousness in their own strength, neither is it found in anything in which they can boast. The only fruit which bears witness that any one is a subject of salvation is that love of righteousness which is manifested in hating his own life because of sin; and such hatred is inseparable from that love of righteousness which produces the hunger and thirst after it which is peculiar to those who are blessed of the Lord.—Matt. v. 6. These bring forth fruit experimentally to the praise of their Lord just in proportion to their realization of their own destitution. It is in this sense only that there is the difference expressed in the text in the amount of fruit brought forth by the hearers represented by the good ground. The glory of our God is infinite in all his revealed works, and in that sense there can be no such difference as is indicated by "some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold." It should be specially observed that this fruit was brought forth by the seed sown, and not by the ground into which it fell. Hence the ground is not entitled to the glory of the increase which is the gift of God.—1 Cor. iii. 6. This cuts off all glorying in the flesh, and shows that it is entirely by grace that the ground is made good, as well as that the sowing of the seed is by the hand of the Son of man.

The closing expression of the text is not a part of the parable, but an application of its instruction. If there were no other expression given in the Scriptures, this word alone shows the discriminating character of the word of inspiration. Only he that has ears to hear can hear the truth in the text. It is hidden from all others, so that they cannot even search for it; for it

is the unsearchable riches of Christ. May the Lord grant to all who love his name that they may experimentally know what it is to have ears to hear his gracious word, in this parable, and in all his revealed truth; and to the name of Jesus be everlasting praises in time and eternity. Amen.

ELDER CLINE'S LETTER.

THE cheering intelligence from the church in Guthrie County, Iowa, gives renewed evidence that the Lord still remembers his little flock, and that he is yet gathering together his ransomed people. Well may the saints rejoice in the visible display of the power of God when he brings his children into his banqueting house, and shows his banner over them to be eternal love. On two occasions it has been our privilege to rejoice in such wonderful seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; but faith gives assurance that he still loves his people even when his throne is veiled in thick clouds. For his way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known. But while his glory is always infinite, it is "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord. For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death; to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord."—Psalm cii. 16-22. May it please our Lord to continue and extend the exhibition of his grace until "All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God," and to his name be glory evermore. Amen.

BACK NUMBERS.

WE have discontinued the sending of back numbers to the first of the volume to new subscribers, unless so requested. We still have some of each number on hand, and those new subscribers who so desire may have the back numbers by stating that they desire them.

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MARRIAGES.

APRIL 14, 1887, by Elder Benton Jenkins, at the residence of the bride's uncle, Mr. James Easton, in Otisville, N. Y., Mr. Henry T. Buchanan and Miss M. Ada Corwin.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elias Vaughan departed this life on Sunday morning, March 20, at his home on Vaughan's Hill, Bradford Co., Pa., aged seventy-five years and two months. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church of Asylum and Vaughan Hill, having been baptized in its fellowship in August, 1831. He was a man held in high esteem by his neighbors and friends, and will be much missed in the community. The little church of which he was a highly esteemed member will feel his loss greatly. He was twice married, his first wife being a member with him until her death, about seven years ago. His second wife survives him, also two sons and two daughters, all married, and four brothers and four sisters. To all of his family and relatives he was very dear, and they mourn the loss of a truly affectionate husband and father and brother. He was a man of tender feelings, and his religious exercises were strong; but he experienced much trouble from the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, especially in regard to the doctrine of election and predestination. He had been taught these precious truths in his experience, and believed them; but the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, opposed them bitterly, as it always does, and he would often pay attention to this opposition of his nature, sometimes so far as to dispute the doctrine when presented clearly in its unconditional and absolute fullness; and then he would fall into deep and harassing trouble of soul, and be strongly tempted to doubt his christian experience. Although he was so inclined to question this doctrine, that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," "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," yet I have been witness many times that this was what gave him the greatest comfort, when the Lord was pleased to apply it to his soul. I have often seen him melted completely under the preaching of that glorious truth of the absolute predestination of God, as it is inseparably connected with the sinner's experience of rich and reigning grace, and have heard fervent acknowledgments from him of the power of that truth upon his soul. There is no love, but only hatred, for the truth of God in the carnal mind of any christian; but some are more harassed by it than others. Brother Vaughan was very sincere and conscientious, and this characterized his actions among men and in the church. He felt it his duty to tell his brethren in conference meetings just how far he was from being such a christian as he ought to be, and all the reasons he saw in himself to doubt whether he was one at all. Of course he failed in that, for no one ever was able to fully express those things. Those groanings cannot be uttered even to God, much less to man. He always succeeded, however, in giving his brethren clearer evidences of his experience, and comforting them by telling much of their own trials, and often came to the conclusion at last that he did have a good hope. In his last sickness he was very patient and resigned. On the morning of his death he told his wife that he was perfectly resigned and willing to go. He pressed the hand of his daughter and said deliberately, "Have you noticed that my respirations are less and less frequent?" She said, "Yes, father, I have." "Well," he said, "I think I am going. What do you think?" She answered, "We would like to keep you, father, but we think you can't be with us long." "Well," he said, "I am going," and quietly breathed his last.

His funeral was largely attended, and brother Charles Bogardus, who is now visiting that church once a month, and myself, spoke to the people.

SILAS H. DURAND.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please insert in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary notice of our dear mother, **Mrs. Elizabeth Leedom**. She was born August 3, 1802, and died April 15, 1886. She was baptized in the fellowship of Southampton Old School Baptist Church by Elder Thomas B. Montanye, January, 1821, and was a firm believer in the doctrine

of salvation by grace alone. Her only hope was in Jesus, the way and the life, having no confidence in the flesh. As the infirmities of age crept upon her, and heart and flesh failed, the Lord was manifest as the strength of her heart. She was almost deprived of her sight many years before her death, which she felt to be a great affliction; but she would often say the dear Lord had done it, and she did not want to murmur or complain. She desired to be patient; for she said, "It will not be long till I shall see as I am seen, and know as I am known." She said she was only waiting till her heavenly Father should call her home. A short time before her death, while I was sitting by her bedside, she talked very sweetly of her departure. She said the dear Lord had already lengthened her days, and she could not be here long. "I have nothing to live for," she said, "Only my Maker's will. It seems that I cannot doubt any more. If clouds come over my mind, they do not stay long, for some sweet portion of Scripture, or the words of some sweet hymn, come with power and drive them away." Once brother Durand asked her if she felt that the work of salvation was finished. She replied, "O yes, Jesus finished it ages ago. That is my hope." The immediate cause of her death was a fall, after which she lived about four hours, most of the time unconscious, and then sweetly fell asleep.

On the 19th we followed her mortal remains to their last resting place. Our dear pastor spoke upon the occasion from 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. She left children, grandchildren and many friends to mourn their loss; but we mourn not as those who have no hope, knowing that our loss is her gain. I have copied the following verses because they are nearly her own words that I have often heard her repeat.

"The days are long and weary,
When four-score years are past;
The nights are sad and dreary,
But they will end at last.

Let us with meek endurance
Our added trials bear;
We have the full assurance
We're in our Father's care.

'Tis he our days hath lengthened
Beyond full seventy years;
And he our hearts hath strengthened
'Mid all our hopes and fears.

And this same Lord is near us
While still we struggle on,
With promises to cheer us
When earthly hopes are gone."

SARAH P. LEFFERTS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 23, 1887.

I AM requested by brother James Lenon to send for publication a notice of the death of his wife, who died at her home in Marion County, Oregon, on October 1, 1884, aged nearly sixty-two years.

Sister **Nancy Lenon** was born Oct. 7, 1822. She was the mother of five sons and seven daughters. Three sons and four daughters survive her, who, with their father, mourn their irreparable loss. But we feel sure that their loss is her eternal gain. She professed a hope in Christ many years ago, and joined the Paint Creek Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and was baptized by Elder John Shanks. In 1855 she, with her husband and family, emigrated to Iowa, and there she and her husband put their letters in Sharon Church of Regular Baptists, where she lived an orderly member until 1865, when the family emigrated to Oregon. Soon after their arrival in Oregon she and her husband put their letters in Siloam Church, where she remained until called away. She was reconciled to the dealings of the Lord, knowing that he would do right. She was sorely afflicted about two years with consumption, and finally fell asleep in Jesus, in the triumph of living faith in God. May her dear children be led by the Spirit of God through life, and join her in the glorious land above. May the sustaining grace of the dear Savior be with the bereaved husband, is the prayer of the writer.

A. SHANKS.

TURNER, Oregon, March 23, 1887.

By request of our highly esteemed sister, **Eleanora Harting**, I will forward a notice of the death of her husband, brother **Charles A. Harting**, which occurred at his home, some ten miles north of Hamilton, Ohio, on the eve of Nov. 5, 1836. The deceased joined the Old School Baptist Church at this place in May, 1869, and was baptized by the late Elder James Martindale, and lived and walked ever after as becomes those who confess Jesus as their only hope of a blessed immortality. He was scrupulously honest in all his dealings with his fellows, and detested everything of a vulgar nature.

Brother Harting was born in Germany, Sept. 7, 1844, and came to this country with his parents when quite young. During the war between the States he enlisted on the side of the Union, and was in the service about fifteen months. He was compelled to leave the service, having contracted a disease which unfit him for active service, and was honorably discharged. The disease contracted in the army was the indirect cause of his early demise, being just in the prime of manhood.

Appropriate remarks were made at his funeral by Mr. Warner, after which his remains were laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, Hamilton, Ohio.

Yours in hope,

GEORGE W. FULKERSON.

HAMILTON, Ohio.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

Mrs E E Roper 2, R W Thompson 2 50, Daniel B Powers 2, G A Benson 2 50, Capt Wm E Buck 2 50, W H H Francis 2 50, Eliza Rowland 2, S D Coley 2 50, A F Stephenson 2, C A Thornton 2, Elder Walter Cash 5 50, Joseph Stephens 1 80, Rebekah Wilson 2 50, Elder J S Corder 5, Fred W Keene 2, A J Harrison 4 20, J P Allison 2, Wm L Nance 12 15, J C King Jr 2, Mrs F A Thomas 4, L D Scarborough 2 50, Mrs Cornelia Green 2 50, J F Farmer 2, H Skidmore 2, E B Turner 1, E W Hartley 2 50, J H Parker 2 20, J B Green 2, Z G Thomas 5.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

E H Watkins 50c.—Total \$85 85.

THREE DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with Sidling Hill Church of Old School Baptists, by Elders White and Chick, to commence on Friday, April 29, and continue over Sunday. We extend an invitation to all who may desire to meet with us at that time, especially those in the ministry. The church is twenty miles from Hancock, Md., the nearest railroad station. Any persons intending to come will please write to Ahimaz Mellott, or brother Dennis Mellott, in time so that they can be met at Hancock on Thursday, about the middle of the day. The post-office address of the above brethren is Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa.

AHIMAZ MELLOTT.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next session of the Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Warren Church, Baltimore Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (18th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, will take the train at Calvert Station, M. C. R. R., at 3.30 p. m. on Tuesday, for Cockeysville. Those coming south by N. C. R. R., will arrive at Cockeysville about 4.00 p. m. on Tuesday, where conveyances will be in waiting to take them to places of entertainment. The friends are cordially invited.

G. HARRYMAN.

THE next session of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent Co., Del., to begin on Wednesday before the fifth

Sunday in May (25th), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (1st), 1887, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (8th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those who contemplate attending the Warwick Association can come on the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R., from the east or west, and from the north on the New York, Ontario & Western R. R., directly to Middletown.

Ten passenger trains stopping at Middletown leave New York City daily, from foot of Chambers and West 23d Streets, New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. Excursion tickets, good for five days, can be procured.

Those coming through the city of New York can reach here at 10.56 a. m. on Wednesday, by taking the cars at the foot of Chambers Street about 8.00 o'clock a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends.

BENTON JENKINS.

THE next session of the Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (15th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west via the D. L. & W., or N. Y., L. E. & W. R. R., will come to Elmira, and there take train on the Northern Central R. R. to Grover. Trains leave Elmira on the N. C. R. R. at 9.00 a. m. and 3.00 p. m.

Those coming from the south can leave Williamsport at 7.15 a. m., 2.35 and 7.20 p. m.

Those coming from a distance will come on Tuesday, 14th. The place of meeting is but a few rods from the depot. Friends will be met at the depot on Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth, and we hope to see a goodly number of friends and ministering brethren present.

M. VAIL.

THE Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of eastern Oregon and Washington Territory will meet this year with Big Spring Church, near Summerville, Union Co., Oregon, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, at 11 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with the church at Van Buren, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 10, 1887.

Those coming on the Nickel Plate R. R. will stop at Staatsville. Those coming from the west on the B. & O. R. R. will stop at North Baltimore. Those coming from the east will stop at Bairdstown. Those coming from the north or south on the Toledo & Findlay R. R. (T. C. & S.) will stop at Van Buren. The above trains will be met on Thursday, June 9th, and the writer will meet and care for those who stop at Arcadia. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

THE Turkey River Association is appointed to be held (God willing) with the Otter Creek Church, in Black Hawk County, Iowa, ten miles northeast of Waterloo, to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in June (4th), 1887, and continue three days.

Friends and brethren who will favor us with their presence will be met on Friday, June 3, in Waterloo. Should any be delayed on the way, they may inquire in Waterloo for Paul Sohner or John Garrett, both living four and one-half miles northeast of Waterloo.

PAUL SOHNER.

SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

These books can be ordered sent either to the subscriber sending the new names or to any other addresses he may desire; but in all cases the FULL AMOUNT OF CASH MUST ACCOMPANY THE ORDERS.

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FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES. COMPILED BY ELDERS S. H. DURAND AND P. G. LESTER.

THE hymns and tunes in this book have been very carefully selected and arranged, and are such as are used in our churches in different parts of the country. The book contains 272 pages of print in all, printed on extra heavy, No. 1 book paper, well bound in full cloth. Two kinds are printed, round and shape notes. Be careful to name which kind is wanted.

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THIRD EDITION—EXTRA OFFER.

The third edition of the Hymn and Tune Book will be ready by the middle of April. We have a few copies bound in Turkey Morocco, price \$2.50.

To any one sending an order for a dozen, common binding, with the money, \$12.00, we will send an extra copy.

The "Signs of the Times,"

DEVOTED TO THE
OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,
IS PUBLISHED

THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH
OF EACH MONTH,

BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS,

To whom all communications should be addressed, and directed, Middletown, Orange County, N. Y.

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B. L. BEEBE.

WM. L. BEEBE.

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Our subscribers will confer a favor on us, and enable us to keep their accounts with more accuracy, by observing the following instructions:

HOW TO REMIT.

The most convenient and the safest way of sending remittances is by post-office money orders, which should invariably be made payable to G. BEEBE'S SONS, at Middletown, N. Y., and not at the New York City Post-office, and always enclose the order in the same envelope with the letter containing the information for what it is to be applied. When it is not convenient to procure a post-office order, the money can be enclosed in the letter, and registered, and it may then be considered safe. But we especially request our friends not to hand the money to post-masters to enclose for them, nor to send us postage stamps, as they are not easily disposed of, and soon accumulate to a cumbersome amount. We must also request that bank checks on distant banks be not sent, as they are subject to quite heavy discounts.

LOOK TO YOUR DATES.

Opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper will be observed a date, this date denotes the time at which such subscription expires, and when a remittance is made to renew the subscription the date should be watched to see that it is forwarded to such time as the remittance pays to, and if neglected, by informing us, it will be corrected. By this method each subscriber has his own account, and can see that the proper credits are given for his remittances.

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In making remittances be sure to give the post-office and state of each name to be credited. In ordering an address changed always give the post-office and state at which the paper has been formerly received, as well as the post-office and state to which it is to be changed. When ordering the discontinuance of a subscription, give us the post-office and state as well as the name to be discontinued.

THE SUBSCRIPTION RECEIPTS

We have discontinued the publishing of the subscription receipts, and have adopted the following method, which if strictly observed will give perfect satisfaction;

We do not mail a receipt to persons sending us a remittance for their own subscription, but let them rely on the advance of their date to show that their money was received.

We do not mail a receipt to a person sending us a remittance for several subscriptions, his own being among them, for when his credit is given he can know that his money was received.

We do mail a receipt to a person sending us a remittance for others, and his own subscription not being included among them.

In the last instance it will be necessary for the person sending the remittance to be particular to give his post-office address, that we may know where to mail the receipt.

If after making a remittance any should discover a neglect on our part to advance the date on the pasted slip containing the name, as stated in instructions to subscribers below, under the caption, "Look to your dates," they will please advise us, and we will make the correction, if the remittance was received, and if not, we will inform them of its failure to reach us.

HYMN BOOKS.

The Fifth Edition of our Baptist Hymn Books (small type) is now ready for distribution. We have now received from our Bindery in New York an ample supply of all the variety of Binding.

Our assortment of the small books embraces First Quality, Turkey Morocco, full gilt, very handsome, \$2.75 single copy, or per dozen, \$30.00.

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By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. We have just republished a large edition of the above named very interesting and instructing pamphlet. Many thousands of copies have been scattered through England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to that degree as to induce us to present to the public this new 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.

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A FIVE DAYS DEBATE ON

CHURCH IDENTITY.

We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size as the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1887.

NO. 10.

POETRY.

REST DESIRED.

COME, thou dear Redeemer, come,
Make my heart thy humble home;
For thyself the place prepare,
Dwell and reign forever there.

Lord, my heart is full of din
From the crowds that swarm within;
All to thee and me are foes,
Much my soul desires repose.

Buyers, sellers, birds of prey,
Drive them every one away;
Make their hateful clamor cease,
Reign thou there the Prince of peace.

Be thou, Lord, my house of prayer,
May I meet a Father there;
Know through thee I'm reconciled,
Hear him own me as a child.

Then I'd bless the holy Three
For such mercy shown to me;
Ever live beneath thy sway,
Never, never roam away.

H. L. G.

—Gospel Standard.

ONE LESS.

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE
ELDER GEORGE Y. STIPP, BY HIS BROTHER
HENRY.

One less at home!
The charmed circle broken; a dear face
Missed day by day from its accustomed place;
But, cleansed and saved and perfected by
grace,
One more in heaven!

One less at home!
One voice of welcome hushed, and evermore;
One Farewell word unspoken; on the shore
Where parting comes not, one soul landed
more,
One more in heaven!

One less at home!
Chill as the earth-born mist the thought
would rise,
And wrap our footsteps round and dim our
eyes;
But the bright sunbeam darteth from the
skies—
One more in heaven!

One more at home!
This is not home, where, cramped in earthly
mold,
Our sight of Christ is dim, our love is cold;
But there, where face to face we shall behold,
Is home and heaven!

One less on earth!
Its pain, its sorrow, and its toil to share;
One less the pilgrim's daily cross to bear;
One more the crown of ransomed souls to
wear;
At home in heaven!

One more in heaven!
Another thought to brighten cloudy days;
Another theme for thankfulness and praise;
Another link on high our souls to raise
To home and heaven!

One more at home!
That home where separation cannot be;
That home where none are missed eternally;
Lord Jesus, grant us all a place with thee,
At home in heaven!

CORRESPONDENCE.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Feb. 16, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I hope my desire to correspond with the household of faith through the SIGNS is of the Lord; and I know if it is not, it will avail nothing in point of edification. My mind has been exercised lately on that portion of the Scriptures which shows conclusively that the Lord has a people, a peculiar, distinct and separate people, who are so often called "My people." The Scripture is found in Psalm lxxxix. 15, and reads, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." If we would understand this text we must remember that there is no better interpreter than the Scriptures, for when led by the revealing Spirit the word is seen to explain itself. We notice in the above that there is a people mentioned and their condition described. This people, who are God's people, are marked; they have the seal of God in their foreheads. There is line upon line, showing to those who can see that there is a people here in the world distinct from all other people, called the people of God. They have been manifested ever since Abel. Moses chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God;" and the Lord, by the hand of the prophets, hath written so often, "My people." On account of the peculiar favors with which God has blessed his people, the nations of the earth have observed them, and kings of the earth have used their power to destroy them, Pharaoh, and the king of Moab, and Herod, and others; but it has fallen back on them as on Balaam. "How can I curse him whom God hath not cursed?" They are known as a peculiar people, who show forth God's praise. They are known as the fewest of all people, and as dwelling alone, not reckoned among the nations. It is also a remarkable fact that when they dwell alone they dwell in safety. That doctrine which encourages God's people to be like the surrounding nations, and to have that which is unauthorized by the word of God, is dangerous to their prosperity, and will bring them into trouble, and not safety. That impatient disposition manifested by Sarah, to hurry the fulfillment of the promise, can only bring trouble, in the form of Ishmaelites, which have to be driven from the house. That desire to have Sunday Schools and other machinery in the kingdom of Jesus, only brings what the Moabitish woman brought

into the camp of Israel, trouble and a stumbling-block. The devil worries whom he cannot devour. Josephus says that after Balaam could not curse Israel, he told Balak that if he would dress up some of the Moabitish women and send them down into the camp, and marry, they could cast a stumbling-block in their way; so he did so. And the Scriptures teach us that Balaam taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block in their way, which he did; and here was Balaam's sin. He did it for reward. So are there many Balaams now, teaching for reward, and doing all they can against the people of God. The people of God should dwell alone and in safety. There is great danger when they seek to dwell with the world and all their various institutions, which prove to be so many thorns in her sides. They are secluded, separated from the world. "It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house," said Solomon. We also notice that the espoused who are truly virtuous are secluded. If a woman who professes virtue mingles with harlots, her character is questioned, and justly so; for, as Paul says, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Paul also spoke of the church as a chaste virgin. The Lord's people are a peculiar people, separate from all other people. Jesus also said that he gave himself for them, that he might redeem them, and purify them unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. They are also said to be zealous of good works; and one of the evidences is their stern opposition to the works of iniquity, which the religious world calls good works. They are works devised by men, and at best are but the doctrines and commandments of men, which we are commanded not to touch, taste nor handle, which all are to perish with the using, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. They prefer to hear and obey the voice which was heard in the mount, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him." The allegiance and obedience of his people to him brings them, as he was in the world, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, despised and rejected of men; also bringing to pass his word, "They hated me," and they will "hate you

also." "If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution." We have only to look back upon the history of God's people to see what strictures were put upon them; and Paul said that these things were written aforetime for our admonition. When we see how God anciently separated his people, and gave them certain laws by which they as a people were to be governed, and also see the trouble they passed through in consequence of their disobedience, we may well be admonished. Jesus also said that they were not of the world, but that they were a spiritual people. The world seeth them not, in that spiritual sense. They are hidden from the world. This is the people who are called "blessed;" and they are blessed, and blessed of God with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. When Jesus, in the sermon on the mount, pronounced the blessings upon certain ones, they were his people who were characterized as "the pure in heart," "the poor in spirit," "peacemakers," persecuted for righteousness' sake, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and mourning. I have thought that the Lord's people were blessed in every condition, as the poet has said,

"In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand shall thy strength
ever be."

When we look back upon their history this is also clearly seen. Daniel in the lions' den, the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, Elijah followed and sought by persecutors; and as Paul shows in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, they were all peculiarly favored of God, which means blessed; and it is so until this day, that like faith, and like spirit, and like trials, manifest the same people and the same blessings. Jesus, our Captain and Head, endured it all, and he was glorified and blessed as the beloved Son of God. God blessed him, and blesses all his people in him. All these trials and afflictions prepare them to know the joyful sound. We need just such, and without them we would also be without the knowledge of the joyful sound. But since we have passed and are passing through such, we can tell the sound when we hear it. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." He that hath learned of the Father cometh to Jesus, and he shall know of the doctrine. When we are quickened by the Spirit, and faith is revealed, we see our condemnation and guilt; we

see our own sins, and know that we are lost, have no strength, are in a perishing condition, are blind and dumb, are of the ends of the earth, are heavy laden, are thirsting, and our feet are in the mire. Then the Lord takes us up, when we have given up all as lost, and places our feet upon the Rock, and shows us our pardon sealed by the blood of the everlasting covenant; shows us the river of water of life in Christ; shows and gives us the rest; reveals our justification in the risen Redeemer, and puts a new song in our mouth, even praise unto our God, the Lamb which sitteth upon the throne; and we are made to say, Blessing, and honor, and power, and glory, and dominion, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue. Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Then we know the joyful sound, the gospel of our salvation, which is of God, by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, but 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. "The joyful sound," the trumpet of the gospel. The prophet said that God would blow the trumpet; and we believe that God does speak through his servants the words of this life. "Lo," said Jesus, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world." The voice of the Son of God is the gospel, the good news, the "glad 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 "shall reign over the house of Jacob forever." The Deliverer of his people has come. O prisoners of hope, are you glad when you hear him coming, yea, leaping upon the mountains, proclaiming with a certain sound thy pardon and peace? Thy pardon is secured; he has come to deliver thee. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." This embodies all that is contained in the gospel, and this is what makes our joy full. How gloriously beautiful are the feet of them that publish peace! What peace is like this peace? Peace that "passeth all understanding," a joy inexpressible and full of glory. Truly may we say,

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

"That sweet comfort was mine
When the favor divine
I first found in the blood of the Lamb."

Surely there is no sound so full of joy as the gospel sound. Jacob's good news was, There is corn in Egypt; but we say, Glorious news! there is complete redemption and righteousness and wisdom and sanctification in Christ for all such poor and de-

pendent ones as are begging for mercy at his door. There is a joy in the beginning of the gospel, and a joy in the midst of the gospel, and a joy in the end. Those who have come through great tribulation know the joyful sound. The joy produced by the sound partakes of the nature of the power which produced it. It came from heaven, and is pure and abiding, never fading, undying, solid. As the poet has truly said,

"Solid joy and lasting treasure
None but Zion's children know."

It will never be forgotten. It leaves a lasting odor, which affects our whole lives. It is the taste of the heavenly gift. The good news that produces the joy is Christ. None is like him. His name is become sweet and precious, and we rejoice when he is preached, for that is the joyful sound. "Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Christ is all, and in all, and over all, God blessed forever. Amen. Not yea and nay, but yea and amen, to the glory of God the Father. No jangling in the true gospel, but it is one certain sound, and that sound is, "Salvation is of the Lord." "O people saved by the Lord."

"Salvation! O the joyful sound!
'Tis pleasure to our ears;
A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears.

"Buried in sorrow and in sin,
At hell's dark door we lay;
But we arise by grace divine,
To see a heavenly day."

The pleasures of this world are of the earth, earthy, and pass away; but the joy of an endless life, who can estimate it? O how deep, how lasting! The gospel produces this, or it flows out of the gospel, which is said to be "My doctrine," which "shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isaiah lv. 10, 11. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isaiah xl. 1, 2. Not only does the gospel embody pardon, but life comes with it, and we are made to say, Abba, Father. If we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. The joyful sound also embraces the love principle upon which we are pardoned. He loved his people with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness he draws them. His love knows no change; he loves them unto the end. This love has provided for their joy here and hereafter; for we have, treasured up in Christ, an inheritance incor-

ruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven; and we are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. With all the present joy, Paul could say, "Now we see through a glass darkly [or dimly], but then face to face." We shall know as we are known. Then comes the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls. This enables us to walk in the light of his countenance. His reconciled countenance is upon us, by virtue of his Son's obedience, who brought in everlasting righteousness, which is declared by the Lord through the prophet, "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "The Lord our righteousness." This is the righteousness which exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees. First, resting in the sunshine of his righteousness is what enables us to walk in the light of God's countenance; for God cannot look upon sin. But since his Son has paid the debt, and put away our sins, and justified us before God, we can walk in his merits and enjoy the smiles of God; and he countenances us because we are cleansed by the blood of his Son Jesus Christ. Believers are called the children of light, and are taught to walk in the light of God, and do so by the Spirit; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

If I keep on, when will I end? I will close, lest I become tedious.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

BLANCO, Texas, March, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having written on divine sovereignty, as displayed in predestination (published in former numbers of the SIGNS, the last of which was published August last), with reference to the chain of blessings recorded Romans viii. 28-30, I promised to continue, and write on, effectual calling. After the long interval, caused by press of business, I undertake the task of redeeming my promise.

All those given to Christ in covenant relation, and predestinated to the conformation of his image, in their several generations, are at the destined time called by God, the Holy Ghost, and invested with an earnest of their inheritance in Christ, their spiritual Head. I say God, the Holy Ghost, because he is in majesty and power co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and Son. In the elucidation of this subject there are two points worthy of note. God's holy law will accept no obedience short of perfection; and since man's fall and corruption, he neither has nor can have such obedience. Though this holy calling takes place in time, yet it is according to God's eternal purpose in Christ Jesus, and is a fruit of his electing and predestinating love. When Paul says that God called him by his grace, we understand him to

teach that it was not for any pliability or deserving on his part as a cause, as he refers in the same connection to his former conversation in persecuting the church of God and wasting it; and as he elsewhere defines grace to be the free and sovereign favor, or mercy, of God, we cannot suppose it is ever conferred upon a worthy object. This seems to be the voice of revelation. Thus Jesus called unto him whom he would, and they came unto him. This call being according to the will and by the power of God, was invincible (Mark iii. 13), and a verification of his language in John vi. 27, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Though the elect, as well as others, are dead in sin, yet the time is coming, and now is, when the dead (elect) shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and hearing, shall live. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this [Jewish] fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."—John x. 16. Thus we see the "wills" and "shalls" of Jehovah encompassing his elect, which are only a development of his eternal love and of his purpose to save them from their sins, as he appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks.—Isaiah xxvi. 1. Neither do the terms "will," "shall" and "must," employed above, imply that God draws or forces them against their will, but by his converting power makes them willing, and draws them with cords of love. God's children, in common with others, being under the destructive control and influence of the powers of darkness, he delivers them from thence, and translates them into the kingdom of his dear Son.—Col. i. 13. Though captives, they shall be let go, not for price nor reward; and the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, for Jesus proclaims liberty to the captives, and opens the prison to them that are bound. I think the Scriptures adduced are sufficient to evince that God's people are called according to his eternal purpose, and independent of anything in the called.

I will now try to show how and to what end they are called. I will remark that as special grace was given each and every one of the heirs of promise in Christ before the world began (Eph. i. 3, 4), so the Holy Ghost in time deals out to each heir, in measure, weight and number, all the gifts and spiritual blessings thus given; as the apostle says, "To every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ."—Eph. iv. 7. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6. We see here that grace bestowed gives knowledge of sonship, but does not impart it. As God calls his people, the call is peremptory and invincible; and as his grace is the agent employed, all others are excluded. Then, neither reading the word, nor preaching the word, nor any other agency of men, has anything to do with calling a

dead sinner. As he is dead, he must be made alive. He is blind, and must have eyes to see. He is deaf, and must have ears to hear, and a heart to understand. This view of the subject is fully sustained by the concurring testimony of experience and revelation. Paul says, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." When Paul was preaching at Philippi the Lord opened Lydia's heart, and she then heard and attended to the things spoken by Paul. So God must first call and open the heart before a preached gospel will prove salutary.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24; Acts xvi. 14. As the Lord calls his people to a state of holiness, into a living union and communion with himself, in order to this he comes to them in the plenitude of his converting power, and by his transforming power makes them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.—Col. i. 12. As they must reach the end of their calling, even their final glorification, through the appointed means or intermediate steps, they are called to repentance unto life, and do works meet for repentance, or manifest evidences of repentance unto life; and as Christ, their High Priest, entered into the holy place, and obtained eternal redemption for them, he is exalted a Prince and Savior, to give them repentance and forgiveness of sins.—Acts v. 31; xi. 18; Hebrews ix. 12. Therefore without repentance given they cannot repent, and when given they can but repent; for a godly sorrow sent home to their hearts by the Holy Ghost worketh in them a repentance unto salvation that needeth not to be repented of, for it is God that worketh in them both the will and the act of his own good pleasure.—1 Cor. i. 10; Phil. ii. 13. As the Lord's people, in an unregenerate state, are ignorant of their lost and ruined condition, being lifted up with pride, fulfilling the fleshly desires of their hearts, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another (Eph. ii. 3; Titus iii. 3), to convince of which, and draw them to himself, he shineth in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. iv. 6), wherein they behold the extent, spirituality and infinite demands of the holy law, and the eternal rectitude and glorious character of the Lawgiver. In this dilemma their hopes, arising from supposed inherent righteousness, receive a mortal shock. They confess their guilt, and the justice of the sentence rendered, contained in the words, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10. Being wedded to the law as a covenant, they undertake to satisfy its demands by their obedience. They are, under the direction of the Spirit, however, finally led to Christ, who is "the end of the

law for righteousness to every one that believeth."—Rom. x. 4. Though full of self, they were emptied and humbled, killed and made alive, wounded and healed, bruised and bound up. For the Lord has appointed unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.—Isa. lxi. 3. It is not only necessary that the Lord's children repent toward him, but also that they have faith toward, or in, our Lord Jesus Christ.—Acts xx. 21. Faith being the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, is likewise the gift of God and the fruit of the Spirit.—Heb. xi. 1; Gal. v. 22; Eph. ii. 8. It results from the effectual working of God's mighty power.—Eph. ii. 19. I do not understand that repentance and faith are either conditions or auxiliaries in the work of salvation, but are parts of and form links in the chain of salvation, and are the first fruits or evidences of salvation to a lost and ruined sinner. Being divorced, and realizing his divorce from the law as a covenant of works, he is possessed with a holy peace in believing in Jesus as his covenant Head and Lawfulfiller. Being justified by faith (as the channel through which he embraces Christ as having met all his covenant engagements), he rejoices in hope of the glory of God.—Rom. i. 2. The poor sinner having pleaded guilty in the court of conscience, now stands and pleads his justification in the court of heaven, through the atoning merits of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The kingdom of heaven being set up in the sinner's heart, harmony ensues between the parties formerly at variance; melody has taken the place of confusion; heavenly peace possesses the soul. The wilderness and solitary place shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. "They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." "And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation;" for "I will rejoice over them to do them good." To make their union permanent, he will neither depart from them nor suffer them to depart from him; for his language is, "I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." "I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever." The marriage of the Lamb is now come, and the bride is arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, even the righteousness of her adorable Lord, Head and Savior, whom she now beholds with adoring gratitude; for her language is, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banquetting house, and his banner over me was love." The King greatly desires her beauty, for she is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought

gold, and she shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework.—Song ii. 3, 4; Psalm xlv. 11-14. Thus the bride, enjoying this union and communion with her spiritual Head, her mind being enlightened by the rays of heavenly wisdom, and her heart being warmed by visits of heavenly love, is eager to diffuse the savor of the name, the glorious work, and the exalted character of her Sovereign.

Then may we all, while filling our allotted circle in the cycle of life, direct every energy to the glory of God, by believing, adhering to and contending for all the counsel of God, so far as known. We are fully assured that the fabric of our salvation and felicity is founded in the eternal will and purpose of God the Father, carried into effect by the mediation of Christ, and applied and brought home to the heart by the converting power of the Holy Ghost.

JAMES WAGNER.

FREMONT, Nebraska, April 13, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find two dollars, for which you will please send me the SIGNS another year. You will notice that I am just two months behind in remitting for another year. I cannot say why I have not sent it before, for I could have done it as easily when it was due as I can at this time; and each paper that I have received since then has brought a sting to my conscience, and has reproached me for my negligence; and I would determine that I would attend to it immediately; but these resolutions of mine, like many others, were made to be broken; but I cannot say they were forgotten. I know not how it may be with others, but for myself I feel this to be a duty that ought not to be neglected, in sending on our money when it is due for the SIGNS; for to my mind if there is any one thing for which we get value received, it is this blessed medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. And may all the gifts which have hitherto helped to adorn the SIGNS still continue to minister food and drink to those in a wilderness and desert land; and may hungry, fainting souls be continually fed with this manna from heaven, this bread which comes down from God, which if a man eat he shall never hunger. In the wisdom and providence of God the way of man is hidden from himself, and the way in which he is led may seem dark and mysterious to our finite minds, yet we may rest assured that the God of grace and infinite wisdom guides and directs in all things. We know not what privations we may be called to endure before we leave these low grounds of sorrow, but this one thing we are hopeful of, that so long as we may be blessed with eyes to see and a heart to understand, we may also be blessed with the means so that we may still continue to take it. In times past, while at home among my dear kindred, when at each turn my eyes could rest upon some dear, familiar face, when I could go up to

the house of God and hold sweet counsel and fellowship with those who are of like precious faith, which at times has been as an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast, I thought even then that I esteemed it a great privilege to have my paper to read. But O, my dear friends, experience and circumstances to which many of you are strangers have taught me that I knew nothing of its value in former time. Not until I was far removed from those pleasant scenes did I learn this bitter experience of loneliness and desolation. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God. While I have only spoken with a certainty as to myself concerning these things, I think I have spoken the sentiments of many others whose condition and lot in this life is similar to mine, who have to depend on our paper for all the preaching we have. And now, brethren Beebe, I feel that I cannot let this pass from me without sincerely thanking Elder Chick for giving us those good letters to share with him, which he had received from sister Stimpson. I felt while reading them that it could truly be said of her, as of faithful Abel, that she being dead, yet speaketh. Our dear brother says, because they are so rich in daily experience of grace, he feels like asking their publication. O, my dear kindred in Christ, is it these little specks of which she speaks, who go plodding along in darkness, with dark dismal clouds, so thick, so dark, that we go stumbling and halting, groping and feeling our way, knowing not whither our footsteps are leading us; O tell us, is it these who are rich in grace? O tell us, where is our Sun of Righteousness that had risen to brighten our pathway, as we had thought, to set no more? Sad, sad indeed is the condition of one who is forbidden the pleasures of this life, knowing from past experience that the love of them worketh death. Sad, how extremely sad, to be compelled to say, No pleasure in this life, with scarce a ray of hope for a better life beyond. The Savior said to his disciples, "Wherefore did ye doubt, O ye of little faith?" How often am I found taking these very same words of the Savior and applying them to myself, "O ye of little faith." We are told that all Scriptures 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 every good work. And, holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. To the law, and to the testimony of some of these inspired writers. Isaiah says, "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." I hope I feel thankful that I can go back in my experience and think of all the way the Lord has led me safely, through dangers seen and unseen; that his word has not failed; that he has caused me to remember the years of the right hand of the Most High; that the Lord is gracious, and will

not suffer his faithfulness to fail. Although David was greatly afflicted, he said it was good for him to be afflicted; for before he was afflicted he went astray, but now he kept his word. "In that day, saith the Lord, I will assemble her that halteth; I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted." God hath chosen his people in a furnace of affliction. This is the testimony of the saints of the most high God throughout all ages. It is the heritage of the saints, "And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." It is recorded of national Israel, that they forgot the works of the Lord; they waited not for his counsel; they wanted to be filled with their own way; they lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert; they made a calf in Horeb and worshiped the molten image. Many times did God deliver them, but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls; yea, they provoked him with their vanities, and the plague broke in upon them. Then stood up Phinehas (type of Christ), and executed judgment, and so the plague was stayed. For our merciful God remembered that they were but dust, and regarded their affliction when he heard their cry, and saved them for his name's sake. What a lesson is here to be learned of the wonderful deliverance of this typical people. How cheering ought this to be to this poor and afflicted people of our day, that we can turn to the testimony of the apostles and find that it is in exact accord with what was written by holy men of old. How consoling, yea, doubly consoling, to turn our eyes within and find the same indelibly written by the finger of God on our own hearts, and to know that their experience is our experience, their trials are our trials, their hope is our hope, their God is our God, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, the eternal God, world without end.

It was not my intention when I took my pen to say what I have, but only to say a few words, to tell how much I appreciate our paper, and to speak in particular of those letters from Elder Chick, and of brother Keene's most excellent letter, for they are both of the same language. It is through the kindness of brother Marvin Vail that we have that letter of brother Keene's. Please do not judge me too harshly, that I glory in their tribulation; but in them tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; that good hope through grace. It seems that my condition is like those whose carcasses fell in the wilderness; they could not enter in because of unbelief. Like Solomon, I am but a little child, and know not how to go out or to come in; and like him I say, Give me an understanding heart. Neither would I choose length of days, for to me

"This world is poor from shore to shore;
'Tis but a baseless vision."

We have no continuing city here.

We seek a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God, eternal in the heavens. Another evidence of the uncertainty of the things of this life is a sad disappointment to me this week. It may seem very simple to some, but to me it has been of much importance, as I had my ideas and anxieties worked up to quite a high degree. I received a letter from sister Clark, of this state, with whom I have corresponded, saying that they had a visit from Elder McCoy, now of this state, but recently of Indiana; and as he would be passing through this place this week, if I would inform them if we were still living here, he would stop off and visit us. You may be sure I lost no time in sending a reply, telling him just where he would find us, and that hacks to meet all trains ran by our place. But alas! the week is past, and we have seen nothing of him. Our hopes and anticipations are blasted.

I know I ought to stop writing, but I still have some space left on this sheet, and if you will bear with me a little longer I would like to tell of one of the bright spots in my life since I came out here. It was a visit last September to the Council Bluff Church, at Loveland, Iowa, in company with Elder Wagner and wife. I have thought so many times since seeing an account of Elder Chick's visit to our aged sister, Lydia Mullock, on her ninety-second birthday, that I would like to tell her of an aged couple I met while there, Elder Jenkins and wife. The name of itself was enough to revive many pleasant memories in my mind. This dear old patriarch, although having passed his ninetieth year, and his wife nearly the same age, had on the day before the meeting rode sixty miles across the prairie in an open conveyance, starting at daylight and reaching Elder Jones' at dusk, the place where we, with about sixty others, staid all night; yet so forgetful was he of his bodily infirmities that he was anxious to hear the preaching we had at night, and requested that the door be left open leading to his room, as by the advice of friends he had retired. He was one of the first to be ready to start for the place of meeting the next morning. He is almost entirely blind. I have many things I would like to tell of this visit, and of this people, but as I have only a few lines left I must close.

Your most unworthy sister, if one at all,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

SHUNK, Pa., March 31, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I take my pen to try to tell you some of my feelings. I was born in Broome Township, Schoharie Co., N. Y., April 1, 1812, and was married March 27, 1827. Until that time I do not think I had a serious thought of my future welfare. I was at a Methodist meeting, and while the people were singing, a calm feeling came over me. I did not know what to think, only that I was a sinner. It seemed as though I wanted to be alone. The

next time that old Elder Streeter preached in our neighborhood I went to hear him. He preached Christ and him crucified; but it seemed as if it was for God's people, and not for me. The Methodists used to tell me I must have faith. I told them I had no faith. They would say, "Every one has a spark of grace, and must improve it." I believed in the predestination of all things, and in the foreknowledge of God, yet I could not understand it, for great was the mystery of godliness. From that time until 1831 I had a great desire to be a christian, but was looking to the law for justification. I could see that if one offend in one point, he is guilty of the whole law. That summer there was quite a reformation, and meetings seemed more interesting than ever before, and I told my husband that I believed the preacher preached better than he used to. One day an aunt came to visit me, and in relating a dream of her daughter's, she said, "Phebe Ann dreamed that she and I were carrying each a bundle of dirty clothes." I had heard before that Phebe was under conviction of sin, and this dream struck me very forcibly. Were we not both carrying a burden? Our righteousness was as filthy rags. It bore on my mind constantly. After a few days I heard that my cousin had experienced religion. There was a meeting one evening at father's, and when my cousin came into the room she came and shook hands with me. I could not speak. We all went up into an upper room. Elder Winans was to preach that evening, and my sins weighed me down so heavily that it seemed as though I could not endure much longer. When the Elder took his text, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," I felt very hungry, and I did feed on that heavenly bread that came down from heaven, which if a man eats he shall never die. I forgot myself, and while he was preaching my burden was gone. When I came to think of my recent burden, I mourned because I could not mourn as I had done. The next day there was meeting in father's barn. Before going into the meeting I thought I would look in my hymn book, although I had not sang from it for two months or more. The hymn which I opened to was,

"Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?
Great Comforter, descend and bring
Some tokens of thy grace."

I read the whole of it. It just suited my case, and I still call it my hymn. When we assembled at the meeting I handed it to Elder Streeter. He gave it out and they sung it. I felt calm in my mind, and willing to wait the Lord's time. My cousin came, and she and another young lady were baptized. When we went to the water the ordinance seemed beautiful to me, but I had no desire to be baptized, as I wished for an evidence that my sins were forgiven. That evening there was meeting at the meeting house, and Elder Streeter again preached, this time on the

sufferings of Christ and his followers' obedience. While he was preaching I said to myself, A follower of Christ. O to be a follower of Christ! If I could have the evidence that my sins were forgiven, I would be willing to follow him and suffer with him (here I put my foot down firmly on the floor) while life lasts. Immediately my soul seemed filled with joy, a light seemed to rest on everything, the minister, the people and all. Had an angel stood in the pulpit, his face could not have shone brighter to me. Then I whispered to my aunt sitting beside me, saying, "Did you ever hear such good preaching?" She smiled and said, "It is good." When the Elder stopped preaching he gave an opportunity for any to sing or speak as they wished. I gave my babe to my aunt, and went up into the gallery, and sitting down by my cousin I asked her to sing. She said, "What shall we sing?" I said, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand." She commenced singing, and I could sing too. When she finished, she arose and said that she thanked the Lord that there was another born into the kingdom. The Elder said, "Who is it, Margaret?" She said, "It is Amy." This was the first that I understood what the feeling meant. The Elder asked me to tell my exercises, but I could say very little, I was so overjoyed. He asked me some questions, which I answered, and was received as a candidate for baptism. We sang all the way home. The next morning my cousin, Israel R. Porter, called to see me. He said he wanted to know how I felt. I said that I felt very well yet. As soon as I finished my work I went down to my father's to weave. While going down I kept thinking, "Pray, lest ye enter into temptation," and before I had reached the loom I began to think myself a great hypocrite, and that I had deceived the church. O that I had not said anything to the church, for now, I thought, O if I had not deceived the church! for I thought that was an awful thing. I laid my head down on the breast beam of my loom, and cried like a child. My brother came in and asked me what was the matter. I told him I was a hypocrite, and had deceived the church. He said, "Cannot you say as much as God, be merciful to me, a sinner?" and he tried to comfort me. When I went into the room where my mother was, she told me that father had been down in the corn-field, and said my brother was there praying. That gave me some consolation. Still I had many doubts. I went to see another aunt, and she wanted to know how my mind was. I told her the same pitiful story. She smiled and said, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." I told her I did not think it was the evil one, but my mind was troubled sometimes, and sometimes I would have a little hope. I was baptized the next Sunday, with my husband and three sisters, by our pastor, Levi Streeter. I had another time of trial just before our covenant meeting, and I fell on my knees and prayed to God, that if I was deceived

he would undeceive me. And I trust he answered my prayer, as some feeling of trust in him came to me. I thought it would be a blessing to me to hear the brethren and sisters talk, but I thought I could not say a word, and took my seat where I would be the last one to speak. But before they were half done speaking I wanted to talk so much that I could hardly keep quiet. I felt so happy, I could not believe I should doubt and have trouble any more. But I was sadly mistaken, for I find a continual warfare, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that I cannot do the things that I would. And we have to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But I must draw this scribble to a close, fearing that I have written more than you will care to read; but it has been on my mind more than thirty years. I am a poor writer, still I want to let you know that I like the SIGNS, and cannot do without it as long as I have means to pay for it, and it contains the same doctrine it now does. I commenced in November last and went for three miles around, trying to get subscribers for the family paper. Some gave me encouragement that if I would wait until winter they would subscribe; yet all I have secured is two. If it would not be too much trouble, I should like to see the letter in the SIGNS written by Timothy Stallings to Elder Mitchell. I did not get that number. It is in volume forty-four, page two, 1867, and my subscription commenced in February of the same year. I was at my grand-daughter's one day, and in looking over some old numbers I found that letter, but it was so torn in places that by placing the pieces together we could read little of it.

Dear brethren, do with this as you see fit. If I am saved at all, it will be through grace.

I remain your sister in hope of a blessed resurrection,

AMY SHADDICK.

DAVENPORT, N. Y., April 7, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I remit from year to year, it seems so unfeeling and distant, so like a want of appreciation, not to offer one word by way of encouragement to you in your arduous and untiring effort to maintain the interest and usefulness of the paper, in the face of contending elements on every hand; and also to other dear brethren and sisters, who so faithfully contribute for the same cause. But a sense of my weakness and ignorance has silenced me again and again, and I have tried to put myself at ease with the argument that so many who are much more gifted and capable remain quiet, and certainly I should not presume on your time and patience; yet as I thought of writing at this time, I felt particularly impressed with a sense of my duty in this respect, nor can I rid myself of it. It seems a relief to tell the dear ones of our Father's family what a poor, weak,

erring creature I am, and how our heavenly Father sustains me from day to day, through every trial and besetment, with strength just enough; and I must say it is enough, though I never have any to spare, to build upon or make a display of, as some of the shining lights, who seem to cast sunshine and comfort in the path of every one with whom they meet. I think sometimes I am such a mystery to myself, it seems as though no one else ever had such unceasing mental struggles as I, in whom the contending spirit is so active for ascendancy. I know and am satisfied that our God is an all-wise God, and there is none like him, who has declared 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. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. He bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. And he taketh notice of the very smallest things; for Christ, in teaching his apostles, asks, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." And, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." Salvation is of the Lord, and there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ. Yet my mind will wander to the multitude of professors who through the so-called christian churches all over the land, of every name and denomination; and although they may differ in some points, yet they are all in league through this international christian alliance, in subverting the great and principal truths of the Bible. And while I believe there are many of God's children among them, it seems strange that they can rest satisfied. We are a little, feeble few, walking in the midst of them, and yet entirely separate from them; for we would, spiritually, starve to death on the food which they seem to thrive and even feast on; for we have not so learned Christ. Still we are no better by nature than they, being just as worldly, and perhaps just as ambitious of popularity; yet we do not rest our hopes on any creature merit, but only in the atoning blood of Christ. I have thought (if you pardon the perhaps ridiculous comparison) that a great deal of the popular religion of the day is like the adulterations introduced into almost every article of food, and the counterfeits of many of the fabrics in our markets. The object is pecuniary gain. So, in order to succeed, the first thing a young person entering society, or setting up in business, must do is to make a profession of religion, which is so plenty and so easily obtained that there is no excuse; or if they cannot conscientiously do that, there is the young people's "christian association," which they can join for a small fee, and where they may "be the means of doing a great deal of good." And every sermon and lecture is so embellished and

set forth that our young people do not seem to be able to discriminate between true religion and morality. Instead of always being ready to give a reason for their hope, if you speak to them of an evidence or an experience, they do not understand you, but will tell you of the great good they have done, and of the wonderful reform they are helping bring about. And I ask myself, Why are these things so? The only answer I can find is, God knows; and I believe it is one of the all things in the great chain of predestination, just as much as the betrayal of our Savior, and in some way redounds to the glory of God, whether we can see it or not. But I know it is more profitable and edifying to think and speak of God's grace and great mercies to us, unworthy creatures, than to dwell on these mysteries, or fret ourselves because of evil doers. Although I have long since learned by experience that I cannot control my thoughts, yet the dear Lord does give me some comforting seasons of meditation, when I am drawn away from self and carnal things, to contemplate the great sacrifice offered for us on Calvary, and to feel that it is sufficient for the vilest sinner; for "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified: whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." And he says, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." And after many other precious promises, he exhorts us, among other things, to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water; and to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised. Of late some of the precious expressions of God's love and special provisions for his people have been sweetly impressed on my mind. The beloved disciple says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Now we know that many heirs are left without much of an inheritance; but we are not left in doubt about this; for Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you." So we need not fear it will diminish in value, or in any way be squandered; for there neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and thieves do not break through nor steal. Nor are we left to dispose of this inheritance in any way, nor despise it, as Esau, who sold

his birthright for a mess of pottage; for Peter further says, "Who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." O how beautifully is God's sovereignty displayed in everything.

But I am occupying too much of your time even to read this very imperfect letter, so I will close, when I have told you how much I prize our family paper. It is a medium of inexpressible comfort to me. My privileges of meeting with the brethren and sisters are so few and far between that I would not know how to do without it. In my darkest, coldest seasons, when my mind is so shut up that I cannot even find relief in prayer, when I have been led to take up our paper I have almost always found something on which my thoughts could rest with some degree of comfort. I am much interested in reading Elder Durand's pieces, "Unto what and unto whom the saints are come," and my husband is too, although he is not a Baptist.

Yours in love and much weakness,
HARRIET N. HARKNESS.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 16, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Brother William Court wishes me to forward his subscription, and inform you of his change of address from this place to Bryant, Jay County, Indiana, where you and all brethren and friends may hereafter address him.

Having accomplished my little errand, I feel to say to you that I am still pleased with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as the general exponent of all the essential points of the true faith. I do not wish to flatter you in the least, for I think that your general course has been sufficiently humble to show that you feel, as well as I, that there is no perfection on this earth. Very truly, dear brethren, we all, who have ever been blessed with any knowledge of gospel truth and comfort, have been compelled to realize our weakness in the things of the kingdom, though God's blessed truth has been so marvelously revealed to our understanding that we wonder why all men cannot see it as clearly as we can, since we feel such a sense of the weakness of our natural powers of discernment. But this, however, finally gives us to see our need of humble confidence in God only, since it was he alone who could teach us, and so proves our need of reliance on him as not only our Teacher, but as the final Teacher of all his people. "They shall all be taught of the Lord." "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence even of your lusts that war in your members?" I think this last quotation explains the reason why so many are departing from the faith; it is through the delusive teachings of the flesh, which, like Peter's presumption, disable them from knowing what manner of spirit they are of, when hastily asking for the Lord's fire to consume their adversaries. How needful it is that every one of God's tried people be made to sensi-

bly feel the need of that wisdom which cometh down from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated. This wisdom makes us feel how liable we are to be led by the flesh or a fleshly spirit, as we have sometimes been led. I do not understand that to be "led by the Spirit" is to fail to "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," but to have more humble zeal for that truth, whether men will hear or forbear. Pride naturally directs our fleshly judgment to the side of the majority, or the many, either to lead or to follow them. But humble reliance upon divine authority for truth is necessary to the support of the true and the faithful; and while no ill will should control our acts, yet true and faithful love should prompt us to loving labor, tempered with long-suffering, till forbearance ceases to be a virtue. Dear brethren, if there ever was a time when we needed the spirit of christian fortitude and forbearance it is now. I say fortitude and forbearance; fortitude to prepare for suitable action, and forbearance to temper action. But as we are so weak in the flesh, whence shall we look for them? Surely not to any set rules or resolutions of ours, but to that blessed and only sweet and gentle Teacher, who only can prepare aright. O that we might be favored, even if need be in death, with those blessed graces.

Brethren Beebe, sometimes I have wished to see some special subjects treated upon, and almost feared the SIGNS might depart from the old landmarks; but in most things I have kept silent, until at last I have been rewarded sweetly for a patient waiting, and made to rejoice in the comforting testimony of divine perfections, such as just suited my need. Dear brethren, I do not wish ever to attack an enemy, but ever to be found faithful in the defense of truth. Indeed, however, if I am to stand on the defensive, I can find no time to put off my armor; for there has never been a time, to my recollection, when the truth has not been assailed, either out of or in the church, and often from unexpected sources. I grant that brethren, and even the world, have a right to watch over me; but I ask of brethren to take the brotherly spirit, and not the spirit of the world, as their rule of judgment. I also desire the blessed Master to prepare me for heeding his blessed word. With this spirit on both sides, I think brethren may freely approach each other, and thus be prepared to give and receive correction.

I have of late felt that some brethren have been somewhat like a little girl of my early acquaintance, who, hearing her aunt say, "Twice two are four," afterward told her mother, with much apparent meekness and simplicity, that it seemed as though her aunt ought to know more than she did; but she knew that two and two are four. I do not use this for levity, but to show that sometimes two brethren may use a figure in two different ways, and neither be necessarily wrong, except in the supposition

that each carries the other's views a space beyond their meaning, thus failing to see the harmony of each. I grant that all parables are designed to give God's people some blessed truth; but I have often thought that there is more in each parable than is generally elucidated by the ablest pen. Indeed, so far are they beyond my feeble powers that I have seldom tried to express the matchless beauties presented to my mind. I think, therefore, that our brethren principally fail when they try to confine instead of to elucidate, and grant to other minds the further consideration of what they have not spoken. When we realize the complex condition of every child of God (think of it, brethren, a child of man and a child of God), I do not wonder that the parables may be often applied in a two fold and sometimes a three fold sense; so also many prophecies and revelations. Brethren, I have often wished that I could write to edification on the parable of the good seed; but when able brethren fail to see alike, I almost fear they might think me intrusive should I dare try to be a reconciler. "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears."—Prov. xxvi. 17. Suffice it therefore for me to say that I wish brethren would always write with great consideration and brotherly regard, especially on points that they do not make bars of fellowship; but let brethren be careful how they write of the views of others, and be sure that they are heretical before they denounce them as such. It is one thing to bear with weak brethren, and quite another thing to tolerate an open heretic. "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject." This shows that we should be very judicious in the use of our language. First, we should be sure he is a heretic, and not endeavor to construe him into one. Second, we should not fail to give the first and second admonition (not vindictive vituperation, nor scandalous misrepresentation) before we reject him. This should not be done by nor in the spirit of party faction, for personal ambition. I should feel condemned should I denounce a brother as a "dangerous man" before I had tried to labor with him, or told him the consequences of his dangerous doctrine; but the apostle explicitly warns the saints against all "hypocrisy" and "evil speaking." Brethren, labor in love, even with the erring, if peradventure God may give them repentance.

Your little brother in hope,

A. B. BREES.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon, Dec., 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I hope it is through no selfish motive that I feel inclined to talk a little to the household of faith, to that chosen generation, who claim no righteousness of their own, but give all the honor and glory to God. I am inclined to think it is not possible for us, poor children, creatures of divine mercy, to thank and adore our great Head as we

ought, though we try ever so faithfully to do so. But notwithstanding all this, his mercies are renewed day by day; and what do we return to him for all the blessings granted us? I will answer only for myself, for I feel that I am farther amiss than any of those who profess to love his name. I am ten thousand talents in debt, with not a farthing to pay; and, more than this, I am ungrateful, unmindful, nearly always carnally minded, and farther out of the way, generally, than I am able to tell. But Jesus knows it all, and graciously grants me seasons of peace that are far sweeter to my troubled soul than anything this world can give. Sometimes I think I can to some extent realize that God is love and peace, and all in all; that he is my salvation and my stronghold; for without him I am nothing, and less than nothing. Dear saints, have you ever felt like that? Yes, I think you have; but you seem more worthy than I; for you cannot know the shallowness of this hypocritical nature. I feel that I cannot be humble or contrite enough. I feel to say that there are times when I would gladly shut myself from the view of all his creatures, and never mingle with them again; for then the temptation to do and say wrong things would not be so strong. But I cannot hope to elude the searching eye of Jehovah, who hath set the bounds of our habitation, and hath numbered even the hairs of our head. Even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without him. How then can a poor worm like me escape him? Then what must I do in my extremity? or rather, what can I do but turn to Jesus, my refuge, my all? For he came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance; and I am a sinner; one, I humbly hope, who has been redeemed by that precious blood, more than eighteen hundred years. Can you, dear saints, fellowship such as I?

"Nothing in my hand I bring,

Simply to my God I cling."

Jesus paid it all; all to him I owe. Brethren and sisters, even while I write, there is something that assails me, and I know not the source from whence it comes; but it asks me why I am writing this, and if I really mean and feel what I have just written. I am even made to feel that I may be a deceiver, while I have wished so much to speak my feelings in a straightforward, candid manner, and I even doubt, to a serious extent, if I really have any true earnest desires for the welfare of that people who, I believe, have been saved with an everlasting salvation. I feel to exclaim, God, help me, for I cannot help myself. And I have been foolish enough to think that he is my refuge and my all; but now I do not know whether he is or not; but I trust, if he is, he will shortly reveal himself to me as such; for it is terrible, is it not, to be tossed around like a bark on the dark waters of despair, without hope, without rudder, at the mercy of the waves? But since I come to think, he can still the troubled waters with a word, and

they can only do just what the Lord God determined they should do. And if I am an heir of glory, they cannot possibly engulf me; and though my sins loom up like mountains above my head, they cannot damn the least of all my Father's children. Then, O my soul, why dost thou seem to doubt the eternal decrees of God? and why art thou cast down? for thou hast found a people who are brought by the way thou art brought, and it should comfort thee to know thou art not alone. "My people." It does cause my heart to rejoice with exceeding gladness to read of the Lord's dealings with his people; for he has brought them by a way they knew not, and placed their feet on a rock, whose foundation cannot be shaken; neither can they remove their feet from thence, for they are kept by the almighty power of God. The gates of hell cannot prevail against them, and their life is hid with Christ in God. Then how utterly impossible it is for aught to harm them. This poor tabernacle of clay may be racked with pain and polluted with filth, but by and by we shall put off this earthly house, and resort to that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where pain and sorrow cannot enter, but all is peace and love. Then let those who are old and apparently on the verge of eternity, such as Elders John Stipp, Abner Shanks, I. N. Vanmeter, and others, who have fought the good fight and nearly finished their course, rejoice at their near approach to the tomb; for they will be with Jesus, and what more can be desired? Nothing. And you, dear old mothers in Israel, what a blessed reward is in store for you. A strong arm will support you through the dark valley. And though we sadly miss the loved ones who have finished their course, we may not mourn as some might, but rather be glad for their sakes, knowing through faith that it undoubtedly is their gain.

Now, my brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, let us not weary in well doing; for if Christ be for us, who can be against us? If we possess a gift, it has been given us of God, and has been bestowed for the good of others as well as ourselves; and remember, we are commanded to commune often one with another. When we keep silent about what we hope the Lord has done for us, we are hiding that which God has freely given, and in time it has been made manifest to us, for our comfort while tabernacling here below, and for the edification of those of like faith. Then this gift is not ours to hide, but the knowledge is given us to share with others. We do not expect the world to know or understand these things, for they are spiritually discerned, and none but the regenerated child can see any beauty or meaning in them. And though our mite may seem very small to us, it may be of great comfort to some poor soul who feels that none are so weak and small as they. But surely that would include all the household of faith; for I believe there are none of

them but what feel at times like their candlestick removed, and the light shut out from their understanding. Then let us rejoice in the hope that Christ has set up his kingdom in our hearts, and in God's own time he will give us the light and knowledge for which we thirst. Let us then unite with one accord and sing this verse, and some may, if they feel like doing so, shout it,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

Brethren Beebe, I fear I have been very rambling, and I hope you will dispose of this according to your judgment.

MRS. J. K. BOYD.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan. 27, 1887.

MUCH ESTEEMED BRETHREN EDITORS—As well as all the household of like precious faith:—It is to such that I have greatly desired to write once more. While hearing brother Rittenhouse's New Year's salutation read, I felt prompted to send my mite to our family paper, which comes to us richly laden with the good old corn and wine of the kingdom. All the wisdom of this world has not been able to adulterate that. It remains pure, and will forever remain so, as long as there is one of the Lord's dear, chosen family to be fed. Then all that pertains to earth and earthly things will be done away. My mind is carried back to the ancient saints; for it is written that "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."—Hebrews xi. 13. It is, I trust, just such strangers and pilgrims that your unworthy sister is trying in much weakness to address. I do not desire the gift of others of my brethren and sisters, for I could not use it to profit. It is for them, and not for me. But if the Lord will be pleased to draw nigh, and by his presence in my soul give me matter, and guide my thoughts and pen, I may be able to express the feelings of my brethren and sisters, as well as my own; for I do not want to write what I do not know by experience. How wonderful it is to listen to the Lord's clearly taught children while they tell, much plainer than we feel that we can, our own secret thoughts, of the way that the Lord has led them. The word is surely true, that the Lord's children are all taught of him and by him, and speak the same things in the same language; and what a peace there is while hearing them. How quietly we can sit in holy communion one with another, and eat of the bread that perishes not, and drink of the fountain that never gets dry. Well might it be said of such, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."—Psalm lxxxix. 15, 16. I now think

of the Lord's dear servants, those who have been well cleansed from the traditions of men, and stripped of all earthly treasures at times, in weakness and trembling. Yet they must go, for the Lord has said in his word to the holy prophet, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." What precious language to cheer the pilgrim on his way. Thus by faith we can follow, from righteous Abel to John, one after another, the patriarchs and prophets, who held the chain, link by link, until the coming of John, who proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. What sweet contemplation to fellow in the way that is cast up for the redeemed of our God to walk in. No matter who they are, nor what their nationality is, they all walk in this highway of holiness. Yet there are times when we find by bitter experience that we are walking after the flesh, and to such the word says, "Ye shall die." I think sister Slanson told us plainly about that some time ago, in the excellent letter that she wrote to the SIGNS. I could take it all to myself. I wanted to write to her then; and now I will say to her that it was good for me to read such scriptural truths, no matter what some may say, who had, I fear, forsaken the old paths. God has placed the gifts in the body as it has pleased him, and left it on record so plainly that it seems as though none ought to stumble. My feelings were touched when I read how sister Mary Parker's tender, tried feelings were hurt. She has our deepest sympathy. I know by my own weak body that kind and tender words are a great solace. Job's pretended friends were no comfort to him, and he was able to tell them so; but when the Lord appeared in his glory, how was it with the sufferer then? Satan fled, and the wrath of God was kindled against the three friends, and the latter end of Job was greater than the beginning.

The second number of the SIGNS for this year contained many very precious things, the letters from our able correspondents. I do not wish to overlook the obituaries of our dear sisters Smith and Dumond, which were written so appropriately for each one by our dear brother Bundy. Those who have visited sister Smith's home, and heard her speak of the sovereignty of God in the salvation of his elect people, would have to be silent if they did not believe it; and sister Dumond, although her end was sad, yet our faith is not shaken, for we remember how she would speak, as with the tongue of the learned, of the riches of grace, giving all the glory to him who wrought such great things in her. It truly was wonderful to listen to the language that she gave utterance to. One more I wish to speak of, and that is Mr. John Squires, of Roxbury, who died so suddenly. I felt that the SIGNS had lost one of its true friends, as well as the

church. Although he was not a member of the visible church, he was a good man, and will be missed by his three brothers, two of whom are members at Otego, with their companions, who mourn for their dear brother, although comforted by the assurance that he had a good hope, and for him to die was gain. I find that this tenement of clay is fast crumbling back to its mother earth. For a number of weeks I have been unable to go out much, and in my feelings have felt that there was but a step between me and the grave; yet I felt calm and composed, feeling that he who called me would do all things well.

I will close this epistle of love, leaving it to your better judgment to do with as you see is right. With love to all the dear readers of the SIGNS, affectionately your sister,
CHRISTIANNA L. FRENCH.

OLUSTEE CREEK, Ala., Dec. 17, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD:—For nearly four years I have had a desire to unburden my mind to the precious ones who write for and delight in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but having nothing save fiery trials and floods of tribulation to write of, I have deferred doing so thus long, fearing the dear ones would think I wrote under a spirit of murmuring. But thank the goodness of the Lord, he has thus far kept me safe from such a foul spirit. I do not mean to say that I have not been attacked by the monster, but through grace I have overcome him in every onset; for salvation hath the Lord appointed for walls and bulwarks. Feeble, weak and of little faith must be the soldier who fears and trembles at wicked men or devils while thus securely fortified; for let them say or do what they may, we know that all things work together for our good. They make lies their refuge, hurl us from their so-called church, put us to the sword, and consume our bodies at the stake. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Let us not be forgetful that he has chosen his precious ones in the furnace of affliction; and this affliction works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Heartrending and bitter are offenses when they come; but we learn that they must needs come, and woe to him by whom they do come. The dear child of God has nothing to fear, for the sweet voice of him who spake as never man spoke will be constantly whispering, too audible to be mistaken, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." The holy Scriptures teem with comfort for the dear, tried ones. Their daily experience affords the same, when they have been thoroughly tried, and shun not to discharge their duty. The dear children must live in discharge of their known duty, or suffer immense loss in the blessed presence and comfortable promises of our blessed Lord. These are facts so well known to the dear ones that they would need no repetition, were it not

that the very same sweet promises have been so often repeated by our Lord, and as often forgotten by us. There is a time to all things, saith the wise man. There is a time to bear and forbear in all godly fear. There is also a time to reprove, rebuke, and that sharply, too. This duty should be performed without the fear of consequences, with an eye single to the glory of God, whether it meets the approval of church or state, men or devils. Beloved brethren, the time is past for Fullerite ministers or circuit riders to hurt us; our enemies are of our own house, and they have crept in unawares. They should meet with no encouragement. They are not pure gold, such as Old School Baptists need.—Rev. iii. 18. They are Arminians galvanized, and are more to be dreaded, if not more abhorred, than the straightout Arminians. They are scrambling wildly for a ground between truth and error on which to rally the saints. They are nice expounders of the doctrine of election, predestination, and life union of Christ and his people; and when they finish their expositions a Methodist bishop would clap his hands and shout, "Good enough!" They encourage loose practice, and gross abominations are practiced or winked at; in fact, anything to harass and wound the dear child of God. They preach loud and long of piety, and practice otherwise; make large pretensions as lovers of peace, but are constantly goading Old School Baptists as Fatalists, as Two-Seeders, Antinomians, Arians; warning the dear little ones against extreme election or ultrapredestination; bringing in huge accounts, false reports and lying charges against the truth, inasmuch that not only our earth quakes and our cities tremble, but the heavens are shaken, and some are made to cry, "Lord, save me!" O how extremely happy are the Lord's people, to have such a strong tower of defense, such a faithful Friend—none like unto him, on whom they may confidently call while they sojourn in this sin-smitten vale of tears. How often our lips essay to complain, and our mouths are filled with praise. Our voice is often raised to implore, and our mouth is filled with thanksgiving. The bitter anguish of soul which we endure when deceived by pretended friends and false brethren, urged forward by designing, hypocritical impostors, is doubly paid back to us by that sweet peace we have with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and indeed appears as a light affliction; of which, dear brethren and sisters, it often appears to me that I have more than one poor sinner's share. My dear brother, William L. Beebe, by referring to a short letter in the *Southern Baptist Messenger*, Volume vii., No. 18, page 140, 1857, and another in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of December 15th, 1879, will gather the pith and gist of my present troubles, which are similar to brother J. F. Johnson's, recorded in his book of letters, page 17, which truly cause us to mourn; but bless the Lord, we are often com-

forted, knowing we have an Advocate with the Father, and believing we have the love, sympathy and prayers of all God's dear children who are in the light and walking as children of light, loving the doctrine which the SIGNS is pledged to defend; who are daily penning articles for the comfort of the Lord's people, and remitting support to the temporal comfort of the beloved publishers of the SIGNS, enabling them to respond to the cries of the poor daily. Feeling thus blessed, I can but thank the Lord and take courage, in spite of my enemies, who absolutely and stubbornly refuse to come to the light for an impartial and fair examination.

Dear brethren Beebe, I now feel to close, adding brother W. L. Rogers' postscript in last issue. As ever,
W. E. FREEMAN.

CLAY COUNTY, Indiana, March 6, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD:—I have had some desire for a long time to write a few lines for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but knowing my inability to edify, I have deferred until now. As some of the brethren and sisters have been writing about the dealings of the Lord with them, I wish also to write and tell the reason of my hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. I was born of religious parents, in the state of New York, in 1810. In 1815 my parents emigrated to Indiana, where we were exposed to all the hardships and privations of a new country. There being no schools, I received a very limited education; but I was taught to work, to labor with my hands, and whatsoever my hands found to do, that to do with all my might. All was well with me, I being quite stout and healthy until in my fourteenth year, when I was taken sick. My parents thought I would die. I had been made to know that I was a great sinner. I cried, "O Lord, have mercy on me, a great sinner." I would say, "Show pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive." The agony no pen can describe exactly. I was made to weep and mourn from day to day. I felt that God would be just in my condemnation. I was led on in this way for some time, when my sins rose like mountains before me, so that I could see no way that God could extend mercy to so great a sinner as I was. Just then these things became personal things with me. I thought I was doomed to die, and that hell was my portion. When every refuge had failed me, and I was sinking down in despair, I cried, "Lord, save, or I perish. Have mercy, O Lord, on a poor, lost sinner." At that moment, in the twinkling of an eye, as I hope, God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined in my heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ my Lord. Then in that same light Jesus appeared and spoke peace unto me in these words, "Son, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." Then my burden was gone, and I was made to rejoice with joy

unspeakable and full of glory. Then I was made to inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The answer was direct from Jesus, who said, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." It is now more than sixty years since these words were spoken to me, as it were, in an audible voice. Now what is self? It is the saved sinner. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. O yes, dearly beloved in the Lord, we can sing,

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me."

I must pass on. In my first experience I thought my trouble all gone, and that all would easy be. I was brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, to his banqueting house; and there, feasting on the riches of his grace, his banner over me was love. The time came that I must follow my Lord and Master in the ordinance of baptism; for the Savior said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I went to the church on Saturday and related to the church in substance what I have here written, and was received, and on the next day was baptized by immersion; for that is the way our Lord was baptized. And they were Baptists. There were not so many divisions among them as there are now, therefore it did not require so many different names to distinguish one from another. I mean the true Israel of God, who worship God in spirit and in truth. But I promised to give the reason of my hope. It is because Jesus lives; for he says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." If I am one of God's little ones, it is all of grace, free, sovereign and reigning grace, and for nothing that I have done. "For by grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." So the hope of all God's little children is one and the very same. One Jesus was crucified for our sins. And this hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Read Romans v. Also, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." "And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." David says, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Three "shalls." This is why I desire to speak to the dear brethren and sisters through our dear paper, the SIGNS. I want to bear testimony to the truth, and say to the dear ones, Write on. I find so much comfort in reading so many able communications that I am made to rejoice that we have such a medium of correspondence. And, brethren editors, if it is not asking too much, publish this, so that the household of faith may know that

they have another witness for Jesus. In conclusion, I ask an interest in your prayers at the throne of God and the Lamb. May grace, mercy and truth abide with you.

I remain your brother in the bonds of the gospel,

JOSEPH S. WHITNEY.

LONGVIEW, Texas, April 5, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—On arriving home this evening, after four days' absence, I found the following note on a postal card, from Elder D. Bartley, of New Castle, Indiana:

"Dear Brother:—In your long article on predestination, in the SIGNS, you twice condemn a harsh spirit and judgment in others who have written on the subject; but yet, near the top of the last column, you say, 'It is no more unreasonable to them who are predestinarians in part, that God has predestinated all things, than it is to the full-blooded Arminian that he has an elect according to his foreknowledge.' This certainly casts the imputation of part-blooded Arminians on the brethren whom you style 'part predestinarians;' and it is very harsh, unkind and unjust, and will grieve and give offense to some of the little ones whom you would call weak. It does not offend me, though I am weak; for I am not a part predestinarian, but believe it fully, just as Paul defines it and applies it in Romans viii. and Ephesians ii. He has given us a clearer and far better exposition of this blessed doctrine than all others who have attempted to enlarge and improve upon it, but have thereby caused much confusion among the foreknown and predestinated children of God, all of whom accept and believe what Paul says about it, which is enough."

As others may have put the same construction upon this statement, please allow me space in the SIGNS to explain, first, what I did not mean, and second, what I did mean. I did not mean to convey the idea that those who are predestinarians only in part hold to the doctrine that man can by his own works secure or aid in bringing about his eternal salvation, or that they deny that salvation is alone by grace; but if brother Bartley, or any other brother or sister, is free from the combat with Arminianism in self, they are further advanced than I am.

I did mean, and do yet mean, that it is no more unreasonable to those who deny the predestination of all things, that God has predestinated all things, than it is to those who do not believe in election that God has an elect according to his foreknowledge. I did not intend to be harsh, unkind, or to do injustice to any, but merely used such words as at that time seemed to my mind most likely to convey my idea. Wherever any have become offended through this misunderstanding, I hope they will accept this explanation. But if any have become offended at the idea I intended to convey, I cannot help it; I cannot recant it until it is proved untrue.

Now, as to the "some of the little

ones whom you would call weak." In the first part of my article I speak of "some poor, little one," but do not here apply it to those who disagree with me, but to those who "cannot understand the subject to his or her satisfaction." I can hardly believe that my brother so construed my article as to conclude that I thought myself strong, while I esteemed my brethren weak; yet he intimates as much. I have been wont to believe that all God's children, when in the proper spirit, feel themselves to be weak. I know I often feel that if I am one at all, I am less than the least of all saints. The apostle Paul says, "When I am weak, then am I strong." While I am weak, yet "the truth is mighty, and will prevail."

Until it is proved that I have "attempted to enlarge and improve upon" Paul's definition, I shall not take this charge to myself. I would here ask, May it not be the case that instead of the doctrine of absolute predestination causing confusion, that the denial of it is what causes the confusion? Let us compare (continually) with the inspired word, and receive only such as holds good therewith, for nothing in the end will do us any good but the truth.

With thanks to brother Bartley, and the best of wishes for the household of faith, I remain yours in hope,
H. B. JONES.

P. S.—I would add that the writers I referred to in my letter as being, as I thought, harsh, were not correspondents to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but their writings have appeared mainly in pamphlet form, and on both sides of the question.

H. B. J.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., April 24, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I do not wish to be monotonous by again writing for publication in our valuable medium of communication, yet I feel like expressing my satisfaction and appreciation of the number for the fifteenth of April. There seems so much to console my poor, weak, sinful self, as a professed believer, and as a minister of Christ. I might name a number of things, but suffice it to say, from first to last, whether poetry or editorial, in all the several communications there is comfort, and especially the editorial; for I have for a long time contended that if the animation of the man (Adam) was immortality, then the non-elect have it as well as the elect, and then where would the need be for the gift of eternal life? Then, too, would not the Arminian notion be consistent, and then the theory that all men have a spark of grace? But the choice of our God in regard to the sons and daughters of his in Christ before the world began forbids us to think, much less to believe, that they ever possessed this heavenly life elsewhere than in him, just where their salvation is; for they are saved, and only saved, in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, world without end; while in the world they shall have tribulation.—John xvi. 33. Therefore

even the chosen people of God are by nature the children of wrath; but God's rich mercy makes manifest the difference, as said Paul (Eph. ii. 1-11), while teaching his Ephesian brethren, "And were by nature the children of wrath," &c. Now this is a description of Jew and Gentile by nature, or of the family of Adam, born of the flesh, or of man, or of blood; while the Lord's people are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.—John i. 13. These were of that number whom Christ came to redeem, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.—Revelation v. 9, 10. These also represent the whole election of grace, or sheep, of whom Christ is the good Shepherd, and has given his life for them as his sheep, and of whom he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life," &c.—John x. 27, 28. Now it is well settled that it is the Spirit that quickeneth, and that the flesh (even of the believer) profiteth nothing; for that which is born of the flesh is still flesh, with the most ardent lover of and believer in Christ; and it takes the whole man, all his natural functions as a man, soul, body and spirit, to represent him in his lost condition as a sinner. Then that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and has a full reference to the Lord working in a poor, lost sinner to will and to do of his own pleasure; and when one such hearkens to his word and keeps his law, that one shows forth some of the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given to him.

Yours in hope,
J. D. HUBBELL.

APRIL 5, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have a question to ask. Suppose a church licenses one of her members to preach. He goes far and near, wherever the Lord in his providence calls him. He is sent as a messenger from one association to another. He preaches on the stand and off the stand, and his preaching is edifying generally. The question is: If the church fails to call for his ordination, have any other brethren the right to do so? Your opinion would be gladly received.

Yours in bonds of love. * *

REPLY.—It would seem to imply at least a want of courtesy toward the church of the licentiate's membership for another church or "other brethren" to act in the case without due deference to that church. This would involve confusion to the serious injury of the usefulness of the brother. So far as we have known, it is common for those who desire the services of a licentiate to ask the church to which he belongs to call a council to consider his ordination. This brings the case regularly before the church. It may sometimes seem to us that a case is unnecessarily delayed; but there are cases in which too much haste has resulted in trouble to the church, and very unpleasant consequences to the brother thus injudi-

ciously hurried to ordination. It is always safe to heed the admonition, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."—1 Timothy v. 22.—ED.

WEST LODI, Ohio, Jan. 11, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—As it is time for me to send in my subscription, you will find inclosed two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Dear brethren and sisters, I appreciate your precious communications in the SIGNS, and to poor, unworthy me. I have a desire ever to live to the honor and glory of God; yet my poor, corrupt heart possesses all manner of evil imaginations, and I often feel that it is nothing but a fountain of corruption. Then what am I but a poor sinner, who feels the need of Jesus? I am nothing, and less than nothing. How is it that God's dear saints can write such sweet communications, that tell me exactly how I feel? It surely must be the Lord directing them. I have been afflicted with rheumatism for more than five years, so I seldom get to meeting; yet I have seasons of rejoicing. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." I have often thought I would like to tell the brethren and sisters how I was brought from nature to grace, as I hope and trust I have been; but being a poor scholar, I have never made the attempt. May the Lord bless you.

CHRISTENAH TOMPKINS.

FORK CHURCH, N. C., March 31, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The Church at Pine, in Davidson Co., N. C., is trying to build a house for worship. The house is inclosed and covered, but our subscription is exhausted, and the few members there that are able to help have been much burdened; therefore if any brother or friend feels willing to help us a little, if it be only twenty-five cents or a dollar, they will be promptly receipted, by sending their liberality to the writer, at this office, Fork Church, Davie Co., N. C. This house is a good, substantial frame building, 36x56 feet, which will cost about six hundred dollars when completed, and will bear a good name for us with our children when we are gone to our reward. We number about fifty-two, and only seven or eight of that number have been able to help with money.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

A. M. WILLIAMS.

DECKERTOWN, N. J., April 25, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—For the benefit of the brethren and sisters and the readers of the SIGNS, I will write a few lines to let them know that I am still an inhabitant of earth, although in a very feeble condition. I cannot sit up, but write this in bed. Whether it will please the Lord to give me a measure of health again, or take me from this vale of tears, I leave with him. I do not think I

will ever walk again, but it is all well, as the Lord knows best. I have had many thoughts and many manifestations of his loving-kindness and tender mercy, and have traveled through darkness so great that it could be felt.

"He, in the days of feeble flesh,
Poured out his cries and tears,
And in a measure feels afresh
What every member bears."

With love and fellowship, as ever,
your sister,

HARRIET LEWIS.

LACYGNE, Kansas, April 4, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR SIRS:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a very welcome visitor to me, and I enjoy the communications from each writer. The columns are filled with able and excellent communications. If I could write as some of them do, it would be a pleasure for me to write; but I know I cannot write anything that will interest any of God's dear saints, unless guided by power from above. My father, S. B. Dodd, wants you to know that there is one poor, weak worm of the dust living in the eastern part of Kansas; and if it is not asking too much, tell brother Purington that his letters on "Absolute predestination of all things" contain the doctrine that he believes, and he bids him God speed.

With love to all God's dear children,

ALICE DODD.

MINUTES

OF ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

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

BACK NUMBERS.

WE have discontinued the sending of back numbers to the first of the volume to new subscribers, unless so requested. We still have some of each number on hand, and those new subscribers who so desire may have the back numbers by stating that they desire them.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS,

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

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1887.

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

PSALM CXLIII. 3, 4.

"For 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."

By request of an esteemed sister, the subject embraced in this text is suggested for our consideration; and such views as are afforded us are freely submitted to the judgment of the inquirer and of all our readers. It is essential to a correct understanding of this text that it be taken in the connection in which it is recorded, and that the truth be remembered that the testimony of Jesus inspired the pen of David as the sweet singer of Israel in this as in all the psalms. Indeed there is no right explanation of any portion of the inspired record which does not proclaim the glory of Jesus, just as every ray of light displays the brilliance of the natural sun. It was only as the Spirit of Christ spake by David that he could testify those glorious things whose fulfillment is found in Christ Jesus alone.

In the opening of this prophetic psalm the appeal to the Lord God expresses just what is written of our Redeemer in his being made flesh and subjected to the curse of the law for the deliverance of his people from that curse; "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."—1 Peter ii. 24. It is said of Jesus, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."—Hebrews v. 7-10. It is in this experience that the great anti-typical David did pour out to God his supplication; and his prayer was never in vain. Neither is there ever a faint and feeble cry from the poor and needy sinner which falls short of the ear of that God whose power is the present support of every one who has realized his own utter helplessness. As it was by inspiration alone that David could write this prayer, it is evident that the same Spirit leads every one who finds the same prayer in his own heart. It is often the case of such, however, that they cannot see the truth in their own case as it is recorded in the portion here quoted from the epistle to the Hebrews. Reason cannot see that Jesus was heard in his cry to be saved from

death; but faith sees the glorious triumph in which the Captain of our salvation made death the door through which he reveals life and immortality. So while reason sees only the afflictions, toil and tears of the saints, faith enables them to glory in tribulations and to rejoice in partaking of Christ's sufferings, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in the Egypt of legal bondage. Under suffering they cannot see how their trials and afflictions work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; yet they shall see the truth of this apostolic declaration when the revelation is given them through the perfecting work of sufferings.—Heb. ii. 10. The chosen nation of Israel could not see what was before them in their weary journey through the wilderness, for the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night limited their vision; but when their journey was ended they could see the whole road as the right way.—Psalm cxvii. 7. So, although under the clouds of sorrow and tribulation the saints are brought by an unknown way, and often feel their hope as almost cut off, yet when they are enabled to look back over their pilgrimage in those dark and gloomy seasons they find their most abiding witness that they have known the protection of the arm of the Lord. "In the deep mire where there is no standing," is just the place where their cry goes out to God, because all other refuge has failed; and when they are saved from this helpless condition they can testify to the faithfulness and power of their Savior, having personally known it. And the more sensibly they realize the assurance of divine love and mercy as extended to them, the more earnestly they desire that they may not be judged in their own merits; for the life-giving word of the Lord by its own light shining in their heart manifests their sinfulness and corruption in themselves, so that they know that in the sight of infinite justice "shall no man living be justified." Already judgment has come upon all men to condemnation, for that all have sinned.—Rom. v. 12, 18. Since sin has polluted the whole race of man, there is no possibility of any being justified by the deeds of the law. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."—Rom. iii. 20. It is only as identified with his body, the church, that this language can apply to Christ Jesus. The text assigns the cause of his appeal to God.

"For the enemy hath persecuted my soul." Evidently this enemy is the power of sin which has involved the members of the body of Christ in condemnation, thus rendering it necessary that he as their life should come under the law and be made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him.—2 Cor. v. 21. In his own spotless purity this enemy could find nothing to persecute. His holiness would consume every element of opposition which could be brought against him, for he

had the witness of God himself attesting his perfect obedience. It is in his unity with the subjects of his grace that his soul was persecuted; for they are inseparably one with him. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—1 Cor. xii. 27. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."—Eph. v. 30. So he says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—Matthew xxv. 40. The enmity of the carnal mind in their members always persecutes the little children who are led by the Spirit of God to hunger and thirst after righteousness. This is an infallible seal of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. For wherever that perfect principle is implanted there is perpetual warfare against its government, arising from the law of sin. This is against the soul or essential element of the saint. The object of this persecution is not the person of the saint, but the soul, which identifies him as one with the Lord Jesus. It is in this sense that we understand the word *soul* to be used in this text. It is used in different senses in other portions of Scripture, in some cases signifying the whole man, as in Genesis ii. 7. In some cases it is applied to a portion of the individual saint, as in First Thessalonians v. 23. But we cannot now discuss the many significations attached to this word in other portions; it is only in the sense specified that the persecution of this enemy is experienced by the saints, and by their Lord in them. As this enmity is ever seeking the destruction of their hope in Christ, it is appropriately expressed by the complaint that the soul is "persecuted," signifying the ceaseless malignity with which this Satanic principle ever waits to annoy and distress them who are led by the Spirit of God.

"He hath smitten my life down to the ground." The life of the saints was thus smitten down to the ground when Jesus "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." As in nature the sun was shrouded in darkness at midday while the awful power of sin was visited upon the dear Redeemer, so the life of his body, the church, was smitten down to the ground in that hour, and they then could see no cheering ray of hope. Hence they are said to be dead when he died for them.—2 Cor. v. 14. In its application to the whole church of Christ, which he has redeemed to God by his blood, this terrible enemy, sin, did then smite down to the ground the life of every subject of salvation. Each one who is called to be a follower of Jesus must know by personal experience the fellowship of his suffering in being made conformable unto his death. This can be accomplished only by the experience of that death in themselves; and it is in this experience that they are enabled not only to understand but to feel the truth of this expression. Yet so dark is their understanding that they do not see that they are thus made partakers of Christ's sufferings. This can be seen only when the Comforter

shall take of the things of Jesus and show it unto them. Until they receive this life-giving revelation they feel their life smitten down to the ground. No language of their own can so forcibly express the affliction of those who thus suffer as the inspired record has told it in this sad prayer of David. In their grief under the burden of sin they feel their life smitten down to the ground; but this is only their temporal experience of darkness. Their eternal life is still securely hid with Christ in God; and their present sorrow is but the evidence that they are favored to be partakers of the sufferings of their Lord in their own individual trials. They whose life has been thus smitten down to the ground are the people unto whom "it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."—Phil. i. 29.

"He hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead." In the humiliation, suffering and death of Christ Jesus, the great Leader of the spiritual Israel, all this complaint was literally fulfilled. When he made his dwelling in the land of the shadow of death, where his body, the church of his election, was already bound in prison, he dwelt in darkness. The intervening sentence of death shut out the light of divine approval from this dark valley, thus covering the whole land with the shadow of death; and Christ must dwell in this darkness in order to redeem the lawful captives who were here held under the sentence of divine justice, for "without shedding of blood is no remission."—Heb. ix. 22. The salvation of the saints is more than their deliverance from the punishment due to their sins. They are "saved from their sins," and perfectly justified by the grace of their Redeemer from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.—See Matt. i. 21; Rom. iii. 24; Acts xiii. 39. This great salvation could be wrought out by no other being but the Man in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He must be holy as God is holy to satisfy divine justice; he must have power to lay down his life and power to take it again; and he must be one with them whom he redeems, or his sacrifice of his life could not help their case.—See John x. 18; xvii. 21. Hence in his unity with his people he was made by sin to dwell in the dreadful darkness of condemnation, from their fall under sin until he through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Then in his triumphant resurrection he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Since he has thus gloriously triumphed over sin and death, he no more dwells in darkness, but is already glorified with all the glory of his eternal unity with God. In his saints, however, he is tempted with all their temptations, tried with all their sufferings, and afflicted in all

their afflictions; for so truly are they identified with him that their every grief and pain is his. While they dwell in darkness in this valley of the shadow of death, therefore, he is with them in all their weakness, sorrow and darkness. He gives them their measure of these trials for their own profit, that they may thus "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." In this darkness they are indeed "as those that have been long dead." So much do they resemble such in this darkness that they often really conclude that they never knew the power of the living word of the Lord. They find in themselves nothing to distinguish them from the dead. They are more or less painfully conscious that sin has made them to dwell in this horrible darkness; but they have not enough light to decide whether they are less dead than the unconscious hosts among whom they dwell. How intense is the agony of those who are thus buried alive among the dead! Their mournful prayer goes up continually to the Lord for relief, for they know that vain is the help of man. In this helpless longing for the salvation which can come only from the almighty arm of the Lord, they ascribe greatness unto their God, and worship him alone. Thus even the darkness is made to show knowledge of the wonderful grace of God in the experience of the saints, as through its awful gloom their Redeemer led the way to the everlasting light of victory over sin and death, and made the way of life to glow with heavenly lustre even through the darkness of the gloomy cavern of the tomb.

"Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me." Even to them who have in their own experience learned the exceeding sinfulness of sin it is not possible to comprehend the depth of its pollution, nor the deceitfulness with which it insinuates its poison into the most sacred recesses of the heart. Even the moments when they would be wholly engaged in prayer to God are invaded by the suggestions of carnal selfishness, either in seeking personal benefits, or in exulting pride that they have succeeded in denying self. That they should utter such bitter groaning as here expressed is not so wonderful; but when such agonizing cries are poured out to God by that Man of his own right hand, the Son of man whom the God of hosts made strong for himself (Psalm lxxx. 17), then the enmity of sin appears in all its enormity, as it is manifest that this dreadful distress of the Redeemer is the result of that wicked principle alone. His spirit was overwhelmed when he sunk beneath all the waves and billows of divine justice. Not one jot or tittle of the demand of the holy law could be remitted for all the strong crying and tears of the darling Son of God. How terrible was that anguish when the sweat of blood bedewed Gethsemane, and when the darkened heavens were startled with the dying cry from Calvary's cross, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Then was the flaming sword

of justice quenched in the blood of the Lamb of God; and sin was cancelled when that blood was shed for the atonement, by which his people are cleansed from all sin. He gave the very life of the church, which is his body, and justice could ask no more. But in thus treading alone the wine-press of almighty wrath his spirit was indeed overwhelmed within him.

"My heart within me is desolate." Thus the mournful complaint of the suffering Savior is continued. What do we understand by this groan? It is not as carnal religion would imagine that the cost of the redemption of his people had so far exceeded his expectation that he regretted that he had undertaken the work. He had fully known all this before he came into the world to save sinners. He humbled himself and came as a servant under the law. All his work was before him and his reward was with him. It was not any new development in the case, therefore, which called forth this cry of desolation. The work which he came to do required that he should put on all the weakness of mortality for the suffering of death. He whose holiness is infinite, whose purity is immaculate in the sight of God, must be made sin. Well might his heart within him be desolate when all the iniquities of all his people were laid on him. Yet he endured all this to reconcile to God the sinful objects of his electing love. This was indeed a miracle of grace, and its praises may well demand an everlasting tribute of thankful adoration. But in this, too, his followers are favored to partake of his sufferings. They often feel this heart desolation when they mourn the biding of their Savior's face; but they do not know that this is the most positive assurance that they are governed by the Spirit of Christ. They could not feel their heart desolate within them if they could have this assurance; yet none but the saints know this desolation of heart.

The fellowship of the sufferings of Christ is the seal of the Holy Spirit of promise. The dark clouds of affliction and tribulation are the background on which is inscribed by the finger of Omnipotence the bright bow of promise, which is the living testimony that his faithfulness shall never fail.

"Blest pledge! He never will revoke
A single promise he has spoke."

APPOINTMENTS.

PLEASANT VALLEY, Va., April 20, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish in the SIGNS that, the Lord willing, I expect to spend the time between May 21st and June 22d among the churches of the Licking and Mt. Pleasant Associations, Kentucky, as brethren may arrange.

Yours in gospel fellowship,
A. B. FRANCIS.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

MCCOYSVILLE, Pa., April 25, 1887.

WILL Elder J. H. Wallingford, of Kentucky, give his views through the SIGNS on Romans vi. 6, and greatly oblige one who desires to know the truth? SARAH A. HARLAN.

MARRIAGES.

FEBRUARY 27, 1887, by Elder M. Vail, at the residence of Deacon J. May, in Yates County, N. Y., Mr. Alfred Jamison, of Dresden, N. Y., and Miss Maggie E. Porker, of Pen Yan, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER Charles Ware departed this life March 28, 1887, at the age of ninety-one years. I have been acquainted with brother Ware for upwards of twenty years, and have known but few who possessed his zeal for truth and order. Brother Ware was formerly a member of Beech Creek Church, but at the time of his death was a member of Bethel Church. On his deathbed he requested Elder J. T. Moore or myself to preach at his funeral. Brother Moore being sick, it devolved upon me, and on the first of April I tried to comfort the bereaved widow and children, as well as the brethren, from Rev. iii. 11, after which his body was laid to rest in Shelbyville Cemetery, to await the trumpet's sound, when the bodies of the saints shall arise in Christ's likeness.

I feel that in his death I have lost a firm friend, an able counsellor and honest sympathizer, while the church has lost an excellent disciplinarian, a vigilant guard of doctrine, quick to detect error and bold to expose it. His widow has lost a devoted husband, his children a loving father, and the community a good neighbor. Our dear aged brother has exchanged a life of sorrow and disappointment for a world of joy and eternal bliss.

ALSO,

BROTHER Presley Hammond died in January last. He had been feeble and helpless for about a year, being eighty or eighty-one years old and very corpulent. He had often sent me word to come and see him, but word never reached me until a few weeks before his death. He received a severe fall, and sent me word to come and see him, but when I reached there he barely recognized me. Death seemed to be at the door. After rendering all the assistance I could, I tried to comfort the sorrowing family.

Brother Hammond was a member of Beech Creek Church from my earliest acquaintance with him, and remained an earnest, meek and childlike christian until the day of his death. I often visited his home, being one of those primitive homes where father, mother, brother and sister all shared alike in the precious Savior's love. He often told me that he was weary of his prison-house of clay, and wanted to go. I asked him if he was not willing to patiently wait the Lord's time. A divine spark seemed to kindle in his eye, and he would say that he would like to go. It was very touching to see his devoted daughters stealing away to shed a tear as their dear old father, whose ties were dearer than flesh and blood, grappled with death.

The funeral will be attended sometime during the summer, when his scattered children can be gotten together. We feel assured that our loss is gain to him.

JAMES E. NEWKIRK.

GRAEFENBERG, Ky.

DIED—At her home near Brentsville, Prince Wm. Co., Va., March 15, 1887, sister Annie J. Howison, in the fifty-fifth year of her age. The deceased was an estimable member of Quantico Church, and a daughter of the late Deacon Austin B. Weedon, of that church. She was a lady blessed with a refined and amiable disposition, respected and beloved in the community where she lived, and held in the highest esteem in the church of her membership. The deceased was born in Fauquier Co., Va., Feb. 11, 1833, married to Mr. Charles G. Howison in December, 1866, and baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington during his pastoral care of Quantico Church. She had been in feeble health, at times, for several years previous to her death, but none of us expected her death so soon. She died suddenly, about 5 a. m., the 15th ult. Sister Howison was firm in her devotion to the truth, yet gentle and refined in her intercourse with those who opposed her views; constantly questioning her own interest in the precious work of salvation, yet manifesting in all her deportment that she

had been with Jesus. She was punctual in her attendance upon the meetings of the church, manifesting in her love of the truth and people of God her interest in the heavenly kingdom. We are reminded by her death of the transitory nature of all earthly things, that we have no abiding city upon mortal shores, and are led to look far beyond the bounds of earthly vision to the saints' everlasting rest. The membership of the churches where I serve who were active in the cause of truth when I first became acquainted with these churches, are fast passing away. They have fallen here and there upon the field of their usefulness, and their places filled by younger brethren called, we humbly hope, by our God as servants in his kingdom, and in this we see the fulfillment of the precious promise, that the Lord will never leave nor forsake his people. But we can never forget the precious moments spent in the company of those who have gone before us, and who have entered forever the home of the blessed. Sister Howison leaves her husband, two children, two brothers and three sisters, besides other relatives, with the church of her membership, to mourn her death. May it be graciously sanctified to our good.

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va., April, 1887.

DIED—At Petersburg, Kent Co., Del., April 4, 1887, Peter F. Meredith, in the thirtieth year of his age. Our deceased young friend was the son of Peter and Sarah C. Meredith, of the church and congregation at Cow Marsh, and who are extensively known among the churches. Their son was well educated, and was of a very serious and thoughtful turn of mind; was highly esteemed and loved by all who were acquainted with him. Of late years his mind had seemed much absorbed in the study of the Scriptures. Being a youth of much promise the event is crushing blow to the family and the community. He had been a subject of wasting disease for about two years and five months, chiefly lung trouble. He passed away peacefully, evidently in the enjoyment of a comfortable hope. We ask again and again, Why must it be so, that the youth in whom we think we see so much promise for future usefulness are suddenly called away? We ask, but no man answers. Much sympathy will be felt by the many friends and acquaintances of this family with and for them in their time of sore bereavement. That grace and unfailing support through previous trials will, we may trust, sustain them now. Our young friend has only gone the way that all the fathers have gone, and the way that all the earth is going.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

DIED—At our residence, March 4, 1887, my wife, Mrs. Ann Lee, in the seventy-ninth year of her age. She was in delicate health for three or four years. She was attacked with pneumonia. The physicians and kind friends rendered every assistance day and night to no avail. She, when able, was always willing and ready to wait on the brethren and friends when they came to see us, and to hear them talk. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS, which we have taken nearly from the commencement. She leaves two sons and one daughter to mourn the loss of an affectionate mother. I have a hope that it is her eternal gain.

Elder J. N. Badger preached a comforting sermon on the 6th. Her remains were conveyed to the graveyard at Mt. Zion and laid by the side of her son.

Dear brethren, when it is well with you remember me, an unworthy brother, if one at all,
M. P. LEE.

ARCOLA, Loudoun Co., Va.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

Mrs Susan Covington 2 50, R M Ashworth 2, E Rittenhouse 20, W T Everitt 2, A M Williams 2, Lewis E Oliver 2 50, Armistead F Garrett 2 50, W E Harris 2 50, James M Gray 2, J T Oldham 10, Eld J T Edgerton 5, Robt H Strong 2, G B Brantley 2 50, Mrs G Jaqua 2.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

Jacob Aycock 50c, Hardy Yelverton 50c.—
Total \$69 50.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next session of the Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Warren Church, Baltimore Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (18th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming by way of Baltimore, will take the train at Calvert Station, N. C. R. R., at 3.30 p. m. on Tuesday, for Cockeysville. Those coming south by N. C. R. R., will arrive at Cockeysville about 4.00 p. m. on Tuesday, where conveyances will be in waiting to take them to places of entertainment. The friends are cordially invited.

G. HARRYMAN.

THE next session of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent Co., Del., to begin on Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May (25th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those who contemplate using public conveyance to attend the Delaware Association can come to Clayton, on the Delaware R. R., Tuesday afternoon before the meeting, and perhaps about eight or ten stop and be met there, and the rest change cars for Kenton, on the Delaware and Chesapeake Road, where they will be met and cared for. I hope to be in the company, to see that all are properly attended to. All the afternoon trains will be met.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

THE next session of the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (1st), 1887, and continue three days.

Those who contemplate attending from the south or east can come by way of Trenton, leaving that city by the B. D. R. R., for Stockton, at 4.56 p. m. on Tuesday, May, 31, where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting. Those coming from the north can come to Frenchtown by the same rail road, where they will be taken care of. A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to meet with us.

CYRUS RISLER.

THE next session of the Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (8th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those who contemplate attending the Warwick Association can come on the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R., from the east or west, and from the north on the New York, Ontario & Western R. R., directly to Middletown.

Ten passenger trains stopping at Middletown leave New York City daily, from foot of Chambers and West 23d Streets, New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. Excursion tickets, good for five days, can be procured.

Those coming through the city of New York can reach here at 10.56 a. m. on Wednesday, by taking the cars at the foot of Chambers Street about 8.00 o'clock a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends.

BENTON JENKINS.

THE next session of the Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (15th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west via the D. L. & W., or N. Y., L. E. & W. R. R., will come to Elmira, and there take train on the Northern Central R. R. to Grover. Trains leave Elmira on the N. C. R. R. at 9.00 a. m. and 3.00 p. m.

Those coming from the south can leave Williamsport at 7.15 a. m., 2.35 and 7.20 p. m.

Those coming from a distance will come on Tuesday, 14th. The place of meeting is but a few rods from the depot. Friends will be met at the depot on Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended

to all who love the truth, and we hope to see a goodly number of friends and ministering brethren present.

M. VAIL.

THE Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of eastern Oregon and Washington Territory will meet this year with Big Spring Church, near Summerville, Union Co., Oregon, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, at 11 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with the church at Van Buren, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 10, 1887.

Those coming on the Nickel Plate R. R. will stop at Stuartsville. Those coming from the west on the B. & O. R. R. will stop at North Baltimore. Those coming from the east will stop at Bairdstown. Those coming from the north or south on the Toledo & Findlay R. R. (T., C. & S.) will stop at Van Buren. The above trains will be met on Thursday, June 9th, and the writer will meet and care for those who stop at Arcadia. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

THE Turkey River Association is appointed to be held (God willing) with the Otter Creek Church, in Black Hawk County, Iowa, ten miles northeast of Waterloo, to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in June (4th), 1887, and continue three days.

Friends and brethren who will favor us with their presence will be met on Friday, June 3, in Waterloo. Should any be delayed on the way, they may inquire in Waterloo for Paul Sohner or John Garrett, both living four and one-half miles northeast of Waterloo.

PAUL SOHNER.

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This is a very interesting and comforting book to all Old School Baptists, written by sister Kate Swartout. It contains 304 pages, printed in large type. Price, single copy 75c; per dozen, by express, \$7.00. Send draft, money order, or registered letter, to Mrs. Andrew J. Swartout, Woodstock, Lenawee County, Michigan; but money orders must be made payable at Brooklyn, Michigan.

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We still lack about twelve hundred dollars of enough to pay for the actual cost of publication, allowing Elder Hassell nothing for his labor and expense, which amounts to several thousand dollars, for part of which he is still in debt. About two thousand persons who subscribed their names for the work, and are therefore obligated to take it, have not yet paid in the money which they have promised. Address,

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GHENT, Ky., March 13, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter dated February 20th, 1887, from brother J. A. McKinzie, of Huntsville, Texas, in which he asks me to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some thoughts on the Song of Solomon iv. 12: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

The word "sister" conveys the idea of a flesh and blood relationship. We cannot claim that relationship with any except those who have descended from the same parent or parents. But the word "spouse" presents a different and closer relationship. It presents the marriage relationship, which is declared by Solomon in the Song of songs to make known in a clear and forcible manner the inseparable union of Christ and his people. The apostle says, "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." These children are they to whom the word "sister" applies. Our Lord is her elder Brother, because he took part of the flesh and blood of which she is a partaker; and that gave him, as the great High Priest, somewhat to offer. He had his own precious blood to offer, that blood of which the children are partakers, and of which he took part. The apostle says, "But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." It was by that offering that he obtained eternal redemption for his people, who figuratively are called by the endearing name of bride, spouse. John the Baptist, in declaring the mission of our Lord, says, "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom." Underlying that marriage relationship is love, one of the seven divine perfections of our glorious Lord. Love being one of his unchanging attributes, is from everlasting to everlasting; but it could not exist without an object on which to rest. But glory to his exalted name, it rested on the spouse ere time began. That spouse, that bride, was

she that was shown to John by the angel who said to him, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed 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." The names spouse, bride, great city, holy Jerusalem, are all used to describe that sister, that spouse, who is a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed; but although all those words, which are expressive of her glory and grandeur, are applied to her, yet her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like unto a jasper stone. John had a view of her both as sister and as spouse. The jasper stone has some dark colors; so the sister in her flesh and blood relationship has some dark colors; but as the spouse, her light was clear as crystal, for the reason that it was a reflected light. It was reflected from the great Luminary that shines in the gospel heavens, the glorious Sun of righteousness, that has arisen with healing in his wings. She is fitly compared to a city set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid. Here I call up in fond memory the first two lines of a hymn that was sung by old christians when I was a very little boy.

"The glorious light of Zion is shining far and wide,
And sinners they are coming upon the gospel tide."

Then the spouse in her glorious union with the Bridegroom is a garden inclosed. On every well regulated farm there is a spot of ground called a garden. That garden is inclosed with the best fence on the whole premises. The garden of the Lord is inclosed with the unchanging love of its great owner. The prophet says, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." God is the salvation of his people; and the prophet for their comfort says to them, "Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Then they are inclosed by him who is everlasting strength; for he is a wall of fire round about them, and the glory in the midst. Nothing can pass through that wall of fire to do them hurt, for they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. In that garden are the richest fruits and the sweetest flowers that grow. The

spouse is asked, "Whither is thy Beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy Beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee." She answers, "My Beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies." In that garden all the graces of the Spirit are found, and with them the spouse is adorned. Then O how lovely must she appear, and how delightful are the sweet odors which she gives forth when decked with these sweet flowers of paradise, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. That garden fitly represents the church in her organized form. There in sweet harmony are found all those graces of the Spirit, those sweet flowers that send forth their never-failing odors, which make glad the city of our God. The first in the list is love. He says to all the members of that church in every land, in every age, in every clime, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." When that sweet flower of paradise is growing, and filling all with its sweet perfume, there is no fault-finding of one brother or sister against others, but all is harmony; and that other sweet flower, peace, is spreading its branches in luxuriant growth, and by its dense shade is destroying those noxious plants called envy and jealousy. Then there is found that other delightful flower called joy—joy in the Holy Ghost—spreading its branches toward the fairer worlds on high, and by its exhilarating odors causing all who inhale them to cry out in heavenly ecstasy, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, and bring an offering into his courts."

But she is a spring shut up. In the land of Canaan wells had to be sunken very deep, and hence to obtain water cost heavily. The Samaritan woman said to our Lord, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." Surely a spring gushing forth on the surface must have been esteemed as a thing of great value; but how wonderfully must its value have been increased when it was made known that it was shut up, and that, too, by one who had the power to do so. Shut up from the encroachments of all animals and all poisonous reptiles which might pollute or poison its waters. Shut up from all enemies that might desire to take it from its rightful owner, or convert its precious waters into noxious vapors. Yes, shut up by him who had all power, for the special use and enjoyment of all to

whom the right to use it was secured. The Spirit by the pen of the wise king of Israel describes the church of the Lord Jesus Christ by those impressive figures; a garden, in which are growing the sweetest and most beautiful flowers; a sister, whose dependence on her elder Brother is such that, when she is coming up from the dark and gloomy wilderness of sin, she is leaning upon his strong arm; a spouse, who is united to her glorious Lord by that love which hath no beginning nor ending, but is from everlasting to everlasting, and seeks her out in the dark and cloudy day, and brings her forth in the sunlight of his own glorious effulgence, whose rays have healing in their wings.

He went down into his garden to gather lilies. When that sweet and lovely flower is dwarfed by the shades of thorns, thistles and noxious weeds, it loses much of its beauty and loveliness, and cannot emit its sweet perfumes. So the saint, when enveloped in the cares of earth, where ambition and the love of earthly gain are growing and flourishing around him, is dwarfed in his spiritual growth, and ceases to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. How often do the dear saints see him by faith in his garden, the church, gathering the lilies; yes, gathering them and transplanting them in his garden above, where no noxious plants nor thorns nor thistles will ever mar their beauty throughout the endless ages of eternity.

But she is a fountain sealed. What a beautiful and illustrative figure is here presented, to present the beauty and glory of that church. The word "fountain" has no limit, except by the use of other qualifying words. We can appropriately say, in giving an idea of the extent of that fountain, that it began on earth with Abel, and has been widening and spreading, and will continue till the last one of the redeemed is transplanted into the eternal garden of the Lord. But it is a fountain of pure waters. John says that he that is born of God cannot commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him. But that church is a fountain sealed. The apostle says, "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." The word "earnest," as used by the apostle, means a foretaste. The saints are sealed, and in that sealing are given an earnest or foretaste of the sweets of redeeming love, made manifest in them by the Spirit in regeneration. In regeneration they are sealed, and their glorious inheritance

made manifest in them. That sealing makes sure to all the redeemed the glorious inheritance of the saints. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." By the natural birth he enters into the kingdoms of this world; by the spiritual birth he enters into that spiritual kingdom prefigured by a "fountain sealed." How wonderful are the figures used by the Spirit to present to the dear saints the glories of the great plan of salvation! Here, in one short verse, is presented to us by figures so much of that wondrous plan that as we advance step by step into its sublime beauties, and are enabled to gaze on its superlative glories, we are lost in astonishment when contemplating the goodness and mercy of our adorable Lord. Surely he is wisdom; and in that wondrous plan he gives to his saints a foretaste of the sweets of that wisdom, by which all the dear saints, all the members of that bride, that spouse, know him, whom to know is life eternal. But here below they are sealed to all the ineffable glories and joys which will be theirs when they are disrobed of mortality. Then you, brother McKinzie, will not have to call on a little, feeble one like the writer of these rambling thoughts to unfold to you the glories of the never-fading inheritance of the saints. Then you will see him as he is; yes, see him in an unobscured vision as made unto you, by the everlasting Father, your wisdom, your righteousness, your sanctification and your redemption. Then, dear brother, how sweet to the saints, in the midst of the cares, sorrows and afflictions of earth, is the contemplation of the glories that await all the dear saints beyond the gloom of earth. May those glories be ours, is the sincere prayer of this little one.

Brother McKinzie will please excuse me for not attempting to write upon the other subjects to which he called my attention. They are too deep for one of my limited understanding to attempt to discuss.

H. COX.

BURDETT, N. Y., Feb. 27, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have another communication from brother A. B. Dickerman. It may be the last time that he will write to me, or to the church of which he is a member, and it may be the last communication from him that you will ever have for publication, and it may be the last time that those who are acquainted with him will have an opportunity of seeing or reading a letter from him. You may publish it if you think best.

I will also write a few lines to my dear brethren and sisters, which you may publish, as I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe. We read in the word of God that "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." The name of Jesus is all my trust; and I am glad that I was taught that name, which is above every name. I have never found any lasting comfort or sweet peace only in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. All the spiritual comfort that the people of God enjoy comes down from heaven. The fruit of the Spirit is love; love to God and love to our brethren. Then why should the saints of God be so afraid to communicate one to another? And as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a medium of correspondence, why not avail ourselves of so good a medium to converse with the children of God? I know that my writing is not the best, and I may make many mistakes; nevertheless my love is strong, yes, stronger than death. I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing, "and if a saint, the least of all;" but if a saint, I am one of God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God did foreordain. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, so I hope in God's mercy.

The SIGNS comes laden with blessed truth and experiences of God's dear children, from all parts of our land; and the editorial department is that which is glorious and comforting. Now, dear brethren, take not this glory to yourselves, but give it all to God. You can publish this if you think best; and if not, cast it aside, and all will be well.

From your affectionate brother in Christ,

H. B. ELLIOTT.

BOONVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 20, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER ELLIOTT:—As you are the Clerk of our church, I will write you a little more of the particulars of my early experience; for I am eighty years old to-day, and perhaps it is the last time I shall ever be able to write you. If I had known you were going to send my letter of September to the SIGNS, I should have written more in that. I received your letter of September twentieth, in which you speak of Elder Vail being with you, and you having a bountiful feast. Truly you did, and I should have been happy to enjoyed it with you. I do not forget your covenant meetings and preaching days, where I have met and enjoyed so many happy meetings for the last thirty years.

I shall be able to write but a small part of my experience. My parents were members of the Congregational Church, and I was taught to be strictly honest and moral, and often wished that I might become a Christian. In the spring that I was twenty years old I was in the field at work with one of their deacons. He said he thought they were going to have a revival of religion, for the brethren were much engaged at their prayer meetings for two or three weeks past, and he thought a work of grace had commenced. O how the thought did strike me that I was to be left out; for I was sure there would be converts brought in. There were some thirty converts brought in that year.

I was in great trouble because I could not be with them, for a few days before I had agreed to go twenty miles away to take charge of a farm for that season. I felt very sad to think that I had agreed to go away. I felt myself to be a great sinner before God; and then to leave the place where God was about to bring in happy converts to his kingdom, all gave me much trouble day and night. At the place I was going to, the year before the Lord had caused to be brought in some thirty hopeful converts, and they were having many conference meetings in that section. I attended many of them, sometimes going five miles after my day's work on the farm was done. Then I would take a back seat, and shed many tears all through the meeting. My trouble all the time increased. I well remember going home one day on horseback, twenty miles, and not one minute on the journey was there that I was not praying and begging for mercy, with the deepest anxiety of a burdened heart. It was a prayer twenty miles long, with great distress of mind. I had all the time my mind set on Paul's conversion, and thought I never could take up with anything less in order to be a Christian. How short-sighted is vain man! My trouble of mind was less at some times than at others, running on for more than a year, and finding no peace of mind. In the fall I came home to my father's. The church was holding many meetings till the next season. The minister and deacons held inquiry meetings every week, where all anxious subjects could meet to talk and advise with them. While sitting one evening by the side of a young man who had lately found peace in believing, he was telling what his feelings had been for weeks past, and of the joy he felt in believing. I thought those were just my feelings, and why could I not hope in God's mercy? A ray of light burst into my soul for the first time, which caused me to rejoice, and I went home that night walking and praising God, yet still fearing that I might be deceived, as things were so different from what I had looked for, having all the time in my mind Paul's conversion. Now I am made to rejoice with a dim evidence and a little hope, and I will praise the Lord for that.

The Congregational minister where I had always attended meeting urged me to unite with them. I told him I did not consider myself baptized. My parents told me I was sprinkled when an infant, but that did not satisfy me. I was searching the Bible, for the first time, to find gospel baptism. I told him that I found nothing but believers' baptism, and that by immersion, that no other was to be found, and that Christ set the example for all his followers. Well, he offered to baptize me. I told him that would be inconsistent, for I did not consider him baptized, nor any of his church, and I could not fellowship them. I had much opposition, my parents and brothers all belonging to that church, and my grandfather and great-grandfather both holding the

office of deacon at the same time. Not long before this, some seven or eight of their most spiritual members had come off and united with the Baptists, which caused quite a stir among them. I went forward to the Baptists, and was baptized, and two old sisters, about sixty years of age, at the same time. It was a happy day to me. I had always lived about ten miles from Yale College, where many looked for good examples of piety and Bible doctrine to be taught. It was over sixty years ago when there appeared to be something new start up at the college—a new doctrine, that the sinner must commence the work of salvation, or he never would be saved. They called it then new divinity; but since then it has been preached all over the land, so that now it is a common divinity. Christ said, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." And, "They hated me without a cause." While all the elect were saved in God's account before time began, Christ's charge to Peter was to "Feed my sheep," and "Feed my lambs." That charge stands good to all his servants called to preach his gospel; but nowhere are they told to make sheep or lambs. Dear brother, while we have been attending associations together, have we not been fed while the servants of God were handing out this gospel food so bountifully? We forgot all the cares and troubles of this vain world, and our minds were carried above this world, in ecstasies of joy, near to the gate of heaven. Was it not heaven below?

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

"If such the sweetness of the stream,
What must the fountain be?"

It is the fountain of eternal love, without bottom or shore—endless. It was a foretaste of these endless joys that are in reserve for the bride of the Lamb. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES I have taken more than fifty years, which has given me great comfort and satisfaction. Why is it that I should prize it so highly, while others cast it off?

I will say a few words here concerning my dear wife, with whom I lived fifty-six years. One year ago she fell

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep."

Some months after we were married her mind became greatly exercised in regard to her soul's salvation, and many times she went with me to the inquiry meetings, anxious to find peace to her troubled soul. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace. She never made a public profession, as she felt herself too unworthy to put on Christ publicly. She died like one falling asleep. I believe that if God commences a work in the heart he will carry it on till the day of death. It was a trying time for me when my companion died, but the Lord sustained me by his grace, and said, "Be still, and know that I am God." The Lord still sustains me by his grace, while often letting a few drops of eternal love enter my heart.

The Lord's goodness has ever been rolling in upon me like the waves of the sea.

You will see that this letter has been written with a trembling hand. I will close, with love to you and all our little church.

As ever, your brother,

A. B. DICKERMAN.

THE ROCK.

FOLLOWING the incidents as recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures from the fall of Adam and his condemnation to death, down to the closing scenes of that shadowy dispensation, we recognize at once the necessity for a Savior, in order that fallen man might be redeemed from under the yoke and bondage of the law, and that the just demands of the law might be satisfied. We find that the vain efforts of man fall far short of that which is required for justification; and the drowning, dying, struggling lost sinner reaches out and cries for help to a higher and mightier source than himself. All the characters portrayed in that wonderful book of divine origin are but representations of that higher source, pointing to him who is mighty to save. The holy prophets foretold his coming, hundreds of years before his advent into the world. Job, amidst his great suffering and anguish, cried, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." National Israel was but a type of that spiritual Israel which was to come, when the legal heaven had been dispersed, and when the sun had set upon the old covenant dispensation. And while the former was ruled over by many kings, princes, judges, &c., the latter should have but one King, who shall rule forever and ever. The prophet Isaiah in foretelling the things that would surely come to pass said, "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, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Jesus is that Rock, the Rock of our salvation. He is the foundation stone upon which all the temple of God is builded, and upon which all our hopes are based. The "tried Stone;" for no more burden can be laid upon him. His work is finished and complete. He has borne the burden of the sins of all his people. And now "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." He calleth them with an holy calling. He hath saved them with an everlasting salvation. His sheep hear his voice and follow him. All that was prophesied of him in the Old Testament Scriptures is being fulfilled in this the gospel day. He came into the world to seek and to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. God manifest in the flesh was he, fulfilling every jot and tittle of the law, satisfying all its exacting and just demands. And now may we hide ourselves in

the cleft of that wondrous Rock, singing with rapturous joy,

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

Jesus, while teaching his disciples, said unto them, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock. And the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." Throughout their whole experience the saints realize the great truth of this parable. Although their feet are firmly planted upon the Rock, yet they are beset upon every side by the enemy, and in our own flesh we find our greatest enemies. As the rains descend, beating upon us, so envy, hatred, malice, covetousness, jealousy, rage, &c., envelop us, causing the floods of doubt and fear and divers temptations to dash their turbulent waves against our fainting souls, in addition to which comes the wind of false doctrine to blow upon us, the lo heres and the lo theres, seeking and using every device to lure away the weary and tired heart from the comfort and repose to which his faith is surely and safely leading him. In his despair and through all his discouragements he clings to the Rock, his only salvation. Christ is his sword and buckler, his strong fortress, routing the enemy upon every hand, bathing the wounded and bleeding heart with the oil of his exhaustless and unchanging love, putting in his mouth songs of praise and thanksgiving, filling him with rejoicings, that the Captain of his salvation is all-powerful, and truly is the Rock of ages, before the mountains were brought forth, or before the mighty seas began their ceaseless and never-ending journey. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. David, in praising God for his manifold and marvelous blessings, said, "The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of salvation, and my high tower." And again, in words of encouragement to the godly, he said, "In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times," &c. What a glorious thing it is to be enabled by the Holy Spirit to enter into and enjoy and rejoice in the rich and full experience of the psalmist David; for when we are enabled to do so, we are surely passing through the same experience. He had his seasons of joyous, dazzling brightness; also his dark and stormy seasons; at one time mounting upon the wings of love to the very summit of the holy hill of Zion, and at other times sinking down into the very depths of the valley of humiliation, fear and despair. While he was of the royal seed, of which our dear Savior was a lineal descendant, he was also in the old covenant dispensation a type of that salvation which good old Simeon was permitted to see when he looked upon

the child Jesus, exclaiming, "Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Jesus is the embodiment of all our spiritual joys and sorrows. With him we shall walk through the valley and the shadow of death, having no fear. He will protect us through every trial to which we may become exposed. His loving-kindness will overshadow us in every vicissitude through all this troublous journey of life. His sweet and tender yet commanding voice is heard even to the uttermost parts of the earth, and not one of the heirs of his kingdom will fail to respond to that voice, taking up their cross and following him when he calls. Each precious promise which he gave us, while yet he trod the winepress here in the flesh, is an oasis in this desert land through which we are traveling, and upon each one, at different stages of our journey, we are permitted to rest our flagging and aching hearts. Moses smote upon the rock at Horeb, and the water gushed forth to quench the thirst of the complaining Israelites. So the rock of our salvation emits a continuous stream of living water, and whosoever drinketh of that water shall never thirst; for it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, said, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ." Thus we perceive that Christ is our all in all. He is within us and round about us. When first the light of Christ's love shines in upon our benighted souls, we flee from Egyptian bondage, we are under a cloud, encompassed upon all sides. In front are the roaring billows of seeming death and destruction, upon either side the wilderness and other impassable barriers, with the hue and cry of the enemy in the rear. We feel that we are lost, we can see no way of escape, our own resources have all failed, our strength is exhausted, we murmur and repine that we have left the fleshpots of Egypt, when lo, we hear a voice saying unto us, Fear ye not. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. And behold, the mighty torrent is stayed, the waters in front have parted, and we pass to the other side dry shod, while the horse and rider of the enemy are drowned in the midst of the sea. O the sweetness and power of that voice, whose utterances never fail to bring sweet repose, comfort and security. No matter how troublous the waters which we must pass, nor how many pitfalls in our winding pathway, nor how deep the pit of miry clay, the

voice of Jesus will remove all obstacles, and set our feet upon a rock, whereon we may sing praises to his glorious name.

And now, dear brethren editors, and readers of our dear family paper, the SIGNS, as we in our frail barks glide along upon the boundless ocean of this transitory life, buffeted by adverse winds, beaten by merciless storms, and exposed to every danger, may we at times be enabled to anchor in the cleft of the Rock, Christ Jesus, refreshing ourselves with his sweet and precious promises. And may many of us be permitted to meet together at our associations this and next month, and together enjoy seasons of refreshing, and with outpourings of christian love to each other, tell of the hope within us; and not, as we sometimes say, our little hope, because that hope is Christ, who is our bright and morning Star. As the natural morning star is sometimes obscured from our view by the passing clouds, it is in consequence none the smaller. So Christ, our hope, although temporarily lost to view by existing doubts and fears, through the lusts of the flesh, &c., is the same Christ, the same hope, never smaller, never lessened. The fountain of his rich love is ever flowing, never ceasing; but while in this fleshly time state, we are not always permitted to drink therefrom. We would give thanks to the wise, the true God, that he sometimes reveals to his little ones the brightness of his countenance and the riches of his grace.

Yours in christian love,

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 1, 1887.

"OUT of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."—Psalm 1. 2.

That the Lord has chosen Zion for his habitation is fully proven in the prophetic age as well as in the gospel dispensation; and that God came down and dwelt in the thick darkness that filled the temple that Solomon had built, has shown his approval of that temple; so has the Lord come down by his searching Spirit in the sinner's heart, proving that the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. As it is light that makes manifest, when the Lord makes darkness light unto a quickened child, then the antitype of Solomon's temple appears. And this temple, the body of the subject of grace, or joint heir of Christ, is in Jerusalem, where to that one in his or her experience the furnace is set, and the law of the Lord must go forth. The heaven-born child must be made to feel, and see, and know, the beauty of the Lord, as well as to inquire in his temple. It is in this way that the saints are prepared to bless the holy name of God. The ancient temple, with its holy place, and ark of testimony, and mercy seat, and cherubim, all point to the work of saving grace, as types or figures, showing the salvation of God, and that the King's daughter is all glorious within, because God dwells in her; for she is only shown or known, as his daughter, the daughter of the King of Zion,

because of his dwelling in her the hope of glory. And she shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work, even the costly garment of her High Priest, who has made her all glorious within, because of his glory and presence there. Where God dwells, there is perfection; and as he dwelt in Zion, or Jerusalem, anciently, because of his own choice, Zion was the perfection of beauty; therefore out of God hath shined. Beautiful then for situation is Mount Zion. "God is known in her palaces for a refuge." As there was one holy mountain, and one holy place in the temple, so there is but one God and one heaven for all the election of grace, or seed of the Lord. Hence there can be nothing added to that which is perfected by the Lord. And as the ancient temple was blessed with his holy presence, so solemn and awful in the type, so wherever his word is found in a sinner's heart, to illuminate that one, is his almighty will; and out of that one, in his own time and way, he shineth forth in the glorious praises of his grace, as out of one saved by the Lord, to bless his holy name; for it is God that works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure. And here again we see the King's daughter is not only all glorious within, and brought before the King in raiment of needle-work, but her clothing is of wrought gold; showing us that Christ of God is made unto his people wisdom, to see their folly; righteousness, to raise them from their lost condition as sinners; sanctification, to set them apart to his holy service; and redemption, to present them faultless before his throne on high. Thus as the glorious light of Zion's risen Lord shines out of every little palace that he has beautified with himself, he shines the chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely one; for truly to them that believe he is precious. How evident it is that God must be in Zion, as he was, to shine out of her, the perfection of beauty. Just so the Lord himself must be in his church or people, as he is to shine out of his church. And no prowling enemy or invading foe can go through the thick darkness in which our God dwells, nor see his glory, nor harm one of these little ones that believe in him; for they are kept as the apple of his eye, preserved from all harm; for only to try their faith are they subject to opposition and temptation. If they cleave to him whose light is in them, and out of whom he has shined as their glorious Lord, in thankful hearts, and brotherly love, and bowels of mercies and long-suffering one toward another, all these are fruits of the Spirit; for by their fruits ye shall know them. For men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles; neither does our God shine out of his people in hatred or malice, or in any of the carnal revelings; but his shining in the hearts of his people to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, makes them meek and humble, as ever a child should be. And I

am persuaded by divine faith in the Scriptures and an experience of twenty-eight years, that I cannot tell one of this shining glory, only as this shining is revealed. And in this we may always know the difference between Zion, the perfection of beauty, and Mystery, Babylon; for the confusion that predominates in the one, no matter what the name may be, is Babel, or dispersion; but on the other hand, where each abounds in the work of the Lord, as they have received Christ Jesus the Lord, they desire so to walk in him, and only strive for the things that make for the peace of Zion, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. The charity of such is not easily provoked or puffed up; it vaunteth not itself, nor behaveth unseemly, but is gentle, forgiving and kind, like the spirit of him that shines out of those who are perfected by his love. Now, after all the mixture of joys and fears, trials and sorrows, how necessary it is that the trembling child of grace should receive the smiles and caresses of their shining and glorious Lord. Surely the people of the living God know the plague of their own hearts, by the reflecting of the glory of God on them, as he shines forth in the love shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them. This must all be felt and known in experience, both in word and doctrine; for there is no experience of grace without the doctrine of God our Savior. Having shined with rays of divine light and glory in their souls, in the gospel of his Son, they have been privileged to drink of the brook in the way, and often have been refreshed from the river whose streams make glad the city of God; in all the blessings that belong to the people that are blessed with the knowledge of the joyful sound of the gospel; a people that shall walk in the shining light of the countenance of the Most High, and in his name rejoice all the day, and in his righteousness shall they be exalted. My own personal experience attests the strength of the unchanging love and unfaltering mercy of our covenant God; for though I have oft been found groping in darkness, he has always appeared the same whenever I have beheld his shining in his holy word, coming as a solace or antidote for all my complaints. Even through severe trials of body and mind, concerning foes within or without, his holy word has been my good cheer, and now I do know there is no God like the God of Jeshurun. He is fearful in praises, doing wonders. He is also faithful to take care that no weapon formed against her whose beauty he has perfected by his glorious presence and work, and out of whom he shines, shall prosper; and every tongue that rises in judgment against her, she shall condemn; for this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. May the Lord bless all his trembling little ones through their journey, and help them to come often to the throne of grace. And may he give our

brethren and sisters that write for the SIGNS strength equal to their day and trial, to edify, and comfort each other in the Lord; and may Israel's shining and glorious lawgiver be the sure support of our dear brethren editors of our family paper; for next to my Bible I value the SIGNS as a medium of communication over the country; and if all felt as I do, and each could sacrifice a little for their benefit, our brethren would fare better than they do, as it regards their finances.

I have written the above hastily to-day, while the weather was so inclement that I did not go out to my appointment. If it is tending to comfort, in your judgment, give it a place; but never let my scribbling pen or rambling thoughts crowd out better matter.

Affectionately yours,

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., March 6, 1887.

"BRETHREN, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."—Gal. vi. 1.

Brethren, have ye not professed to love one another, claiming to be "born of God?" "God is love." "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—1 John iv. 20. Now, brethren, we should be very careful how we act toward each other, and see that we give no cause for offense. If we see a brother in an error, what is our duty toward such an one? Is it to go and tell some other brother about it, and he and you go to some of the other members of the church and tell it to them, and not only to them, but even to the world, probably to his worst enemies, and tell them that such a brother has done so and so, and ought to be dealt with, and so make it public, while perhaps the poor, erring brother is not aware that he has done anything that has caused any offense? Perhaps the first he knows of it, he hears it from some other source, or some brother speaks in conference, and tells the church that he thinks there had better be something done with him. This is apt to excite the poor, erring brother, and cause him to be stubborn, and hard to be reconciled. I say, is this the way to cause brethren to love one another, and to have fellowship one for another? "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "Let us not be weary in well doing," &c. Is it not better to take God at his word, take the rule he has given us? for he has given us a perfect law, to govern every case that can possibly come up in the church. "If thy brother trespass against thee," go to him alone, and tell him his fault, in the spirit of meekness, and you will be sure to gain his confidence, if nothing else, and the probability is that you will gain your brother, and hide a multitude of faults. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them

who are of the household of faith." "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Dear brethren, if we are born of the same Spirit we are heirs of the same inheritance, children of the same parents. What belongs to one belongs to all; that which is enjoined upon one is enjoined upon all. Strive for "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." If ye bite and devour one another, are ye not carnal, controlled by the wrong spirit? Whenever we find within us a spirit of envy, hatred, malice, evil speaking, evil surmisings, not willing to take the Scriptures as the man of our counsel, but rather to have our own way, we may know at once that we are under the influence of the wrong spirit; we are not crucifying the old man, with the deeds and lusts thereof. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." When we find that love is absent, we may know that we are wrong. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Love casteth out all fear. If we cannot go to our brother and tell him his fault in love, and for his benefit, for the purpose of restoring him, and for the healing of the wound, and restoring peace and happiness in Zion, we had better hold our peace until we can. Should you conclude that a brother is injurious to the cause, and ought to be excluded, take God at his word, and go at it right. There is a right way to do everything. If you take the right course you will get rid of him without any trouble; but should you start wrong you will give him the advantage of you, and he will give you much trouble, and probably make a rend in the church that will take a long time, if ever, to heal. Therefore how necessary it is for us to study the Scriptures, and know what the Captain of our salvation has said concerning us, that we may know how to execute the laws that he has given to Zion for her safeguard. "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed

shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isa. xxxv. 3-10. I think this has reference to the church when she is walking in order. Then I would say, "Little children, love one another." If you want to live in peace and enjoy yourselves as brethren and sisters, study the Scriptures and try to live up to what they teach, and not the rules which men have devised, for this will get you into trouble every time. But not so when you take the word of God as the man of your counsel; for then you will have peace and happiness, your enemies will not be able to stand before you, and you will have prosperity. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." The quotation marks refer to Scripture quotations, which the reader can find by reading the Bible; and if you are not familiar with them, it is highly necessary that you should be, if you are a child of God and want to know the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

In conclusion, I would say that we are a small body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, called Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and we are trying to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, for which our names are cast out as evil, and have become a hiss and by-word to all the surrounding nations (so-called churches), and by some who once stood with us; and for no other reason, that we can conceive of, than that we contend for salvation by grace, and grace alone, and have no fellowship with those who want to bring in new inventions. We believe the doctrine advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and by most of the contributors to it. We would say that if any of the preaching brethren are passing this way, or can make it convenient to come, come and see us. We have but three preachers, and they are old. Brother I. R. Greathouse, of Georgetown, Kentucky, visited us last winter, and preached for us (South Fork and Pigeon Creek) several times, much to the comfort and satisfaction of the brethren and sisters. We would say to brother Greathouse, Come again; our doors are ever open to you as long as you come in the fear of Israel's God, and to all that can come, who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God; but to them who have men's persons in admiration we would say, Stay away; we have enough of that kind around us. For fear that we may deceive some one, we will tell you that we are poor, and you need not come expecting to get much of this world's goods, for we have not got it to give.

I have already made this letter too lengthy, but will say, Search the Scriptures; and if this does not hold out full weight, you are under no obligations to receive it.

From your unworthy brother, in much weakness and fear,

C. C. HEATH.

SCALESVILLE, Ind., March 22, 1887.

GRAFENBERG, Ky., Dec. 19, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Being very lonely today, and my mind engaged on things divine, I feel like penning a few thoughts on the "Cherubim," for the consideration of the dear saints. Everything under the patterns has its counterpart. The subject would be too voluminous to treat on all the tabernacle or temple worship, were we gifted to do so. The building of Noah's ark and the doings of Noah present wonders in types. The raven sent out, which never returned, presents the law in type. The law preyed upon the dead; so the raven found a world of dead carcasses to prey upon, while the ark contained the living, which he dare not molest. And he is abroad out of the ark today, and feasting on the dead; while the dove, the emblem of peace, meekness, patience and love, found no rest for the soles of its feet, till the waters abated, when it found the olive leaf, and plucked it, and returned with a symbol of the gospel oil and light.

The dimensions of the most holy place was a cube, twenty cubits square, representing Christ's kingdom of glory, the church in all ages. The walls inclosing represent eternity. The cherubim stretching their wings from wall to wall, shield the church from eternity, through time to eternity. They present to my mind the two covenants; for if not mistaken, I have experienced the coming in under the law cherub, witnessing its awful denunciations against sinners, of whom I am chief. The frightful rustling of the raven's wings, to devour; the unseen hand of providence guiding my steps, directing my way, with weeping and bitter lamentation, to the mercy seat, where the tips of their wings unite over the urim and thummim, where, according to Paul, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. There, too, the eyes of each cherub centered. Here the holy incense was sprinkled; here the smoke of the incense settled and stayed; here the prayers of all the saints concentrate; from this sacred place the divine will is revealed; the song in the night is hymned; here old things pass away, and all things become new; here the saints serve in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. The rapturous view presented in vision to Ezekiel and John of the cherubim is wonderful to contemplate, and seems to present something like a double vision; while Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train (the church) filled the temple. Above it (the church) stood the seraphim. Each had six wings. With twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, with twain he did fly. The wings here no doubt represent the gospel covering by the apostles, the chosen heralds of salvation, who carried the message, as it were, on wings; for Ezekiel represents them as having four faces: the lion, boldness; the soaring flight and keen vision of the eagle; the docile meek-

ness of the ox; the intelligence and depravity of a man; all of which characteristics belong to the true ministers of Christ. The wheels present the propelling power by which they are driven. When the living creatures stood, the wheels stood; when the living creatures were lifted up, the wheels were lifted up; when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And whither the spirit was to go, they went. The true ministers of Christ have learned by sad experience that the wheels are indispensable to success. I suppose the prophets of old were taught the same lesson. Paul wanted to preach in Asia, but the wheels (Spirit) forbade. I suppose our nature would devise a rich field, if the wheels would take us to it; but the stars are held in the right hand of him that standeth in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; unless they be wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. The awful high ring full of eyes, dreadful to look upon, seems to present the wonderful height of God's wisdom in the order and plan of redemption, and corresponds with the eyes of the "four beasts" of Revelation, before and behind, the past and the future; for under the law and the prophets the joining wings of the cherubim were future (before), while under the gospel it is past, or behind; for the centre pivot of all true religion is Christ crucified, to which each cherub looks, over which each spreads a wing, under whose wings the church in all ages has been shielded, and will be till time shall be no more. They not only cover and protect, but guide, pointing to the centre of the mercy seat; also watch and warn; while the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, represent support or basis; as the two lamps and two olive trees represent the light and provisions. The lamps, to my mind, present the church under the two covenants. A lamp without oil or fire is of no use at all to give light. The two olive trees (law and gospel) have plenty of oil, which is conveyed unto the lamps. The prophets and apostles are golden pipes that tap the oil trees and the lamps, and convey the oil into the bowls. But it is the business of the High Priest to trim, snuff and light the lamps, and it must be done with fire from the altar. No strange fire must be used. If strange fire is applied, destruction is the inevitable result. With all these provisions, the church goes mourning for more light, a better evidence, a closer walk with God. The two witnesses, the two anointed ones, the two olive trees that stand by the god of the earth, to my mind represent in type, as also the other figures presented, the provisions of mercy under the two covenants, to the church in time, and is experienced by each individual member, as passing under the wings of the cherubim, and out into eternity, where they will see all the types and shadows consummated in Jesus, their Savior, and be made to

wonder at the voluminous wisdom, power, majesty, might and dominion celebrated in the great mystery of their redemption, salvation, justification and glorification. The saints, though surrounded with all needful equipage, are a poor and afflicted people, are strangers and pilgrims in a strange country, casting a longing look for a better country, that they may get away from self and sin, and be with Jesus, who has charmed their hearts and drawn their love and affection to him. There is no lasting love but in him. He has proved himself a friend to them that sticketh closer than a brother.

J. E. NEWKIRK.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, April 8, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—The following letter was written by sister Libby, who, with her husband, brother Nathaniel R. Libby, were raised in Sanford, Maine, and about twenty-five years ago moved to the state of Iowa. They both received an evidence that they had been born of God, and that their experience and what was preached by the Old School Baptists did agree with the gospel of Christ. They could not unite with any other religious denomination. Last September they came back to their birthplace to visit their relatives and friends, and to be at the Maine Old School Baptist Association, held in Bowdoinham, Maine. Before they returned home, September 20, 1886, I baptized both of them, and two sisters that live in the bounds of our meeting at North Berwick. Sister Libby has written a large number of interesting letters since she returned home, to some of the members of our church, and I thought that it would be interesting to the readers of our family paper to read one of them, so I have sent this one for them. Yours,

WM. QUINT.

CRESO, Iowa, March 22, 1887.

DEAR ELDER AND FAMILY:—As my mind has been with the church a great deal of late, I thought I would try and write you, and let you know something of how we are getting along. First, I would say that we are just as sinful as ever, and sometimes I think more so. I am so easily carried away with the things of this world, and so easily forget the dear Redeemer and his loving-kindness to me all through the journey of life. My mind is so taken up with foolish thoughts that it causes me many doubts and fears, and I wonder if such an one can have one spark of grace in their heart. I am led to doubt if there is anything about me but old nature. Then at times, when I think of our meeting last fall, and the great privilege I enjoyed in following the dear Redeemer down into the water, and being buried in baptism, my heart seems full of love to the dear Lord and the church. O! it seems to me that I can never forget the happy feelings of peace and rest that came over me when I was buried in baptism; and O how much I did enjoy the preaching at all the meetings we attended. It seems that the Lord was in all; and the dear brethren and sisters, how good it was to be with them, and to feel such love

as we enjoyed there. I have been led to exclaim within myself, Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon those that love him. It seems as though I miss the meetings a great deal more than I did before we were there, and at times it makes me feel very sad to be so far away, where I cannot meet with the loved ones and enjoy their love and fellowship, if they can have any for such a poor sinner as I feel myself to be. I should esteem it a great privilege if I lived where I could go to meeting and hear the gospel preached in its purity. There are plenty of meetings in Cresco, but it does me no good to go there, so I stay at home. They live by works of their own, so we cannot agree. If I had to depend upon my own works, it would be a poor dependence, and I would be forever lost at the last; for I have no hope but through grace. My hope seems so small at times that I can hardly hope; but still I cannot give it up, for it is more to me than all this world besides. Sometimes, when bowed down with sorrow, it has seemed to me as though the Lord has promised me that he would never leave nor forsake me; and if he has, what have I to fear? for his promises never fail, and his mercy endureth forever. O happy thought. If we are only so blessed as to be one of his, we shall surely arrive safely home, in spite of earth and sin; for he cleanseth from all sin. If it were not so, what would become of me? We have the Church History, and Nathaniel has got it mostly read through. He likes it very much; and from what I have read and heard him read, I think it is a treasure. I like to read of the old followers of Jesus, and how they have been kept by his power and grace, through all the trials of life, and died in the full triumph of his love. But I think I shall weary your patience with my long letter. I felt as if I wanted to write to you, and I hope you will bear with me. At times it is very hard for me to feel perfectly reconciled to be so far from the church, and I feel a great desire to speak to some one, and to hear others talk of their joys and sorrows. I seem to gain strength by it. Here I feel so alone, I hope it will be that you will have time to write me a letter, for I assure you it will be very thankfully received. We have, I think, eleven letters that we have received from you, brother Chick, and other brethren and sisters, which I read over every little while, and have quite a feast. I feel unworthy to call them brothers and sisters, but my heart longs to do so, they seem so dear to me. But I must close by sending my love to you all, and I desire an interest in your prayers, that the dear Lord will give me grace and keep us in his love.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain your unworthy sister, if one at all,

MRS. N. B. LIBBY.

WATERLOO, Seneca Co., N. Y.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—If it will not be intrud-

ing upon your time, I will once more drop a few lines through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is over thirty years ago that we picked up your paper here, full of good news, which gladdened our hearts, and led us to find the despised people of God, and to leave the New School Baptists here in Waterloo, and to cast our lot with the despised children of God in Clyde, Wayne County, fourteen miles north. My wife and I were baptized by Elder Brown, and we have been visiting among a few of the old members that are left; but, sad to say, that little branch is scattered, and most of the old members are gone to their long home, to praise him that hath loved us with an everlasting love. We left our home in Iowa on the twenty-second of November last for this place. My wife was very sick previous to leaving, but is much better now. We desire to be thankful to the Lord.

Dear brethren in the bonds of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, how beautifully the sweet singer of Israel speaks of the mercies of the Lord. "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens."—Psa. lxxxix. 1, 2. Children of God, we look back to the time when we were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.—Eph. ii. 12. Amazing grace, that he should find us wandering in the paths of sin and folly, having no desire for spiritual food; but in his own time Christ Jesus manifested himself unto us as the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. Like Jacob of old, we called the place Bethel. Like Mary, our sins, which were many, are forgiven. She loved much. Great sinners need a great Savior. Then let us exalt and adore him for his love and mercy to us. "In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Well might the apostle John break out in sweet strains, saying, "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 that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Let us examine ourselves. Do we feel that we are poor sinners, so weak, helpless, defiled, nothing good in us, and if the Lord leaves us only for a moment, what poor wretches we are? Methinks I hear some poor child of God say, Instead of getting better, I get worse every day. "But 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." Paul does not say it is in the old man, or in this body of sin, that we are burdened with, but "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." "Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart." Do the blind Pharisees understand or know anything about it? If the blind guides of the present day could see themselves as the poor publican, it would stop their boasting. "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." The blessed Savior says, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." How many in this day are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. The Savior said to such, "Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." To the child of God who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, he blesses him with his love and peace in believing on him alone.

Since our visit in this state we have visited many of the dear brethren. The Sunday after our arrival we went to May's Mill with my son and his wife, and had the pleasure of witnessing his wife go down into the watery grave. Brother Bogardus baptized her in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. How good and how pleasant to see the dear children of God following their Lord and Master. I feel to praise and bless his dear name for the sweet privilege of meeting a few of his chosen people, and to be enabled to speak in honor of his name.

Yours, as ever, in the bond of peace,
THOMAS BLAKE.

SMITH'S STATION, Ala., Jan. 24, 1836.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I so much appreciated the last issue of the SIGNS, that I feel it is due to say so, and also to encourage those who write words of comfort for the children of God. I appreciated very much your editorial, and hoped it served to comfort many besides myself. I feel to be ignorant concerning things that are to come, and can write nothing as reliable, only such as I am enabled to do by faith. There seems to be a difference of opinion upon the subject of the resurrection; yet, so far as I have seen, none deny it, while it seems that some contend for a philosophic or natural resurrection, reasoning after natural things. But there

seems to be a sublime mystery about it, and in the resurrection the Lord seems to veil himself in clouds and darkness. Yet we believe that judgment and righteousness are the habitation of his throne. We are always perplexed when we try to see spiritual things by natural vision, or comprehend spiritual things with our natural minds. Here lies a trouble, and he must be gifted of God who always bears in mind and is governed by this rule, and is enabled at all times to draw a correct conclusion from all he reads in the word of God. I do not think we can ever be comforted with the idea of the resurrection, outside of our faith in the power and wisdom of God; for the power and wisdom and purpose of God are all connected with the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The philosophic materialist now, as in the days of the apostles, denies the resurrection of the dead, upon the principle that when the body decays and turns to dust, it will be impossible to gather the particles of the same body and raise it up. The Sadducees denied the resurrection, and angels, and spirits. We must resort to the word of God, and that must be our standard. We must settle all our differences upon its testimony; for that teaches us that they who speak not according to this testimony, have no light in them. The patriarchs and prophets all testify of the resurrection of the dead. We find that there was no difference of opinion among them, for they were all led by the same Spirit, which was the Spirit of truth. The trouble with us is, not taking the plain, simple fact, but prying into and speculating upon how it will be, and what kind of a body we will have. The Scriptures abundantly testify that this vile body shall be fashioned like Christ's own glorious body; that it is sown in weakness, and raised in power; sown natural, and raised spiritual. The words, glorious, immortal, incorruptible, all go to show us the difference between an Adamic body and a spiritual body; and the striking difference appears to be that one is subject to death, while the other is not under the domain of death. There are many questions we may ask which would perplex the most experienced gospel minister, who has wisdom enough to preach to the comfort of the saints, but not enough to answer one of his curious questions, which would neither comfort him nor glorify God. If God is glorified in our real submission, I cannot see how he is glorified in our restless curiosity. Besides this, there are many things which, if we could learn to be ignorant of, would be the better for us. The desire to be as the gods, to know good and evil, brought its consequent evils, sorrows and troubles; while it seems that submission and waiting on the Lord will now bring us to see and comprehend the height, and length, and breadth. Sometimes impatience and restlessness bring ignorance and confusion. The Scriptures teach us that the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we that are alive and remain on

the earth shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, at the last sound of the trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised up. The apostle says, "Comfort one another with these words;" not with metaphysical questions, nor prying into things secret, which belong to God; but accept the plain, simple declarations of God, that it shall be so. It seems that the God of wisdom, who gives faith, is amply able to give comfort to that faith in his word, which the apostle teaches, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now if any brother has ever found a description of the resurrection, as to how, and when, and all the particulars about it, write it out, and let all have the benefit of it; for hereby we are helpers of each other's joy. And the careful, thoughtful believer, who has passed through great tribulation, and has grown in grace and the knowledge of the truth, is fruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; and his experience, when told or written, certainly helps his brother in the Lord to see and understand the loving-kindness of the Lord; and this is the main lesson for us all to learn. Blessed are they that know the joyful sound.

These are a few scattering thoughts which came to me this morning, which I have written, and leave with you to publish, if you see fit. If not, cast aside.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

AUDRAIN CO., Mo., April 17, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I am now receiving the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and am very much pleased with it. I feel that I have been edified in reading its editorials, and also the communications from the different correspondents. I was well pleased with the article of brother H. B. Jones on the doctrine of predestination; which doctrine I must with shame confess that I at one time hated; for I thought if God predetermined all things, that gave me no chance to save myself. I intended to do something to save myself, and I think this is the case with all men in a state of unregeneracy. There is none of them that intend to be lost (not knowing that they are already lost). They think they can do something to bring about a reconciliation; and I, for one, intended to do this. Well, if I intended to do it before I undertook, I determined; therefore I was a predestinarian myself. But I was unwilling for God to determine beforehand what he should do. O how rebellious and inconsistent! But there was quite a difference in my predestination and that of the Almighty; for I was unable to accomplish what I had predetermined, while God, who is all-powerful, does all his pleasure; nor does he take counsel of any. He works, and none can hinder; neither can any make him fast or slow; but in his own appointed time he carries out his gracious designs. Now, my dear brethren, if I know my own heart, this is the God that I worship, one

that can save to the uttermost. This is the only God that can do a poor, helpless sinner any good. Man, with his boasted abilities, has accomplished wonderful things in nature, but outside of nature he is a blank. Although some men claim that they are instruments in the hand of God in saving souls (and there was a time that I did agree with them), I am compelled to differ with them; for I now understand the Scriptures to teach that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, and that there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved, and that is the name of Jesus. His name implies his mission; for the angel said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." The Scriptures also teach, to my understanding, that by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God Christ was betrayed into the hands of sinners, taken and crucified, and there shed his blood on the tree of the cross. And when he cried and said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, the salvation of his people was complete, and on the third, the appointed morning, he arose for their justification. He trod the winepress of his Father's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with him. He has fulfilled the law in all its jots and tittles; for he says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." And I believe that he fulfilled it for his people. He suffered in their law room and stead; for by his stripes we are healed. I know that some say that he has come and made a way whereby the sinner may be saved, if the sinner will only do his part; or, that Christ has offered salvation to the sinner, and if the sinner will he may accept. But Christ says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." And I have failed to find where Christ ever offered to save any one; but he hath obtained eternal redemption for his people. And I believe that it is the work of God to bring them into the enjoyment of the salvation that he has obtained for them; for they have wandered away, as far as wicked works can carry them. They being dead in trespasses and in sins, nothing short of the power of God can quicken them. And I believe that he, and he alone, does this work, unaided by any human means or instrumentalities. The dead sinner has no more to do in bringing about his spiritual birth than he had in bringing about his natural birth. Christ says, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him;" and, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." They are drawn by the cords of his love, not against their will, for they are first made willing. For he says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." There was a time when they were an unwilling people; unwilling for the man Christ Jesus to reign over them; a time when they "walked according to the prince of the power of the

air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." And while we were in this state of death, dead in trespasses and in sins, God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. O what a manner of love is this!

M. D. FISHER.

SILVER LAKE, Ind., Dec. 17, 1886.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—I take my pen in hand to write to you a few lines and give you a short history of my feelings, although I feel incapable of doing so. In 1878 I was, as I hope, made to see my sinful condition. Although I embraced the Arminian religion in February, 1874, yet I was not satisfied, and the reason I could not tell. I was impressed in mind to go west, which I did, and made my home with one of my uncles, who belonged to the Old School Baptists. I was a Methodist, and the Baptist faith did not suit me at that time. I must confess I was an enemy to the doctrine of salvation by grace. I wanted it to be all of works, as all Arminians do. But my uncle handled the Scriptures with such power that I could not withstand him; yet I thought that he made God an unjust God, in that he did not give all a chance, as I called it. This was from February to August, 1877. In August, 1877, I went with my uncle to attend an association, and one of God's servants in his discourse gave my Arminian creed a heavy blow, telling how they would preach their works, and how they would carry on their revival meetings. That did not suit me, and made me angry with him, and I walked out of the house to get rid of hearing him. But O what a night I passed that night. I could not rest. My mind was troubled from some cause that I could not tell. I went home with my uncle, and was asked what I thought of the association. They preached a lie, was my answer. From that time I was made to mourn my sinful condition as I never did before. I thought I had to do something, but did not know what to do. I then began to read the Bible, but I could find no relief. Every word of the sacred writing seemed to condemn me. I could not find support for my good works, for I read that it is not of works, lest any man should boast. And I read, "There is none good, no, not one; they are all gone astray," &c. Then I would think, where am I? I then commenced reading in the law, to find justification; but I read that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified; and he that hath broken one precept hath broken all. I had violated in that sense, and done many things that the law forbade. In short, there was no hope in the law for me, and I would pray God to give me light to see myself as I was,

and to guide me in the right way. But the more I would pray, the more I felt condemned; and I feel myself still a greater sinner than ever in my life. I continued thus in my troubles until August 16, 1878 when I thought that I must go to endless woe. My soul was burdened down with my sins, so I was made to cry to God for his mercy. And, my dear brother, I felt that if God should send my soul in hell he would be just in doing so, for I felt that I deserved no better reward; for I felt that I was the worst sinner on earth. But on the sixteenth day of August, 1878, in my deepest anguish, when all my hopes were gone, in a grove in Iowa I went to ask God for mercy. I felt I were on holy ground. Yet I could but say, "Lord, save, or I perish." In an instant my burden was gone. I felt like telling my dear uncle and aunt what the Lord had done for me; but for fear I was mistaken, I did not tell them. But if I am mistaken, I know this, that I love the things I once hated, and hate the things I once loved; and if it were not for the blessed gospel of Christ I would be alone, for I am where I never get to hear the blessed gospel preached in its purity. There are no churches here except Arminians.

Now, brother Beebe, if I am mistaken in my conversion, I can but say that I love the brethren, and wish I could meet with them. I would like to be baptized. My health is very poor, and I am not able to work, and have lost my right arm, it being amputated near my shoulder, which prevents my going where there are some of the brethren, and have the opportunity of following my Lord and Master in baptism. If I were able to take the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I would do so, for it would be a great comfort to me. You may do as you please with this. If you think this would be of any comfort to any one of the little flock, publish it in the SIGNS; if not, burn it. Write to me when you can. I would be glad to hear from all of God's people at any time. It would be a comfort to me in my affliction. I must come to a close and not take up too much of your time in reading my poor writing, when you can get something more interesting to read.

I remain yours in love,

J. H. RHODES.

LIGONIER, Indiana.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been requested to send you a short sketch of my experience, if you think it is worthy a place in the SIGNS.

I was born in the year 1865, in the little town of Nagold, in the kingdom of Württemberg, Germany, the home of Martin Luther. My parents were of the Lutheran faith, and had their children all sprinkled when infants. When six years of age I was forced to attend public school and Sabbath School, in all of which we were catechised. This I did until I was sixteen years of age. It was a great punishment to me, instead of a pleasure. Sometimes, instead of going to Sabbath School, we would play truant, and return about the time that school closed, and ask some of the

other boys what the song and the text were, so that we could tell our parents when we returned home, thus deceiving them. In my seventeenth year I left my home for America. My first stopping point was in Darke County, Ohio, where I resided two years. At first I felt quite lonesome, feeling that I was without friends; but God, who is merciful, did not forget me, for he gave me a home and friends wherever I went. I thought that I was getting along nicely until three years ago last January, when I had a letter from home stating the death of my dear father, whom I loved dearly. While on his death-bed he longed to see his boy who was far away; and while reading this letter the tears came to my eyes for the first time in America. Here I realized what I had lost in the death of my father, who had always been so good and kind to me. I promised him that I would return and see him; but what are our promises without God's will? From that time, dear brethren, I began to feel a distress of mind, and that all was not right with me. I tried to get rid of these feelings, but I could not do so; wherever I went they seemed to follow me, and often I would lie awake until after midnight. I began to fear that my mind was affected. I often tried to pray, but it seemed that my prayers were only mockery. I tried to enjoy myself in young company, but I could not do so. I often wondered why I could not, but now trust that I know the reason. God, who had been so merciful to me, had something better in store for me, a poor sinner, unworthy of notice.

Thus I was led along until the winter of 1886, when my trouble seemed to be greater than ever before. I went to meeting, but returned with a heavier burden than when I went. On returning from meeting one evening my burden of sin and guilt seemed so heavy that I thought my heart would burst. I knelt down to try to pray the Lord to have mercy on my poor, wicked and wretched soul, and just there light broke into my poor heart, and I felt like going out into the fields to praise the Lord. When I awoke the next morning everything seemed to be new; even the stock that were in my care looked better. I felt like telling everybody what had taken place. I lived in this happy frame of mind for about two months, when darkness began to overshadow me; but I was enabled to trust in Christ, my Savior, who had been so merciful to me. For some time I did not know that anybody else ever had such feelings, and I was afraid to tell any one my feelings. In April, 1886, I went to work for brother Lewis Smalley, who, I found, was a member of the Baptist Church, but I knew nothing of their faith. On the fourth Sunday in April I went with them to their meeting, and there for the first time I heard an Old Baptist discourse, which was food to my poor soul. It caused me to look back over the way that I had been led, which ever seems new to me. I thought that all seemed to enjoy the meeting,

and I felt a love for them that I had never before known; but still I was afraid to tell them what I hoped the Lord had done for me. I went to the next meeting with the intention of telling them the reason of my hope, but again I failed to do so; and from time to time I put it off until the fourth Sunday in last March, when the Lord gave me strength to go to the church and tell them what he had done for me, and on the Monday following I was baptized. When I was led down into the water I felt that it was a privilege too great for one so unworthy as I; and when raised from the water I felt like praising the Lord, and sounding his praise all over the world.

Such, dear brethren, are the feelings of your little brother,
GUSTAVUS BAUSER.

ALBANY, Mo., Feb. 10, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose you a letter from sister Hess, which I received a few days ago. Sister Hess is a sister-in-law of mine, and I have often been comforted with her timely epistles of love, while burdened with trials; and as this letter was not written to me, but to another sister in Christ, I feel like submitting it to you for use to the household of faith and the sister named.

ISAIAH J. OLABAUGH.

GOLDENDALE, W. T., Dec. 20, 1886.

A. L. DULIN—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—You will no doubt be surprised to receive a letter from me, an entire stranger to you; and I am surprised at myself, that one so ignorant as I should attempt to address you. After reading your communication in the October number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, my heart was filled with love to you and the dear people of God, and I felt like writing to you, to tell you how much comfort I derived from your letter. You wondered how one so ignorant and weak as yourself could write anything of comfort to others. But let me tell you, my sister, that every word you wrote was as food to my hungry soul. I had been feeling unusually sad all day. I commenced to read your letter, and it was so rich and good I turned back and read it to others. I often wish I could write as the other sisters do who write for our family paper; but I am surely one of the most ignorant and unlearned of any that profess the name of Jesus. I often wish almost, that I had remained out of the church, for I fear that I will bring a reproach upon the cause. I have had a name among the Baptists for fifteen years, and they have borne with all my shortcomings, forgiving and passing by all my wrong doings. O how I love God's dear people, with a love I hope which is not of this world; a love the world cannot give nor take away. There is a cord of love that binds all God's people together, though they may never have seen each other's faces; yet when they read of the Lord's dealings with them, they feel to exclaim,

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Dear sister, you said your earthly cup was bitter. Sometimes I feel like I have more bitter than sweet. I feel sometimes my cup of sorrow is about full; but not my will, but thine, O God. First, I lost a dear, noble little son, then my dear father, a precious sister, and last, my dear mother was called to go. It seems sometimes more than my weak nature can stand, to think they are gone from me forever in this world. Yet they died rich in faith of a blessed resurrection, and I ought not to grieve for them. My mother, Mrs. N. E. Beebe, passed away on the seventeenth of last August. Her obituary appeared in the last number of the SIGNS. I was with her during her last sickness, and through all of her terrible sufferings she never murmured, but said, "All is right." A little before she died she reached out her arms and said, "O blessed Jesus!" She went on to describe his glorious appearance in all his glory as he appeared to her when he spoke peace to her soul so many years ago. I saw, while watching her, the glorious smile that lit up her face and witnessed her faith in the Savior. I felt as if it was not death, but just a gentle sleep, from which she would awake to everlasting joys in heaven. "O grave, where is thy victory?" I do not think a child ever had better parents, and none ever left better examples for their children to follow. But I am such a poor, miserable sinner, I cannot do the good I would. When I would do good, evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not. We are greatly blessed with gospel preaching. Our beloved pastor, Elder Bullock, preaches for us twice a month, and I surely think and feel that he is endowed with power from on high.

I must now close my poorly written letter, asking you to forgive me for intruding on your patience. I have wanted so much to write to sister Kate Swartout, but my unworthiness has kept me from it. With much love to you, I am your sister in hope of eternal life,

MINNIE HESS.

TIFFIN, Ohio, Jan. 12, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As my subscription has expired I will again make a remittance, as I cannot do without the SIGNS; for it brings joy to my heart, good news and glad tidings from the many dear ones and able defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus. Christ is exalted and the sinner abased; Christ is all in all, while the sinner is nothing, can do nothing, desire nothing, have nothing, only as the Lord gives him. This is the Savior I love to worship, praise and adore; for I have nothing in view save Jesus Christ and him crucified. In reading the last number of the SIGNS (January first) this morning my eyes fell upon a short but precious letter written by sister M. Carey, which made my heart run out in love toward her. Though separated by land or sea, strangers according to the flesh, that love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord is inseparable, and like as drops of

water, flowing from heart to heart. And who shall be able to separate us from that love? Shall height, or depth, or principalities, or powers, or things to come? There is nothing able. It only sinks the love and wisdom of the world into nothingness and everlasting contempt. Why I am again trying to write for our dear family paper I know not. I hope it is from no other motive than the love of the saints of our God; for I am determined to know nothing among you save Christ and him crucified. I have not been permitted to meet with the brethren and sisters at Honey Creek this winter, and so far the winter has been long. O why are my winters so long? My soul is hungry and thirsty for gospel food; and yet at times I seem to know not whether I am that blessed character that hungers and thirsts after righteousness; but I know I love the Lord's people, his cause and kingdom, if my heart deceives me not.

I hope our dear sister Carey's request will be granted by our dear brother Jenkins, who wrote so beautifully to his inquiring young friend, showing the difference between true and false religion; and I hope he will be profited thereby. I trust our hearts may be opened to understand what may be written upon the subject, for it has been my heart's desire to know what constitutes a mother in Israel. Paul says to Timothy, "Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity."—1 Tim. v. 1, 2. This is what we understand constitutes that peculiar people, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, the family of Israel, knit together in love, joy and peace; a quiet habitation, a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid.

I remember when but a youth attending school, my mind was more or less exercised in regard to the doctrine of election and predestination, and I would argue with my schoolmates, but met with much opposition every time. I could say that the Bible said so; yet no one ever taught me those things, and it was long before I was made to see myself a poor, helpless sinner before God; and then it was a period of six years or more before I was made to rejoice in Jesus as my Savior, that he died that I might live. O glorious hope! my soul rejoices at the thought. Immediately after that sweet experience of the love of God shed abroad in my heart, these words came to my mind, and to my recollection I had never read them, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." O how strongly I was drawn out in love to the Old Baptists; yet I did not want them to know I loved them. Such a struggle and such beating with stripes as I suffered for ten months my pen is not able to describe, because I felt too unworthy and unfit to live with such good people. It will soon be ten years since I was enabled by faith to put on Christ by baptism, and raised to walk in newness of life, and have the answer of a good conscience toward God. But I have found it easier to thus put on Christ, than to keep him on, and adorn the profession by a well ordered life and godly conversation, and have a conscience void of offense before God and before men. In much love,
MATTIE S. DERR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1887.

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

SECRET SOCIETIES.

IN compliance with several requests, we will state that so far as our acquaintance extends the prevalent custom of Old School Baptist churches is to discountenance their members holding connection with any other societies claiming to be religious or moral; and especially do they object to such societies as hide their designs under the cover of secret organizations and oath-bound ties. Much more manifest is the inconsistency of those who claim to follow after righteousness, yet holding organized connection with those who do not even profess morality. This might suffice to answer the queries received; but it is far more important to understand what is the law of our Lord on the subject than to know the practice of the churches.

The very name "church," which was given by our Redeemer to his own visible kingdom, is a word which signifies that the members are "called out" from the world. When the church in Corinth had fallen into disorder, the apostle called their attention to this separation from the world as the remedy for their trouble. They could not walk in the fellowship of Christ and retain their connection with the idolatry of their Gentile companions who sacrificed to devils. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."—1 Cor. x. 21. From the connection in which this is written it is evident that the principle involved is the entire separation of the saints from all the institutions of the world which assume to be designed to promote morality or religion. They who are called to be saints are not of the world, even as their Lord was not of the world; nor are they at liberty to seek their treasures in the world. They who mind earthly things while professing to walk in the ordinances of the gospel, are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction.—Phil. iii. 18, 19. The question for the saints to consider is not how far they may follow their carnal minds without justifying the church in cutting them off from her membership; rather they should seek to follow in the very footsteps of their glorious Leader. Since his whole law is summed up in the command to those who love him to follow him, it is professing by their action that they do not love him when they go where he never went. Not only do we seek in vain to find his footsteps leading into any secret convocation of natural men, but we have his own word for the fact that he said nothing in secret. When the high priest asked him of his disciples and of his doctrine, "Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever

taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing."—John xviii. 20. From the time when he said this until he was nailed to the cross there was no moment when he might have entered a secret assembly with the men of the world. Hence, in entering any such organization no one can be following Jesus. That some dear children of God have united with secret societies of the world there is no room to doubt; but that fact no more proves that it is authorized by the law of Christ than does the example of Peter justify us in denying our Lord. We feel safe in saying that there is no record in the Scriptures of any other secret society having the sanction of the authority of Jesus except his church. They who are led by the Spirit alone have the secret which identifies the real members of this peculiar company; and all the efforts of created beings never can communicate this secret to one who has not been taught it of the Lord by the immediate guidance of the Spirit which leads the saints into all truth. There is therefore no need of guarding their secret with any oath or pledge. So far are they who have received this solemn secret from having ability to teach it to others to whom it has not been revealed, that they cannot even tell it to their own natural understanding. It is still true that "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."—Psa. xxv. 14. For those who have been elected by eternal love to know this secret, and to obtain like precious faith with the apostles and prophets, it would be an inconceivable fall to come down to membership in any earthly society, even though they there found none but the most noble men of the world. For the sun to seek light from a dim candle would not be so hopeless an experiment, for both these are natural things, while the high calling of the saints is from heaven, and it brings them into perfect fellowship not only with all the holy apostles and prophets, but also with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.—1 John i. 3. Well does the Scripture call him a profane person as Esau, who would despise this heavenly birthright by selling it for carnal gratification.—Heb. xii. 16. Until some divinely authorized precept or example can be found leading those who love the Lord into such fellowship with the world, the saints will be safe in saying of all earthly organizations, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united."—Genesis xlix. 6.

In the absence of any written authority for uniting with institutions of the world, it has been suggested that the saints might gain the favor of their fellow-men by uniting in their societies, while there seems no harm in such association with respectable and moral men, even though they give no evidence of love for the truth of the gospel. In reply to this plausible suggestion the saints should re-

member that they are not at liberty to give their allegiance to any worldly authority, since they belong both in body and in spirit to the Lord, who has redeemed them from death by the sacrifice of himself. Their whole life should be devoted to his glory, as it is enjoined by the inspired commandment, "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Cor. vi. 20. It is needless to say that they could not glorify God in going with the world into wickedness and crime; but if they do anything in itself good in such society they glorify that society instead of praising God by all such works. Indeed reproach against the church and her Lord is implied in the claim that any good can be attained by human devices for which the divine law of Christ makes no provision. Hence, they who look to such devices for comfort or support do most assuredly forsake their sure dependence upon the word of the Lord; as it is written, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."—Jonah ii. 8. Such a departure from the divine rule is typified in the reproof of Israel, whose idolatry brought the judgment of God upon them. "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."—Jeremiah ii. 12, 13.

It would be well for any member of the church to consider before going into any worldly secret society whether he would have preferred that company when he first hoped in the grace of God for salvation. Can any worldly society present stronger attractions than those which you then saw in the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth? Could you now afford to trust your salvation to the most perfect society ever devised by the mind of man? It is not merely the immediate association with the visible church in this time and place which you propose to forsake for the company of those who blaspheme the name of Jesus. In leaving the footsteps of the flock you leave the whole company of his ransomed people. In going where your Lord never went you do not walk with him. It is the adversary of your peace who says you are free to follow your own inclination in this matter. It is not true that any saint has a right to disregard the law of Christ which enjoins on his followers that they come out and be separate from the world.—See 2 Cor. vi. 14-18. In following the pattern given by our Redeemer we must deny self and obey his holy commandments in all things. In any other course we are living after the flesh, and sowing that seed of which we shall reap only corruption. Then may all who hope in the salvation of God be enabled to heed the solemn appeal of the inspired apostle, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that

ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."—Romans xii. 1-3.

In the presentation of these thoughts on the subject of secret organizations we would not discuss the question of the usefulness of these things in the world. With the institutions of men we have no right to interfere so long as they do not disturb the fellowship of the saints, or claim the glory due to our Lord Jesus. Let the world have its own institutions. If any subject of salvation loves the vain devices of men more than the church of Christ, he will learn by being filled with his own ways more surely than by any arguments of others that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. May the Lord direct all who love his truth to walk in the pathway of righteousness, wherein there is no death.—Prov. xii. 28.

MATTHEW XII. 43-45.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—When you have time and space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, please give your views on the above cited text, and confer a favor on a poor sinner who desires more light.

J. H. YEOMAN.

SILVER CLIFF, Colo., July 18, 1886.

REPLY.

"WHEN the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

If our esteemed brother has access to the old volumes of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, he will find in the paper for November first, 1871, an editorial on this subject from which we do not dissent. The application of the parable was clearly designed as a forcible summing up of the terrible rebukes with which our Lord had been denouncing the blaspheming Jews, who even charged that he by the power of Beelzebub cast out devils. These very Jews had voluntarily sought baptism at the hands of John and been rejected. They had followed Jesus because they did eat of the loaves and were filled; but they had only been directed in all this by their own will. The unclean spirit of selfish idolatry had not been cast out of them; it had only gone out without releasing its claim to return at will. Hence, when Jesus preached the necessity of living by vital unity with himself they were offended, and by their own free will they "went back, and walked no more with him." As they had been prompted by selfishness to follow him, so they could by

the same motive go back to the dead carcass of Judaism. Their subsequent malicious persecution of the Lord and clamor for his blood showed the seven fold wickedness which possessed them.

In its application in principle to the same characters in the present experience of the church, it is manifest that those who have been led by carnal selfishness to profess the name of followers of Jesus, are exactly like their prototypes in their assumption of power to follow the Lord, or to go back to their carnal dependences. The called and chosen disciples can go to no other but Jesus, for in him is their life. Those who have of their own natural will chosen to profess the religion of Christ, can by the same will choose something different when interest or expediency so directs; for the evil spirit has not lost his control by for a time going out of them. At will he returns, and takes possession of the house which has been empty, swept, and garnished in his absence. To external appearance this house seemed as thoroughly purified as one out of which the unclean spirits had been cast by divine authority; but there is just this difference: the subject of divine cleansing is thenceforth under the necessity of following Jesus as his only life; while such as have by their own will taken the name of his disciples can at will forsake him. The false professor is not troubled about the pollution of sin dwelling in his members. The unclean spirit having gone out of him, he is just as pure as he desires to be. In other words, he has all the religion for which he chooses to live. Like the whitened sepulchre, he appears outwardly all clean, and even garnished with the showy tinsel of self-righteousness; but he is as unconscious as that sepulchre of the horrible pollution hidden within. Even the true subject of the cleansing blood of Jesus, groaning under the burden of the vanity of the body of this death, may at times be envious at the apparent freedom from sin of these lifeless hypocrites when they behold their prosperity; but the great Judge is not deceived, for "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."—Heb. iv. 13. He knows his sheep, the objects of his electing love and the redeemed vessels of mercy. They are all "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 5. Like the chosen and called apostles, these elect vessels of mercy are under the necessity of following Jesus, because they can go nowhere else. They are indeed willing to obey the commandments of their Lord, but that will is wrought in them by the power of God. It is not of themselves; it is the gift of God. Since they have not the power to will or do anything of themselves, it must be true that every one in whom that will is found is assuredly led by the Spirit of God, and is therefore one of the sons of God. The very bitter grief they feel in their inability to do the good they would,

gives assurance that they have the will abiding in them.

In the case of the man out of whom the unclean spirit is gone, as applied to such as voluntarily attempt to follow in the ordinances of Christ without being led by the Spirit, there is no rest for him in the dry places where he invariably walks. The performance of duties and observance of legal ordinances are such very dry places that they can afford no rest to the weary one. Then the unclean spirit takes with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell in the man, making the last state of that man worse than the first. This is fearfully fulfilled in some cases even in the present time. Men who have made a great show of devotion to the cause and doctrine of Christ, have afterward shown such total disregard to the principle of truth and love in their actions that they exhibited the nature of wolves, "not sparing the flock." In such characters the truth has been manifest that their last state was worse than the first. Since the apostolic age such volunteer impostors have from time to time infested the church. They are always found making a fair appearance and affecting great sanctity; but they are never troubled on account of sin in themselves. Their chief distress results from there being none worthy to be their companions. These are described by the inspired apostle as "Spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."—Jude 12, 13. This state of hatred against the truth and malice against its divine Author is certainly far worse than the indifference of those who, like Gallio, care for none of these things, which is the original condition of every sinner in the death of nature.

This "wicked generation" against whom Jesus spoke this parable was not confined to those who were at that time upon earth personally. As they who are Christ's are the true seed of Abraham, so all in every age and place who are willing servants of sin are included in that wicked generation unto whom the Lord says, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John viii. 44. There is nothing but wickedness in this evil generation; and their hypocritical assumption of the name of disciples but makes manifest their real character. The condemnation which rests upon them is just, and they can have no plea upon which to base a claim for acceptance in the sight of God. Indeed, so filled with wickedness are they that they cannot even desire the justifying righteousness of God which is revealed to the saints in Christ Jesus. From the openly profane world the church has little to fear in the form

of persecution. It is when the idolatrous spirit of carnal religion has made a show of sweeping the old house that the man is possessed by those awful spirits which are ever thirsting for the blood of the true subjects of salvation by grace. There is no record that Cain ever exhibited an unkind feeling toward Abel until he began to be religious. Then he hated his brother, because his own works were evil. This is still the last state of all whose religion is of that carnal will which was in Cain. There is no exception to the dreadful judgment which is pronounced by the sovereign Judge of quick and dead in the closing words of our text. "So shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

THE following letter we copy from *Zion's Landmark* for May 15th, 1887:

DEAR ELDER GOLD:—Will you be kind enough to publish this article in your esteemed paper for the benefit of brethren who have subscribed for the "Church History" five or six years ago. I wrote to Elder Sylvester Hassell about the "History" and he stated that it was in the hands of Elder Bebee's Sons, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., for publication. I received a postal card from Elder Bebee's Sons stating that the book would be sent to all subscribers who had sent in their two dollars. Myself and brother N. R. Raulerson and brother William Raulerson sent our money five or six years ago, and we have not got our "History" yet. I have written two letters to Elder Bebee's Sons about the "Church History" and have received no answer yet. I hope you will publish this in the *Landmark* so they can see that there is likely to be some complaint among the brethren down here about the long delay. If they don't aim to send the "History," please send the money back to our address, St. Lucie, Indian River, Brevard county, Fla., and oblige your brethren.

WILLIAM H. RAULERSON,
N. R. RAULERSON,
JOEL W. SWAIN.

St. Lucie, Brevard Co., Fla., April 1st, 1887.
R E P L Y .

The books referred to in the above letter were all three mailed February first, 1887, to St. Lucia, Brevard Co., Fla., and if not received it was from no neglect on our part; and if the two letters were received and needed replies, they were answered. We mailed the books as fast as they were received from the bindery, sometimes as many as five hundred in one day. In order that the subscribers to the History may judge for themselves whether or not we have been tardy or careless in filling their orders, we will give a statement of our system in doing the work.

Owing to the length of time since the first subscribers' names and addresses were sent in, we did not deem it safe to send the books until we heard from them again. We therefore, at an expense of over fifty dollars, sent cards last August to all on the list up to that time, requesting them to answer immediately if the card reached them; and all but about four hundred and fifty replied, and were marked "correct" on the list. Then, to hasten matters as much as possible, we had those names and addresses written on slips, and afterward revised by two persons, one reading the list and the other reading the slips. Then the whole lot was gone over again by two others, one reading the slips and the other reading the list; making sure that the

slips agreed perfectly with the list, after making sure as stated above that the list was correct, with the exception of the four hundred and fifty who had not answered the cards. The slips were then pasted on the wrappers, so that when the books arrived from the bindery we only had to do them up in their wrappers, and they were all addressed, ready for mailing; but before they left this office they were again compared with the list, after the book was in the wrapper.

To sum up the whole process: We wrote to the subscribers to know if we had their addresses correct on the list; and after making sure of that, we drew the addresses off on slips, and made sure they were correct by revising them twice with the list; then pasted them on wrappers; and, after putting the books in the wrappers, revised them again, to enable us to be positive that the wrapper with the book in it had a slip on it directed correctly. If the above shows carelessness, we do not know how to be careful.

As to the insinuation of dishonesty of intentions, either on the part of brethren Hassell or ourselves, we do not think it necessary for us to occupy space to reply.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder William Rogers was born April 8, 1802, in Fayette Co., Pa., came to Columbiana Co., Ohio, the first of May the same year. At twelve years of age he went with his father to Zanesville, Muskingum Co., Ohio, his mother being dead. He learned the shoemaker's trade and returned to his birthplace, where he remained two or three years, and then returned to Columbiana Co., Ohio. While traveling in the same country where he formerly had been, he stayed over night with a Presbyterian family, whose minister was there, and with these he went to meeting, and was very much concerned about his welfare. When the minister read his text it was, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." That filled his mind with astonishment. "How can that be?" He strove for about six years to get better, but seemed to get worse. He went to hear the Predestinarian Baptists (once called Nazarenes, or Old School), and thought they preached the doctrine of the Bible. He married Miss Elizabeth White, in Columbiana Co., Ohio, May, 1824, and in March, 1828, moved to Highland Co., Ohio. He and his wife were baptized by Elder Laymon, and one month after he was chosen deacon of the church, and remained one until he came to Logan Co., Ohio, in March, 1834. Here he found a few of his faith, and they met together and held prayer meetings until they got a minister, when they constituted a church. He was licensed to preach for the church in 1849, and was ordained by Elders George McColloch and Stephen Hukill, in 1851. He traveled and preached to several churches until old age and feeble health compelled him to stay at home; but he did not waver from the doctrine of salvation by grace. His wife died in 1861, and in 1863 he married Miss Sarah Clevenger, a member of his faith and order. He had four sons and five daughters, all by his first wife. His eldest son was a member of the same church with his father, and remained strong in the doctrine of salvation by grace until his death, several years previous to that of his father. Two sons preceded him to the spirit land. He leaves a sorrowing wife, seven children, twenty-four grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren. He lived to see his children all married. Elder William Rogers died February 7, 1887, aged eighty-four years, nine months and twenty-nine days. Elder A. B. Brees visited him a few days.

before his death, and he requested him to preach his funeral at that time, while he was living; so there was no funeral sermon preached afterward.

SARAH ROGERS.

PLEASE publish the obituary of another of our children. Our youngest son, **Walter Lee Chapman**, died of consumption, at two o'clock on the morning of April 16, 1887, aged twenty-four years. Only a six months have passed since we buried our eldest daughter, Mrs. Lucy Stoddard. Scarcely have our wounded hearts commenced to heal, and now in so short a time are the wounds torn and bleeding afresh. He was a good and loving son and brother, loved and respected by all who knew him, and his death is deeply regretted by his relatives and friends. He made a profession of religion at a Methodist altar, when quite young, but after the lapse of some considerable time he was baptized and united with a New School Baptist organization in Baltimore City, where he resided, in business with his brother. When his health broke down he returned to his home in Virginia, and early in December went to Aiken County, S. C., with the hope that the warm climate would be beneficial. Remaining a few months, and receiving no benefit, he returned to his home to die. We feel that God has a purpose in thus afflicting us in these sore and sad bereavements, and we sorrow not as those who have no hope. He often wrote me while from home, giving expressions of his feelings and the exercises of his mind. His patience and his resignation to the will of the Lord in afflicting him was remarkable; and his trust and hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in his conversations with us, is a great comfort, for we are satisfied his sufferings are over and he is at rest.

ALSO,

My father, **John C. Weedon**, for many years Judge of the County Court, died yesterday evening at six o'clock, in his ninety-first year, at his home in Prince Wm. Co., Va.

In deep sorrow, your sister,

M. CHAPMAN.

NEAR DUMFRIES, Va., April 29, 1887.

My beloved husband, **Wm. P. Carey**, was born January 6, 1813, and died April 8, 1887, at his home in Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., aged seventy-four years, three months and two days. He took a heavy cold on the first day of April, and was sick only one week. The last eight years of his life he filled his seat in the two churches that he attended, with only two or three exceptions. He loved to sing the songs of Zion, and at night would often sing,

"The day is past and gone," &c.,
and in the morning,
"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays," &c.

When he told us that he would soon leave us, he said,

"When this lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song
I'll sing thy power to save."

During his last hours his mind was on heavenly things, and he would say, "What a view I have had." But he was so weak that he could not describe it. The night before he died he desired to see Elder Jenkins once more, and we sent for him. He came that night, and was with him in the morning by his bedside when he passed away, and he knew that the end of my dear husband was peace.

The funeral was attended on the 11th, when a discourse was preached by Elder Benton Jenkins from Eccl. ix. 10.

"A precious one from us is gone;
A voice I loved is still;
A place is vacant in my home,
Which never can be filled.

"God in his wisdom has recalled
The boon his love had given;
And though the body moulders here,
The soul is safe in heaven."

MARY CAREY.

BROTHER **Benjamin D. Dubois** was born in Franklin, Warren County, Ohio, July 1, 1806, and died in Piqua, Miami County, Ohio, January 31, 1887, aged eighty years, seven

months. In 1826 he was united in marriage to Miss Mary T. Barkalow. The fruit of this happy union was two sons and five daughters. The two sons, after arriving at manhood, and two daughters in infancy, preceded their father to the grave. Sister Dubois, the wife of his youth, three daughters, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, with the church, are left to mourn the loss of a kind husband, father and grandfather, and a beloved and faithful member of the church; but we mourn not as those that have no hope, for his daily walk and conversation showed plainly that he was a lover of Jesus. In early life he united with the Old School Baptist Church in Warren County, and shortly after moved to Shelby County, Ohio, and put in his letter with Harmony Church, and was soon elected deacon, which office he filled to the entire satisfaction of the church; but the last few years he was not able to get to meeting very much. He was a great sufferer from dyspepsia and tumors in the stomach. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and the predestination of all things; that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he is too wise to err and too gracious to be unkind.

JESSE C. LINE.

By request I send for publication in the SIGNS the obituary of **Henry Frances Cornell**, infant son of Mr. Philip P. and Mrs. Mary Cornell, of Ekfrid, Ontario, Canada, who are both devoted friends of the Old Baptists. The subject of this notice died March 22, 1887, of inflammation of the bowels, aged two years and eleven months. He was the only child and first-born. The stroke was very sore and afflicting to his loving parents. He was a very interesting child. A few hours before his death he said, "I am going," and wanted his aunts and all to kiss him, which all present did. Then he said, "More kisses." When some were about to return more, he said, "No, no," waving them back with his hand, and called "More aunts," but they were not all there. A little while before his spirit took its flight he said, "Have mercy on us," which we think very remarkable in one of his age. Many relatives mourned their loss; but Jesus can heal all their sorrows and bring all to his eternal home if it is his will.

I tried to preach at the funeral from the words, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." The attendance was the largest that I ever saw for a child. Our meeting house in Ekfrid was full.

Yours in tribulation,

WM. POLLARD.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—By request I forward you the announcement of the death of **Aseneth Moshier**, wife of S. P. Moshier, who departed this life in July, 1886. Aseneth Moshier was born February 23, 1804, was married to S. P. Moshier June 10, 1838, united with the Primitive Church, Cohocton, N. Y., was baptized by Elder Ovaette in 1830, and departed this life on the morning of the 15th of February, 1887, at the house of Mrs. Ann Dutan, her daughter, near Manchester, Iowa, at which place her funeral services were held, and where much kindness was manifested during her sickness by kind neighbors. The writer of this article spoke a few words on the occasion from Philippians i. 21. The following lines are a sketch of her last conversation, written by her daughter, Mrs. Steel. She had spells of calling on the Savior, and praying, from Friday, and telling of the loving-kindness of Jesus. The last twenty-four hours she called almost continually. She would say, "O blessed Savior, thy loving-kindness is so great." Again she would say, "O blessed Father, take me home to thy loving bosom, thy love is so great." She said a great deal more, saying, "O I am so happy." Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

THOMAS GILL.

It becomes my painful duty to write the obituary of my dear father, **George A. Pryor**, who died November 30, 1886, with apoplexy, aged sixty-nine years, nine months and twenty-two days. He was born in Pittsylvania Co., Va., moved to Fayette Co., Ill., in March, 1843, and remained there until his death. He has been a constant member of

the Old School Baptist Church for twenty-eight years. He leaves a wife, two sons and one daughter to mourn their loss, besides numerous relatives and friends.

His funeral was preached by Elder John Lawler.

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

"Yet again we hope to meet thee,
When the morn of life is past;
Then in heaven with joy to greet thee,
Where no farewell tears are shed."

MARY J. SMITH.

VANDALIA, Ill.

DIED—At his home in Prince Wm. Co., Va., Jan. 14, 1887, of pneumonia, **Montgomery E. Reid**, aged eight months, the youngest son of Ira Reid.

Montgomery dear is called away,

And we are left to mourn;
On earth he could no longer stay,
The Father called, Come home.

My friends, come sympathize with me,
While I my story tell,
How death's cold hand has torn away
The one we loved so well.

Now, gracious Lord, if 'tis thy will,
The rest in mercy spare;
Short was their stay with us below,
But Jesus thought it best.

CECELIA REID.

OCCOQUAN, Va., March, 1887.

DIED—April 17, 1887, of typhoid pneumonia, after a severe illness of twenty-eight days, **Lester W. Hutchison**, youngest son of Manly A. and Maney Hutchison, and grandson of brother William Cockrill, of Frying Pan, Va.

"Our darling is sleeping, so free from all pain,

O wake him not to suffer again;
He slumbers so soundly, O let him sleep on;
His sufferings are over, his trouble all gone.
O think how he suffered and groaned with pain

In the long night hours as we smoothed him
In vain;
Till God in his mercy sent down from above
An angel that whispered a message of love."

A FRIEND.

It is with profound sorrow and grief on my part that I have to announce the death of my dearly devoted mother, **Mrs. Sarah Baker**, who died at my residence at Foxbury, Pa., on Monday, April 11, 1887. Her remains were taken to Buffalo for interment, and were laid to rest at Forest Lawn Cemetery on Friday, April 14. She was followed to her last resting place here on earth by a loving son and three loving daughters, and numerous friends. We had no concern about her spiritual welfare, as she died in faith in the Lord. Please make a note of this in your next issue, and continue sending the SIGNS as usual. Her son,

JOHN F. BAKER.

CHURCH NOTICES.

WE, the church at Fellowship, Upshur Co., Texas, of the Primitive Baptist faith and order, having learned that one Hyrum Barton, who was once a member with us, as well as an Elder and our pastor, but who was, about five years ago, excluded from us, and has never given us any satisfaction, has made application to and has been received into Concord Church, of the Little Hope Association, and is now preaching under their authority; and having further learned that there is a rumor afloat in some places that the said H. Barton has been restored; we desire to undeceive those who may be deceived, and to prevent further deception; for he has not been restored, and we hold his credentials. Therefore,

Resolved, That we have no fellowship for the said H. Barton, nor for any who recognize him as a gospel minister.

Adopted by the church in conference, Saturday before the second Sunday in April, 1887.

H. B. JONES, Mod.

J. M. EVERS, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the following list of appointments, and oblige:

Monday after the second Sunday in June, in the afternoon, at Bryn Zion.

Tuesday p. m. at Cow Marsh.

Wednesday p. m. at Broad Creek.

Thursday a. m. at Little Creek.

Thursday night at Delmar.

Saturday and third Sunday at Salisbury.

Monday at Rewastico.

Tuesday at Forest Grove.

Wednesday at Indiantown.

Thursday as the friends may arrange at Snow Hill.

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

Mrs Sarah Eldrey 2, J L Scott 2, Chas G Beebe 2 50, E A Perkins 2 50, Rees Perkins 2 50, D B McColl 11, A B Brees 1 25, Miss Emily Coggin 2 50, Miss G D England 2, Chas Ivey 2 50, John G Jones 2, J W Hawthorn 2, Thomas Bell 5, David Steeks 2 50, James T Price 2, Seth Woodall 2 25, Harrison Coberly 2, Mrs Bettie Clark 2 50, Wm H Embry 2, Isaac B Shows 2, Mrs Bettie Clark 2, J B Richey 2, Dr Wm H Taylor 4, Jos P Gulley 1 95, Jas J Gilbert 2, Eld E Stephens 2.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

J S Rice 50c, R O Rice 50c.—Total \$69 95.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next session of the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (1st), 1887, and continue three days.

Those who contemplate attending from the south or east can come by way of Trenton, leaving that city by the B. D. R. R., for Stockton, at 4.56 p. m. on Tuesday, May, 31, where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting. Those coming from the north can come to Frenchtown by the same rail road, where they will be taken care of. A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to meet with us.

CYRUS RISLER.

THE next session of the Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (8th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those who contemplate attending the Warwick Association can come on the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R., from the east or west, and from the north on the New York, Ontario & Western R. R., directly to Middletown.

Ten passenger trains stopping at Middletown leave New York City daily, from foot of Chambers and West 23d Streets, New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. Excursion tickets, good for five days, can be procured.

Those coming through the city of New York can reach here at 10.56 a. m. on Wednesday, by taking the cars at the foot of Chambers Street about 8.00 o'clock a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends.

BENTON JENKINS.

THE next session of the Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (15th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west via the D., L. & W., or N. Y., L. E. & W. R. R., will come to Elmira, and there take train on the Northern Central R. R. to Grover. Trains leave Elmira on the N. C. R. R. at 9.00 a. m. and 3.00 p. m.

Those coming from the south can leave Williamsport at 7.15 a. m., 2.35 and 7.20 p. m.

Those coming from a distance will come on Tuesday, 14th. The place of meeting is but a few rods from the depot. Friends will be met at the depot on Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended

to all who love the truth, and we hope to see a goodly number of friends and ministering brethren present.

M. VAIL.

THE Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of eastern Oregon and Washington Territory will meet this year with Big Spring Church, near Summerville, Union Co., Oregon, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, at 11 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with the church at Van Buren, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 10, 1887.

Those coming on the Nickel Plate R. R. will stop at Stuartsville. Those coming from the west on the B. & O. R. R. will stop at North Baltimore. Those coming from the east will stop at Bairdstown. Those coming from the north or south on the Toledo & Findlay R. R. (T., C. & S.) will stop at Van Buren. The above trains will be met on Thursday, June 9th, and the writer will meet and care for those who stop at Arcadia. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

THE Turkey River Association is appointed to be held (God willing) with the Otter Creek Church, in Black Hawk County, Iowa, ten miles northeast of Waterloo, to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in June (4th), 1887, and continue three days.

Friends and brethren who will favor us with their presence will be met on Friday, June 3, in Waterloo. Should any be delayed on the way, they may inquire in Waterloo for Paul Sohner or John Garrett, both living four and one-half miles northeast of Waterloo.

PAUL SOHNER.

LIFE'S JOURNEY AND LESSONS BY THE WAY.

This is a very interesting and comforting book to all Old School Baptists, written by sister Kate Swartout. It contains 304 pages, printed in large type. Price, single copy 75c; per dozen, by express, \$7.00. Send draft, money order, or registered letter, to Mrs. Andrew J. Swartout, Woodstock, Lenawee County, Michigan; but money orders must be made payable at Brooklyn, Michigan.

THE CHURCH HISTORY FROM CREATION TO A. D. 1885. BY ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL.

This book contains 1034 pages, together with a fine steel engraving of the senior author, Elder C. B. Hassell. In the front part is a complete "Table of Contents," divided into chapters, and in the back part is a Concordance, making it most convenient for reference. The work is now ready, and will be mailed to any address, postage prepaid, at the following prices for single copies:

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The price at which the History is sold by the single copy will not admit of much reduction for club rates; but to partially repay our brethren and friends for interesting themselves in its circulation, we are authorized to make the following reduction for six or more copies ordered at one time:

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We still lack about twelve hundred dollars of enough to pay for the actual cost of publication, allowing Elder Hassell nothing for his labor and expense, which amounts to several thousand dollars, for part of which he is still in debt. About two thousand persons who subscribed their names for the work, and are therefore obligated to take it, have not yet paid in the money which they have promised. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

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The "Signs of the Times,"

DEVOTED TO THE
OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,
IS PUBLISHED

THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH
OF EACH MONTH,
BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS,

To whom all communications should be addressed, and directed, Middletown, Orange County, N. Y.

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We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size as the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each or the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1887.

NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., April 23, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—To-day I received a request from sister M. J. Worsely, of Tarboro, N. C., that I should write something for publication upon the words found in Luke xviii. 7, 8, and this evening I feel like making a beginning in that direction. If I am able to write anything that shall be to the profit of any one who may read, it will be a labor of love on my part; because the theme itself has long seemed joyful and pleasant to me, and because I hope and trust that it is my chiefest pleasure to speak a word that shall do good to the weary, if I may. But the longer I live the more do I come to feel sure that no word of ours can profit any one except the Lord apply and bless it by his Spirit; and yet I also at times feel more and more confident that he will and does bless every word that is spoken in his name to some use and advantage to his people. In ways and times unseen and unexpected by us he causes his word to fall like seed and bear fruit to his glory. The word may be spoken in weakness, but it goes forth in power; and the secret of all is, "I am weak, but Jehovah is mighty." "My voice cannot even awaken the sleeping ones, but his can quicken the dead." I have never felt so poor, weak, unprofitable, and unable to understand or tell the mysteries of the kingdom in my life as I have of late, and yet they are very sweet to me as I catch glimpses of them; and if our sister and the readers of the SIGNS will put up with some very scattering thoughts, I will feel glad to write them.

The words read as follows: "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. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" The parable with which this chapter begins, and of which these words are the conclusion, is defined at the beginning as a lesson of encouragement to prayer. This is the design. "He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Every parable spoken by our Lord had some one definite object in view. They teach some one great truth. This object is not always stated in so many words; but here it is. In this parable, at least, there is no room to dispute its meaning. It is that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. There are many things con-

nected with this truth, some leading up to it, and some growing out of it, of which it may be needful to speak; but the main thing is clear, that men ought not to give over prayer, nor be faint nor discouraged.

The parable and the argument in it are very striking. There was in a certain city a judge who was unjust, and who was moved neither by the fear of God nor regard for men; a man who sought his own ease and his own advantage alone. There was in the same city a widow, who had an adversary from whom she had suffered injury, and she comes to this unjust judge seeking justice at his hands. For a time he would not pay her any attention; but she was importunate and deeply in earnest, and she comes again and again. This is annoying to this selfish, ease-loving man, and at last he says, "Lest by her continual coming she weary me, I will do her justice." What neither the fear of God nor regard for man will lead him to do, his own selfish love of ease will lead him to do. Now the Savior reasons after this fashion: If the unjust judge, who cared for no one nor nothing, would at last listen to the widow's importunity and avenge her of her adversary, how much more may children of God be sure that the kind, merciful and loving Father will hear his children when they pray. If there seems to be a delay in the answer of their prayer, it is not because their Father does not hear nor care for them, but for other reasons which seem good in his sight. If he answers at once it is for the good of his elect; if he delays it is still for their good. But in either case they may be sure that their heavenly Father does hear them and pity them, and therefore they may confidently continue to call upon him. God will avenge his own elect, though he bear long with them, that is, though he seem to delay for a long time; and thus they are taught, "though the vision tarry," to wait for it, "because it will surely come, and will not tarry." Still, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? Will he find any one praying? for prayer is a product of faith. Will he find any one like this woman? This seems to me to be the meaning of the parable, expressed in a brief form.

But now some reflections arise in my mind that seem to me of importance to consider; and first, while prayer is the christian's normal state, because he must ever be dependent upon God for all that he is or shall ever have, yet he is often discouraged and prone to distrust his God, and

therefore to cease to pray. The apostle has told us that they who come to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of those who seek him. If therefore our faith in God grows faint, if we begin to doubt his care for us and interest in us, we shall of necessity grow faint in prayer; and therefore to grow faint in prayer argues that we are far from confidence in God, or in his love and care for us.

Believers have many besetments and discouragements in the way, and therefore need encouragement and admonition in everything. Because we are liable to be discouraged in our calling upon our heavenly Father, the blessed Lord spoke this parable. It must be needed by us, else he would not have spoken it. Among all the discouragements which believers meet with when they attempt to pray is the fact that often they can see no response. They call, but seem to themselves to have called in vain. How many times, when persecution has raged, have the people of God cried, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge us and deliver us?" Yet the years of persecution have continued, and it has seemed that deliverance would never come, and the suffering ones have had their faith sorely tried. At such times scriptural assurances such as are contained in this parable have been needed, and have often strengthened the trembling child, and enabled him to still call upon God, and bear faithful testimony to his power and grace. At times again, when the love of many waxes cold, when all Israel seems, to the few scattered faithful ones, to have bowed the knee to the idols of the day, and black desolation seems to cover Zion, and few go up to her solemn feasts, and faint are the songs and praises of the sanctuary, the Elijahs of the time pour out complaints, and can see no comfort, and are ready to give up the struggle, and to say, "I am left alone, and they seek my life." At such times we need again these cheering words of the Savior, that they ought always to pray and not to faint. For many years we have longed to see a reviving in Zion, and the churches built up, and more laborers sent into the vineyard; and perhaps many of us have been praying for it, and we have not seen it. What a temptation there is to give it all up, and to conclude that the Lord does not hear, that he has forgotten his cause, and all is wrong. The parable gives us assurance that God will bless in the right time—in his own time. All

that need concern us is, Are we still looking to him, calling upon him?

But to speak for a moment of that which is more personal with us. The child of God longs for deliverance from the dominion of the foes within his heart. He has been long time praying that all pride and anger and malice and evil speaking and covetousness and selfishness may be put down within him, and that all love and joy and hope and every fruit of the Spirit may abound; and he does not see that it is so. It only seems that every inward lust abounds more and more. He remembers that God has promised to hear and answer prayer, and his prayer does not seem to be answered. Perhaps he has prayed for strength to overcome some, wrong habit, and he still is its slave. O how apt he is to say, "Surely I have prayed in vain; I will pray no more; God does not hear me." For such as are troubled in this way also, Jesus spoke this parable. It teaches us that the promise will surely be fulfilled.

But why does our God delay, as it seems to us, to hear and to answer? Because it is needful to try our faith. Because it is needful to show that we do not serve God for hire. Because we do not really need that thing just now. Because we must learn our own nothingness, and God's power, wisdom and sovereignty. Because to grant the request now would not glorify God as it will by and by. Because if we had it now we should consume it upon our lusts, but by and by it will feed the flame of love to God. Because the welfare of others is involved as well as ours. And so the answer is delayed beyond our set time, but not beyond God's set time. "At the appointed time it shall speak, and shall not lie." God will help his people, and that right early. God has fulfilled his promise time and again to answer prayer, and he will again. Our own individual experience proves it. There is not one child of God on earth who does not have testimony in his own experience that God does hear and answer prayer. We pray for a heart to seek our God, and is not the answer already in the prayer? We once in our distress pleaded for hope, and have we not hope to-day? In providential trials we have sought the Lord, and have we not been kept thus far? And can we doubt now that God does answer prayer?

How often, when in some time of need the Lord has sent relief, and it has been so plainly the work of God that we could no longer question it, have we felt rebuked and ashamed

and condemned for all our shameful questioning and doubting, and have felt that we must pray for pardon even when we rejoiced in the gift. I often think of David, in the seventy-seventh Psalm. It was a time of trouble with him, and he cried unto God with his voice. He found no rest even at night. He could not sleep for trouble. He remembers past days, when he could sing in the night. He was sure of the past; but now he cries, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail forever? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" What a woeful plight his soul was in! Why should his troubles make him question God? Here is the answer: "And I said, This is my infirmity." God's arm was not shortened, but his faith was weak. "This is my infirmity." All this doubting and questioning and despairing has no room when we remember God. It is our infirmity. David found the remedy for his questionings in remembering what God had wrought; and so on to the end of the psalm David comforts himself in recalling and speaking of the works of the Lord. Have we ever seen anything in our God but love and pity and patience and forbearance? O how good the words, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." The Lord will reveal his loving-kindness every morning, and his mercies shall be fresh every evening. As well might Israel, after being fed for thirty years by manna in the wilderness, begin to fear lest to-morrow there shall be no manna upon the ground, as may we fear lest we be finally forsaken of God. The parable of which we are speaking assures us how faithful and true and kind our Father is.

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

But now the Lord says, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Our God shall continue faithful. He will continue to visit and help his people; but how will it be with us? Will he find any of us trusting in and waiting upon him? This belongs to his own people. Will any of them be resting calmly and confidently in his promise—in him? When the Lord comes it is always a time of need on the part of his people. Some of them at least will be passing through the fire. Will they be steadfastly looking to him? Will he find such faith as was in Abel and Abraham and Enoch and David, and all those who by it wrought righteousness, and endured affliction, and gained a crown of victory? Will he find the faith of Daniel, of the three worthies who dreaded not the fire and quenched its violence? Or will he find us all saying that our Lord delays his coming, and eating and drinking with the drunken, and each one smiting his fellow-servant? Will he find a look-

ing to him in prayer, a cry in our hearts, Come quickly, Lord Jesus? If left to ourselves, without sustaining and restraining grace, we know what the answer must be. There will be no faith, no looking to him in prayer. We shall not pray at all without the grace of God, and we shall always disbelieve his word. We shall have no patience until the early and the latter rain has fallen upon us, if left to ourselves; but his grace can do all things.

Does there not seem to be a measure of sadness in these words of the Savior, When he cometh shall he find faith on the earth? Jesus wept over the doom of Jerusalem; and is he not also sad as he sees our unbelief and distrust and turning away from him? Is there not also a measure of reproof in his language? As I have been writing this afternoon I have felt reproved by these words, and have had a desire not to grieve my Lord by my hardness of heart and slowness to believe. I cannot charge my doubting to any one or anything but myself, and I am ashamed before God. When the Son of man cometh, will he find faith and continued prayer in me? Should he come to me now would he find it?

In the christian experience, steadfast trust and instant prayer and ready obedience go hand in hand. The trusting man is a praying man; and the trusting, praying man is also an obedient man. Unbelief leads always to sin. As faith produces good works, so unbelief produces all disobedience. I think that all our life could be resolved back into the two principles of belief in God and unbelief in him. So in Hebrews we are told that Israel fell in the wilderness because of unbelief; and we are warned to take heed lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief in departing from God; and so by the example of Israel we are warned. How weak and prone to wander we must be to need so many reminders, so many admonitions, so many reproofs. How distrustful we are! How little we look to God! Where is our faith? What is our profession worth? O how often the child of God is compelled to ask himself such questions as these! But in spite of all our failure, Jehovah will not fail. He will avenge his own elect, which cry unto him day and night. O may we all rest in this.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

GHEENT, Ky., April 3, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter from Mr. John McMillan, of Kosciusko, Mississippi, in which he requests my understanding through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of Luke vi. 27-30, which reads as follows: "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy

cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again."

There are two characters distinctly presented by our Lord in this chapter, the disciples of our Lord, and the great multitude which came down from the mountain. These two represented the whole human race, all that were created in Adam. Our Lord draws the distinction in the twenty-seventh verse when he says, "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you." Here were the disciples before him, listening to and hearing his wonderful teachings. The multitude was also there, who had natural ears, but by their natural powers could not hear the great spiritual truths then being declared by our Lord. He describes them when expounding one of his parables, when he says, "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive."—Matt. xiii. 13, 14. That multitude with their natural ears heard the voice of the glorious Son of God when he was preaching his own everlasting gospel; but those in that multitude who had never been made spiritually alive did not receive his teaching, for the reason 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." But our Lord was then especially addressing those who could hear, and to them he said, "Love your enemies." How wonderfully strange is this language to the unregenerate! They promptly say that none can love their enemies—that our Lord was then teaching an impossibility; and they rejoice when they find a cause, either real or imaginary, for the persecution of their enemies. From this cause the dear saints are often made to mourn. Abel was the brother of Cain, yet persecution even unto death did he receive at the hands of his brother. So it has been ever since. False brethren have extended the hand of persecution to the dear saints in every land and in every age; but for their comfort our Lord has said to them, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. v. 10. Although their names may be cast out as evil, yet they have the glorious assurance that the kingdom of heaven is theirs. In the use of that little word "hear," in the twenty-seventh verse, our Lord draws the contrast. In that contrast is presented the difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate, the persecuted and the persecutors. As in days of old, the children of the bond woman will persecute the children of the free woman. While our Lord was teaching the spiritual man, yet by that teaching he showed what his peculiar characteristics were. He

could hear, and hearing he could understand. In the new and spiritual birth he was given the power to understand and to comply with the teachings of his glorious Lord. The apostle John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."—1 John iii. 9, 10. The apostle says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." He also says, "God is love." That wondrous attribute of our God is made manifest to the dear saints in regeneration, and in sweet meditation they are enabled to look back to the ancients of eternity, and hear him in sweet and assuring accents say, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." In looking to themselves they are made to realize that there was a period when they were enmity against God, and in their carnal nature were, like Saul of Tarsus, persecutors; but when born again they have Christ in them the hope of glory. Then they are prepared by grace divine to love their enemies, to do good to them which hate them, to bless them that curse them, and to pray for them that despitefully use them; yea, and to accept most sweetly all the wonderful teachings of our Lord in these four verses, and to rejoice in them. You know, dear saint, that by your natural powers you cannot even pray for yourself, much less for them that despitefully use you. Prayer is worship; and God is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as do worship him in spirit and in truth. Then the ability to pray is the gift of God, the effect of regenerating grace; and none can or do pray but those who are born of the Spirit. Their cry is,

"Amidst ten thousand anxious cares,
The world, and Satan's deep-laid snares,
This my incessant cry shall be,
Jesus, reveal thyself to me!"

When he is revealed in his glorious fullness to the dear saints they are made to rejoice in the fond hope that the time will come when they will be like him, and see him as he is. It is then that they can love their enemies, and do good to them which hate them, and bless them that curse them, and pray for them that despitefully use them. Humility is one of the striking traits of character of the saints, and is clearly taught in these four verses. God by the prophet says, "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." It is that character of man to whom our Lord addresses himself when he says, "Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." It must be that our Lord by this teaching presented to his dear people in all the ages to come the wonderful power of regenerating grace. None

could be brought under that teaching, and so humiliate themselves as to give up all, except those who were spiritual, and who were prepared by grace divine to say, Thy will be done. In his will they find sweetest rest; but day by day they are made to mourn the power of sin in these frail bodies, and are made to cry out with the poet,

"When I attempt to soar above,
To view the heights of Jesus' love,
This monster seems to mount the skies,
And veils his glory from my eyes."

If friend McMillan thinks that our Lord was attempting to make that multitude understand and practice what he was teaching by the powers of their natural minds, he surely is greatly mistaken, but not more mistaken than the Arminian world is, which claims by means and money to be adding to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. O what fearful unbelief pervades the hearts and minds of men! unbelief in the power of God to carry on the great work of preparing his redeemed for the enjoyment of the rich and never-fading inheritance of the saints. A part of that inheritance is a reconciliation to all the providences and dealings of God with them while clothed with mortality. A reconciliation to the things taught in these four verses could never be enjoyed by any of the saints except by the wonder-working power of our God. When he was reviled, he reviled not again; yea, he was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. This wonderful pattern he set before his people. They by divine authority are exhorted to walk in all lowliness and meekness; yea, it is said to them, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." This wonderful pattern that he has set for his saints should silence forever our murmuring, and crush forever the spirit of persecution in us, and cause us to rejoice in the hope that we by regenerating grace have been made to know the joyful sound, the sound of the gospel trumpet. That trumpet gives forth no uncertain sound, but proclaims Jesus in his humility as the pattern for all the redeemed, and in his exaltation the true object of all praise and adoration of men and angels, yea, and of all the heavenly hosts around the eternal throne. The psalmist says, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."—Psalm lxxxix. 15, 16. He was humiliated that he might bring in everlasting righteousness to and for his people; and in that righteousness shall they be exalted. O how wonderful is that exaltation! He, your Lord, was smitten and afflicted of men; but now he is exalted far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to

come.—Ephesians i. 21. Then, dear saints, should you not glory in tribulation, in that tribulation and humility taught in these four verses? If it should be the will of your Lord to call you through the trials there presented, remember that "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." He passed through that wonderful tribulation, through that baptism of death, that you, dear saint, might be exalted at his right hand, where there are joys forevermore. Then should you not glory in tribulation? "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."—Romans v. 3-5. Then why should the saints wonder at the teachings of our Lord in the sixth chapter of Luke? It is there recorded for our learning. If afflictions and persecutions should be found in our pathway, let us rejoice in them, knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." With that glorious assurance the saints have nothing to fear, knowing that our Lord triumphed over their last enemy, which is death, for them. In that conquest a glorious and eternal victory over all the powers of darkness is secured to them amidst the unfading glories of a never-ending eternity.

From the letter of friend McMillan I am left to conjecture that he has never united with God's dear people in a church capacity; but I have this to say to him, that if he is really seeking to know and understand the great truths taught by our Lord in that chapter, which I have no reason to doubt, he surely has the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in his heart; and my prayer for him is that God may strengthen his faith, and enable him to declare to God's dear people the power of regenerating grace, and thus obey the commandment of your Lord.

H. COX.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., May 5, 1887.

DEAR BROTHERS:—I send you letters numbers three and four of sister Hannah Stimpson. I hope and believe that they will, after all these years, be of comfort to some of the little ones. All who knew her will know that she wrote as she felt. She was a lowly, humble follower of the Lamb.

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, March 8, 1871.

DEAR BROTHER:—I know it has been some little time since your good, kind letter was handed to me. It gave me much comfort to peruse it. I have felt many times since that I wished to answer, that I might be expecting another; but I have been quite sick for some time past with a severe cold and cough, so I have been

unable to write. Very many times I have felt in this way: Now if I could only write, how many things I want to say. But, dear brother, this morning I feel cold and lifeless, and indeed I fear I am in this same state nearly all the time of late.

As I have re-read your kind words this morning, speaking so confidently of me as being one of the saints that "shall all be taught of the Lord," I tremble, as a sense of my sins and my unlikeness to my God, my shortcomings and the evil propensity of my nature, rise up before me, that you, his child, can feel that confidence in me. I tremble, fearing the deception I am practicing. O, my brother, I would not for worlds like this deceive one single soul. I would not be deceived myself; and I do believe my daily prayer is that, if deceived, I may be undeceived. If ever I bow in prayer these are the first words I feel to utter, "O, my God, open my blind eyes, and show me myself. If I am a hypocrite, let me no longer go about being deceived myself and deceiving others." I do long, above every other consideration, to be freed from sin, to be pure and holy as God himself is pure; but I know full well that while dwelling in this flesh, if a child, I shall ever be burdened with this sinful self. I know "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," and I know, too, that naught but the grace of God can keep it at all in subjection; and O that he would grant me of his grace sufficient to keep me from going so far astray as to bring one wound upon that glorious cause, or upon the church. I cannot live as I would daily. O that I could honor my God daily with a well-ordered life and a godly conversation; but I must confess with shame that I do not live as I ought nor do as I ought, but I am unable to control my thoughts. I can much better control my language and my walk than my thoughts. It is, as you say, truly a great thing to reconcile an enemy, and it is indeed a comforting thought that our God has reconciled us unto himself; for had he not done it for us, we certainly should have been without hope. There is no other way of salvation, neither can salvation come by any other. It is, as you say, a theme that can never be exhausted, one that fills my heart with comfort to think upon, to write upon, and to hear spoken of.

I have not attended a meeting since I returned from North Berwick in September, as I wrote you before. I cannot tell you how very precious the SIGNS is to me. I have just been reading the last number, March first. It seems to me that I am not wholly deceived when I read my daily experience so plainly told by those whom I never saw. I read other papers at times, and hear others talk, but they tell me naught I have ever experienced, and so I find myself saying, Can it be that we have all been taught of the Lord? for he teaches as none other, and all his children speak the same language. How well you expressed my mind in your last letter. There is truly a peculiar sound; and when I hear that sound how my heart

goes out to the person with a love that far exceeds all earthly considerations. The writings of brother I. N. Vanmeter are very interesting to me. I have enjoyed his piece in this March number very much. He writes very plainly, I think. I received a very interesting letter from our dear sister, Susie J. Littlefield, and was very happy to get it. I feel that I am not only comforted, but instructed, by a correspondence with those who seem to be traveling the same road with myself, with the same staff and guide, as I hope. O, my brother, I feel that I know so little, if indeed I know anything aright, and need constant teaching from my brethren and sisters. I know, too, that there is but one Teacher, and he can teach as never man taught; but are we not all of the same family? and as we mingle together we are strengthened and edified. I suppose you well remember our brother King, from Whitefield. He died very suddenly a few weeks ago; also two of brother Turner's children, the oldest and the youngest. Perhaps you have heard of these deaths before. When a child of God is called home from this sinful world, to reign forever with his God, it seems that we ought rather to rejoice than to mourn. They are taken from all their pains and sorrows, freed from sin, their longing souls set free, to praise their Savior God forever and forever. As I look into myself I fear that my longings are not from the pure motive to be freed from sin, to be pure and holy, from a desire of holiness only; but from an unwillingness to endure. Sister Susie mentioned something like this in her letter, and that caused me to look more closely within; and I fear that I have not the patience to endure my allotted portion in this present world. Self is what I most long to be rid of; but I would be patient, trusting alone in that God who searches the very intents of the heart. He alone can keep me; he alone can guide me.

I fear you will think this a blue letter, but bear with me, my brother. You say I may write just as I feel, so I take the liberty to thus intrude my gloomy feelings upon your time. Pardon me, and pray for me, that the sweet, reviving sense of God's grace in my heart may again cause me to sing the joyful song of a realizing sense of pardoned sins. I feel to say, with the psalmist, "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion. Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me."

Your very unworthy but loving sister,

HANNAH STIMPSON.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, June 29, 1871.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have again perused your good, cheering and very welcome letter of March 28th, and I fear my long silence will lead you to think it could not have been a very welcome letter; but, my brother, could you but know how every line sank deep within my heart and caused me to rejoice with joy

unspeakable, that you, a child and servant of God, can thus express my own travels, my daily experience, and then could you have been here and seen how much I have had to occupy my time, you could then understand how I could neglect to answer your kind letter. Sometimes I have had a little hope that you would write again, and not wait for a reply to your last; for I do derive so much comfort from your letters, and it seems to me that mine are of so little account, that I wish you would write two to my one. Is this very selfish, dear brother?

Can it be possible that you too feel that did the children of God know you better they could have no fellowship with you? O how much I have felt this. I have felt it much of late; and I have thought that could they live with me, and know one-half that I know of myself, they could have no fellowship for me. You speak of the promises of our God. O yes, my brother, they are well adapted to our every need, and could I feel that I have any right to one, I could claim all as mine; but if I have no right to one, there have been times in my life when it seemed to me that not only one, but many, have been sent home to me with such sweet comfort that I could but rejoice in the God of my salvation. Yes, even in the dark hour of affliction I could rejoice in this, that whom he loveth he chasteneth; and as all earthly hopes were darkened, then the sweet promise came, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." O yes, my brother, his people are as dear to him as the apple of his eye. The words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," have been applied to my soul with such sweet assurance that I could even rejoice in tribulation; and as I recall those sunny times I say again and again,

"Dear Lord, why should I doubt thy love,
Or disbelieve thy grace?
Sure thy compassions ne'er remove,
Although thou hide thy face."

I do not doubt the love of God for his own, but how can I believe I am his? I once thought I should grow better as I grew older, but I find that I grow worse. I find in my corrupt nature vileness that I would once have thought could never exist in me. The knowledge of this causes me to moan daily. O! were it not for sin dwelling within, I feel that I could ever rejoice. I say again, as I said before, I long to live free from sin; I long to live the life of a Christian. The account you gave of that dear sister is very touching, and truly proves that our God is a God of truth. O yes, we can rest in this; we have no other place of rest, no other place to go. I often feel, my brother, that as I speak of my own sinfulness I do not realize the awfulness of this truth, and I know well the deceitfulness of the human heart; and, as you say, I am often thus troubled. I would thank my God for the numberless

ways in which he has condescended to bless us, and this one, of speaking one with the other upon this subject of all subjects, the most interesting. What comfort I have experienced in hearing others, whom I believe to be the true children of God, tell of their own travels; but whenever I am thus blessed I feel to wonder how it is that they can tell my own exercises so plainly.

I think it will be a long time ere I forget the fall of 1870. O, my brother, the enjoyment I was then blessed with was almost too much for such a sinful speck in creation as myself to enjoy. O could I but live it over again! But I find, as I mingle in the society of the children of God, the dear Old School Baptists, that I ever derive more or less comfort. I love the very name; and if I meet with one, it matters not if we never met before, I feel that we are of the same family, and I love that one at once as my brother or sister. Now, if I have no right with them, I cannot help this feeling; I cannot feel differently. I can love no other class of people; it is utterly impossible; neither can I believe any differently from what I do. I am just here, and cannot help myself. I do not feel any desire now to feel differently; but there was a time when I did. There was a time when I would have gone with the multitude, could I have had my way; but there was no food for me there, no comfort there, so I turned to my own (I hope I am not deceived; I hope they are my own), and they received me. I can only say, Wonderful, wonderful are thy ways, thou King of saints! It is a mystery all. I feel at times that I would sing praises forever and forever to his name for his wonderful condescension in ever having one thought of me in permitting me to hope in his mercy. O the depth, the length, the breadth of such a love! Who can fathom it? Who can understand it? Ah, one day we shall know as we are known and see as we are seen. I mean, dear brother, that the children of God will thus be blessed. I hardly now, as I write, dare hope I can be one; but Jesus knows. His will be done. His church is saved, his glories are sung, and Christ is honored as the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely One, and I should be content. But I long, O, I long to be one of that number who shall sing his praises in eternity.

My brother, I fear I shall weary your patience, I have written so much. My pen has kept in motion till all this paper is covered, and I have written so hastily that I feel really ashamed; but a loving brother, I feel, will pardon all errors and write me very soon, all the same as though I had done better. I was at Bowdoinham at our last conference, and enjoyed it much. Again I ask you to write me often, if your time is not too much occupied. I would not be too selfish. Remember me in your prayers.

Your true sister in hope,

HANNAH STIMPSON.

ST. PAUL, Ind., Jan. 18, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I feel inclined to give the reason of my hope through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I will be as brief as possible, and ask you to dispose of what I may write as you think best.

In my boyhood I would sometimes have serious thoughts in regard to death and the judgment day. I would reflect on my evil ways, but concluded that there would be time enough in the future for me to change my ways. I would set resolutions what I would and could do. I thought that by treating everybody well I could glide through the world without having any trouble or enemies. I looked at the Baptists as being a selfish people, and would argue with my mother against their doctrine, for it seemed unreasonable, and was hard for me to understand. I possessed a proud nature, and thought I was doing better than most other people, and thought that when I got a little older I would become a Christian. But thanks be to God, at one time when I was listening to Elder McQuerry preach (I cannot now give the date), my sins appeared before me like mountains, and it seemed like every person in the house looked on me as a sinner; and although the preaching was salvation by grace, it seemed impossible that there could be any grace or mercy for such a guilty criminal as I viewed myself to be. The old gray heads then looked to be a happy band of saints, feasting at their Master's table; but I felt too unworthy to take a crumb. After I returned home I went out into the orchard and tried to pray, but could only utter a very few words, and they seemed not to ascend higher than my head. I made several other attempts, but could get no relief. I could see a beauty in holiness, and thought I would give anything if I could change places with any of the old members of the church. My trouble would at times partially wear off, and I would resolve that I would try to do better, but would soon find myself in young company, engaged with them in their follies. At other times I would find myself getting angry and giving vent to my angry passion, which would set me back worse than ever. I finally got broken up and involved in debt, which caused me to conclude that surely the hand of God was against me, and that I had sinned away the day of grace. I then began again to try to pray in great earnest; but I got no relief, until one day while at my sister's my brother asked me to take a walk with him, and he asked me why I did not join the church. I told him my reasons, and he tried to comfort me and encourage me to go to the church; but I could not think of doing so with my burden of sin. But on our return, as we entered the yard, this Scripture came forcibly into my mind, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I went into the house, picked up the hymn book, and opened to the hymn, "Cast down, but not destroyed." I then

opened the Testament, and it seemed to be full of promises, and I could hardly stop reading, for it seemed as though I could read it as I never could before, for it all seemed to be for my comfort. I finally went out into the yard again, and everything in nature seemed to be praising God. My burden was gone, and my heart was filled with joy. I resolved that I would go to the next meeting at Conn's Creek and tell what great things the Lord had done for me. At the next meeting, being the second Saturday in August, 1867, I went, but through timidity I could not talk much, but was received, and was baptized by Elder Nanny, after which my satisfaction and joy was unspeakable. I felt as though I could stand before the great men in the religious world and tell them the folly of their dead works. But it was not long before I began to have doubts, and feared that I had deceived the church; for I found that I still possessed my old, sinful nature, and could not live as I thought a Christian ought to live. This, dear brethren, causes me more trouble than anything else to this day, for it seems like I am doing worse than ever before in all my life. But one thing I can say, and that is, I do not fear death, neither do I fear hell; but sometimes I fear that some calamity will be sent on me for my disobedience to the commands of my loving Savior. But I have been comforted in the midst of my darkest seasons, and made to thank and praise God for the many blessings I have received at his hand. I am made to realize that his goodness and mercy have ever continued with me, and can say with one of the apostles that he hath delivered, doth deliver, and will deliver me. Dear brethren, I firmly believe the Lord's people are protected against everything that might befall them, only that which is for their good; for Paul says that all things work together for good to them that love God. Jude says that they are preserved in Jesus Christ. Peter says they are kept by the power of God. Christ says (in speaking of them as sheep), "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." And just before his departure from this world, he told his disciples not to be troubled; that if he went away he would send the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, unto them, who would teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them. He let them know that as he could not be with them in person to comfort them, he would be with them in Spirit, to comfort and instruct them. But this is not all that is done for them; they have a righteousness given them which exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, even the righteousness of faith; and notwithstanding they still possess their old, sinful nature, they are the only people that perform righteous acts, that are acceptable with God. Those acts are the fruit of the Spirit, prompted by love. In this sense they are termed a holy people,

or nation. They are fed on spiritual food, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; and being in vital union with Christ, they are equal heirs with him, and possess all that he possesses. Without this union they never could have been redeemed, nor could they enter the climes of immortal bliss. But, dear brethren, being thus related to our blessed Savior, redeemed by him, and gathered into his visible kingdom (or in his arms as lambs) by him, we believe that he will come the second time, and gather all his redeemed home with him to glory.

These are some of the reasons of my hope in Christ; and although I feel so weak and sinful, and my hope sometimes seems so little, I cannot throw it away. Dear brethren, we should bear each other's burdens, and strive together for the unity of the faith. We should esteem our ministers highly in love, for their work's sake, and minister unto them of our carnal things. May we become more perfect and sound in love, as well as in faith, is the desire of your unworthy brother,

G. C. AVERY.

NEAR PANOLA, Ga., March 18, 1887.

VERY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—

Through the kind and protecting care of the all-wise and merciful God I am spared another year and permitted to again address you as brethren and sisters dear. When I see my poor letters in print I feel so mortified I think I never will write again; but when I have an impression to write I find no peace of mind until I write. The SIGNS still comes to me regularly, richly laden with the precious truth as it is in Jesus, and together with the sweet experiences of the dear saints of God makes it truly comforting and interesting. Each number contains the same sweet story of Jesus and his love. The writers have all been taught in the same school, Christ Jesus being their Teacher; and to be taught in heaven's school is indeed a most glorious teaching. In this school we are taught that "salvation is of the Lord." What a privilege to hear from the dear children of God in all parts of the world, telling of their hope in Christ and trust in the same precious promises. However wise a child of God may be, or exalted in the church or world, they are as dependent upon the Spirit as the most lowly and ignorant. When God shines in the hearts of the saints, love dwells there, and it is that love that causes them to love each other. It is a sweet and tender love which the world knows nothing about, neither can it be taken away by the world. The children of the dear Father's family are linked together with a golden chain that can never be broken. Love! what a sweet word. Love has done so much for us. Love caused us to mourn; love caused us to cry to God for mercy. In love Jesus, who was rich in mercy, left the exalted courts above and trod these low grounds of sorrow thirty and three years, that through his poverty we might be

made rich. Then, my dear sisters, are we not rich indeed if we are heirs of immortal glory? Though poor in this world's possessions, how blessed to have an inheritance above that is incorruptible and fadeth not away. I sometimes look upon the world, who seem to be perfectly happy and contented with its pleasures; yet I have no desire to exchange places with them, neither do they seem to covet the place of the poor and afflicted of God. How much to be preferred is the lot of the saints, who have a crown of glory awaiting them in the world to come, to the lot of the proud and happy of this world. How precious is the sustaining grace of God to the afflicted and sorrowing ones, while bowed down in grief. Am I one that has experienced the grace of God in my heart? is a question of serious importance with me. I am often shrouded in doubts and fears, but I sometimes think that these doubts and fears, dark and doleful forebodings, are as much evidences that we are subjects of grace, as the more joyful seasons are. When Christians live in disobedience, they are left to grope in darkness, and the chastening rod is laid upon them, which is evidence of God's love to them. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; but it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby. How infinitely tender he is with the little ones, and how long he bears with them before he corrects them. What a kind, loving and compassionate Savior, who changes not. Although we change, he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He knows no variableness nor shadow of turning. He will never leave nor forsake his dear ones. Mothers may cease their own to cherish, and even every human tie may perish, but his love and friendship, which far excels all earthly love and friendship, never fails. He knows every secret tear that falls, and hears us when we call. O how we ought to look up and adore him who has done so much for us. How often have I, when I felt that all else was gone, been allowed to pillow my poor, weary head upon his breast, and feed upon his love. What a sweet rest for the poor, little, tired child of God. O that I could forever remain at his dear, wounded side, and sit at his feet and learn the lessons he so sweetly teaches. But I am so ready to wander into by and forbidden paths, instead of following his footsteps. Having sorrow and temptations, when I would do good evil is present with me. How beautifully our dear sister, Mary Parker, wrote on the words, "But the sorrow of the world worketh death." Every one who has experienced the grace of God in their heart could understand the full meaning of those words as she expressed them, and could sympathize with her. How often, dear ones, have I allowed the sin and sorrow of the world to work death to my

spiritual enjoyment. Only a few weeks ago I was in that state of feelings. I felt as if the last ray of hope was gone, I was so sick with a sense of sin, and while my heart was overflowing with grief I was made to utter the solemn inquiry, Is there no balm in Gilead for me? Is there no physician there? Since I have been cut off from the world, the world is hateful to me; and like sister Mary, I thought that its joys and sorrows could affect me no longer. But I find I am not yet free from sin and temptations. Whether I am one of the chosen or not, I do know that I love those who are, with a love not of this world; and being deprived of the privilege of meeting with them at our church meetings is indeed a hard trial to bear. None save those who have experienced it can know what a cross it is. You, my dear, lovely ones, who are blessed in that way, certainly enjoy a precious privilege. To go to hear Arminians preach is no enjoyment for me, because I have no relish for their food, and it hurts my feelings to see the word of God trampled under foot. But I suppose they think they are right. Then we should not blame, but rather pity them. I believe that there are children of God among all denominations, and none can know anything but by revelation of the Spirit. To all the children of the Father's family I send Christian love and remembrance, and desire an interest in their prayers. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for Christ's sake, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory resteth upon you. The afflictions are no doubt sent sometimes for disobedience, or a rebellious heart, or for the trial of our faith, which is much more precious than gold, though it be tried with fire, and shall be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. This makes you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I want to say to sister Mattie Derr, Write again for the SIGNS. Why, dear sister, should you keep silent when your letters are so comforting to the afflicted and sorrowing ones? Let your light shine in the house, where others may see it, and not put it under a bushel, where none can see it.

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, I am affectionately yours.

ARMINDA L. DULIN.

KANSAS, Ga., Nov. 29, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having obtained the consent of the writer, one of my cousins, whom I do believe is one of our Father's family, I send you the inclosed letter for publication, if you think proper. Although short, I think it has the right sound.

Your unworthy brother in affliction,

R. J. W. PATTERSON.

LITTLEVILLE, Ga., July 19, 1886.

R. J. W. PATTERSON—DEAR COUSIN:—According to promises I will try to tell you some of the Lord's dealings with me, as I trust and hope I am not deceived. I was reared by a good, Christian father and mother, strict Baptists, though I grew up a wicked girl. Sometimes, when I heard of a death, I would become alarmed. Then I would promise the Lord that I would do better. I went on in this way till May, 1875, when I first was struck with my troubles. It seemed like I could not bear it. I did not know what to do. I went mourning day after day. I would think of some solitary place, where I would go and try to pray; and when I would get there, sometimes I would pass it by, and at others I would fall on the ground and try to pray. It seemed that every word I uttered fell to the ground. I thought that I was going to die. I would cry, "O Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." All nature seemed to be wrapped in mourning. I would have exchanged my condition with the brute or bird. Everything looked dark and sad. Every day seemed like it would be the last with poor me. I thought if I died in this state I would be lost forever. I could not eat nor rest anywhere. Many times my husband would step in and ask what was the matter with me. He would ask me if he had ill-treated me in any way whatever. I watched the sun go down, thinking I would never see another day, that there was no mercy for me, and that my day of grace had passed. I thought the time had been when I might have repented, but now, alas! it was too late. It appeared to me there was a chance for everybody but poor, sinful me. I concluded that I had committed the unpardonable sin. I went on this way, thinking every day would be my last; that before another day I would be dead, and then hell would be my doom. Here I felt to be justly condemned, and I thought everybody could see the same in me. Though I thought it just, yet I cried, "O Lord, if it is possible, let mercy be extended to a poor, wicked wretch like me. O Lord, if there is no mercy for me, O keep me from sinning any more." I viewed God to be just, and that he would be just in sending me to hell, though I did not wish to go. I thought if I did go, I would go trying to pray. One day I went into the garden to get a mess of greens for dinner, and when I found myself I was trying to pray. How long I staid there I do not know. Right there my burden was gone, and I had a hope. This came in a way I did not expect. Yes, dear cousin, I was rid of my troubles for awhile. Then I would have doubts and fears; and although I felt I loved everybody, I loved the Primitive Baptist people the best. Although I had always been taught by the Arminians to work out my own salvation with fear and trembling, yet I never thought of this, that "it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." O how I do love the brethren of the Primitive order. I know that no man has taught me this doctrine, but I do believe I have been taught it by a higher power. I believe the Lord has opened the eyes of my understanding, and led me to see my own weakness. The Scriptures say, "By grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." What wondrous love for Jesus, when a sinner feels his sins forgiven. My lovely little daughter died. She was sick but a little while, and all attention was paid by parents, doctors and friends, but without avail. She was a peculiarly affectionate child, and was greatly attached to all who had charge of her. It looked like my poor heart would burst with grief to part with her; but the Lord gave, and the Lord took; blessed be the name of the Lord. Yet I mourned and wept. I believe she is now with Jesus, there forever and ever to sing that everlasting song, redeeming grace. I hope to meet her there. Baptism is still on my mind. I hope to be baptized by the Primitive order before long. I will close.

May the Lord have all the praise, is my prayer,

MISSOURI COBB.

PRENTICE, Ill., Feb. 17, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Inclosed you will find the money for our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. To be without the SIGNS would seem like a member of our family gone. From my earliest recollection my dear father and mother took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. When I was quite young I dearly loved to read our precious paper. For several years before I went to the church I was in trouble, my life was so dark, and my sins seemed more than I could bear. Often my dear mother would ask me what was wrong with me, saying to me, "Are you sick?" When I would think that I would tell her, my heart would almost burst with deep sorrow. While I was under this frame of mind the Old Baptists had a meeting at our school-house, and my dear mother was not able to go; but she asked me if I would go, and have some of the members come home with me. With a sad heart I went, feeling I was a lost sinner forever. Elder Tommy Sanders preached, and while sitting under the sound of his voice a bright light shone around me, and my burden was gone. I could understand the preaching as I never had before, and the dear old brethren and sisters looked very lovely to me. I felt that I must go to them and tell them how I had been brought to see that Jesus was my Savior, and how many long, weary days I had passed in deep trials and trouble. When the sermon was ended my fears began, and I went home feeling that I had been in that sweet frame of mind only to be deceived. Soon after their meeting I went to visit

my aunt, and while I was there Elder Vanmeter came home with my aunt and uncle from church meeting to stay over night. My mind was so troubled I felt like it would be a great relief to me to talk to brother Vanmeter; but I went to my bed with a sad heart, feeling that I was not fit to go to the church. I felt that I could not close my eyes that night. But soon I was asleep, and a sweet dream was my night's rest. I dreamed the beautiful Sunday morning had come, and I had the privilege to go to meeting; and I dreamed brother Vanmeter took for his text the first two verses of the last chapter of Revelation, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb." His sermon, I thought, was preached for me. When the door of the church was opened, I dreamed, I went to the church and told them of my wish to unite with them; but I could talk to the church but little, though I gave enough evidence so that they received me; and soon I was at the water, where I could follow my Savior in the likeness of his death; and as my dear brother raised me up out of the water, it seemed that the presence of my dear Savior was bending over me, for everything was shining so brightly. The beautiful Sunday morning came, shining bright with the Savior's love, my way was clear, I was blessed with the privilege to go to meeting, and to my surprise my dear brother took for his text, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb." My sweet dream was fully realized. Ten years have passed away since that day. I went to the church, but could tell little of my many trials; yet they received me. I longed to enjoy that sweet sunshine of peace as long as I lived. But those same dark seasons did come back, and doubts and fears are ever with me. Yet when that little hope springs up, if it burns brightly only for a few moments, what a sweet peace of mind I then enjoy. I often feel comforted in reading the able pieces written by our dear brethren and sisters. I think our brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS are truly blessed, they are so gifted in spiritual things.

Now, dear brethren, as I close these lines I wish for you many long years to send us our much loved paper. With christian love to each and every one who may read this, I am

Your little sister,

ELLA M. PARROTT.

AL-LU-WE, Ind. Ter., Dec. 9, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to thank you for your great kindness and forbearance in waiting on my remittance and sending my paper punctually. Our circumstances have been so straitened since we came to this territory that it has been hard to make my remittance; yet I cannot think of giving up my paper, the SIGNS OF THE

TIMES, as it, with my Bible and hymn book, are all the comforts I have in the way of preaching. I have never found any person in this territory of the same faith and order with myself. When we first came here I murmured within myself at what I now believe to have been the dispensation of God. I felt that of all persons I needed to be near the old fathers and mothers in Israel. I felt that of all persons I needed the good counsel and admonitions of the people of God. Sometimes I would feel that I was without a friend and without God in the world. My faith would become so weak that I would go by myself and wring my hands with grief unspeakable. I felt so little and so ignorant of the good things pertaining to my Father's house, I thought of all the children I was the least qualified for being sent out in such a cold and barren place. I have not found a person that understands my language in a doctrinal way; and worse than all, they call my God an unjust God, because he does not save the goats as well as the sheep. O how my heart goes out for such a poor people, who do not know of the goodness, long-suffering, ever-loving kindness of the dear Redeemer, and what true brotherly love is. Sometimes I see myself so cold and indifferent to the admonitions of my Lord and Savior, I fear I am not born again. Then when the question comes with power, Do you love the brethren? I can say, If there is anything I know, I love my brethren in the Lord for the truth's sake. O how I would like to be near my dear brethren in Christ, that when in my weakness, and almost without hope in the world, they could throw the mantle of charity over me and speak comfortably to my poor soul. I feel bad when I hear brethren and sisters say, "I wish such a preacher had come to-day; I don't like to hear those little preachers." If a man is a child of God, and called of God to preach, he is an instrument in the hands of God to speak through. Who dare call him a little preacher? They are not all of one gift, but every one in his place. About seven years ago some very precious brethren said it would be better if the SIGNS would drop the matter in regard to the second birth; that some could not see or understand it as it was set forth in the SIGNS, and that it was hurting the paper. I do not believe those subjects come up by chance; I believe they come just as the all things that are predestinated of God, in their right place and at the right time; or, in other words, when his children are in need of such food. At the very time the second birth was so ably set forth, by our dear senior editor, I was greatly in need of just such food; for it was hard for such an ignorant child as I was at that time to know just how the change was; so it afforded me the greatest of comfort; and I suppose there were many others in the same condition. I do not believe that the subject of absolute predestination

just happened to be discussed in the people's minds at the present time; but God foreknew and predetermined to stir his people's minds to set forth that doctrine in its true light at this present time, for the edification of his people. And now may the Giver of all good keep you and preserve you to a good old age, to wield the pen of truth to the edifying of his little ones that are scattered to the four winds.

Your little sister, if one at all,
REBECCA W. ICE.

BLACK LICK, Ohio, Feb. 7, 1887.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I once more take my pen to try with the help of God to write a few lines. I feel my weakness, and feel just as dependent on God for all things as ever I did, for I know that without him I can do nothing. All my help must come from God. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. To whom can we go, or in whom can we trust, but in the Lord alone? He hath the word of eternal life. But how often I mourn his absence, and doubts and fears beset me on every hand, fearing that I may be deceived. I often think I am like one traveling in a far country, seeking a place of rest; but night comes on, and darkness hides all light from sight; and I grope in darkness till light dawns on me again. Then how glorious that light appears. When God said, "Let there be light, there was light." So it is with us when the clouds hide the natural sun from our sight; the brightness shines the same beyond the clouds, but it is hid from our sight by the clouds. So it is with us and the Sun of righteousness. But his glory is the same. He is the same God yesterday, to-day and forever. With him there is not the least shadow of turning. All things move on as God has predestinated they should. We cannot turn the course of one planet which God has fixed in the starry heavens. No more can we change our wicked hearts, to serve the true and living God. This is the work of God. He works, and none can hinder, and he doeth all things well. He is a holy and just God, and who can say, What hast thou done? I fear sometimes that I murmur against the will of God, when death enters our family circle and takes away one of the loved ones. The ties of nature are so strong, it fills my heart with sorrow. I have just buried another of my children. This makes six, just half of the family. But let me say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Although trials and troubles beset me on every side, yet may I be enabled to say, Thy will be done, O Lord. For what is our life but a shadow? It appeareth but a moment, and then passeth away. This body returns to its mother dust.

"Naked as from the earth we came,
And crept to life at first,
We to the earth return again,
And mingle with our dust."

But if we are born of the Spirit we

have this blessed hope, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house in the heavens. This house is for all God's people, for all those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before time began, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. May this glorious hope cheer us in our pilgrimage here below; for in this world we shall have tribulation; but Christ says, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." I feel my bodily strength is failing, my days are fast drawing to a close, and in a short time these hands will lie cold in death. But I have that blessed hope that I trust the Lord hath given me, that at his own appointed time he will take me to himself, to be with all that blood-washed throng in a world without end.

Well, I will close now. When I look over this, it looks like the writer, weakness; but I will send it to you, to do with as you see proper, and all will be well with me.

As ever, yours in hope,
LUCINDA ROCHELLE.

TYRONE, Ky., April 3, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In the fortieth chapter, tenth verse, of the book of prophecy of Isaiah, we find the following Scripture, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold his reward is with him, and his work before him." The prophets prophesied that the Lord God would come, and the apostles testify that he did come just as the prophets said he would come, with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him. Jesus, in speaking of the work he had to do, says he wondered that there was none to uphold. He looked, and there was none to help. So his own arm brought salvation. And when he went to the house of Zaccheus, he said, "This day is salvation come to this house." How did this salvation come to this house? was it there before Jesus got there? No. Then how? The moment Jesus entered the house, salvation was there; for Jesus was that salvation that came to that house. The psalmist says, "The Lord is my salvation." And in this same fortieth chapter and eleventh verse of Isaiah, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom." He is not only their salvation, but he is their shepherd. He is the shepherd of the flock, and he feeds them and leads them out into green pastures and beside the still waters. And that is not all he does for them, for we find in John x. 11, Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." He not only giveth his life for them, but he gives them life; for he says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." What a blessed thought to the poor, trembling child of God, to know they are not their own keepers; for they are kept by the power of God, through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time. Hebrews xiii. 20:

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep." Now he is not only the good shepherd, but he is the great shepherd of the sheep. And in 1 Peter v. 4, "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away." Here we find him to be the chief shepherd; the good shepherd, the great shepherd, the chief shepherd, and is the only shepherd that can give life to the sheep. He is head over all things to the church: he is the head of the body. Is not the head the chief member of the body? Sever the head from the body and you take away all the feeling sense, seeing and smelling; therefore the body is a dead substance. He is the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of peace. He is all and in all, alpha and omega, the first and the last. It is he that spake as never man spake; and he speaks, and it is done; commands, and it stands fast; and what he does no man can undo. He opens, and none can shut; he shuts, and none can open. He is the only one that can calm the troubled ocean, or speak peace to the troubled soul, and say, Thy sins, though many, are all forgiven thee. Go thy way and sin no more.

Brethren Beebe, if you see anything in this poor scribble worth noticing, you can give it space in the SIGNS; if not, cast to the waste basket, and all will be right.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
J. J. WATERFILL.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., April 21, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I take some degree of pleasure in communicating to you that through the mercy and grace of God the few Primitive or Old School Baptists held a meeting here on the third day of April, and requested Elders W. M. Mitchell, J. E. W. Henderson, B. A. Walker, R. F. Missledine and J. S. Baxley to meet with us on the third Sunday, the seventeenth day of April, for the purpose, if they thought it proper and advisable, of constituting us into a church of the Primitive order. Only two of the above named brethren were present, Elders Mitchell and Baxley; and as I was one who desired to go into the constitution, and being an ordained Elder, the presbytery was made up of Elders Mitchell, Baxley and myself. After preaching by Elder Mitchell, the presbytery was formed; Elder Mitchell Moderator, and myself Clerk. We proceeded to gather the letters of all who desired to constitute; and all the letters proving to be in order, we then read the Articles of Faith. Elder J. S. Baxley offered prayer, after which the right hand of fellowship was extended, and the Moderator pronounced it a church in gospel order. There were only five who went into the constitution, viz., brethren W. P. Burks, W. A. Cook, sisters F. A. Ford, M. E. Estes and N. E. Jordan. After the church was constituted conference was opened, with Elder Mitchell Moderator and

myself Clerk *pro tem*. The door of the church was opened, whereupon I offered my letter and was received. Brother W. P. Burks was elected Clerk; and brother W. A. Cook was requested to act as Deacon, he having been ordained in the church from which he came. The church then called me to serve her as pastor.

We met at the Opera House and were there constituted, because we had no better place. Now we meet in a court room and hold our services. We are few in number, and have but little means, but we desire to build a neat house of worship. I will here say that any of the brethren who read this, and feel a willingness of the Lord to assist us, we will receive it thankfully and appreciate the same. I feel an interest in the matter, and with aid we can build a neat and commodious house of worship. All who feel so disposed will send it to me or to W. P. Burks, 24 South Court Street, Montgomery, Alabama. I write this as an item of general interest to the brotherhood, and hope that the brethren will remember us in their petitions at the throne of grace, for we are poor and weak and few. They have called me to be their pastor; and when I look upon the little flock, and look around upon the rich and the proud, and the many religious orders around us, I feel to say, Alas, Master, what shall we do? But spiritually I feel that the Lord is able to open our eyes that we may behold, and to say, There be many more for us than there be for them. "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?"

If you think this worthy, publish it; if not, cast it aside.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., March 5, 1887.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS:—In closed please find four dollars, two dollars to apply on my subscription for the SIGNS, and the remaining two dollars set to the credit of a new subscriber. I have been quite ill since last September, and it is only a few weeks since I have been able to write without its tiring me all out. I have had an attack of bronchitis, and it reduced my strength and flesh at first so much that we feared it had affected my right lung. I write this of myself because I want to speak of God's goodness to me. When I lay upon my bed, so weak, my friends doubting my recovery, I felt happy. I felt I was resting in the arms of Jesus, that I was in his hands, and all would be right. As I grew a little stronger I realized how desolate my dear ones would be left. Then I prayed that God would restore me to health, if in accordance with his holy will. The thought came into my mind, Why do you want to stay in this world, subject to care and anxiety, when you have an assurance of something so much better beyond the grave? Paul said, "Knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body,

we are absent from the Lord." "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." Now am I so vain and sinful, so much attached to the world, that I want to stay here a little longer with my dear ones? It seems to me the Lord is kindly and mercifully restoring me to health, and I have a great desire, as soon as the weather is settled, to meet with that little band of saints at May's Mills, who desire to serve the Lord in truth and righteousness. Little over a year ago I had the privilege of becoming one of their number, not on account of my worthiness, but, as Elder Durand said, it is those who have been given faith to see that they are righteous in Jesus. After standing alone for thirty years, kept by the power of God, I now have a membership with the people who trust in God, through faith unto salvation. The spirit of love and praise to God that I find among this unpopular people is so different from the spirit manifested amongst religionists in my own city. When I meet with those who tell what the Lord has done for them, it touches my heart and I am melted in tears. In God is my salvation and my glory, the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God. For the past six months I have been shut out from the world, and yet I can say that the time has not seemed tedious, so often I have realized the sheltering presence of my Savior, and my cry has been, I need thee, O I need thee every hour. Leave me not. Let thy mercy endure forever. The Scriptures and the SIGNS have been a great comfort to me. I have anxiously waited for the SIGNS. It is filled with good reading. I am interested in the subject, "Unto what and unto whom the saints are come," by Elder Durand. The editorials are always interesting. The new subscriber I send you is one of God's children that stands alone. Born into the kingdom in the midst of Babylon, she is strong in the faith and enjoys reading the SIGNS.

Yours in christian hope,

MRS. J. B. WEST.

SUNNY SIDE, Ind., Dec. 15, 1886.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Of all the Baptist periodicals that I have ever read there is none I prize so highly as the SIGNS. The sentiments contained in it seem to touch a cord within my breast that thrills my very soul with joy. Our Baptist brethren in this part of the state generally do not advocate absolute predestination, carrying it only so far as it relates to the spiritual family, and I have tried my utmost to see it that way and be in harmony on that point with the majority of them; but the more I search and ponder over the matter, the greater the impression becomes fixed in my mind that (I will not say absolute) universal predestination is taught all through both the Old and New Testaments, and I often feel to rejoice that it is so. Yet I do not feel like casting my brethren aside

and withdrawing fellowship from them simply because they cannot see in the same light that I do; and in fact, they express the same to me, and I verily believe that we have brotherly love for each other. But occasionally a minister will take advantage of his position, and ridicule the predestination of all things; and when he attempts to tell just how it is, he gets so bewildered and tangled that it seems to me that any one could be able to see the inconsistency of a partial predestination.

Our association is called the Mount Salem, and is composed of seven churches, called respectively Elkhart, Providence, New Hope, Tipacano, Island, Shiloh and Mount Salem. My membership is with the Elkhart Church, which has twenty-six or twenty-seven members. Within the last two years there has been quite an ingathering in all our churches, and we have a comfortable assurance that there are a goodly number of others without the fold who have been pricked in the heart, and are ready to cry out, as it were, "What shall we do?" At our last meeting one dear young sister related her exercises, and was led into the baptismal waters by our much loved pastor, Elder W. L. Lines. Brother Lines comes to us every fourth Sunday and Saturday before, richly laden with the good things of the gospel. He is an excellent pastor, an able minister, and speaks as one of the "oracles of God."

Dear brethren, if it is not asking too much of you, I would like your explanation of the first six verses of the second chapter of First Timothy. You may choose your own medium, either the SIGNS or by letter. For the present I bid you a kind adieu, hoping that heaven's choicest blessings may rest upon yourselves, together with all the dear family of God.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope,

ABRAM H. SMITH.

BATH, Maine, Jan. 24, 1887.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—I often feel as if I would like to write to you all, if I could only express my thoughts so you would find the letter interesting. I have been much comforted of late in having my mind led to see some of the beauty in the finished salvation, and have rejoiced that there are a few witnesses in the world who testify that Jesus died, yea rather is risen again, and I am permitted to have a name and place with them. I have been taught that Jesus came to save his people from their sins, and he finished the work. I can find nothing in the Bible that assures me that I can obtain eternal salvation by any of my works or prayers. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. Paul found in his experience that "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." These last five words, how few, compared with the number in the world, have a realizing

sense of them; and what an evidence it is that we must be taught of God before we can say the same in our experience. We are brought to the place where it looks to us as if there was no way possible for such vile sinners to be saved; and then Jesus is revealed to us as the Savior of sinners. Each one feels, "I am chief." The name of Jesus is above every name, and all the fullness dwells in Jesus; for it pleased the Father to have it so. And all his children confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. They love to tell what great things he has done for them, in taking them out of an horrible pit, setting their feet upon a rock, and putting a new song into their mouths, even praise unto God. They love to declare his works; for "without him was not anything made that was made." He has declared the end from the beginning, and controls every event. We cannot flee from his presence, neither with our carnal minds can we find out God by searching. The carnal mind is enmity against God. Paul says, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The children of God will always find that before they can say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," it has to be revealed unto them by their Father which is in heaven. Flesh and blood cannot reveal this blessed truth unto us any more to-day than it could when the Savior was here on the earth. When I have these truths brought to my mind with so much beauty, it makes me forget myself for a season, and praise to God fills my soul. How many times David said, "Praise ye the Lord." I do enjoy reading the SIGNS, and love those who write such excellent letters, and the editorials are always rich and full.

Brethren Beebe, if you see anything in this letter that does not give all the glory to God for the salvation of his people, throw it aside, for it is worthless.

With love to the household of God, I am your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

DEAR ONES:—I have often thought I would write some of the Lord's dealings with me, one of the weakest of all saints, if one at all. I had serious thoughts about dying, almost from my earliest recollection, and thought some time I would get religion. Thus time passed on until I was about eighteen, when there was a Methodist protracted meeting, at which most of my associates got religion. I set to work in earnest to try; and the more I tried, the further off I got. They would tell me it was my fault; that there was something I was keeping back; that I must join the church and give my whole heart to God, which I tried to do, but all in vain. I was in great distress, not knowing what to do. I then thought

if I would pray often, at least three times a day, that certainly would appease the wrath of an angry God. But I continued to grow worse and worse. In the fall of the year 1859 my father died, and as I witnessed the life blood slowly ebbing away, and saw how calm he was, my soul was made to cry out "O! if it were I, what a condition I would be in." I was made to see my utter helplessness, and in agony of soul was made to cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I was led on in this way, sometimes in hardness of heart, and sometimes in deep distress, until December, 1859, being from home at my uncle's, going to school. I will never forget the cold, dreary December evening, as I sat at the window, deploring my condition, and had given up all hope of ever being any better, when all at once my burden was gone, and I was made to leap for joy. I then thought my trouble was all gone, and for three or four months I never had one doubt.

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

If ever a poor soul had comfort and peace, I surely had. I was married the following spring, and soon after doubts began to arise, and I soon found myself in deep distress, but of a different nature. I would tell my husband, thinking he could do me some good; but he could only tell me he knew nothing about it. And thus I was tossed, praying, fearing, and hoping against hope, always praying for the conviction and conversion of my husband, for eleven long years, when joy came at last. "Joy cometh in the morning." When he first told me of his trouble, my joy was almost as great as when I was first relieved of my burden; for I well knew when the Lord commenced a good work, he would accomplish it. "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called."

MARTHA A. JOHNSON.

(See obituary on page 143.)

ROCA, Neb., Feb. 15, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The Church History was received in good order. I appreciate it very much, and believe it will be a great blessing and of much interest to all lovers of the truth. The price is a mere trifle for such a volume as that. The vast amount of labor that it has taken to prepare such a volume is wonderful. I truly hope that Elder Hassell will be richly rewarded for his labor of love for the truth's sake, for taking up and completing the history of the church of Christ which his dear father had taken up, but who was called home in the midst of his work. How sad we feel when we hear of the death of such gifted and faithful servants as Elders C. B. Hassell, G. Beebe, T. P. Dudley and others. But, dear brethren, we are made to reflect upon and consider the goodness and tender mercies of our God, who has blessed us with such dear, faithful servants, and that he has only released them from his

vineyard of labor here in the world of sin and sorrow, from all their trials and cares, and has taken them home to bask in the realms of eternal joy with their blessed Lord and Master. So, brethren, may we be enabled to bow in humble submission to the will of our God, as did his humble servant of old, and say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Dear brethren, I was just thinking of the love and fellowship of the saints. Although they are scattered all over the world, and some are alone in the uttermost parts of the earth, yet when they read the communications of brethren and sisters who have been brought from nature's darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, they are made to rejoice in the God of their salvation, and take courage, and say, Surely the goodness and mercies of the Lord have followed me all the days of my life. If the bond of love is so strong here, what will be the joy of the redeemed saints when they shall all be gathered home to dwell forever with their blessed Savior?

Brethren, I have written more than I expected. May the blessing of God be with you and uphold you in the defense of the truth as it is in Jesus, as he did your beloved father, and may you long be spared to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," is my prayer. This is at your disposal; do with it as you think best.

Your unworthy brother,

JOSEPH BRUCE.

MT. PULASKI, Jan. 14, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Fearing you may think me negligent, and knowing that you must be at a great expense to publish your paper, I will send for last year and this together. My mother is getting old, and the SIGNS is a great comfort to her. I would love to write something for publication in our medium of correspondence if it were not for my great unworthiness, which I feel so much; and when others tell my feelings better than I can, I think it is no use; yet I can bear testimony to the truth of their feelings, and say that if they are God's children (and I do not doubt that), then I may have hope that my profession is not a delusion. Sometimes I think as Job did, "O that my words were written." For I can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and that I have seen him and heard his gracious voice in the words, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." And when low down in the valley, and all seemed lost, a word from him has revived my desponding spirits, so that beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness, was mine. O if I only knew how to perform duties impressed upon me, and how to walk in that humble childlike way I can see in others! but the hymn,

"Alas! it is a thorny road
That I am called to tread,"

is my feeling. Yet I do not wish to complain; for if, as it is with some

others, afflictions of body were added to trials of mind, I fear that I should sink. I believe the Lord knows just when and how to direct our steps. Yes,

"Though shafts of death thick 'round me fly,
Till he shall bid I cannot die;
Not a single shaft shall hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

If you see fit to publish any of this, all right. I wish the cause of truth to prosper. May God direct you in your labors of love, and make you a comfort to Zion.

J. H. RING.

SOUTH WESTERLO, N. Y., Jan. 1, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the goodness and mercy of the Lord my unprofitable life is still spared to see the commencement of a new year. O how thankful I want to be for the goodness and mercy of the Lord that has followed me all the days of my life. Were I competent, I would like to tell my dear kindred in Christ the way the Lord has led me, but age and infirmity forbid. It is sixty-five years since I indulged a hope in the Lord, and sixty-two years since I united with the church. I have been a poor, unprofitable creature. I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES almost from the commencement, and have been much comforted by the editorials and sweet communications of the dear brethren and sisters. The doctrine it contains my soul rejoices in, salvation by grace alone. If there was one thing for me to do to obtain it I should not have any hope. I feel deeply to sympathize with the afflicted ones, such as sister Mary Parker. I can truly say, The eternal God is my refuge, and underneath are his everlasting arms. Were it not for the sweet hope we indulge of a brighter inheritance beyond this vale of sorrow, sin and pain, we should despair. Age and infirmity forbid meeting with my dear brethren in Christ. I have been able to meet with them but once in ten years, and never expect to meet with them again in time. I am almost seventy-eight years old, and think every year when I renew my subscription it will be the last. I cannot do without it as long as I can pay for it and can see to read it.

Dear brethren editors, I hope you will be long spared to feed the sheep and lambs. I leave this in your hands to do with as you please; perhaps it will be the last.

Your unworthy sister in Christ,
R. A. ELMENDORF.

Rio, Ill., Nov. 29, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have to remit for the SIGNS, I would like to speak of the comfort I have received through the many articles and editorials in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for which I hope I am thankful to the Giver of all good and perfect gifts. Write on, dear brethren and sisters. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for

all her sins." What a glorious doctrine the doctrine of Jesus Christ is; a doctrine that proclaims the complete salvation of God's people, through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ; a doctrine full of Jehovah's shalls and wills. Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." 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." Here is foreordination and predestination. Now, as I hear but little preaching, and meet but few that are sound in the faith, and as I sometimes think I love to talk of and hear others tell of the love of Jesus, you will pardon a poor, weak worm of the dust for thus addressing you.

Yours in love, as I hope,
J. H. BLOOMFIELD.

KALONA, Iowa, March 5, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I feel that I cannot do without the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is all the preaching I have. Inclosed please find post-office money order for two dollars, the amount of subscription for 1887. I have been a helpless sufferer for over four years, not able to leave my bed, and it is a great satisfaction to me to have the SIGNS to read. If not asking too much, I would like to have the views of some of the brethren on Luke xvii. 12-18.

Respectfully your friend,
SUSAN C. PARKER.

BOOK NOTICES.

WE have received a copy of a book entitled "Life's Journey and Lessons by the Way," by Mrs. Kate Swartout. We have not as yet had the time to read much of the work; but as the authoress is so well and favorably known to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we do not feel it necessary for us to give an opinion, or to indorse the book to recommend it to our subscribers. It is a neat little volume, containing 304 pages, handsomely bound in cloth, and will be sent by mail, postage paid, on receipt of price, as given in advertisement on our last page.—ED.

INFORMATION WANTED.

MONROE CENTRE, Grand Traverse Co., Mich.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I would like to ask if you have any of our faith and order in the northern part of Michigan. If so, I wish they would send me their address. Yours,

JOHN DUFFUS.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER P. McCay having changed his residence from Fisher, Illinois, to Fullerton, Nance Co., Neb., wishes his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIAIS,

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1887.

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

JUDGE NOT.

"WILL you please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Matthew vii. 1, 2, and oblige one who desires to know the truth? Peculiar and severe trials cause me to make this request. E."

REPLY.

"JUDGE not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."—Matt. vii. 1, 2.

To our understanding no higher privilege is given to any created being than the ministering of comfort to such as suffer under the "peculiar and severe trials" through which the afflicted disciples of our Redeemer are called to pass in this valley of the shadow of death. Gladly therefore would we ever labor with the ability which we have received of the Lord for the relief of any subject of severe trials; but it is graven in our experience by the failures of a lifetime that unless the Lord gives comfort to the tried saints, neither our wishes nor our utmost efforts can avail for their relief. Indeed, since the most favored servants of God, whose inspired testimony glows with the revelation of our Lord Jesus, were yet dependent on the grace of God for their own comfort, it would be folly to expect more strength in any of the saints in the present day. The words of our gracious Lord himself must be applied by his own Spirit in order that they may bring consolation to the afflicted and strength to the weak. When reason would seek to know their heavenly sweetness they are sealed in impenetrable mystery; but when they are revealed to the saints by the faith of the Son of God, they see with clear assurance the glorious truth that their righteousness is in Jesus and not in themselves; then his words are food to them, and they receive his doctrine as the bread of life. Only such as are born of God ever know the power of the word of the Lord in this comforting sense; and they are the characters on whom the divine blessings are pronounced in the opening of this wonderful discourse from which the text is taken. In order to see the true import of any sentence in this sermon it must be taken in the connection and applied as it was spoken by the Lord.

It is expressly stated that none but his disciples were with Jesus when he taught them saying what is written in this and the two preceding chapters. Hence it is evident that the instruction and commandments in this discourse apply exclusively to them who are by the grace of God called out from the world and led by the Spirit to follow Jesus. As they are the subjects of that kingdom which is not of this world, so all the law of that kingdom is spiritual, and every injunction properly understood

is in perfect harmony with all the sacred Scriptures. Every interpretation of the text, therefore, must be erroneous if it conflicts with any other portion of the inspired testimony of Jesus. Detaching the text from its connection with the whole gospel of Christ, it plainly prohibits the saints from judging any matter whatever. That this is not the correct understanding of this direction of our Lord is evident; since they are not only positively enjoined to judge themselves and their fellow-mortals, but even to try the spirits which are clothed in light and appear to be messengers of the Lord, when in reality they are arrayed with and belong to that antichrist whose coming is after the working of Satan.—See 1 Cor. vi. 2-4; 1 John iv. 1. The context shows the sense in which the Lord used these words which have troubled not only our inquirer, but many other little children who reverence his authority. He goes on immediately to specify the judgment which is forbidden, applying the prohibition to their seeking for faults in each other. In that spirit of judging, the mote in our brother's eye gives us more anxiety than the beam which obscures our own vision. This is the sense in which the saints are forbidden to judge. So Paul says, "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."—Romans xiv. 13. This is the inspired exposition of the language of Jesus. As the King in Zion, he gave the law in our text. As one of the princes who rule in judgment, the apostle was moved by the Holy Ghost to expound and apply that law. It does not require of the saints that they shall have no regard to the conduct of each other; for they are commanded to withdraw from every brother whose conduct is not conformed to the order established in the church. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."—2 Thess. iii. 6. This direction can be obeyed only by the most careful judgment on the part of every member of the church, yet it is not inconsistent with the command of our Lord in the text under consideration; for the judgment by which disorderly members are condemned is not determined by the voice of the church, but by the law of Christ, which is the perfect standard of order. Hence, no defense against the just judgment of that law can be found in the divine rule under consideration.

It should never be forgotten that the whole law of Christ is one law, in which there can be no disagreement or conflict. All apparent inconsistency in its precepts results from misunderstanding or misapplication of the words of inspiration. The reason assigned for which the saints are commanded to refrain from judging, "that ye be not judged," certainly shows the judgment to be in the sense

of condemnation of others according to our own standard of righteousness. Judging to the condemnation of others by our own authority, we must concede to them the same right to condemn us; thus our own example would justify that judgment which would be against us. This would result in the same confusion and mutual recrimination which are prevalent in the world; and thus we should deny the very element of peace and love, which marks those who are led by the Spirit of God. It is in this way that we are judged with the judgment with which we judge, and receive the same measure with which we mete or measure. In the peaceful kingdom of Christ alone is this law fulfilled. His own example shows how the carnal world despise this holy principle. He judged righteously and showed mercy in all his dealings with the world; yet his kindness was requited with cruelty, and his perfect righteousness did not shield him from the wicked devices of the workers of iniquity. This world is not capable of receiving his law, nor does he give any commandment to any others except those who love him. Therefore he immediately adds to this injunction the limitation which confines its application within his kingdom. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." These dogs and swine are all those unclean sinners who have not received the holy Spirit of Christ. If the saints should apply this holy principle of heavenly charity to such, they would treat with contempt the precious pearls of christian love and meekness, trampling them in the mire under their feet, and turn again and rend those who presented them. But to those who are led by the Spirit of Christ that meekness which resists not evil is irresistible in overcoming all opposition. In this is manifest the spirit which rules in the heart of every one who is tested by it. Even the saints are sometimes led by a carnal spirit, and under such guidance they are disposed to appeal to carnal reason and selfish pride; but as surely as they are subjects of the kingdom of Christ, so surely shall they be made to suffer in that court, for they thus take the sword of justice into their own hands, and invariably in so doing they must fall by that sword. The defense of the obedient saint in time of trial, persecution and distress is pointed out by the apostle, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."—1 Peter iv. 19.

When the saints are under the guidance of the Spirit of truth they are not likely to judge so severely against others as against themselves. Thus, when the light of divine holiness first shines in the heart, the sinfulness of others is forgotten in the sense of personal vileness and corruption. While this is felt there is not much inclination to judge

closely, nor yet to seek for the sins of others. But when our own sins are concealed in the darkness of selfish pride, then carnal presumption can find nothing in others which is exactly as it should be; we feel that it is the fault of our brethren that we cannot esteem them better than ourselves, and secretly wish that they were more nearly our own equals in merit. When this selfish judgment is in our hearts we shall experience the truth as it is declared by our Lord in our text, in finding ourselves under the condemnation which we had awarded to others. Thus with what measure we mete it is measured to us again. The visitation of this strict judgment of our Lord is a fearful thing to be endured; yet there is comforting evidence even in this suffering to sustain the hope of those who receive such chastening. It was exclusively to his disciples that the Lord gave this perfect law. Hence even they who suffer its strict fulfillment have the assurance therein that God deals with them as with sons.—Hebrews xii. 7. Thus their very bitterest tribulations are precious evidences that they are subjects of the infinite love of God.

As in the case of other portions of Scripture, the injunction in our text is sometimes perverted by the specious sophistry of the enemy of truth in such a way as to make it seem to forbid the saints requiring of those in their fellowship a walk and conversation consistent with their professed obedience to the law of Christ. This false application of the words of Jesus is so palpably dishonest that it is little short of blasphemy. The bewildered subject of grace may indeed be deceived by this bold device of Satan; but it is hard to understand how one who has ever seen the holy perfection of God can be so blinded by his own sinful mind as to seek under the cover of the law of Christ to justify his own willful wickedness. This is the substance of the argument of all who would excuse their misconduct by pleading that the Lord has forbidden the church to judge them. Every one who knows the sinfulness of sin is conscious that he is himself the guilty one whose action only manifests the sin which lust in his own heart had conceived. Therefore it is a very unfavorable indication when any one is found pleading exemption from the judgment of the church in his transgression of the law of the King in Zion, even though it be without the reproach of outbreaking crime; much more is that one to be openly condemned who would interpose this text as shielding him in such conduct as would bring deserved reproach upon the profession of faith in Christ. One carnal minded professed member of the church is a more effective enemy to her spiritual prosperity than all the avowed infidels who have ever been arrayed against her. For while the power of God restrains the enemy so that the life of every saint is beyond his reach, yet there is a vast amount of affliction which is brought upon them by the temptations of their adversary. This was illustrated in the cases of Job, of

David, and many others, which are written for our learning; and as they were often brought so low that they could see no way of deliverance, so with the saints in the present time. They are not kept by their own care and watchfulness; yet they find comfort in obedience to the law of Christ, and in forsaking his law they suffer the rod of his chastisement. Thus by their experience of the holy joy which is found in keeping the commandments of Jesus they have the assurance that their hope of glory is alone the manifestation of Christ in them; and their suffering of chastisement in disobedience is equally positive evidence that they are recognized as the children whom the Lord corrects in love.

To the view of natural reason it seems inconsistent to regard them in whom dwells the love of holiness as yet in need of the admonition in the text; hence all natural religionists can see the perfection of the followers of Christ only in that pharisaic self-righteousness by which they might claim superiority over their fellow-sinners, as if they had righteousness in themselves. Because of their inability to show to their own reason that righteousness which faith sees in Christ, the saints are often brought under heavy clouds of doubt and darkness. Then their own heart judges them to condemnation, and they are made to wonder how they ever did hope in the salvation of God. This is the same judgment with which they judge one another when they are looking at the things which are seen; and in condemning others they also condemn themselves. It is only by faith that any saint is justified in the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and that justification is entirely by grace. This fact forbids all boasting, and clearly shows the inconsistency of those who stand only in the grace of God themselves, judging with their own narrow vision in condemnation of others.

In its application to the discipline and order of the organized church as established by the authority of our Lord Jesus, the injunction under consideration demands of all who reverence his authority the most solemn consideration. The church is not at liberty to enact for herself any laws, nor even to execute the letter of the law of Christ as directed by the natural mind. That law is itself spiritual, and it must be applied and executed in the spirit and not in the letter. Walking humbly and in love the saints obey the whole law of Christ; then each is able to esteem others better than himself. It is only in this spirit that they fulfill the injunction of our Lord in the text; and when they feel themselves most unworthy and have least confidence in self, then they most manifestly exhibit their conformity to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus as it is concisely stated by the apostle, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. Speak not evil of one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother,

speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?"—James iv. 10-12. When this principle rules in the heart of the saints they will obey in spirit and in truth the injunction of our Lord in the text, and the love and fellowship which shall abound will make their habitation bright with the glory of the Lord. Then, no surrounding circumstances can mar their peace, nor can the gates of hell prevail to rob them of their holy joy in the fellowship of the gospel of Christ Jesus. May the grace of God ever enable his saints to rejoice alone in the truth that "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."—Isaiah xxxiii. 22.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please insert in the SIGNS the death of my brother, **George W. Fox**. He was born in Loudoun County, Va., Nov. 5, 1822, and died March 14, 1887, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. Of late years his health failed him so that he was scarcely able to go about, until last spring he took a bad cold, which settled on his lungs, which finally ended his life here. He lingered for a long time, not able to go out of the house, and took to his bed, which he left no more until his summons came. He died with composure, at times suffering, until a few days before the separation took place, when he became unconscious. I visited him as often as I could during his sickness, which seemed to cheer him up. His daughter, two sons and myself waited at his bedside until he drew the last breath, on March 14, about nine o'clock a. m. His funeral took place at his residence here on the 16th inst., Mr. James Conway officiating, attended by a large company of friends. The hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," &c., was sung after the conclusion of the services. His children started with his remains to Shepherdstown, West Virginia, where he was interred in the German Reformed burying ground, by the side of his wife, who died about sixteen years before him. Thus I am bereft of all our immediate family, except one brother, out of nine brothers and sisters, father and mother. The family consisted of thirteen children, four of which died in infancy. The surviving nine grew to manhood and womanhood, five of which married and had families. They all died since I grew up. I witnessed the death of all of them. I feel lonely at this period of my life, and my mind often reverts back to the death of my mother, whom I so dearly loved. It was hard to give her up, but the Lord took her. Should we not be submissive to his will? George joined the German Reformed Society soon after he was married to Miss Staley, and about the year 1865. He united with the Presbyterians, where he remained in fellowship until his death. He was much beloved by the congregation, and his funeral was largely attended. The minister of his meeting spoke in high esteem of him during the services. We feel to hope our loss is his eternal gain.

JESSE T. FOX.

PORT DEPOSIT, Md.

DIED—At his residence in Miami County, Ohio, April 12, 1887, **Peter Shanks**, aged ninety-one years, seven months and twenty-six days. Brother Shanks was born where Cincinnati now stands, when it was Fort Washington, August 15, 1795. At the age of seventeen he entered the war of 1812, and in the year 1817 he came to Brown Township, Miami County. He lived in that township about seventy years. He was twice married; first to Miss Leah C. Shenk, by whom he had six children, three of whom are dead. She died May 13, 1839. He was a member of the Lost Creek Regular Baptist Church before

the split; and when the separation became necessary, he stuck to the Old, Primitive order of Baptists, and was a staunch believer in the cardinal doctrine of foreknowledge, predestination, calling by the Holy Spirit, justification from the deeds of the law by the blood of Jesus Christ alone. In 1858 he was married to Mrs. J. Neff, by whom he had two children; one died in infancy and one is yet living. His second wife died April 27, 1861. Since that time he has lived without a companion. Since that time he has lived without a companion. Many years ago the majority of the church were Missionary. Since that time he has lived almost entirely alone, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. He would have no compromise with the popular religion of the day. He was a Baptist for about seventy years, and honored his profession. He leaves four children, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, brethren and friends, to mourn their loss; but their loss is his gain.

A funeral discourse was delivered by the unworthy writer, from Job xiv. 14, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and also 1 Cor. xv. 44, 53, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

WM. LIPPINCOTT.

DIED—At her father's on Hemphill, in Rapides Parish, La., April 17, 1887, Miss **Sidney Hunt**. She was born June 5, 1872, on Liberty Creek, in Vernon Parish, La. Her disease was heart dropsy, caused from rheumatism. She did not belong to the visible church on earth, but from the evidence she left with us we believe she was a member of the church invisible. She was confined in a rocking chair one month and a few days, and just before she died she told her father that she wanted him to send for the humble writer to come and sing and pray with her; and I complied with the request. She then told him that she was going to die, and when she died, to get me to come and sing and pray in the house before her remains were taken out of the house. She wanted Elder Burns to preach her funeral, which he did, at the Self graveyard, in Vernon Parish, La., from 1 Corinthians xv. 56, 57, followed by some closing remarks from the humble writer. I was with this young lady some in her sickness, and I can truly say that she bore her misery with much patience and without murmuring. She was sensible of her death. She called all her little sisters and her father and mother to her before she died, and embraced them and kissed them, and fell asleep.

We lay thee in the silent tomb,
Sweet blossom of a day;
We just began to view thy bloom,
When thou art called away.

Her remains were taken to the Self graveyard and laid away, where her funeral was preached by Elder J. K. P. Burns. May the dear Lord bless and comfort all the bereaved, is the prayer of the humble writer. She leaves father and mother, sisters, grandfather and grandmother, and a large connection, to mourn their loss.

DAVID RICHEY.

It becomes my sad duty to announce the death of our beloved sister, **Laura Webster**, who departed this life April 30, 1887, in the forty-seventh year of her age, of Bright's disease of the heart. She had been complaining quite awhile, but was only confined to her bed twelve days. The deceased was born in Dumfries, Prince William Co., Va., August 5, 1840, and was baptized on the first Sunday in April, 1870, and since that time she has proved a faithful member of the Zion Church. She died triumphant in the faith, and was one well established in the truth as it is in Jesus. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. I was in her company about two weeks before her death, and her conversation was of heavenly things. She was one ever ready to give the reason of her hope in the Lord Jesus; but when taken to her death bed she did not talk much, but said to her husband on one occasion, "O that I could go to sleep to wake no more."

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep."

The writer of this article attended her funeral on the first Sunday in May, 1887, and spoke from first Corinthians xv. 57, 58. The deceased leaves her husband and one son, besides other relatives, with the church of her membership, to mourn her death.

Yours in fellowship,

N. P. RIED.

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 31, 1887.

It becomes my painful duty to send you for publication in the SIGNS the obituary of my beloved wife, **Martha A. Johnson**, who departed this life March 3, 1887. She was born in Madison Co., Ind., Oct. 12, 1837, the daughter of Jane and Henry Riggs. We were married at the same place by Elder J. A. Johnson, May 16, 1860. Also, we were received and baptized by the same as members of the Lebanon Regular Baptist Church, in August, 1871, where she remained a worthy member up to her death. Her disease was lung fever, which seemed to attack her with such force as to baffle all aid, and we were made to realize that we must give her up. Words fail to express our sadness of heart as we realize how we miss her presence. She was a kind, indulgent mother, and a true, patient and affectionate wife. She leaves myself, a son and two daughters, three grandchildren and the church, to mourn; but we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

Funeral services were postponed until our regular meeting in March, when Elder G. S. Weaver delivered a sermon to many of her sorrowing friends, from Job xiv. 14, 15. A piece written by her, but not finished, was found in her private drawer after her death, which I send you for publication in the SIGNS.

R. M. JOHNSON.

(See communication on page 140.)

IN memory of **Mrs. Sarah Baldwin**, who died Nov. 7, 1886.

She sleeps—we laid her down to rest,
Her hands upon her lifeless breast;
Her eyes are closed; she sees no more
Her friends who now her death deplore.

Her voice is hushed, which used to tell
Of Jesus, whom she loved so well.
It was her earnest, fervent prayer,
That God would her for heaven prepare.

Her pains are o'er, her work is done,
The battle fought, the victory won;
Henceforth for her in heaven is laid
A crown of life that cannot fade.

Fain would we have held back the foe
That laid the humble christian low;
For while the harvest is in view,
The faithful ones are very few.

O yes, we mourn, we grieve, we weep,
That we no more on earth shall meet;
But in that happy, heavenly land,
We'll no more take the parting hand.

By faith we know our heavenly Friend
From the beginning sees the end;
And what to us is now so dear,
Hereafter will look bright and clear.

HENRY REED.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—By the request of our bereaved sister, Phebe Pace, I announce the death of our beloved brother, **G. S. Pace**, after about one year's sickness. He departed this life May 16, 1887. He was born July 11, 1818. He joined the church of Primitive Baptist faith at an early age, and was ordained a deacon. He has been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for a long time. I have been intimately acquainted with him for several years, and can of a truth say that wherever he went among his brethren and sisters he did command their utmost respect. He stood firm in the faith, and in his last hours he gave bright evidences of his departure to that city not made with hands, but a heavenly city, whose builder and maker is God, eternal in the heavens. He said, "Look, look, isn't it pretty? We are going home." He leaves a widow and many friends to mourn their loss, but we hope that their mourning is not like those that have no hope, believing that their loss is his eternal gain.

A. J. CRAIG.

MERIDIAN, Miss.

OUR little girl, **Ann Lena Duke**, died March 21, 1887, being eleven months and three weeks of age.

She was too dear to stay below,
God called her up above;
He called her from this earthly clay,
To sing redeeming love.

She's gone to meet her brother
On that delightful shore,
Where sickness, sorrow, pain and death
Are felt and feared no more.

Then, fond mother, cease your weeping;
Sorrowing father, dry your tears;
Lena is only sleeping
Till her Savior's voice she hears.

Sweetly sleep, my little darling,
Holy angels guard thy bed;
Gently rest in Jesus, Lena,
Till he calls thee from the dead.

ROBERT M. DUKE.

HARPER'S FERRY, W. Va.

ONE by one the dear children of God are being called home. Brother **Christopher Neal** died at his residence in Woodford Co., Ky., on March 8, of heart disease, in the seventy-fifth year of his age. Brother Neal was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Bryant's Station, in September, 1881, by Elder S. H. Durand, of which church he was a member at the time of his death. Elder P. G. Lester was sent for to speak at his funeral, but being absent in Virginia a Presbyterian minister officiated, Mrs. Neal being a Presbyterian. Yours in hope,

J. W. WALLIS.

ORDINATIONS.

SATURDAY before the second Sunday in May, 1887, being the second day of a three days meeting then in progress, of the Coast Fork Church of Primitive Baptists, held at Muddy, Linn County, Oregon, at the usual place and time of meeting appointed for the solemn worship of God and to attend to her business, five of her members being present, including her pastor, Elder J. P. Allison, also the following visiting brethren, Elders John Stipp and Daniel Bridges, of Scio, Silas Williams, of Bethel, W. S. Matthews of Union, Jephtha Thornton, of Oak Creek, and Deacon Edward Loat, of Scio, who had all assembled with us in answer to our call, having in view the ordination of brother **NATHAN WALDEN** to the full work of the gospel ministry.

By arrangement, Elder Silas Williams preached, after praise and prayer. He used John x. 21, as a text for a discourse. He was followed by Elder John Stipp, with some remarks on the same subject, in confirmation of what had been already said. The church then sat in order for business, and chose Elder W. S. Matthews Moderator *pro tem*.

Invited visiting brethren to sit with us in council.

The next reference was the matter relative to the ordination of brother Nathan Walden to the full work of the gospel ministry. The church being of the same mind in regard to it, agreed to proceed with the ordination.

It was then found that the following named churches had responded to our call:

From Scio, Elders John Stipp and Daniel Bridges, and Deacon Edward Loat.
From Bethel, Elder Silas Williams.
From Union, Elder W. S. Matthews.
From Oak Creek, Elder Jephtha Thornton.

These organized themselves into a presbytery, together with the pastor of the Coast Fork Church, Elder J. P. Allison, and chose Elder W. S. Matthews Moderator, and Deacon Edward Loat Clerk. The church then presented brother Nathan Walden to the presbytery, who related his experience of grace, and his call to the ministry, and his doctrinal views, which were found to be satisfactory to the presbytery, and in accordance with the Articles of Faith of the Old School or Primitive Baptists. Then proceeded to set him apart by solemn ordination to the full work of the gospel ministry. First, a hymn of praise, then the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, and prayer by Elder W. S. Matthews; after which the charge was delivered by Elder John Stipp, and the right hand of fellowship was given by the presbytery and by the members of the church to the now fully ordained Elder Nathan Walden, while singing a song of Zion.

W. S. MATTHEWS, Mod.
EDWARD LOAT, Clerk.

PURSUANT to a call of the Bluffton Church, in Adams County, Indiana, for a council to meet with them at the house of brother Ardellas Carter, on Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1887, for the purpose of considering the propriety of ordaining brother **WILLIAM PINE** to the work of the gospel ministry, the following brethren were present:

From Greenville Association, Harmony Church, brother Jesse Line, a licentiate.
Providence Church, Elder J. P. Peters and brother John Light.

Refuge Church, Elder A. B. Brees.
From Mad River Association, Sugar Creek Church, Elders J. G. Ford and Uriah Trumbo, and brother Jacob Rimer.

Council organized by choosing Elder J. G. Ford Moderator, and Elder A. B. Brees Clerk.

The Moderator, in behalf of the church, then presented brother William Pine as a candidate for ordination.

Brother Pine, after preaching a discourse, related his experience and call to the ministry, which being satisfactory, the presbytery, composed of Elders J. P. Peters, J. G. Ford, Uriah Trumbo and A. B. Brees, proceeded by laying on their hands during the ordination prayer by Elder Uriah Trumbo, after which the charge was given by Elder A. B. Brees.

J. G. FORD, Mod.

A. B. BRESSES, Clerk.

APPOINTMENTS.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the following list of appointments, and oblige:

Monday after the second Sunday in June, in the afternoon, at Bryn Zion.

Tuesday p. m. at Cow Marsh.

Wednesday p. m. at Broad Creek.

Thursday a. m. at Little Creek.

Thursday night at Delmar.

Saturday and third Sunday at Salisbury.

Monday at Rewastico.

Tuesday at Forest Grove.

Wednesday at Indiantown.

Thursday as the friends may arrange at Snow Hill.

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Halcott Church, Halcott Centre, Greene Co., N. Y., commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in July, meeting to commence at ten o'clock, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. Those coming on the cars will be met at the Griffin's Corners depot on Friday afternoon, the day before the meeting.

J. H. SCUDDER, Church Clerk.

PLEASE publish in the SIGNS that a yearly meeting is to be held with the Middleburg Church, in Broome, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in July, being the ninth and tenth days of the month. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth.

Done by order of the church.

M. P. COOPER.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next session of the Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (15th), 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west via the D., L. & W., or N. Y., L. E. & W. R. R., will come to Elmira, and there take train on the Northern Central R. R. to Grover. Trains leave Elmira on the N. C. R. R. at 9.00 a. m. and 3.00 p. m.

Those coming from the south can leave Williamsport at 7.15 a. m., 2.35 and 7.20 p. m.

Those coming from a distance will come on Tuesday, 14th. The place of meeting is but a few rods from the depot. Friends will be met at the depot on Tuesday p. m. and Wednesday a. m. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth, and we hope to see a goodly number of friends and ministering brethren present.

M. VAIL.

THE Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of eastern Oregon and Washington Territory will meet this year with Big Spring Church, near Summerville, Union Co., Oregon, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, at 11 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with the church at Van Buren, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 10, 1887.

Those coming on the Nickel Plate R. R. will stop at Stuartsville. Those coming from the west on the B. & O. R. R. will stop at North Baltimore. Those coming from the east will stop at Bairdstown. Those coming from the north or south on the Toledo & Findlay R. R. (T. C. & S.) will stop at Van Buren. The above trains will be met on Thursday, June 9th, and the writer will meet and care for those who stop at Arcadia. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

W C Farthing 4, Jonathan Dail 2, Wm M Burdshaw 2, Mrs Eliz Smith 50c, Louis Stout 5, L L Roberson 2 50, Caroline Fox 2 50, Mrs Ida Wingo 2, J G Ford 2, A P Cowart 2, John Chandly 2 50, D W Luten 2 50, Geo H Merryman 2 50, T W Pender 2 50, Eld David Richey 2, Jas H Hall 2, Eld Nuly Greener 2 50, A C House 2, Wiley Johnston 15 75, James W French 2 50, N E Miller 2, Annie M Yard 2, D C Miller 3, Elder J M Thomas 2.—Total \$70.75.

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This is a very interesting and comforting book to all Old School Baptists, written by sister Kate Swartout. It contains 304 pages, printed in large type. Price, single copy 75c; per dozen, by express, \$7.00. Send draft, money order, or registered letter, to Mrs. Andrew J. Swartout, Woodstock, Lenawee County, Michigan; but money orders must be made payable at Brooklyn, Michigan.

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The price at which the History is sold by the single copy will not admit of much reduction for club rates; but to partially repay our brethren and friends for interesting themselves in its circulation, we are authorized to make the following reduction for six or more copies ordered at one time:

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We still lack about twelve hundred dollars of enough to pay for the actual cost of publication, allowing Elder Hassell nothing for his labor and expense, which amounts to several thousand dollars, for part of which he is still in debt. About two thousand persons who subscribed their names for the work, and are therefore obligated to take it, have not yet paid in the money which they have promised. Address,

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1887.

NO. 13.

POETRY.

DAILY BREAD.

We would not pierce the misty clouds around us,
Nor fathom what the future has in store;
But day by day thy loving care hath found us;
Lead us to-day, O Lord, we ask no more,
Only to-day.

We could not bear the weight a lifetime carries;
Our strength grows weakness if we do but try;
To-morrow comes with force that never taries;
Help us to-day, O Lord, is all our cry,
Only to-day.

We have no strength to walk unless thou lead us;
Sin hides each side the strait and narrow way;
Our hungry souls must faint unless thou feed us;
Help us, we plead, to live aright to-day,
Only to-day.

DO I MISS YOU?

(DEDICATED TO ONE GONE BEFORE.)

Would the heart miss its throb if life's current should wait,
Or cease altogether to flow?
Do I miss you, my darling? would a bird miss his mate?
Yes, I miss you, wherever I go.

Yes, darling, I miss you in every place,
And my hot tears unbidden will flow,
As oftentimes I try in my fancy to trace
Your sweet face in the firelight's glow.

As I sit and look back in the past, through my tears,
To the last time I gazed on your face,
The days seem as months, and the months seem as years,
So slow do they measure their pace.

How my memory still clings to those bright, happy hours
We have spent in the years that are past,
When we roamed through the woodlands and gathered wild flowers,
Each thinking they always would last.

But those day-dreams of life, its bright visions have fled,
For the dark clouds of fate fill the air,
And the thought that my flower lies withered and dead,
Soon hurries me back to despair.

What would I not give could I have you here now,
To sit by my side for awhile,
And press your soft hand on my hot fevered brow,
And glad my lone heart with your smile.

How long, O my darling, how long must I wait
Till I come to that ever-bright shore,
Where our spirits shall meet "at the beautiful gate,"
Re-united, but parted no more?

Till then, may the Spirit's bright halo be shed
O'er my pathway to guide me aright,
And each night, as of old, when my prayers have been said,
I will whisper, "My darling, good night."

WM. BAYARD BURNETT.

New York, April 25, 1887.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RIMER, Ohio, May 25, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been requested of me by brethren at different times to write some of the dealings of the Lord with me in the ministry and otherwise, for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have at last got sufficient consent of my mind to make the attempt, knowing that you, brethren, will judge for me, as I would not be qualified to judge a production of my own. Being led in paths that I knew not, and in ways unknown to me, has hindered me from keeping a diary of my travels; for everything has been so different from what I expected, I could find nothing at the time that I wanted to record; therefore I will have to depend mostly on my memory. In looking back over my travels, I humbly hope I can see some of the Lord's dealings with me, though at the time I did not realize it so clearly. I shall not attempt to relate my first experience, as part of that has been published in the SIGNS before; but I will commence at the time I was baptized by Elder Z. Thomas, in the fellowship of Mt. Salem Baptist Church, Noble Co., Ind., on the 15th day of April, 1866, where I remained for about nine years. I believe my mind was exercised to preach from the time I received a hope; but I did not think the liberty I was using was preaching. I earnestly proclaimed salvation by grace everywhere. It was not long until the Lord gave me a view of the gospel ministry and its sacredness, which almost caused me to reverence a preacher; but it was not applied to me yet. The time came, however, when the Lord said, "Thou art the man." I never can forget my feelings at that time. I instantly saw my ignorance and corruption, which caused me to shake my head, with an awful groan deep in my heart, and I turned away from the place where I stood with quick steps, in agony, rebuking myself for such a presumptuous thought. But alas! I could not get away from it. I pleaded with the Lord for some time to remove such foolish thoughts from me, and to save the sacredness of his gospel ministry from being disgraced by such an ignorant, simple creature as I was; that he could qualify anybody else around there better than me for that holy work; that it must not be; that it should not be; that I could not preach; that it was a mistake. Such thoughts would pass through my mind with a shudder, almost hourly, wherever I

was. After trying for a time to get rid of this burden, and having failed, I determined to try and qualify myself. I went to work committing Scripture to memory. I purchased a small Testament, carried it in my pocket, and read it every opportunity I got, until it was worn out, and had not made much progress. I concluded my language was not good enough to preach, so I bought a grammar and studied it awhile, and my wife would hear me recite. This was a failure, for I could not remember nor use what I mechanically recited. My thoughts were on preaching whenever I took that book in my hands, so much so that I would grievously accuse myself of thinking of nothing but preaching, and at the same time could not preach, and had not sense enough to learn to parse a sentence, nor to commit but little Scripture to memory. My prospect looked gloomy, still the burden remained. Next I thought to convince myself of my folly by trying to preach at some time, which I thought could be done without anyone suspecting my motive, as liberty was always granted in the church for anyone to speak on the subject of religion. I thought if I failed it would settle the matter; for if God wanted me to preach, I could preach; however I thought it would be a miserable failure. The time came at last for what was to me an awful test, with no one to help me bear the burden, as I would not reveal the secret to any person. I tremblingly got up and took a text, which I thought I must do, or it would not be preaching. I talked awhile (I do not know how long), and in my judgment it came out just as I expected. After the meeting, the Elder took me aside and informed me that it was a very particular thing to preach the gospel; that while I was fighting the Arminians on the one side, there was danger of getting too far on the other, into what he called Antinomianism, which he defined to be the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, which justified a man in all manner of crimes; that he never knew of any that had imbibed this heresy that were ever reclaimed; which proved to him that it was next to the unpardonable sin. He also added that the gospel was a consistent doctrine, and occupied the place between the two, and was called the middle ground doctrine; and he advised me to study it carefully before attempting to preach. I regarded the Elder as a faithful father in Israel. Believing now that he had discovered my folly, and had

taken it in time, he being one of God's ministers, I regarded it as though God himself had spoken to me. I tamely bowed my head and let him rivet a yoke on my neck which God alone could remove, and which I had to wear for seven long years. My preaching was at an end, yet the necessity of preaching was upon me. I went to work to learn the middle ground doctrine, which I must do before I ever could attempt to preach again. These two great evils the Elder had warned me of added much to my anxiety, for I knew that I was a dull scholar, and feared that I could not learn it. My prayer to God was to reveal it to me if he would have me to preach it. I went from place to place, having conversation with brethren, but always had some wrong ideas that they said would never do. I was not contentious nor stubborn, which caused them to have patience with me. I took to writing sermons for inspection, but none of them, they said, would do to lay before the public. I kept on at this until I had an ordinary trunk half-full of foolscap paper written on both sides. After the sixth year of this cruel bondage I fell into a kind of a spiritual stupor, which lasted about six months. I hardly knew that I had any exercise on the subject at all; but unexpectedly the good Lord revealed his sovereign and infinite majesty to me so plainly that when I noticed myself I was holding both hands upward, while viewing his glory. Here the chains dropped from my neck, and I was free. I saw that instead of the gospel being bounded on the one side by Arminianism, and on the other by Antinomianism, leaving only a narrow channel between the two for the gospel to run in, and its subjects liable to be shipwrecked on either shore, whose only safety was in a wise and prudent ministry, it was placed at the helm to pilot them through safely; that its bounds were nothing short of the eternal, unchangeable "wills" and "shalls" of Jehovah, having Jesus only at the helm, and the ministry, together with the rest of the crew, alike dependent upon him, instead of the crew being in the least dependent upon the ministry, as I had been taught. Now I saw that the gospel came directly from Jesus to the subject, rich and sweet. It had no time to get old and stale by being hoarded up in wise and prudent minds, but that God had hid these things from them, and revealed them unto babes. Since that time when I hear a minister dictating for the preaching of the gospel, recom-

mending that such doctrine as predestination and the unity of Christ and the church should only be preached by the wise and prudent ministers, I conclude that he is too wise and prudent to even know what the gospel is, as it is only revealed unto babes, who are not able to dictate. I now was willing to be an Antinomian, anything or nothing, for the glory that was revealed to me. My heart was full to overflowing. I could hardly keep within bounds of propriety and order, which I was a lover of. I looked up the word Antinomian, to see what kind of a creature I was, and was disappointed again; for instead of the word meaning predestination, its definition was, "against law," having no reference to predestination at all. Believing that I delighted in the law of the Lord, and seeing that Jesus fulfilled it, and by so doing set it up as a monument of honor, there was no room for any Antinomianism in it. After this my religious conversations were such as to alarm the Elder; and fearing the probability of my falling into this awful doctrine, to wit, predestination, he came to convince me of its danger, and only succeeded in convincing me that he never did believe as I did. I then went to the church with the matter, and after three succeeding meetings I became convinced they believed as the Elder did. This was not done in bad feeling, for they wanted me to keep my place, no matter what I believed, which I could not do for conscience' sake; for when I believed a thing, I desired to practice it consistently. In losing faith that this was the church of Christ, I saw that I had not been baptized, or that I had not been baptized in the fellowship of what I believed to be the church of Christ. I became troubled very much on this subject, and finally went to see Elder George S. Weaver about it, who lived about one hundred miles distant. He encouraged me, and made an appointment for our place. There were about six or seven others who were members of the same church with me who became dissatisfied also, and we sent for those we had learned were sound Predestinarian Baptist ministers, who kindly heard us and came at different times and preached the gospel of Christ, which was unto us the power and wisdom of God. The names of the ministers that visited us were Elders A. B. Brees, Jacob Gander, George S. Weaver, John Weaver, R. Thompson, Curtis, J. G. Jackson, John Biggs, L. L. DeLano, M. Brown, G. M. Peters, S. Seitz and J. G. Ford. On the 20th of November, 1875, I was baptized by Elder G. S. Weaver; also, he baptized sister Rebecca Easter at the same time. Then a council was called from the Conn's Creek and Lebanon Associations, and a church was organized, consisting of five members, on the first Saturday in January, 1876. The necessity of preaching the gospel became as strong as ever now, and I tried, with the ability that God giveth, to obey; but I supposed I could keep

the burden of my heart concerning preaching a secret from the brethren. On one occasion, when Elder Curtis visited our place with Elder George S. Weaver, he asked me if I ever had thought anything about preaching, or having to preach some day. I denied it, and wondered how he got that idea; but I betrayed my feelings by weeping. Elder G. S. Weaver told him to let me alone, adding that the Lord would fix that. I had a great anxiety to hear the ministering brethren talk on the subject of a call to the ministry, which sometimes they would do; or if I could get into company with young preachers that were only licensed, I would do it, for I thought that they would be more likely to talk on the subject. At one time I went to hear one preach, and I was invited to follow him, which I did, after which he gave me some advice. He said I was too reserved, and held back too much; that I should throw my shoulders back and speak free and strong, like he did, and told me to watch him, which I did; but I made such a miserable failure at mimicking that I felt sick. He also asked for a text, and Rahab the harlot was given him for a subject, which he took, and labored to prove that she represented the Arminian denominations. After meeting I took him aside and asked him how it came that Rahab represented the Arminians, when she was numbered with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as having obtained like faith, by which she and all her house were saved. He reflected a moment and said, "I preach it as it is preached down our way, anyhow." This discouraged me, for I thought if imitating was necessary to the ministry, I lacked that qualification also. Soon after this Elder L. L. DeLano came to our place and succeeded in getting me to tell him my feelings concerning preaching, for which I thought the Lord punished me for deceiving him. The circumstances were as follows: when the time came for him to go home, he chose to walk to the railroad station, which was about seven miles distant, providing I would go a distance with him. I readily consented, as I hoped he would talk on the call to the ministry, which he did without my alluding to it. He did it by relating the Lord's dealings with him. His experience was so much like my own that without a realization of what I was at I told him all. He remarked that this was what he wanted to hear long ago, which brought me to consider what I had done. I turned back, regretting that I had made such a fool of myself, just to deceive him. I had gone six miles with him, and remembering that my partner was in the shop hard at work, where I ought to have been, instead of doing what I did, I hurried back and took no time to change my clothes, but I went immediately into the shop; and seeing a horse standing there waiting to be shod, I took the broom to sweep the dirt from his feet; but by not using proper caution, he kicked me and broke my leg. This I regarded as a swift recompense

for my deceiving Elder DeLano. But after a few days, while brooding over the matter, I concluded I had got so avaricious that I had shamefully neglected the reading of the Bible, and the Lord had put me in a way to read it. So I went to reading, but my mind was everywhere but on what I read. Here I came to the conclusion that I was of no account to God, man or beast, but a burden to myself and family; yet I could not die, and was of no profit to live. The visibility of our little church was destined to be of short duration. In June, 1877, our number was reduced to only two, myself and sister Rebecca Easter, who (as you will remember) was baptized at the same time that I was, one year and six months before. We continued to hold our meetings regularly for about one year, and then disbanded. Elder DeLano acted as Moderator at the time, which was in October, 1878, and in November following I was received into the fellowship of the Olive Branch Church, Wood Co., Ohio, a distance of about eighty miles. I now thought the prospect of my ever preaching was at an end, though I had preached all the time along, if I ever preached; yet I did not regard it as preaching. I looked forward to the time when perhaps I might preach. I was aware also that the brethren thought I was called, and to correct this wrong idea I wrote letters to all concerned, telling them that they should not expect me ever to preach any more, for the little gift they supposed they had seen in me was merely a sympathetic feeling aroused for the little church, as they had no one to preach for them; but now that was gone, and my preaching was gone with it. Notwithstanding this, the Olive Branch Church in my absence licensed me to preach, in February, 1879, and in May or June following I visited the church. While at the station waiting for the train to come home, Elder M. Brown informed me of what the church had done. This was a great surprise to me. I took him and Elder DeLano (who had just come to see me off) and began to rebuke them, by telling them that I thought I had that matter settled by the letters I had written to them on the subject, and that they had mistaken fellowship for a qualification for the ministry; and I wanted them, the next time they met, to reconsider what they had done. I saw my argument had no force upon them, which caused me to feel rebellious. The sacredness of the ministry and its duties were set along side of my ignorance and imperfections in a moment when they told me of what they had done, for me to view and compare, which I did with a groan. I however saw that in my rebellious feelings I was faulting God's management of his church, and was rebuked in the thought, but conceived a more presumptuous one, for which I was fearfully chastised of the Lord afterwards. I remembered that when I received a hope I had often thought if I had my sins back again I would watch and see how and just when I

got rid of them, and then I would have a better evidence; and now I would profit by this, and watch every step of the ground over which I traveled, and be sure that I was called of God before further steps should be taken in my case, in which I thought I had the advantage, as they could not ordain me unless I was willing. I went on preaching as before, never finding a time when I did quit, but was always close to the time when I expected to. In August following I was taken sick with lung fever, being flighty most of the time for nine days and was constantly talking, supposing I was preaching. The doctor became alarmed and undertook to stop my talk by telling me I would have to die if I did not stop; but if I would be still, he would get me well in time for the association, which I begged for when in my right mind. I stopped talking, but it was because I forgot what to say, and worried more to think of something to say while he was there, than to talk. The association was to be in September following, in Van Wert County, Ohio, and at that time I was able to sit up most of the time. My wife tried to coax me out of going, but I would not give it up, so she had to get ready and go along to take care of me. My mind was so weak that I could not do any business, such as settling with customers that wanted to pay their bills. My wife would give them credit for money paid, telling them when I got better I would fix it all right. We arrived at the place of meeting all right, on Thursday before, and I commenced preaching, and preached every day and night while the association lasted. Then came the time that taught me a lesson never to be forgotten. On Sunday we were to meet a little earlier. After the congregation met, Elder G. M. Peters stated that the object of the early meeting was to consider the propriety, and if deemed proper, to ordain to the work of the ministry brother Uriah Trumbo. This was kept entirely from me until it was announced from the stand. Now you can see how I watched every step, as I so presumptuously resolved in June before. I offered no resistance; in fact I never thought of it, having forgotten all about watching. I told my experience, and with it my call to the ministry, as I did not know how to separate them. The council proceeded to ordain me without asking any questions, having heard me preach to that time. This took place on the 14th of September, 1879. I do not remember much of what took place at that meeting, but have learned it by hearing brethren rehearse it. My mind grew stronger, the more I came into the realization of what had taken place, and with it God granted me some resignation, I hope, as much at least as an ox has after the yoke has been put on. In April, 1883, I moved to Putnam County, Ohio, and in June, 1884, the Olive Branch Church, in Wood County, was disbanded. In July, 1884, I was received into the Sugar

Creek Church, Putnam County, Ohio, where I had located, and still remain, and have enjoyed sweet communion with the brethren here. Nothing much out of the ordinary duties of the ministry have occurred since, except a few trials in misfortune (as it is commonly called) and sickness. I will relate an instance when the doctrine of predestination was assailed at a trying time with me. Saw smithing is the trade I follow, and I have to go, when called upon, to the place where the work is to be done. On one occasion while adjusting a large circular saw that was running at a high speed, my left hand was caught by the saw, and three fingers were fearfully mangled. I was taken to the surgeon's office, who decided on trying first to save my fingers, as none of them were cut entirely off. During this operation, which lasted about three hours, the man whom I was doing work for took this opportunity to deal a death blow to predestination, as he knew what I believed and preached. A good many people were at the door, which was open. He asked me, in rather a loud voice, so that the company could hear, "What do you think of the doctrine of predestination now?" adding that he would curse a God that would predetermine such a horrible thing to him. I answered in the midst of my suffering by saying, "That makes it the more bearable to me, realizing that all things are under the immediate control and supervision of an infinitely wise God, who can stay the plagues he sends, and heal the wounds he makes; in which trust there is a sweetness in trials that you who believe in chance know nothing about. To you this might happen to kill, but to me there is no fear. When God is in it, all is well. But cruel chance, how hopeless are its victims. Do you not feel like cursing a God that instituted such a cruel thing as a chance, and leaving us to be its victims, from which we have no appeal?" Here he interrupted me, and said that he did not believe in chance any more than I did; to which the doctor replied, "Mr. Trumbo then must be right." This or something else softened his heart, for he paid the doctor's bill. One week afterwards I filled my appointments near Columbus, about one hundred miles distant, and my hand healed, disfiguring or crippling it but very little. In January, 1885, my wife was taken very sick, and I staid by her bed, never changing my clothes or taking my boots off for twenty days; and I neither sat nor lay down for seven succeeding days and nights in that time. This looks incredible, but it was occasioned by becoming so accustomed to that position that I could not sit or lie down without great pain. In October following I was taken sick also, and have not done a day's work since. However I have missed but few appointments.

These are some of my trials, both natural and spiritual, reaching over twenty-one years of time. Hoping to comfort some of God's afflicted, I have written this.

URIAH TRUMBO.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 25, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The following was written by our dear bereaved sister Hogeland at my urgent request, and I intended it to be published as a part of the obituary notice of her husband, Deacon John Hogeland, in the SIGNS for April 15, 1887, but it was omitted in the publication of that notice. Will you please give it a place in the SIGNS?

Your brother in Christ,

SILAS H. DURAND.

"WHEN my husband first experienced a hope he was away from home on a gunning trip. He was in great trouble of mind when he went, but I did not know it. Elder Quint, of Maine, was visiting this church at that time. I had been under exercise of mind for a good while, but always tried to conceal my feelings on this subject from my husband, knowing that he had been brought up a Presbyterian. He nearly always went to our meeting before we were married, and always went with me afterward; but I thought he would not like me to join the Old School Baptist Church. However I could not let him go away without telling him how I had been feeling, and that within a short time I felt that the Lord had manifested himself graciously to my soul. I felt that my sins, which had been as scarlet, were all washed away. (I hope when the dear Savior cried upon the cross, It is finished, that he remembered me. If not, I am none of his.) I felt as though if I did not tell him my feelings I could not stand it till he came home again. When I told him he seemed greatly affected. Tears ran down his cheeks, but I do not remember that he said anything. I told him that I wanted to be baptized, and would have to go to the Old School Baptist Church and tell them how I felt. He did not object at all, but said, 'This is a matter between you and your God.' He appeared very sad at our parting that day. He expected to stay a week or ten days, but about the middle of the week he returned, which surprised me very much. I asked him if he was sick. He said, 'O no, I am not sick, but I want to see some of the dear, old, despised people of our God, like Deacon Vanartsdalen and dear Elder Quint.' He told me he had been in great distress. The first night after he left home he could hardly sleep at all. The second night he did not get to sleep until after midnight. When he awoke in the morning he thought everything was praising God, and he was praising him, too, before he knew it. The words that settled and confirmed him in the precious hope were these, '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.' We visited Deacon Vanartsdalen and Elder Quint, and he was blessed with great liberty in talking with those dear old saints. He seemed to be praising God constantly for his great deliverance. The next Thursday we went before the church, were received, and were baptized the next

Sunday, November, 1866. But O what an unworthy member I have been. God has been so merciful to me. Deacon Vanartsdalen, about three weeks before his death, sent for my husband and told him that he wished him to be appointed deacon in his place. This, it seemed to him, would be impossible, for he felt so unworthy that he thought he could not serve. But when the church unanimously called upon him to take that office, he finally, though with great timidity, accepted it, and served about six years. During all his sickness I never heard him complain. When asked particularly how he felt, he would say, 'O, it is all perfect rest.' Once he said to me, 'I feel so calm, so quiet, such sweet peace.' He was sick ten weeks, and was confined to his room eight weeks. Two weeks before he was taken away he disposed of his earthly effects. He was sensible to the very last. About two o'clock in the morning he seemed greatly oppressed for breath. On being raised to almost a sitting position he looked around the room at the family, who were all present. His brother's wife, who had been baptized the year before, was also present. He reached out his hand to her and said, 'What is your claim?' She replied, 'I hope it is the same as yours, Christ Jesus.' He then called my name. I said, 'I am right here.' He said, 'I have had to go through great affliction.' I replied, 'Yes, the people of God are a poor, afflicted people.' He asked me to repeat that sentence. I did so, and then he seemed to break out in strains of love, ascribing all the power of God. He said, 'His will has sustained me in all this affliction. He has reconciled me to it. I am happy.' Then again, speaking very slowly and with some difficulty, 'All these things God ordained before the foundation of the world. Blessed thing! If man had the control over things, where would we be? Nowhere. How firm is his foundation.' Then he reached towards me and said, as I put my head down to him, 'So much I wanted to tell you.' Then he raised his hands, as though waving them upward, and sinking back upon the pillow quietly passed away."

KEZIAH HOGELAND.

"THEREFORE love is the fulfilling of the law."—Romans xiii. 10.

Then hatred is the transgression of the law. Every subject of law either loves or hates the law and the law-giver. No subject of law creates or begets itself; neither does it change itself from that which it was created or begotten. None then can fulfill the law but they who are begotten and "born of God;" for "God is love."—See 1 John iv. 7, 8. Neither can any ever fail to fulfill the law who are "born of God;" for they are born of incorruptible seed.—1 Peter i. 23. Then the anointed of God, which is Christ, is the only source from whence the law can be fulfilled. Men cannot fulfill the law, because "they are corrupt."—Psalm xiv. 1. "For all flesh had corrupted his way

upon the earth."—Gen. vi. 12. Then man never did nor ever shall obtain any favor or blessing of God for keeping any of his commandments, laws or statutes. This will appear when we consider this language of the Savior, "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."—Matthew xxii. 37-40. What but the pure "love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" ever has or ever can fulfill these two commandments? And if all the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments, what part or particle of the law or the prophets has or can be fulfilled by any other than the "love of God which is in Christ Jesus?" As all God's people are in the Father and in Christ, so the Father loves them as he loves Christ.—John xvii. 21, 23. All God's children are pure in heart, as God is pure, because they are born of him.—Matt. v. 8; John i. 13. The love of God is in all his children, because Christ is in them; and as they cannot be separated from him, they keep his commandments. Does not Jesus say, "If a man love me he will keep my words?"—John xiv. 23. Do they not "delight in the law of God after the inward man?"—Romans vii. 2. Is it not written, "Blessed are they that do his commandments?"—Rev. xxii. 14. "Blessed are they" is the cause of their doing them, and not their doing them the cause of their being blessed. It is also written, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."—John xv. 10. Does this express a possibility of their failing to keep his commandments and abiding in his love, or even the manifestation or experience of his love? Nay; rather it expresses the certainty of their abiding in his love, even as certain as he kept his Father's commandments and abides in his love. How else could he have said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full?"—John xv. 11. How could their joy be full if there was a possibility or a probability, yea, I might say a certainty, of their failing to keep his commandments, if it in any wise depended on their weak, fleshly, fallible nature? There was no possibility of Christ failing to keep his Father's commandments, because he was perfect in love, being God manifest in the flesh, and God is love; and because he "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God."—See Heb. ix. 14. All the worship of God's saints is through the same "eternal Spirit," and cannot be hindered nor fail. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 24.

ELEAZAR HARRYMAN.

LEXINGTON, Oregon, Dec., 1886.

BEDFORD, Pa., May 13, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I reached this place last evening, after a pleasant railroad ride of a few hours. I have been thinking much of the goodness and mercy of God displayed everywhere around me, revealed in the beauty of returning spring. I have witnessed a great variety of scenery since leaving home. The train sped merrily across the green fields, through the beautiful valleys, and around the mountain sides, while my soul has been filled with a sense of the goodness of our God. We have passed through a long and rigorous winter, and hail with delight the return of spring. In every budding plant, in every forest tree, and upon every green field, we read the lesson of infinite wisdom. 'Tis written everywhere in nature around us, in the new-born power of returning spring. Our soul is filled with praise to him who quickens the languid life of earth, and displays everywhere, from valley to mountain top, the wonders of his power. 'Tis the impress of that mighty, all-creating, and all-predestinating hand from which all creatures, destinies and incidents fall, to act their part upon the pathway of time. But more severe than an earthly winter is a winter of the soul, when our spiritual enjoyment seems chilled with earthly care and conflict, and we mourn an absent God; when the cry of despair seems lost in its own echo in the bleak and dreary winter night. "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there?" The hand that rolls back the literal winter must open the gospel fountain to the thirsty soul; and when this is his good pleasure, how refreshing the evidences of divine goodness to the one shut up in the long dreary winter; how infinitely precious the renewed testimony of the Savior's love. The eternal curtains are lifted, and we are again upon the delectable mountains of the christian's mortal pilgrimage. "The winter is past, the rain is over and gone." The brightest beauty of earth is lost in immortal glory. "The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."—Song ii. 12. We can roam at will, and with rapturous delight among the precious flowers in the gospel garden, and the spices thereof flow out, filling the sanctuary with sacred praise. May we wait in winter for the opening spring; wait in patient, fervent hope, confiding in him who holds our times in his hands.

I am now visiting churches in the bounds of the Juniata Association of Pennsylvania. Providence permitting, I hope to return home in a few days.

Yours in gospel bonds,
WM. M. SMOOT.

SPRINGTOWN, Texas, May 12, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please allow me space in the SIGNS to say that I have received five dollars more from Benton Jenkins, fifty-five dollars from George B. Hooton, Brooklyn, N. Y., two dollars and five dollars from per-

sons in other states, and three dollars from a sister in Canada. I have distributed what has been sent among the Springtown and Poolville brethren. These two churches number over sixty members. We feel thankful, and appreciate the kindness of the dear brethren to us, poor, sinful creatures.

We have been blessed with gentle showers of rain, and everything is promising at this time for a good crop of cotton and corn. Wheat cannot do much, but some oats are very good. We feel to thank God that he has permitted us to see a change for the better. On the 14th and 16th of April we had fine rains, and on the 8th of this month we were blessed with another fine rain. So the brethren generally are in good spirits, and can get anything they need to live on by going in debt for it. This they will have to do, for there is no money here. The dark cloud has burst and the gloom disappeared, and we feel to thank God and take courage. We have had some accessions to our churches lately. Two are to be baptized on Sunday, the 4th.

Dear brethren and sisters, pray for the poor and afflicted in this part of the earth.

As ever, your brother in Christ, I hope,

B. L. THRONEBERRY.

HICKMAN, Tenn., May 16, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to say to you that I prize the SIGNS very highly. It comes to me richly laden with the good things of the kingdom. O how often I have been comforted and consoled in reading the many precious communications from the dear brethren and sisters throughout the land. I would say to them, Write on; you do not know how many poor, afflicted souls you do comfort, confirm and build up. Often have I been made to say within myself, while reading of the trials and travels of some brother or sister, Surely I do know something about it; for here is one whom I never knew, whom I never heard of, that can tell my feelings better than I can myself. But then, dear brethren, we need not think it strange, for we read, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." I have had a great desire, ever since I have been reading the paper, to give to its readers some of my travels in this christian warfare; but barrenness in feeling and a knowledge of my inability to write for publication have kept me back.

Dear brethren editors, continue to write the editorials, for every one of them seems to be a feast within itself; and if there is any one of them that seems better than the other, my mind would turn to the one upon true worship. It did my soul good when I read it. I thought surely, according to this, I am a true worshiper; for from a feeling sense of sinfulness, and inability to render anything acceptable, I am daily made to say, God help me. God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

S. JONES.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Primitive Baptist Association called Baltimore, in session with the Warren Church, Baltimore Co., Md., May 18th, 19th and 20th, 1887, sends greeting unto the churches composing the same.

"Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."—Heb. iii. 1-6.

Time with its onward march goes on, and reminds us that another year is now numbered with the past, and that the time for another associational meeting is at hand; and according to our usual custom, you will expect from us a Circular Letter. The subject that seems to rest with some weight upon our mind is the christian walk; and the passage of Scripture which our mind has been called to may be found in Colossians ii. 6, 7: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." If we go back to the beginning of this epistle we will be enabled to see who the "ye" are that are addressed in our text. It is to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse, and, as we trust, to us who are now assembled at this association, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus everywhere (though sinners of Adam's race). The apostle in the first chapter of this epistle says that he does not cease to pray for them, that they might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." But, beloved, when we are led to view these things in the light of the knowledge of God, we are almost led to forbear writing to exhort our brethren unto love and good works, when we see how far we come short in our own lives in things pertaining to the kingdom of Christ; but the great apostle to the Gentiles could exhort his brethren unto love and good works, when at the same time he could say, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given." Beloved, we feel that it is a safe place to be in when we can feel that we are the least of all saints. We feel that there is no room then for boasting.

We will now try to see how we re-

ceive Christ, and the way we are to walk in him. To receive Christ is when by a blessed and happy experience we come to know him. We feel our need of great things, and find them all in Christ as we come to know more of him. We learn that he is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and we have received him as such. We come to see in him all patience, love, humility, meekness, and obedience to God. Let him be our pattern in these things. We walk in him when we look to him for grace and help, when we look to him to supply all our need. We walk in him when we walk in patience, love, and all the fruits of the Spirit. We walk in him when we have in us a spirit to ask what is the will of God concerning us, and when we can say, It is my meat and drink to do his will. We received Christ as being all that we needed to save us, help us, and guide us, and as our life and our example.

We will now try to show by Scripture testimony in what way we are to walk in him. The apostle tells us, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Eph. iv. 1-3. The blessed Savior said, in his memorable sermon on the mount, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. v. 16. Who are they that are here addressed? We think the Savior has told us in the fifth chapter: Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that mourn; blessed are the meek; blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; blessed are the merciful; blessed are the pure in heart; blessed are the peacemakers; blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake.—Matthew v. 3-10. The apostle tells us again, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us."—Eph. v. 1, 2. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."—Eph. ii. 10, 20. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1. We might cite many other passages, but we will let these suffice. Now, in view of these things, beloved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? that in our intercourse one with another in matters pertaining to the kingdom of God we should at all times endeavor to keep self in the background, and to be ready always to listen patiently to our brother's views; and if they seem to conflict with ours, we are commanded to reason together, but in the spirit of meekness and love. Just here we

feel like quoting from the present volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, January first, from a communication written controversially, which reads thus: "In order to endeavor to be of the same mind and judgment in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, it is necessary that the saints should, as often as may be, speak one with another of these things, and not only present to each other that in which they do see alike, but that also in which their views are of any difference, in order to see if the Lord will show them which is of the flesh and which of the Spirit. This is controversy. But it really seems as though there is no need that there should be bitterness in it, or striving for the mastery, or angry, sharp, or reproving words. Why should not brotherly love continue perfectly, while each expresses simply and freely what he understands as the truth of the subject, setting forth such testimony as the Lord has, in his estimation, given him, and while each gives kind and careful attention to the views presented in opposition to his, ready and glad to acknowledge candidly anything that appears well supported in those views? This is striving together for the faith of the gospel; striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; striving to be of one mind. It should be our anxious desire that this one mind, when we find ourselves agreed, should be the mind of Christ, rather than the mind of any one of us." We have quoted quite lengthily, but it seems to fit in our subject much better than anything we could have written ourselves. The brother will pardon us for our presumption.

"And stablished in the faith." What is faith? We are told that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We understand that Abraham was in possession of the faith here spoken of when he was called upon to offer up his son Isaac, accounting that God was able to raise him up again even from the dead. Also the same faith that enabled Moses, when he was come to years, to say, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."—Heb. xi. 19, 25, 26. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, 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."—Heb. xii. 1, 2.

"As ye have been taught." We understand by being first brought by the working of the Holy Spirit to see and feel our wretched and undone condition by nature, by reason of sin dwelling in us, to feel our utter helplessness, and to be brought to the ends of the earth, and to feel that all the goodness and righteousness we

have is as filthy rags; and then with the poet we are permitted to say,

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me."

The Lord says by the mouth of the prophet, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."—Isaiah xlii. 16. And again, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isa. xl. 1, 2.

"Abounding therein with thanksgiving." Beloved, do we not feel at times that we would never tire in our praises and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father for the manifold mercies and blessings which he has bestowed upon us, poor, unworthy creatures, when we are permitted to rejoice with our blessed Savior, and say, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Luke x. 21. With the psalmist we can say, "I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High." "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth." "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners."—Psalms ix. 2; xvi. 9; xx. 5.

We will close this already too lengthy article, as we fear, with a short exhortation from our beloved brother Paul. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."—Rom. xii. 1, 2. Also, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another."—Rom. xii. 9, 10. "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Rom. xii. 20, 21. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."—Hebrews xiii. 2. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalm cxxxiii. 1.

We trust that we have written in the fear of God, and to the honor and glory of his dear name. "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." Amen.

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those that love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfill his word."

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.
F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bryn Zion Church, May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1887, to the churches composing the same, sends this their annual Circular and epistle of love.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—The time is at hand that we appointed to meet again in an associate capacity, and, if the Lord will, to mingle our voices together in praise and thanksgiving to him that has kept us in love, peace and harmony. How wonderful is the power and love that bind the saints of God together. This love is strong as death, and is always testifying of him who is love and keepeth his saints. Love is the fountain from whence all true obedience flows. While we feel constrained to meet and assemble ourselves together time after time, it is also a sweet privilege so to do; not, as some vainly suppose, to obtain the love of God, or to cause him to love us, but because he first loved us, and we hope to experience and enjoy the evidence and witness of this truth. He hath loved us, saith the prophet, with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness has he drawn us to his service and praise, and to the enjoyment of this love for each other. Love is the fulfilling of the law and will of God; for there is no law against his will. He works in his saints both to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is well-pleasing to him and in his sight that we dwell together in love; hence the exhortation or command to "Let brotherly love continue." It will continue if nothing pertaining to the flesh comes in the way. Love is not something that we can manufacture, or that pertains to nature or to the flesh, but it is of God; and whosoever loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. That he should have all the glory, that his name, and his only, shall be mentioned in our deliberations, in our associations and meetings of love and worship, his name alone is to be known in the great work of saving poor, lost and helpless sinners; remembering, as we come together from different parts of the country, that the same God over all events in every place is in us all and in this event; and our appointment has been and is according to his divine appointment. We know this, because of the privileges we enjoy. We enjoy them in proportion to the preparation of heart by his grace; for we are fully persuaded that the preparation of the heart as well as the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. The professed religious world appoint meetings and fast days to attend to their business affairs. In the progress which they think they are making in helping the Lord to accomplish his purpose (if indeed they suppose he has a purpose)

they vainly suppose that he needs their helping hand, and will richly compensate them for their assistance in the great work of salvation; but we have not so learned Christ. We meet not to help him, but in the hope that we may enjoy a refreshing season from him, who is our help; that we may, if it please him, render praise and thanksgiving to the God of all comfort, who has done and is doing so much for us. We hope and expect in this opportunity to hear from each other of his doings among the children of men. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." We are called in one hope of our calling, and that hope is Christ; that we may be kept by his power, through faith unto salvation. We have learned, we trust, in measure, how helpless and dependent we are upon him for even one moment's enjoyment, even under the most favorable circumstances; and it must be entirely of him who has hitherto sustained us if we are ever so blessed as to dwell with him forever. It seems to us that much of our present enjoyment depends upon our knowledge of him. This seems to be the great and unspeakable gift, even eternal life; for we are told that this is life eternal, that we know him, the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. This knowledge is heavenly and divine. This no one can attain to, and is only revealed to the heart and faith of those whom God hath appointed unto this knowledge and salvation. Only as his Spirit is put into our hearts can we cry, "Abba, Father," or know him to be living in us. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." No one can witness to the life of Christ only as Christ lives in him. It is impossible that they should know, or testify truthfully of the resurrection of Christ, only as in their experience they have risen with him; hence the exhortation of the apostle to his brethren, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." We can only seek things that are desirable; and for them to be desirable we must first know them. "So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." All the blessed, heavenly enjoyments that we sometimes experience in meeting and in mingling our voices together in praise, are the result of the knowledge which God has given us of himself and ourselves, and are entirely due to that grace that brings salvation down to such poor, helpless sinners as we are. Then no marvel if we should love one another, and love to meet together, to talk and hear of the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of. We do not want any other compensation. There could be nothing richer or greater than this enjoyment of love and blessed hope.

"Tis a heaven below
My Redeemer to know,
And the angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet
And the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners adore."

The gifts and callings are all of God, and must and shall be to his praise. They are for the edification of the church of God, that the church may appear to his praise. The prayer of one of old was that we might have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. That is the prayer of the saints yet. Well do they know that nothing but grace will be to his praise, or will be acceptable with him. The form of godliness, or appearance of praise, may do for those that know nothing of his grace; but spiritual worship and heartfelt service to him are always rendered to him by grace, and in no other way, even by the child of God. If we render anything to him, it will always be in taking the cup of salvation. We do not learn obedience from choice, but through suffering, and that kind of suffering which is furthest from our choice. If left to ourselves at any time, to our own choice, we should gratify the flesh, which is death. The Savior of sinners, though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience through or by the things which he suffered. It was not the will of the flesh that he came to do, but the holy and righteous will of his Father must be done; and that will was for the Son to suffer and die, that his people might live. That will also embraces all the redeemed of the Lord; and they shall have fellowship with his sufferings and be made conformable unto his death; and through this suffering we learn obedience and love. Neither can we choose what kind of suffering we will endure; for the apostle says that if he should give his body to be burned, it would avail him nothing without charity. In this school of Christ we learn his will concerning us, and to obey that will. We find him to be all and in all the service and praise rendered unto him. The life that we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

May the God of all comfort be in our midst and preside over all our deliberations, and they shall be to his praise.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

The Elders and messengers of the Delaware River Association of Old School or Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Kingwood, Hunterdon Co., N. J., June 1st, 2d and 3d, 1887, to the several churches whose messengers we are, send love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the abounding goodness and watchful care of the immutable and covenant-keeping God, we are spared to meet again, according to our previous appointment, for which great privilege we surely ought to render thanks to him who keepeth Israel in safety, and supplies all our needs, bestowing every blessing upon us, both temporal and spiritual. As it has been our established rule, from organiza-

tion to the present time, to present an annual address by letter, we now would call your attention to the glorious subject of the final victory of the elect of God over every foe, both external and internal; and we have chosen as our text the following declarations of the apostle Paul: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. viii. 28-34. In the dark and inscrutable purpose of God, his true, tried and faithful followers, during the legal dispensation, as well as in the gospel day, have at times had to pass through fiery trials, in which it seemed to them that their God had utterly forsaken them; and like David, they have felt to cry in their distress, "Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail forevermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah." But untold thousands of the tried, afflicted and tempest-tossed children of God have received sweet consolation and real comfort by the Spirit's application of the substance of the following declarations: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee." The glorious and soul-cheering truth uttered by the Spirit concerning the Messiah is, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." The word will always be spoken in season and exactly right. Notwithstanding the rebellion and open idolatry of national Israel, God said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Said the adorable Redeemer, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Said the inspired Paul, "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." Also, if we read the

eleventh chapter of Second Corinthians entire, we shall see not only what holy boldness the apostle possessed, but that a graphic description of his sufferings is therein recorded; therefore that devoted servant of Jesus Christ was prepared to write the Romans the important declarations which we are about to consider in this our annual letter.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Having previously spoken of the various sources of consolation, and especially, in the two preceding verses, of the Spirit helping our infirmities, and that he gives those prayers, and those only, which are heard of God, the apostle manifests that ardent desire for his Roman brethren that he does in his other epistles, that they might, if according to the will of God, be well persuaded of the happiness and privileges of their condition, that they might be enabled to serve God with cheerfulness and freedom of spirit, and pass through the troubles and difficulties of the world, trusting in God; and although often they are in sorrows, sufferings and trials, which are not in themselves joyous, but grievous, yet in the purpose of God they redound ultimately to the good of God's dear children and his declarative glory. "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." In times of sore anguish and deep distress the question arises in the mind, If God hears our sighs and groanings, why are we not immediately delivered from our afflictions and troubles? In answer to which the apostle shows that not a "link" can be severed in the divine concatenation; for if such a thing could be, the "golden chain" of God's purpose would be broken; so that, although they are not removed, as we desire, yet God makes them work for good. But in order that none should be led into carnal security or a state of indifference, the apostle adds, that they for whom all things work together for good are such as "love God, and are the called according to his purpose." And this is not only true in itself, but is here asserted to be a truth known to believers, and no others. After positively asserting many things, the apostle says, "we know," do not surmise, or deduce from all the rest of the things enumerated, but certainly know; and this does not mean that believers know it merely in a "speculative" manner, but that it is a knowledge which they have in the heart, producing in them confidence; for "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant."

All things, whatever they be; all things indefinitely are here intended; but the extent of this expression is by many limited to afflictions; and while it is true that the apostle had been referring to the present sufferings of believers, and enumerating various things which are consoling, but, approaching to the conclusion of the

wonderful enumeration, the last of them is of a most comprehensive description; and that it is so, the terms he employs warrant us to conclude. All things, he says. And if the context necessarily limited this expression, its universality ought not to be contended for; but it does not. Is it more than the apostle says on another occasion, when he uses the very same expression, *all things*? and so far intimating any exception, adds a most comprehensive catalogue. "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." And again, "All things are for your sakes." See also Rom. viii. 35-39. That all things work together for the good of them that love God, is a truth affording the highest consolation, when applied by the Spirit, to believers; for these words teach believers that whatever may be the number and overwhelming character of adverse circumstances, they are all working for their good; and why? Because God governs the world, and is the sole Arbiter of all events; for the first cause of all is God; secondary causes are all his creatures, whether angels, good or bad men, animals, or the inanimate creation; and all secondary causes move only under his direction. Whenever the time comes, according to his purpose, God, the first cause, moves all secondary causes against his enemies, as it is said, "In that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground, and will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely." Also, "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid." If these last quotations do not show that Jehovah is the righteous and absolute Monarch of the universe, then there can be no meaning in terms, and language has no force. Right here, brethren of this association, we feel it to be binding upon us to propound a few questions. While it has been stated and advocated by some in various parts of our country, that these strong doctrinal points are not of much account, and are useless to dwell upon, we hope that not a member of this association has become so bewildered as to consider these things, which are the very "marrow" of the gospel, nonessential, or so much so that they ought not to be much dwelt upon. Dearly beloved brethren, if such feelings are fostered by any of us, where would be our fear and reverence of God, when this important branch of truth, which our God has revealed from heaven, is considered at best rather useless and unnecessary to dwell upon? What! shall our glorious Creator be taught by any of us, his creatures, what is fit to be preached, and what should be sup-

pressed? Is the adorable God so very defective in wisdom and prudence as not to know till his creatures instruct him concerning what would be useful and what would be pernicious? Could not he, whose understanding is infinite, foresee, previous to his revelation of this doctrine, what would be the consequences of his revealing it, until we poor, finite creatures should point it out? If it was in harmony with the will of our God to make known these things in his written word, and to bid his messengers publish them abroad, woe be unto that servant who attempts to so "soften" these matters as not to displease the world nor cross the "visionary notions" of some of his brethren. Objection has been made to the terms "Predestinarian Baptists." Can it be that any one of us dislikes to be called a Predestinarian Baptist? It is to be hoped not; for if we are not Predestinarian Baptists, we are not the class the New Testament Scripture describes.

"To them who are the called according to his purpose." It should cause the children of our God to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" when they see the divine harmony existing in the apostolic writings concerning the doctrine of God our Savior; for on the day of Pentecost Peter said to them who "were pricked in their heart," "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." The calling did not make the promise, but was the result of the promise. Said Jesus to his Father, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." We have in the Savior's prayer, and in Peter's declaration, exactly the same words, "as many as;" not one less, not one more, than the number embraced in God's purpose. They are called not merely outwardly by the proclamation of the gospel, but by the Spirit internally and efficaciously, and made willing to obey Christ in his ordinances, in this, the day of God's power. They are called according to God's eternal purpose, according to which he knew them, and purposed their calling, before they were made manifest by a fleshly birth; for all God's purposes are eternal; and the declaration of the inspired penman positively shows that their calling is solely the effect of grace; for when it is said to be a calling according to God's purpose, it entirely excludes works; as it is declared, "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." By these awfully sublime declarations it is clearly shown that it is an effectual and permanent calling, for God's purposes cannot be defeated; for "The counsel of the Lord shall stand," therefore their calling is according to the purpose of him who "worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will."

"For whom he did foreknow." This

declaration leads us on directly to a full and a most encouraging view of the progress of the divine procedure, originating with God, and carried through all its "connecting links" forward to the full possession of that glory which shall be known in heaven, when the saints shall awake with the exact likeness of their glorified Redeemer. Our God foreknows all things before they come to pass; but the apostle here is designating the elect of God; and the foreknowledge of God is accompanied by his all-wise decree; for, as it is said concerning Christ's crucifixion, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." The reason why this word is here used to denote the divine determination, is because the foreknowledge of God necessarily implies his purpose with respect to the thing foreknown; for our God foreknows what will be, by having determined what shall be. The Scriptures clearly declare that it is not because our God foresees a thing that it is determined, but because it is ordained by him to come to pass in the order of his providence; therefore his foreknowledge and determination cannot be separated by the ingenuity of the most subtle metaphysicians now living on the earth, for the one involves the other; for when our God determined a thing should be, he foresaw that it would be; consequently he determined with himself from eternity everything he executes in time; for "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." Our Lord Jesus Christ was delivered into the hands of wicked men, because God foreknew that such would be the case; but it was according to his fixed counsel and ordination, for there can be nothing contingent in the mind of Jehovah, who foresees and orders all events, according to his own unchangeable will. Believers are called "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;" and in the same chapter it is said of Christ, "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." Here foreknown signifies, as it is rendered, foreordained; for it is from the same original word; also, "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew," that is, whom he had before loved and chosen. A vast number of passages of Scripture, in addition to what we have quoted, might be adduced to corroborate the glorious fact that foreknowledge and foreordination cannot be separated, for they are cognate; the one is not separate from the other.

"He also did predestinate." Concerning this clause of our text, we do not feel to dwell very lengthily upon it, as we have already anticipated its just meaning; but as it is in divine concatenation, we shall make some quotations to sustain it, as well as some remarks concerning it. True believers in Jesus Christ rejoice that their heavenly Father has spoken in such positive terms concerning them. Paul says, "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained [pre-

destinated] before the world unto our glory." Also, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things [not part of them] after the counsel of his own will." As the term is used in these last quotations, it respects not all men indiscriminately, but only those on whom God has placed his love from eternity; and as then it is absolute and complete, so it is definite, and the number who are thus predestinated can neither be increased nor diminished. If it is, as declared, "to the praise of the glory of his grace," it follows that it must necessarily be by grace; that is, free, unmerited favor; and love to God, and a desire to be conformed to the image of Christ, cannot in any respect have its origin in fallen man. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us." "We love him, because he first loved us." "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." Will such glorious declarations of gospel truth lead the recipients of spiritual life to be indifferent and careless while passing through life's journey here on earth? Certainly not, unless the arch-adversary has them so in "coils" that barrenness and leanness of soul have taken possession of them; "for the grace of God" teaches his children, "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." The apostle has told us to "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering: forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

"To be conformed to the image of his Son." The trials, sorrows and afflictions of believers in this world manifest clearly that they are set apart from the great mass of mankind; for said the apostle, "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." And again he says, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body; for we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." Again said the apostle, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness,

which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." These declarations show that the conforming of believers to the image of their dear Redeemer begins in the world, and will be perfectly consummated in the world of immortal glory; for here believers are to "put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." In suffering they are conformed, in their measure, to him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." His children must endure tribulation, that they may "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church." As the Captain of their salvation was "made perfect through sufferings," so his people must follow him in sufferings; therefore the "outlines" of the image, so to speak, are seen in believers here in time, which will be perfected in heaven; for the apostle John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

"That he might be the first-born among many brethren." Grace was given unto the vessels of mercy "in Christ Jesus before the world began." Also, an apostle says, "A servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness: in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." In the determinate counsel of God the period would certainly come when his soul should be made an offering for sin, and he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, and by his knowledge many should be justified, for he should bear their iniquities. In the Redeemer's prayer he said to his Father, "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." By his obedience many were made righteous; and as the Captain of their salvation, he was to bring (not attempt or desire simply to do it) many sons unto glory; for "The gift by grace which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." And as he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, he is not ashamed to call them brethren; but in all things he must have the pre-eminence, for "he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all (things) he might have

the pre-eminence." Therefore he is the First, the Principal, the most Excellent, the Governor of his people, and their Lord. Regarding his glorious office, he is our King, our Head, our Lord, our Priest, our Prophet, our Surety, our Advocate with the Father, our all in every sense pertaining to our salvation; and he "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." His children are all his subjects, whom he leads and governs by his Spirit, for whose sins he has made atonement, by his sufferings in the flesh and death on the cross. They are his disciples, whom he has called from darkness into (not merely to) his marvelous light. Concerning the glory of the Mediator, "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." These declarations, recorded in the New Testament, harmonize exactly with the prophecy recorded concerning him in the Old Testament; for said the Father, "And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him, and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation. Also, I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him forevermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven." Under the law the first-born had authority over their brethren, and to them belonged a double portion, as well as the honor of acting as priests; the first-born in Israel being holy; that is to say, consecrated to the Lord. The word first-born also signifies what surpasses anything else of the same kind, as "the first-born of death," signifying a very terrible death, &c. Ephraim is called the first-born of the Lord; that is, his "dear son." In all these respects the appellation of first-born belongs to Jesus Christ, both as to the superiority of his nature, of his office and of his glory.

A vast amount of Scripture testimony might be adduced to sustain and corroborate the glorious truth that the final victory of the children of God is secured beyond the possibility of the power of any foes, or all foes combined, to ever deprive the feeblest child of the inheritance; for "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you,

who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

In this day of dire confusion, gross idolatry and avowed denial of the finished work of redemption, through the righteous life, bitter and agonizing death, and triumphantly glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, "the poor in spirit" rejoice in the immutably fixed purpose and the absolutely sure promise of their heavenly Father, that they "are more than conquerors, through him that loved" them; and times without number have the following consolatory words been applied with sweetness and power by the Spirit unto them, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Fearing that we might be tedious in our remarks upon this glorious theme, we will bring forward the residue of our text as the finality to this our letter. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who shall be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

WM. J. PURINGTON, Mod.

CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

To the several churches composing the Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1887, mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is a source of gratitude and thanksgiving unto us that our God, who is rich in mercy, has in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus preserved the visibility of our churches, and continued unto us our church privileges and blessings, thus enabling us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. It is presumed that the members composing our several churches have the interest and welfare of their respective organizations at heart, and desire the prosperity of Zion, and prefer Jerusalem above their chief joy. This at least should be the characteristic of all the living in Jerusalem; and we feel assured that if any of God's children are careless and indifferent in this respect, and forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, they cannot and do not realize the sweet blessedness which is found alone in a faithful obedience to the laws and commandments of Christ. "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."—Rev. xxii. 14. How comforting and consoling it is to the children of God

to know by experience and the assurance of the word of God our Savior that the perpetuity and visibility of the churches do not depend upon human effort or numerical strength, but upon the power and faithfulness of our God and Savior, who assures us by his word that "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."—Matt. xviii. 20. Therefore we are taught that the members who represent the visibility of our churches are those who have been by the power and grace of God gathered together in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Spirit of Christ in the prophet Jeremiah tells us how these pillars in the church are gathered together, when he declares, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

—Jer. xxxi. 3. The everlasting love of God and his loving-kindness are manifested in the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and in the complete redemption and salvation of his people, and by the witness of the Spirit in our own personal experience. By faith we are made to enjoy the sweet assurance of his declaration, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." By the omnipotent power of his life-giving word the dead are made to hear his voice and live. Poor sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened together with Christ, saved by grace, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. These are they who as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. These are the characters who constitute our several churches, and who are prepared by the teaching of the Spirit to receive the doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness which abound in the inspired Scriptures. It becomes us, amid the religious errors and delusions with which we are surrounded, to earnestly heed the teachings of the great Head of the church.

External appearances and professions are no sure evidence of the stability of a church. A church may be adorned with all the commendable graces accorded to the church at Ephesus, and yet lack the essential element of strength, as in the case of the Ephesian brethren. The Spirit charges them with having left their first love, and commands them to repent and do the first works, else their candlestick will be quickly removed from his place. We refer to this important subject because it is the faithful admonition of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, and who walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and who declares with absolute authority, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." May we be found walking in our first love as it was shed abroad in our hearts in the new birth, and doing the first works with gladness

of heart and willing obedience, as in the early days of our experience, and continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association of Old School Baptists, to the associations and meetings with whom she corresponds, sends greeting in the Lord.

BRETHREN:—We desire that grace, mercy and peace may abound toward you through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have met again in an associate capacity; and as has been our custom for so many years, we desire to inform you of our affairs. We have much to encourage us in the loving-kindness and tender mercy and faithfulness of our God. He has remembered us during the past year with unnumbered blessings; and where we cannot trace his goodness we desire to trust him until he makes his arm bare in our sight. Our churches report some ingatherings during the past year. We have hope that the Lord may still revive us. The letters from the churches inform us that they are at peace, and that they are still standing fast in the doctrine of God our Savior, as revealed in his word and in all christian experience. The predestination of all things that come to pass, the election of grace before the world began, the sovereignty of God extending to all things great or small, the special atonement for the elect only, the effectual call by grace of all for whom Jesus died, and of no more, the final preservation of the saints through faith to glory, the resurrection of the dead and final glory, are all principles yet dear to our hearts. We desire to stand fast in the present truth, and pray God that we may not be swerved from any of these things by any errors ancient or modern. Sinners saved by grace, must ever be our confession. We think the preaching at this session of our association has been unchanged from the preaching fifty years ago, when the separation from New School errors took place. All the principles of doctrine stated above have been proclaimed firmly and in love. Your messengers and messages of love have been gladly received, and we ask you to receive ours in return. May God bless and keep you in the faith and in the peace of God.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., at the usual time, at which time we hope to meet and greet you by letters and messengers again.

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

The Delaware Baptist Association, in session with the Bryn Zion Church, Kent Co., Del., May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1887, to the several associations with which we correspond, addresses this as her annual Corresponding Letter.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We are in

receipt of Minutes from nearly all the names upon our list, and from several we have ministering and other brethren as messengers. There are so few laborers in this part of the vineyard that it is especially gratifying to us to find that we are remembered, and that we are in receipt of much needed help. We hear of no disorder or confusion; but the testimony of both Minutes and messengers is of peace and harmony, and all striving together for the faith of the gospel and for the unity of the Spirit. Our session has been one of abundant comfort, wherein those fruits of the Spirit, love, joy and peace, have abounded. The churches report general enjoyment in their meetings, and good and encouraging attendance upon the ministry of the word. Preachers from abroad occupied the stand throughout the session, and the word preached was without a jarring note, and was received by the large congregation in attendance with readiness of mind and a solemn and sincere interest. It has been a sitting together in heavenly places, and a season that will not soon be forgotten. So far as we are able, we feel disposed to reciprocate the favor by Minutes and messengers to you.

Our next session is appointed with the church called Welsh Tract, to commence on Wednesday before the last Sunday in May, 1888. We hope that you will continue to manifest that you have fellowship with us.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with Kingwood Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The eternal, unchangeable God, who neither sleeps nor slumbers, and keepeth his covenant with his people, has again permitted us to meet in associate capacity, and we have great reason for gratitude to him who has preserved us from rationalism and the wild fancies of our carnal minds, so prevalent in this day of delusion, and that we can greet you in the love of the gospel and the fellowship of the saints, and receive your letters and messengers with gladness. Ministering brethren from several states came to us in the fullness of the gospel of Christ, proclaiming salvation of the Lord alone, the vital unity of Christ and his people, and the eternal predestination of all things, to our comfort and establishment in the truth. Our session has been harmonious throughout; no jarring notes of discord have marred our peace. The churches composing our associations are in peace, and contending for the faith of the gospel. We do not report large additions and great growth in number, but attentive congregations and earnest inquirers after truth, that we hope shall in due time bear fruit to the glory of God. And while we wait for the set time to favor Zion, we trust we are growing in grace and knowledge of truth and

are strong in the faith, resting in the finished work of Christ.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1888, at ten o'clock a. m., when we hope to receive your letters and messengers in the love and fellowship of the saints.

WM. J. PURINGTON, Mod.

CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

The Warwick Association of Old School Baptist churches, in session with the church at Middletown, N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1887, to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, send love in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the kind providence of our gracious God it has been our privilege again to meet in our annual assembly and to enjoy the manifestation of that love which is the fruit of the Spirit of God, abounding unto the perfect fellowship which is in Christ Jesus. By this heavenly principle we are still enabled to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. While the confusion of tongues in the religious world causes the earth to tremble, and the very heavens are dark with such threatening clouds as may well cause the hearts of men to be dismayed, it is sweetly comforting to such as have hope in God to rest in the assurance that the warfare of Jerusalem is triumphantly accomplished by the almighty captain of her salvation. Even her enemies can form no weapon which shall prosper against her. To carnal reason the prosperity of the wicked indicates that the Lord has forgotten his chosen heritage; but to the faith of his afflicted and poor people his glorious victory over every enemy is given by the revelation of that blessed comforter who takes and shows to them the things of Jesus their triumphant Redeemer. So that even while reason sees nothing but gloom surrounding the church of Christ in this day of will-worship and idolatry, still they whose trust is in the Lord are immovable as mount Zion, resting in the immutable truth and love of God.

Our session has been harmonious, and the ministration of the word by your messengers during this meeting has been with power and we trust with the demonstration of the Spirit, to the comfort and strengthening of the saints. Our next session is appointed to be with the church in Warwick, commencing on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1888, when and where we earnestly desire, if the Lord will, to meet your messengers and learn of your steadfastness in the truth. Brethren, pray for us; and may grace, mercy and peace from God be abundantly given you through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, to whom be glory evermore. Amen.

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1887.

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

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

"If it is not asking too much, will Elder Beebe please give his views on John v. 2-9, and oblige a sister in Christ?"

"MARIA C. GRAHAM.

"SCRANTON, Pa., Jan. 11, 1887."

R E P L Y .

"NOW THERE is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another stepeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath."—John v. 2-9.

It is with some reluctance that we comply with this request, as it embraces a subject which has quite recently been treated upon by an esteemed brother, whose eminent ability in the ministry has long been recognized by the church at large, as well as by all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. While it is not our purpose to controvert his sentiments, nor those of any other brother, we simply submit as requested such views as we have in reference to the text.

In the order presented in the record given by John, this miracle of healing was just after the two miracles in Galilee, by each of which the Lord Jesus attested his unity with the Father even in his humiliation under the form of a servant in the flesh. The incident of the healing of an impotent man, whose infirmity had continued thirty and eight years, of itself should have been sufficient to convince the most stubborn unbeliever; but even this act of mercy and compassion only excited the enmity of the zealous Jews. They could not believe that he who was the friend of publicans and sinners was the Redeemer of Israel. Indeed, to their minds the fact that he had thus violated their sabbath day was conclusive evidence that he was not the Christ of God. To suppose that this, or any of the miracles wrought by Jesus, was designed to convince his enemies of his divine character, would involve the absurdity of the disappointment of infinite wisdom and almighty power; since they were more bitterly enraged by every miracle he wrought. But when he called his own sheep, or people, they were at once obedient to his word; for he taught as one having authority, and never spoke to them in vain.

Of the literal facts connected with

the display of healing mercy in this case, no more can be known than what is here written, since there is no account of the circumstance given by the other evangelists. It is but one of the many miracles by which our Lord Jesus confounded the proud teachers of Judaism, who boasted that they were Moses' disciples. As such it attested the truth of his divine authority over diseases and infirmities, as well as over the elements and all the powers of earth. This evidence may even be received by the natural mind, and thus his eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen. There is therefore no excuse for infidelity; but they who do not glorify our Lord as God give evidence that they are willing votaries of the god of this world by whom they are blinded. To those who are led by the Spirit of truth there is something revealed far more important to them than what the mere letter of this record would convey. Of this we would write; as it is in this view of the subject that they who are taught of the Lord can find their own experience in the present time. If we could fully understand the inspired Scriptures, it would doubtless be seen that to all that is written there the saints have the witness in their own experience, by which each believer is qualified to bear testimony to the truth of every portion of that word. Since in our present state we know but in part, however, all is dark to us until the Comforter takes and shows unto us these things of Jesus.

It should be observed that the typical character of Jerusalem, as reflecting that church of God which is the embodiment of the redeemed, still continued until the fulfillment of all that was written in the law and the prophets. Therefore, until after he had nailed to the cross the handwriting of ordinances, Jesus limited the mission of those whom he sent forth to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but after his resurrection they were sent into all the world. This wonderful miracle was not only done at Jerusalem, but it was at the pool of Bethesda, which Hebrew name signifies "house of mercy." There lay in the five porches of this pool "a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered," not one of them able to do anything to cause the waters to move, nor to secure the benefit of their healing virtue. This strikingly agrees with the condition of that whole nation whose trust for acceptance with God was based upon their own works in complying with the requirements of that legal covenant which was enjoined upon them by the hand of Moses. The peculiar maladies specified were all expressive of the defects discovered in them by the law, by which is the knowledge of sin. They were so utterly blind that they called evil good, and good evil; they put darkness for light, and light for darkness; they put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.—Isa. v. 20. They were so crippled or halt that they could not walk uprightly as required by the law of that covenant in which they trusted; and

therefore they were so withered that they could bear no fruit of righteousness, but were hopelessly cut off and condemned by its precepts. In the case of the one to whom Jesus spoke, it is evident that he was more helpless than his companions, for there was always some other to step down before him into the pool when the waters were troubled. The fact of his remaining at the pool under such discouraging circumstances shows that it was his only hope for relief from his infirmity. This is the case of every conscious sinner until he hears the voice of Jesus. Nothing but failure and disappointment was ever realized from efforts to fulfill any conditions by which to become righteous; yet he can hope for no relief from any other source but obedience to the holy law. This therefore he earnestly but vainly seeks, for there is nothing but condemnation there. When in his last extremity he hears the voice of Jesus, it is indeed "the joyful sound" to him, for at that word his sins are blotted out, and he lives in that eternal life which only Jesus can give. There is no account that any one of them who lay in the porches ever attained the healing which he sought there. Certainly there never was a sinner justified by the deeds of the law. But the voice of the Son of God brought life and health to the helpless sufferer in such a time and manner as was entirely unexpected; so the trembling sinner hears the life-giving word of Jesus, and in that instant his sins are washed away in the cleansing blood of the Redeemer.

The question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" is just the inquiry which is applied in every experience of the salvation which is by the grace of God. It is by this searching question that the conscious sinner is made to realize the hopeless destitution in which he lies condemned under the just sentence of the holy law. The reply of the poor invalid states his helplessness. So the convicted sinner can see no way in which he can hope to secure the healing mercy by which he must be cleansed from his sins. No man is found to aid him in the time of his need. This destitution might well cause the sufferer to despair of relief, even though he should see the waters moved by the angel of mercy. So in the case of the sinner when the truth of his condition is revealed to him. He feels that mercy may come to others around him, but he is without strength to secure its benefits, and he has no man to help him. Truly his prospect is gloomy as was that of the impotent man. But it was to this helpless man that Jesus spoke the healing word which gave strength and will to obey the joyful command. The "great multitude" of them who lay in the five porches neither received nor fulfilled the direction. It was a special and particular election which chose this invalid as its object. There is no account that he was in any respect more deserving of favor than any of the others. Yet "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk."

If some of his companions had attempted to obey this word of Jesus, it would not have been honoring to God, since the direction was exclusively given to him. The word itself being spirit and life, could not fail to fulfill the design of Jesus. The man was not *invited*, but *commanded* by divine authority and power. His will was swallowed up in the will of God which was wrought in him. The law of Moses could interpose no impediment in the way of implicit obedience to the divine mandate, even though the man knew not who he was that had spoken unto him. That word which called light to shine out of darkness gave both will and power to this poor invalid to obey the command of the Lord. It was not left to his judgment to decide the point whether the word was worthy of his attention. He heard and was made whole without volition on his part. So with every sinner who hears the voice of the Son of God. He is made alive by that quickening word, without so much as knowing that such grace is given to him before he finds the new principle manifested in him producing love of holiness and hatred of sin.

In regard to the statement that an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water, we have no clear conception either of the literal fact or of its significance, beyond what is stated in the text. It is plainly recorded, however, that the pool afforded no relief to the impotent man to whom Jesus spoke. If any of the "great multitude of impotent folk" were ever benefited by its waters, it is not included in the testimony of Jesus. Those who seek salvation in the pool of the "house of mercy" should ascribe all their praise and thanksgiving to that pool; but those who are saved by hearing the voice of the Son of God can give glory to him alone. Even now there are many professors of religion whose trust is alone in the infinite mercy of God, who yet have no regard to the justice and judgment which are the habitation of his throne. These characters wish only to escape the punishment due to their sins, while they have no desire to be saved from their sins. They do not love holiness nor hate iniquity, neither do they feel their sin as a burden. Their only wish is expressed in the prayer of Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his?" They have not that faith by which Moses was led in "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."—Heb. xi. 25, 26. Carnal selfishness would never choose this portion of suffering affliction, nor find in it the recompense of the reward which is so precious to those whose highest joy is in the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. By the healing found in the water of Bethesda there was afforded occasion

for boasting; since all depended upon the activity of the impotent character who was able first to step in after the troubling of the water. Evidently such mercy could never benefit one who was "without strength," as are all those to whom Jesus brings salvation by his almighty grace.

In the fact that this miracle of mercy was done on the sabbath day, there is not only shown the sovereignty of the Son of man over the appointments of the law of Moses, but that he is himself the end of that law for righteousness to every one that believes.—See Matthew xii. 8; Romans x. 4. By the letter of the law it was forbidden the Israelites to do any work on the day which God gave them as the sabbath; hence the Jews were unable to accept even this miracle as evidence that Jesus was indeed the Christ. They saw in this display of healing mercy only a violation of their sabbath, and this was enough to satisfy them that Jesus was not even a good man, much less the Messiah for whom they were all looking. So to this day legal religionists attach vastly more importance to the observance of a weekly sabbath according to their traditions than to all the injunctions of the inspired law. It cannot be regarded as merely accidental that this and other wonderful works of our Lord were done on the sabbath day. It is evident that the design was to show that all that law was fulfilled in himself, and that they whom he made free were free indeed. In its application to the experience of the subjects of salvation, there is peculiar fitness in the man in the text being healed on the day of rest. After the toil and labor which has filled all their days of weary efforts to attain righteousness by their own works of obedience to the law of a carnal commandment, the voice of the Son of God brings not only justification of life, but that perfect righteousness is shown to be without works. Every dead sinner who hears this voice instantly lives, and all who are made alive by that quickening word are free from sin. They are no more under the law, and therefore can no more come into condemnation; but are already passed from death unto life, and that life is everlasting.—John v. 24.

To those who have been translated by the sovereign voice of Jesus out of the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God there is no other day but the sabbath, as it is written, "There remaineth therefore a rest [or, keeping of a sabbath] to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."—Heb. iv. 9, 10. The law of our King forbids the subjects of his grace to go back to the works of the law for righteousness. Perfect rest in the finished work of Jesus is the law of this day which the Lord has made, and which is the only christian sabbath. It is here that all the typical sabbatic days and years are fulfilled in the experience of those who are cleansed from sin by the blood of Jesus; and often do they

prove by bitter experience the death to all their joys and comforts which results from their attempts to work a robe of self-righteousness in this gospel sabbath. They will ever find all their efforts to make themselves righteous by their own works to be productive of nothing but filthy rags. "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."—Isaiah xxx. 15. In this sabbath day all the gracious works of God for the deliverance of his people are manifested to them. There is rest for them nowhere else.

The subject suggests much more of the unspeakable riches of that grace by which the sins of all his people are washed away in that precious blood which Jesus shed for our redemption, but these reflections must suffice for the present. If they shall afford any comfort to our inquiring sister or to any lover of divine truth, to the grace of our Lord Jesus is due all the praise. May we, with all who feel their helplessness, realize the healing virtue of his word, and evermore rest in his perfect salvation.

WHOSE FAULT WAS IT?

OUR readers will remember that in the number for June first, 1887, we copied a letter from *Zion's Landmark*, signed by Wm. H. Raulerson, N. R. Raulerson and Joel W. Swain, in which they charge us with neglect, if not dishonesty, in regard to mailing subscribers their Church Histories. In reply we gave a statement of our system of mailing the books. We have since then instituted inquiries, and learn from the postmaster at their office that the three books were delivered to Mr. Joel W. Swain's son-in-law. Perhaps brother Swain gave his son-in-law the two letters to mail that he claims to have sent us without receiving any reply. If so, we would suggest that he request his son-in-law to examine his pockets and see if he does not still have them, as he seems to be a little absent-minded.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER H. B. Jones having changed his residence from Longview, Texas, to Glenwood, Upshur Co., Texas, desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Halcott Church, Halcott Centre, Greene Co., N. Y., commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in July, meeting to commence at ten o'clock, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. Those coming on the cars will be met at the Griffin's Corners depot on Friday afternoon, the day before the meeting.

J. H. SCUDDER, Church Clerk.

PLEASE publish in the SIGNS that a yearly meeting is to be held with the Middleburg Church, in Broome, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in July, being the ninth and tenth days of the month. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth.

Done by order of the church.

M. P. COOPER.

MARRIAGES.

ON May 4, 1887, by Elder William J. Parington, at his residence, Mr. William H. Hoggeland and Miss Ella C. Nevins, both of Hopewell, N. J.

ON May 31, 1887, by the same, at his residence, Mr. John V. Snowden and Miss Emma N. Lennard, both of Lambertville, N. J.

MAY 15, 1887, by Elder Wm. A. Campbell, Mr. John Miller and Miss Mary Offord, both of Camal, Lycoming Co., Pa.

IN North Berwick, Maine, June 5, 1887, by Elder Wm. Quint, Mr. John B. Clark and Miss Nellie M. Reynolds, both of Sanford, Maine.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At Summitville, N. Y., Monday, June 6, James A. Dorman, in his sixty-fourth year.

Mr. Dorman was born at Cobleskill, Schoharie County, N. Y., July 27, 1823. When six years old his parents removed to Lewis County, and settled, and he acquired a good common school education, the best to be had in those days, becoming an adept at mathematics and surveying. In 1846, when twenty-three years old, he, among others, became imbued with the western fever prevalent at that time, and going west visited Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Michigan, becoming in turn pedagogue, drover and surveyor. In 1848 he was employed by the Ontonagon Mining Company, of Chicago, to locate their different possessions on the peninsular, and in August of that year he headed the largest and best equipped expedition that ever explored that great fastness. They remained during the winter and successfully located all the great mines of the company. Becoming tired of the monotonous life in these regions he turned east and arrived in New York City early in 1849, where he immediately laid the foundation of a large fortune. In 1850 he married Emily, daughter of Henry Christie, of Haverstraw, N. Y., by whom he had two sons. In 1851 he leased and opened the first live hog market in the city. In 1858 he bought the City Mills and engaged in the manufacture of feed, until 1862, when having to undergo an operation for his eyesight he was compelled to sell out. He built and patented the famous floating mills and elevator which were sold at a great profit. In 1865 he purchased the celebrated Moore Distillery, the largest in the country, which the turn of affairs compelled him to relinquish after eighteen months' operation. He was the owner of St. John's Military School at Sing Sing. Having lost his wife in 1875, he married two years later Mary J., daughter of Capt. Thomas Denton, of Wurtsboro, N. Y. Four years ago he removed to Summitville and engaged in the mercantile business.

Mr. Dorman was a gentleman of a high order of intelligence, unfaltering honesty, intense ambition, sterling business qualifications and unimpaired integrity. He had many times been misled by business associates, and lost a large portion of his vast fortune through trusting to inferiors.

The funeral was held at Summitville, on the 8th inst., Elder Vail, of Waverly, N. Y., officiating. The remains were interred at Haverstraw, N. Y.—*Wurtsboro Dispatch*.

Brother Dorman was baptized in the fellowship of the Middletown and Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, Sept. 24, 1870, and remained a worthy member of the same until he removed his membership to the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, of New York City, where his membership was at the time of his death. He was a warm-hearted, generous brother, one who loved not in word only, but in deed. His generosity to the church at Middletown during their financial embarrassment will not soon be forgotten by us.

May the Lord comfort his bereaved companion, our dear sister, and be more than a husband unto her.—ED.

My dear mother, Mrs. Stephen Cory, was born in Hampshire County, West Virginia, and when about twelve years old moved

with her parents to Ross County, Ohio. Her parents, Peter and Mary Sperry, were members of the Old School or Primitive Church, and her father was an able minister. About the fifteenth year of her age she joined the Baptist Church. In her twenty-first year she was married to Stephen Cory, January 16, 1822, moved to Henry County, Indiana, in November, 1825, and settled in the wild woods, where they endured many hardships. A short time afterward she united with Salem Church, in Wayne County, Indiana. After a few years Lebanon Church, in Henry County, was constituted, and she moved her membership there, where she remained a faithful member till her death. At the time of the division she stood firm on the anti-means doctrine, and ever remained so. As a christian she set an example worthy of attention. Her last disease was paralysis. She had a stroke Feb. 5, 1884, which partially paralyzed her right side and so affected her speech that she could talk but little. In February, 1885, she had another light stroke, which made her more helpless and so affected her speech that she could call but a few words. She was blessed with wonderful patience in her affliction. Surely she could not have endured had not God stood by her in every time of need.

Father and mother moved to New Castle, Henry County, three weeks before father's death, in September, 1884, where she remained until September, 1885, when she moved to Isaac B. Maule's, her son-in-law, and her youngest daughter, in Randolph County, Indiana, where we cared for her day and night. We had noticed a gradual decline in her health for six months, and about five weeks before her death she took a cold, which reduced her very much; but her courage kept her sitting in her chair the greater portion of her time till the morning of November 25, when she was suddenly taken with a terrible pain, which continued about three hours, when she became completely paralyzed. In this condition she lay until Friday night, the 27th, when her spirit took its flight to realms of eternal rest. O how we miss her. On Sunday after her death Elders Jackson and Weaver preached her funeral, after which her body was interred by that of her husband, in the Old Settlement grave-yard, to await the resurrection morn.

She leaves seven children and their companions, twenty-eight grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren, together with the church and many dear friends, to mourn her absence, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe she is now enjoying that sweet love of which she so often sang.

This notice was written and mailed in February last, but from some unknown cause failed to reach the press. We ask to be remembered at the throne of grace by all the dear saints.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all, in hope of eternal rest,

NANNIE MAULSBY.

WITH sadness of heart I announce, by request, the death of our dear and beloved brother in Christ, William L. Craven, of Philadelphia, Pa., who departed this life on Thursday, June 2, in the sixty-second year of his age. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., by Elder William J. Parington, on the second Sunday in June, 1876. On April 7, 1877, he deposited his letter with the Salem Church, of Philadelphia, where he remained a devoted member up to the time of his death. Brother Craven was widely known and much loved, particularly in the bounds of the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick Associations. His home was truly a Baptist home, and friends passing through or visiting Philadelphia invariably directed their steps thitherward, always receiving a cordial welcome from him and sister Craven. He was most happy when talking of the things of his Father's kingdom and his Savior's precious love, particularly with the brethren in the ministry. He was strong in the faith, a firm believer in the predestination of all things, prompt in the discharge of all his duties, desirous to serve; and although well provided

with this world's goods, he was as humble as a little child. He retired from active business on the first of January, this year, and since that time his mind has been especially directed to heavenly things. Like a child from home, he seemed anxious to be released from this mortal and corruptible body, that he might put on immortality and realize the hope that was so strong within him. He had put his house in order, and was ready at any time. When the summons came, almost his last words on earth were, "Come, Lord Jesus." With Paul he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

At the funeral Elder Joseph L. Staton spoke with power from 1 Cor. xv. 22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Elders S. H. Durand and P. D. Gold were also present, taking part. Sister Craven, two sons and one daughter mourn the loss of husband and father; and while sorrow is felt by all who were near and dear to him, we are confident that he now inhabits the realms of eternal glory, where "No chilling winds nor poisonous breath Can reach that healthful shore; And sickness, sorrow, pain and death Are felt and feared no more."

B. F. COULTER.

By request of the dear departed one I will give the many dear friends in the state of New York a short sketch of the last days of Hannah Swartout, wife of Albert Swartout, of Lenawee County, Michigan. She was born in Ulster County, N. Y., in the year 1842, and died April 20, 1887. She was united in marriage to Albert Swartout in the year 1881, in Jackson County, Michigan, and united with the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Columbia, Jackson Co., Mich., I think, on the second Sunday in May, 1881, and truly she seemed like a weary child returning to a dear father's home. So glad was she to meet with the dear brethren and sisters that nothing could hinder her but sickness, and she could not do too much for them. O how many happy hours I have passed in her company, talking of Jesus and his everlasting love to sinners. Her theme was Jesus, the only true and living way. Although God in his wise arrangement saw fit to afflict her, and she suffered greatly for nearly four years with an abscess on her side, accompanied with dropsy the last two months of her mortal life, yet she never murmured or said it was hard. She said if it was the dear Lord's will she would like to live and bring up her darling babe and be a comfort to her dear family. But the good Lord's ways are not our ways, and he saw fit to take her to himself in glory. I witnessed her last moments, and she requested me to pay this last sorrowful tribute to her memory. For a few hours she seemed to be bereft of her reason, yet at the last, I think, she was in her right mind. She suffered greatly all night, and just before she died had three spasms. Just before the spasms she called the names of her sister and brother in the state of New York. Her last words were, "Pray, pray." She leaves a sorrowing companion, a dear and loving daughter, and a little one four years old. O how we miss that dear pale face in our meetings. May God comfort the grief-stricken companion and all the dear ones with the sweet consolation that her pain is over. These lines came into my mind after beholding her dear face in death,

"Sorrow for joy she has exchanged,
Forever freed from pain,
And in the heavenly regions range—
For her to die was gain."

Elder Swartout spoke on the occasion from Psalm xvii. 15, to a large congregation.

M. P. LEWIS.

Giles Gordin died at his residence in Madison County, Ohio, April 12, 1887. He was born in Botetourt County, Va., March 3, 1810. He came with his parents to Clark County, Ohio, in 1816, and was married to Phebe Stevens in 1832, of which union there were eleven children born. His wife departed this life in 1861. He was married to Delia Linson, with whom he lived until his death. He joined Bethel Old School Baptist

Church, in Clark County, Ohio, in 1837, and was baptized by Elder Vann. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone. He was paralyzed for two years and seven months before his death, so he was helpless. Through his affliction all the enjoyment he had was when the brethren came to see him and talked about the doctrine of God our Savior. He leaves a wife, eight children, four brothers and seven sisters to mourn the loss of an affectionate husband, father and brother.

His funeral was preached by brother Walter Yeoman, from 1 Peter ii. 9, "But ye are a chosen generation," &c., which was a favorite text with the deceased. His remains were laid to rest in South Solon Cemetery, near his late residence. He was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than forty years.

FREDRIC GORDIN.

DIED—At his late residence near Brentsville, Prince Wm. Co., Va., May 4, 1887, Mr. John Sullivan, in the ninety-first year of his age. The deceased was in many respects a remarkable man. Simple in his habits of life, he was favored with excellent health throughout his long life, and up to within a short time of his death was able to work some upon his farm. While not a member of the visible church, he was a strong friend of our people, and argued well in defense of the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace. He leaves several children, besides other relatives, to mourn their loss.

At the funeral on the 6th inst., the writer spoke briefly from the ninetieth Psalm and tenth verse. The mourners have our sympathy. We rejoice to know that our destiny is in the hand of a sovereign God, who will do all things well.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCOQUAN, Va., May, 1887.

DIED—In Jay, Maine, May 24, 1887, sister Mary J. Macomber, widow of the late Tilson Macomber, aged sixty-seven years. Sister Macomber had a severe shock of paralysis last February. For a few days afterward she retained her mind partially, and could converse a very little; but for nearly two months before she died she was entirely unconscious. Sister Macomber obtained a good hope, was baptized, and united with the Jay Church, some thirty years ago. She manifested the work of grace in her heart daily, by her godly life and conversation. She possessed an amiable and lovely disposition, and was a warm-hearted friend to all, old and young, especially to the household of faith. She leaves children and grandchildren, and many other relatives, to mourn their loss.

Her funeral was largely attended, all feeling that a humble christian was now resting from all her labor here below.

H. CAMPBELL.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, June 1, 1887.

Stephen D. May was born in South Carolina, December 6, 1807, and emigrated with his father to Greene County, Alabama, about the year 1819. In the year 1833, in Greene County, Ala., he was united in marriage to Miss Jane G. Meador. He remained in Alabama until the year 1850, when he moved to Fayette County, Texas, where he resided until 1854, then moved to Bell County, Texas, where he resided until the time of his death, which occurred Nov. 4, 1885. About the year 1834, in Alabama, he united himself with the Primitive Baptist Church, of which he was a member at the time of his death. His disease was pneumonia. He was aged seventy-eight years less one month and two days. He left an aged widow, one son and two daughters to mourn their loss. We loved our dear father well, and often think of him and the advice he always gave us.

JOHN D. MAY.

DIED—At this place, on the morning of the 20th of April, our afflicted sister, Mrs. Hannah Swartout. She was born in Ulster County, N. Y., and there spent the greater part of her life. She came to Michigan a few years ago and united with our little church by baptism and experience. Her life was one of sadness and disappointment, and

her death and sufferings of the most painful kind, being long afflicted with a sort of cancerous tumor. Those whose dear ones pass away without apparent suffering cannot know what it is to see them suffer so. She had every care in her long sickness, and leaves a husband, two daughters and many friends to remember her.

Elder Swartout spoke very suitably at her funeral from the words, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

MRS. KATE SWARTOUT.

KELLY'S CORNERS, Mich.

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TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THE Broad Creek Church has fixed upon the third Saturday and Sunday in July for their two days yearly meeting, services to commence each day at ten o'clock a.m. This is a change from the time published in the association minutes.

The morning train will be met at Laurel on Saturday.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

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This is a very interesting and comforting book to all Old School Baptists, written by sister Kate Swartout. It contains 304 pages, printed in large type. Price, single copy 75c; per dozen, by express, \$7.00. Send draft, money order, or registered letter, to Mrs. Andrew J. Swartout, Woodstock, Lenawee County, Michigan; but money orders must be made payable at Brooklyn, Michigan.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

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IS PUBLISHED

THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH
OF EACH MONTH,

BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS,

To whom all communications should be addressed, and directed, Middletown, Orange County, N. Y.

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B. L. BEEBE.

WM. L. BEEBE.

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The most convenient and the safest way of sending remittances is by post-office money orders, which should invariably be made payable to G. BEEBE'S SONS, at Middletown, N. Y., and not at the New York City Post-office, and always enclose the order in the same envelope with the letter containing the information for what it is to be applied. When it is not convenient to procure a post-office order, the money can be enclosed in the letter, and registered, and it may then be considered safe. But we especially request our friends not to hand the money to postmasters to enclose for them, nor to send us postage stamps, as they are not easily disposed of, and soon accumulate to a cumbersome amount. We must also request that bank checks on distant banks be not sent, as they are subject to quite heavy discounts.

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ON

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1887.

NO. 14.

POETRY.

JAMES IV. 14.

Time is winging us away
To our eternal home;
Life is but a winter's day—
A journey to the tomb;
Youth and vigor soon will flee,
Blooming beauty lose its charms;
All that's mortal soon shall be
Inclosed in death's cold arms.

Time is winging us away
To our eternal home;
Life is but a winter's day—
A journey to the tomb;
But the christian shall enjoy
Health and beauty, soon, above,
Far beyond the world's annoy,
Secure in Jesus' love.

BIRTHDAY REFLECTIONS.

(JUNE 14, 1815—1887.)

A MONUMENT of mercy before my Lord I live,
And for his boundless goodness to him my
thanks I give;
Thus far along my journey he's safely led me
through;
His goodness have I witnessed till I am
seventy-two.

I oft am made to wonder why I am left to
stand
Amidst the many dangers around on every
hand;
Why one so poor and barren should cumber
thus the ground,
A tree that has no beauty, on which no fruit
is found.

A wonder unto many that long my life have
known,
As one so nearly worthless, so little good has
done;
And equally surprising, when all my faults I
see,
Has been their long-forgiveness and patience
unto me.

Though I've been a professor since eighteen
thirty-three,
When I my life look over it does appear to
me
That I have done but little as it should have
been done,
So full of imperfection that like me there is
none.

Yet I have long been trying the gospel to
proclaim,
And to set forth the glory of Jesus' precious
name;
But seldom have I spoken and closed to take
my seat,
Without most keenly feeling that it was in-
complete.

The longer I have traveled along the chris-
tian race,
The more I view salvation as being all of
grace;
No other plan could rescue a sinner such
as I;
On this I live at present, on this I hope to
die.

Soon shall my hope be tested, and I shall
shortly know
My final destination, let it be weal or woe;
In thee, O Jesus, Master, I humbly trust my
all,
Till I shall end my journey, and thou shalt
for me call.

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, III.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"For the fashion of this world passeth away."—1 Cor. vii. 31.

These words have been on my mind for a considerable time, and have presented themselves in so many different ways that for the relief of my mind I have felt disposed to write a few thoughts on them for the consideration of those that feel they are pilgrims and strangers in this vale of tears. Were I to write all that I have felt, I would begin with a long apology for presuming to intrude my poor productions upon you or your readers; but I will not say anything more than to state the fact that I do feel that I am one of the poorest, weakest, most unworthy sinners that ever had a hope in the mercy of God, and that the declaration of the apostle Paul in his letter to Timothy has been a very great comfort to me at times, "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."—1 Tim. i. 16. He seemed to have reckoned that if there was mercy for him, none need despair, which, I think, is the feeling of all God's dear children when in their right mind. I feel very much like pursuing this subject a little farther, as it magnifies the riches of God's grace, and humbles poor, vain man, who is so prone to pride and vainglory. I speak for myself, and I hope my testimony is the experience of the household of faith. I will return to the words at the head of this article. The apostle in this chapter is exhorting and instructing his brethren as to their walk and conversation; and as if in conclusion, and to add a solemnity to these precepts, he, as it were, sums up the whole matter with the words, "For the fashion of this world passeth away." And if this is the case, what does it matter to us what the world may think of us? for we will soon pass away from it, and have to do alone with him who inhabiteth eternity. Therefore it becometh us to listen well to the precepts and instructions he has laid down for our guidance here in this sin-cursed world. The psalmist says, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace to his people and to his saints: but let them not return again to folly."—Psalm lxxxv. 8. O that I and all God's dear children could at all times attend to this exhortation or example, and how much more pleasant and sweet would be their intercourse with one another

as they journey along from strength to strength to the end of all things here below. But alas! the fashion of this world in a thousand different forms diverts their minds from going straightforward as did the living creatures in the vision of Ezekiel; and whenever our words or actions do not go straightforward with the word of God, we may rest assured that we are going after the fashion of this world, whether we are aware of it or not; and it is my humble opinion that there is more of a tendency among the subjects of grace to be led astray into the paths of error and false doctrine than to follow the vanities of the world in natural things, though even the vanities and fashions and frivolities of the giddy multitude have been and still are temptations that beset very strongly many of the subjects of God's grace, and carry them captive into the land of the enemy, so that it seems as if their chief enjoyment was to live and act in harmony with the fashionable throng that think of nothing else but to be leaders of fashionable society. O that they might think seriously of the words of the apostle, "The fashion of this world passeth away." And what does it matter what the world may think of me? Would it not be better for me and more for my comfort and the honor of my Master to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, knowing that all other necessary things will be added? The wise man, after he had tried all the pleasures and comfort that the world could give, pronounced them all vanity and vexation of spirit; and he certainly had opportunities of proving the truth of it, much better than almost any other one we can think of, as he had riches and power bestowed upon him in abundance, so that whatever his heart desired he could procure. But alas! it was only vexation of spirit to one who had known and felt the importance of the things of eternity, and the sweet and comforting power of God's presence and grace in the forgiveness of sins. But I must end this part of the subject, with the hope that God's dear children may follow the exhortations of the apostle as laid down in this chapter, as the time is short; and let them that use this world abuse it not, for the fashion thereof passeth away; but let them live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world, looking for and hasting unto the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and doing nothing that will tend to shame or reproach, but that we may, as the apostle says, be

blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; giving none occasion for the enemy to speak reproachfully concerning them, as is sometimes done, to the great grief and confusion of their brethren. O how sad it is to see a brother whom we have esteemed and loved as one of the excellent of the earth, and to whom we have looked to for advice and counsel, go after the follies and fashions of the world, and actually carried captive by the devil at his will, and apparently given over to hardness and impenitence of heart. May the Lord keep us, lead and guide us by his Spirit, looking unto him for strength equal to our day. There is another more insidious way that we may be carried away by the fashion of this world, in placing reliance on what men may say about the word of God, even good men; and it is an evil that is very wide spread, even among those that profess to know and love the truth, but who read or listen to what this or that great, good man says, instead of inquiring at the mouth of the Lord, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not. Let us still remember, "The fashion of this world passeth away," in whatever form it may appear; and I take it that everything is the fashion of this world that is not of God; but he and his word and his work will stand when time shall be no more. Then fear not, ye heralds of the cross, to declare all the counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear (for the fashion of this world passeth away, with all its new-fangled notions, which are in opposition to the word of God), and place the crown on our God; or in the beautiful words of the poet, "Crown him Lord of all." Allow no one to share the power and glory with our God, for it is he that sitteth upon the circle of the universe, and the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before him. And yet vain, puny man will dare to arraign him at his bar, and say that if he does thus and so he is unjust, and is the author of sin. But know, vain man, he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin. And the great apostle to the Gentiles stops all argument upon the question, saying, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Dare not to question his power, his wisdom or his justice, and remember he is thy Creator; and how dare you ask, "Why hast thou made me thus?" but rather bow in the dust of humility and revere and

adore thy God; and if a subject of his almighty saving grace, love him with all thy soul and strength, and under all thy trials and sorrows pray for submission to his holy will and pleasure. And just here I wish to say that I read in a book published by an Old Baptist this sentence in reference to the creation of man (and it was a sorrow to me, as it is certainly not a form of sound words), "God made man able to stand, but liable to fall." Now the apostle tells Timothy to use sound speech that cannot be condemned. Now let us examine this statement and see if it is in accordance with the word of God or sound speech. If there is any place in the whole of the inspired record that justifies the statement, I would like to see it. But let us follow the subject and see where it will land us. It is said that Christ was verily fore-ordained before the foundation of the world as the Redeemer of his people.—1 Peter i. 18-20. Again, Paul says to the Ephesians (i. 4), "According as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world." But I need not quote the pen of inspiration to prove to any Old School Baptist that God chose his people in Christ before time began, as that is one of the fundamental truths of our faith. Well, if these things were all settled before time began, according to the eternal purpose of Almighty God, then according to the statement that God made man able to stand, he was able to make null and void all the purpose of God in the salvation of his people. I would ask in all sincerity, Can this be called sound speech that cannot be condemned? I think not; neither do I feel that it is the doctrine of God our Savior, which is not yea and nay, or a peradventure or uncertainty; but all the promises of God are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God. It may be that the author was afraid the character of God would be stained if he were to admit that God purposed and decreed the fall of man, purposed that he should disobey the command he had given him. I would say, Fear not; for the great eternal Jehovah is able to defend his holy character against all the aspersions of those who know not God and who hate his truth. He says he hath made all things for himself, yea, the wicked for the day of evil. He said unto Moses, "Go and tell Pharaoh to let my people go, that they may serve me; but I will harden his heart that he shall not let the people go. And I will multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt." Mark well, vain man, the ways of God. The fashion of this world is to say that God withdraws his restraining hand and lets Pharaoh harden himself. I know nothing of such reasoning, neither by revelation nor the word of God in the inspired record; but he says, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up." And if any one wishes to dispute with his sovereign Maker about his doings, I am out of the quarrel, feeling that the fashion of this world will

soon pass away. I hope I have by the grace of God become settled and grounded in the truth, and I desire to leave all the opinions and speculations of men aside, and look to the Lord for direction and wisdom; and I dare not question his right to work all things after the counsel of his own will, nor to set up my judgment in opposition to his sovereign will and pleasure. To me it is a most unspeakable comfort to know that the God whom we adore does rule, guide and direct all the affairs of the universe with unerring wisdom; and were it not for that blessed confidence, I feel that I should sink into despair. And now, lest some remarks that I have made respecting the opinions of others should be construed to mean a desire not to correspond with one another, or go to hear God's servants declare his testimony, or the fellowship saints have with one another, I desire to say that I think the greatest comfort I have is to meet with those I love in the truth, and to hear the servants of the Lord declare his counsel, and speak of the unspeakable riches of Christ, and his power to save all who come unto God by him; and none have any desire to come but those whose hearts he has touched with his Spirit and made alive from the dead. I hope I have had many comforting seasons in reading the communications of the brethren and sisters through the SIGNS and otherwise; and we have the inspired record as our guide and example for meeting and speaking together, and exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see so many departing from the faith and giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We are commanded to turn away from all such, and from all things that have not "Thus saith the Lord" as a standard. I humbly hope, poor and sinful as I feel myself to be, I can say with the prophet of old, I am very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; and my desire is that his dear children might walk in the truth, and have their hearts rooted and grounded in the truth, that the enemy might not get an advantage over them. Do not be afraid of the floods of ungodly men, nor their vain imaginations, for the fashion of this world passeth away. Neither need you fear, trembling child, that God is not able to defend his holy character against all the aspersions of the enemies of the truth; for he will take vengeance on all his enemies, and bring his children through all their trials, safe to his kingdom of glory.

I have written the foregoing to satisfy my mind, and send it to you to publish, if you feel disposed so to do. If not, cast it in the fire, and all will be well. S.

MAY 17, 1887.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., June 28, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The inclosed narration of experience is from my sister-in-law, and is, I think, a clear narration of the manifest power of God in bringing

sinners to know and love him. It has been of great interest to me, and I believe it will be to others also. I often get very cold, dull and listless, and feel as though nothing spiritual would ever again have power to move me. But I do not think I have ever yet been so cold that I could hear the story of the grace of God as told by a new-born child in the kingdom of heaven, unmoved. My heart does burn within me when living experience is told. It is so wonderful that a dead sinner should live, that a stranger should be a stranger no more, but a fellow-citizen with saints. I cannot help rejoicing that here is another who is redeemed from wrath and brought to God by the blood of Christ. And so I rejoiced when it was told me that the writer of this, and two of her sisters, had about the same time each received a hope in Christ. And, in the fact that I could rejoice, my own hope was strengthened.

I remain your brother in Christ,
F. A. CHICK.

LIVERMORE FALLS, Maine, Jan. 7, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER FORRIS:—It has been a much longer time than I intended it should be, when I received your letter, ere I find myself attempting to answer it. And if I had not promised you to write what I trust have been the Lord's dealings with me, I should not, probably, do so now. Not for the reason that I am unwilling to speak of his goodness and talk of his love, but because I do not feel as if what I may say would be for the comfort or edifying of any. But I know God is able to use the weak and foolish things of this world for his own glory. "And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." The apostle has made it very plain that there is not a possible chance of the creature glorying in himself; for he goes on to say, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." So if I tell anything at all, it must be what God has done; for it is God that works in us, both to will and to do, and that of his own pleasure.

I cannot remember when I could not discern the difference between preaching that declared the salvation of God's children as completed already, the work finished that the Father gave his own Son to do, and that which made the salvation of sinners as dependent on certain conditions which the creature himself must fulfill, and then Jesus would do the rest. In my mind at that time, however, I distinguished the first mentioned kind as that which gave God all the glory, and the other as that in which man had a share. I think, as nearly as I can judge after so many years, that I was about six years of age when I heard Elder

Campbell preach this doctrine that ascribes all honor and glory to him to whom honor belongeth; and there came to my heart the knowledge that it was true. I remember saying to myself the words, Truth! truth! Moreover, I was glad that it was true. It did not seem strange that I should feel as I did about it, but rather that all could not see that God was a being all powerful, who would carry on his work, and none could let or hinder. Through the intervening time till I was about twenty, I had thoughts about death and the future, as I presume all do, but not with any particular feeling of concern as regarded myself. That God had a people whom he loved with an everlasting love, and that the work of regeneration in the heart was both began and carried on by him, I never seem to have doubted. But now I began to be dissatisfied with myself. That which I would not, I did; and the things I would, I did not. I was selfish, unkind and hateful to those that I loved the best. I do not mean to say that I was any worse than I had been all my life, but that for the first time I saw myself as I was in the sight of God. The resolves made to do better were broken by a worse exhibition of my natural depravity than any before. I wanted to do right, but what I did was all wrong. I knew not what to do, but I tried to pray, and my words fell down to the ground. The heavens were shut up, the sky was as brass, through which no prayer of one so wicked as I could reach the divine ear. My sins seemed greater than ever; for what a vile one to attempt to approach God in prayer. Every thought and imagination of my heart was evil. I longed to be freed from the burden of sin. But I was such a sinner, could God be just and save me? It was the pure in heart that should see God, and I was all impurity. Yet there was comfort in these words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Surely I thirsted after righteousness. I had none of my own, could get none, was empty of every good thing; and God's promise was true; but it was not for me. All the pleasures of the world lost their interest for me. When surrounded by the gayest circumstances, then my loneliness was greatest. There was nothing satisfying on the earth. I saw my own self, knew what a sinner I was, and that there was nothing to help or justify such, except the blood of Jesus, which cleanseth from all sin. Now there came a time of deeper trouble than I had known before. I was forsaken. There was no eye to pity, no ear to hear. God might and could save others, but not me as sinful as I was. Then I once again tried to pray, and, behold, he heard me! The quiet peace of that moment can never be described. I could then say with the psalmist, "Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me."

For a time it seemed enough just to know that he heard me when I cried unto him. It was soon after that, as I was reading the twentieth chapter of John, when I came to the place where those disciples to whom Jesus first appeared told Thomas that they had seen the Lord. But he said unto them, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." I felt those words were for me, who, like Thomas, doubted that the Lord had died and rose again for me. But when I came to the verse where Thomas himself saw his Savior, was convinced, and said unto him, "My Lord and my God," I could say the same. I knew the peace there is in believing. How precious did it seem to say, "My Lord and my God!" Now, not only was he the Savior of others, but mine too, even my Lord. Very dear will the memory of those early days of my experience ever be. There was a sacredness about everything. I felt that I was walking with him in newness of life, and for a time I seemed at rest, and did not feel to speak of the things I had enjoyed. But soon I began to see that I ought to confess this Savior before men, and to ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I had been attending prayer meetings among the Baptists of this place, and I felt a desire to tell them of my new found hope. But I began to fear it might not be so after all. Perhaps I had deceived myself, and should deceive others. Yet I thought, You have enjoyed so much, should you not be willing to tell of his goodness? When the day came on which the prayer meeting was held, I earnestly besought God that some token might be given me, if it was his will for me to confess him before the world. Yet the day passed and no word of encouragement had been given. I felt sad and depressed, when a few moments before the hour of meeting these words, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," came as a voice from heaven. I felt the presence of the One mightier than all in the place, and trembled before it; but quick as thought came the answer from my heart, I will serve the living God. I had been made willing in the day of his power. I seemed lifted above my surroundings and out of self, and as if though an host were encamped against me my heart would not fear. I need not say that I desired to tell what great things God had done for my soul. No language can express my feelings then, as these words of the psalmist do, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." "For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." What a beautiful spring that was! I had always loved the season in which nature clad herself anew in beauty, but now every leaf and blade of grass were praising God, and my heart was in unison with nature.

God had dispelled the unbelief that had enveloped me, and I basked in the healing rays of the Savior's love. Then hope, love, joy and peace sprang up in my heart. Could the life and beauty of the whole earth vie with the life within? But they were both the work of God, and his works shall praise him. For "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." And every soul renewed by the Spirit says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." During this time I thought of writing to some of the Old Baptists, and to tell them of my hope. But after all the divine favor that had been mine, I felt afraid that I might deceive them, or as they had known how little like a child of God I had always been, they might not think it possible for such a change to have taken place. You can see how very ignorant I was, and how easily Satan made me doubt my experience. But Elder Campbell, on his way to an appointment in Jay, stopped a few hours with me; and I, although harrassed by many fears, decided to tell him of my hope; for that voice, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," was above that of the tempter's. So I remarked to him that I had some good news to tell him. "What kind of news is it?" said he. "The best news in all the world," I answered. "I hope God has forgiven me my sins." But I could say but little more. Satan was there, telling me that I had better have said nothing at all. However, Elder Campbell asked me to write him of the way I had been led, which I did. I soon received a reply, in which he said, that if he was a child of God himself, he felt that I was one. How strange it seemed, and yet how exceeding precious to have one upon whom I had always looked with reverence, call such an one as I a child of God. The subject of uniting with the Old School Baptists was one on which I had but one mind. I was not worthy to be among them; but if they saw fit to receive me, that was my home. If I was saved, it was God's work, not mine, and I desired to unite with that people who gave all the glory to him. Although the Baptist society in this place, among whom I had passed the darkest as well as brightest part of my experience, had my warm esteem, I was not drawn to them to find a home. So at the July conference in Bowdoinham I tried to tell some of the Lord's dealings with me; but I think I said but very little. However, I was received, as you know, along with dear sister Belle, and on Sunday was baptized. It was a beautiful day, and all fears had flown. As I went down into the water I realized as never before that I was walking in Jesus' footsteps. Such a solemn thing to do, and such a privilege to one that loved him. The first verse of the ninety-seventh Psalm came to me with power as I came out of the water, "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." It seemed so plain that the

Lord ruled, and nothing took place without him. I needed not to fear that I had gone contrary to his will; for the Lord, not man, reigneth. What a sense of security it gives a child of God, when he is pleased to reveal something of his omnipotence to them. How safe are the sheep of his fold; for God is the Rock of their salvation. "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite," says the psalmist. When we feel the same, David's God is our God. Precious, wonderful and blessed. How often we use those words when talking of God's love to us. Yet even those words fail to express the real blessedness of a heaven-born soul; for the peace of God "passeth all understanding." I have been led so gently, and have so often been refreshed beneath the shadow of the great Rock in a weary land, that I realize, it seems to me as plainly as the Israelites must have of old, when the cloud went before them by day and the fire by night, that he hath led me about and instructed me.

Your sister,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

GHEAT, Ky., May 3, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother W. Spitler, of Montrose, Illinois, in which I find the following: "Now if you feel free to do so, I wish you would explain to me by private letter or through the SIGNS, just which you prefer, 1 John i. 8, and iii. 9." It may be that many of the readers of the SIGNS would prefer that I should answer by private letter; but this one thing I know, that I cannot write that which would edify God's dear people unless guided by his Spirit. If what I write affords comfort and instruction to the dear saints, it is not mine to withhold; and if I were to do so, it would be wrong; and knowing that the brethren editors of the SIGNS labor diligently to prevent error appearing in its pages, I feel that I can safely submit my poor, feeble thoughts to their scrutiny. If they should withhold from the public my writings I should feel grateful, instead of a spirit of complaint.

Without further preface, I would here remark that the subject to which brother Spitler invites my attention is in the following language, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John i. 8. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. It will be remembered that these texts were recorded by John, that loving disciple through whom our Lord gave to his church three epistles, which from beginning to end breathe a spirit of love. O that that Spirit could to-day pervade the hearts of all God's dear people, and inseparably unite them as one people in the bonds of sweet christian fellowship! Not only do the dear saints receive the sweet, comforting and consoling truths contained in those epistles from the pen of that

loving disciple, but they are blessed in the unfailing providences of God with that most wondrous book, the book of Revelation, from the same pen, guided by the unerring Spirit of prophecy, in which the dear saints are enabled to behold the matchless goodness and mercy of God, in revealing to them the "things which must shortly come to pass." For that purpose he was banished to that lone isle by a Pagan monster; yet that monster did not know the wonderful things which God was about to show to that disciple for the instruction of his dear people through all coming time. Thus John was eminently prepared by the Spirit of our God to record the wonderful truths contained in the texts to which brother Spitler invites our attention, truths which are found in the experience of every regenerated son and daughter of the Lord Almighty. In the daily experience of the saints they are made to cry out, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Therefore they accept most fully the language of John, who says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The wheat and the tares must grow together; but it is the Spirit that quickeneth—the flesh profiteth nothing. Then in their experience God's people realize the presence of two natures in them. All his people are taught of the Lord, and they all learn the same great truth. One of them said anciently, "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 the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Romans vii. 21-23. The apostle delighted in the law of God after the inward man. He delighted in the law of God because the inward man is renewed day by day. He did not delight in the outward man, for the outward man must perish. The inward man was created in Christ Jesus unto good works; the outward man was created in Adam, and to him and all his posterity it is declared, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." "The wages of sin is death." We have daily ocular demonstration of the dominion of death over all the descendants of Adam. By their relationship to him they are involved in the penalty of the law, which is death. As the wages of sin is death, and as death is the inheritance of all, so certainly are all sinners who die. Then it is clear that "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Surely those who say that they have no sin have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, hearts and do not understand, and the truth is not in them. Those who know the truth know Jesus, for he is the way, the truth and the life; and he is exalted at God's right hand, for to give repentance unto Israel and the remission of sins. Repentance means "turning away from;" and God's people, beholding him by faith as a Prince and Savior, one who is

able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him, turn away from their sins and their iniquities; yes, they abhor themselves, and repent in dust and ashes. That repentance, that turning away from sin, is the effect of that new heart which is given them in the new birth, in regeneration. Before that period they did not abhor sin nor desire to turn from it; but when born of the Spirit their cry is, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" That delivery is never completed while clothed with mortality, no more than are the tares rooted up. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Thus the warfare commences in regeneration, and goes on till time with this old man is no more. While in that fearful conflict the prayer of the dear saint is that he may be kept from every false way. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults," comes welling up from his heart; and, like Peter, his cry is, "Lord, save me!" He sees the fearful waves of sin rising around him, ready to overwhelm him; and when he, like Peter, feels that he is sinking, that faith which was given him in regeneration looks to Jesus, that precious name, which is a strong tower, into which the righteous flee, and are safe from the fearful storms of sin and iniquity; but ere they are aware they are again resting on the bed of carnal security. Then to the saint it is night. The natural darkness which surrounded Peter when he thought he was sinking was not more intense than the spiritual darkness which envelops the dear saints when they are depending upon their natural powers. But they are still saints, as much so as Peter was a disciple when he thought he was sinking in that mighty storm amidst that fearful darkness; but it was not too dark for him to see Jesus. The storm was not too fearful to destroy his faith in the power of his adorable Lord. The roaring of that mighty tempest could not quiet his love and his confidence in him whose power hushed into silence the troubled elements. The bride cried to the watchmen, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" Although it was night to her, and she was mourning the absence of her Beloved, yet her trust in him was not abated, but her love was made more intense. She says, "I found him, and would not let him go." Thus in every conflict in this fearful warfare the saints look to Jesus for help, for strength, and for the power to overcome the wicked one; and in his name their final triumph is sure, their victory certain, because he in whom they trust has all power both in heaven and earth. If there were no warfare between that which is born of the flesh and that which is born of the Spirit, there would be no looking to Jesus for help amidst those fearful conflicts, and no sweet songs of praise to him for his precious manifestations of his love in their delivery from the wiles of the

wicked one. Then surely they cannot say, We have no sin.

But "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The apostle uses the word "man," and illustrates the difference between the natural and the spiritual when he exhorts the saints at Ephesus, saying, "Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Eph. iv. 22-24. Thus the apostle presents the contrast between the old man and the new man, the natural and the spiritual, and this looks to their headships: Adam, the head of all the natural family; and Christ, the head of all the spiritual family. The apostle describes those two headships, saying, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." The words "was made" are in Italics, and hence are supplied. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 45-48. The natural are all corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; for they are like their head and progenitor, who was of the earth, earthy. The spiritual or new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. They are they "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." The new man is of heavenly origin, for he is born of God. Being born of God, he belongs to that family which cannot sin. It would be just as possible for God to depart from his infinite purity and commit sin, as it would be for that new, spiritual man which is born of God to commit sin. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The promise to Abraham was, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Christ was that seed. Abraham was declared to be the father of the faithful; and Christ was his seed, in which all the families of the earth were blessed. Then it is Christ in all who are born of God the hope of glory. In speaking of them, Peter says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. That seed is Christ in them the hope of glory. He says of all the redeemed, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." He is the life of his people; and he once was dead, but now he is alive forevermore. It is that eternal life which dwells in him that he gives to his redeemed in

that new birth; hence it is incorruptible and cannot sin. We all have natural life by reason of our descent from Adam, and in that natural life we all sin. All are sinners; and the wages of sin being death, our natural bodies die, "as in Adam all die." They die because they remain corrupted and corruptible, and must return to dust. Then surely "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." If the flesh is worked over in the new birth and made spiritual, it certainly could never die; for that which is spiritual is not subject to death, but that which is natural. Adam was a natural man, and died; so all his family must and have died. Adam violated the law and incurred its penalty, which was death, and death reached the whole man; no part was exempt. In his mortal body were the seeds of death profusely sown, and in their harvest untold myriads of his offspring have been carried to the dark caverns of the tomb; none exempt. He died to holiness. The last vestige of that purity which was his in the garden took its final leave of him when he violated the law of his Creator, who said to him, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." There was no limitation in that word "die;" it reached the whole man and his posterity.

It is written, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." The word "order" in that text is a limiting word, and limits the sentence to every man that was Christ's. They all shall have life at his coming. He came to seek and to save that which was lost; and all that were of that order were lost in Adam. And every part of man being dead, being lost, every part that was so lost must be redeemed, must be saved. Then, without doubt, it is the whole man that is saved. That salvation was secured and completed when Christ arose from the tomb. His death, in the fulfillment of the law, and his resurrection from that state of death in which his precious body lay those three days, were in strict accord with the eternal purpose of God, and fully accomplished that which was fixed in infinite wisdom and unchanging love, which was to save his people from their sins. When the angel announced to Joseph his birth and his mission to earth, he did not mean that a part of each one of his people should be saved, but he meant just as he said. "His name shall be called Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Every part of each one of his people shall be saved from the consequences and dominion of sin. For this purpose our Lord laid aside the glory he had with the Father before the world began, took upon him that body that was prepared him, in which he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, passed through the gloomy scenes of Gethsemane, and the fearful agonies of Calvary, was laid in the tomb, and arose a mighty conqueror.

That was a complete conquest over that death in which his people were involved by the fall in Adam. As that death reached every part of man, so that redemption saves every part of each individual of the redeemed family. In the garden of Eden Adam had no sin till he violated the law. Then he was driven out, and condemned to death. But by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus he is saved from that death, because his Lord is both his resurrection and his life. In the resurrection of his Lord, by reason of his unity with him, he had secured to him a complete conquest over death and over the grave. Then it surely is man that is saved with an everlasting salvation. But man in his relationship to the first Adam is entirely destitute of the ability to enjoy the glorious things secured to the redeemed in their eternal salvation. Hence our Lord says, "Ye must be born again." In that new and spiritual birth they have a foretaste of the joys of that salvation. The apostle says, "What! 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?"—1 Cor. vi. 19. But, mark you, that body is not the Holy Ghost, but it is the temple. He says, "the Holy Ghost, which is in you." Surely the Holy Ghost, which is in all the regenerated sons and daughters of the Most High, doth not commit sin. But that body in which it dwells sins daily, and consequently must die. It was from that state of death in which all the bodies of all the redeemed were involved, that Jesus came into the world to save, and did save, by the one offering which he made on Calvary, and by his resurrection from the tomb. The angel said, "He shall save his people from their sins." The *ultimatum* of sin is death and the grave; and most certainly by his death he did redeem them from death, and by his resurrection he did redeem them from the grave. He, by the prophet, says, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death." By reason of their unity with him they have these great and glorious things secured to them. He is their resurrection, their life, their wisdom, their righteousness, their sanctification and their redemption, and he is in them the hope of glory. John says, "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." He that is in those little children is their life, and doth not sin. The evidence that each one of those little children has that they are born of God is, that they love one another. O that we all could give better evidences that we are the children of God, by ceasing to find fault, complain of and persecute others. Being born again, they have a foretaste of the joy of their salvation, and they rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. They could have no confidence in it, for they know that it is mortal and must die. But, O glorious

thought! O blessed assurance! faith unfolds to the enraptured vision of the dear saints that the time will surely come when the bodies of the dear saints that have long laid in the dark caverns of the tomb, because they were mortal, will put on immortality; yea, will have given to them by their adored Redeemer, who is their resurrection, that spiritual, eternal and immortal life which was given them in regeneration, and which could not sin, because it was from God. In that spiritual, eternal and immortal life they will be saved from their sins; for then this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption. Then shall be brought to pass the saying, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," to whose wonderful name be all the glory.

If this should find a place in the SIGNS, brother Spitler will please accept it, feeble and unsatisfactory as it no doubt will appear to him, as a token of that love and fellowship which should bind all the dear saints in sweet union and harmony while here below; and the brethren editors will please dispose of it as they may deem best, and believe me affectionately theirs,

H. COX.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., May 12, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The subject of the covenant has been a source of much pleasant meditation to me, and if what I write will be of any benefit to any of the Lord's children who read the SIGNS, I offer it as a mite in the way of a contribution. We are not our own, or in other words, we do not belong to ourselves, if we are the Lord's; and I am sure, if we are the Lord's, all we have is his, and when we offer anything we will say as Solomon said in the building of the temple, "What we have brought is thine." And if we offer anything in building up and edifying the church that we did not receive from the Lord, it will prove useless in his glorious kingdom and spurious in his cause. The covenant is, as we understand, the constitution of heaven touching the salvation of the Lord's people, the church; and I do not know but that the covenant is the base-work of all creation, as well as salvation; and I feel satisfied that all the saved of Adam's fallen race are saved upon the principle of that covenant ordered in all things and sure. We find many cavilers and objectors to this plan of God, and they ask with some emphasis, "Where recorded in the Bible?" We answer, From the first chapter in Genesis to the last verse in the last chapter in Revelation, with line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, confirming the child of God in that holy faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe

that Jesus was a covenant Savior, and he came according to the promise made before the foundation of the world. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost." Some of those wise (confounded) Babel builders say that is spurious; but I take it as a truth taught and set forth repeatedly in the New Testament, and I believe it with all my heart. Jesus, speaking by the mouth of the psalmist, said, "It is written in the volume of the book, I come to do thy will, O God." Jesus was represented as occupying a throne before the world was, holding a book in his right hand, sealed with seven seals. These seven seals have been unloosed, and he has revealed their contents to them that fear him; for he says, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and to them he will shew his covenant." And Jesus said that some things had been revealed that had been kept secret from the foundation of the world, but was now manifested to the heirs of promise. He also said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes." We understand that there was a river which proceeded from the throne of God and the Lamb, clear as crystal, called the river of life; and we know that life was embodied in and given to all the heirs of promise by this covenant. We understand this covenant doctrine to be the embodiment of all truth; and those who love the truth love it, and those who believe the truth believe it; and we also know that those who deny it deny the truth, and we know that no lie is of the truth. Hereby we perceive antichrist; and those who despise the doctrine of Christ, and profess to worship him, are false professors; and we have the Bible to sustain us in this view. If any one is unsound on the covenant, they will be unsound on other things. This I understand to be the key note of the whole system. And when we sing the Lord's song, which we understand to be salvation by grace alone, we have a use for the key note. There is but a jangling, rangling, discordant sound as the Babylonians sing, and it will perhaps suit a certain class who are accustomed to such so-called music; but those whose ears the Lord of glory has trained to the melodious notes of gospel grace and truth complain, as did Lot. They vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their frog croaking, as we may justly style it. We see the great contrast between this river, clear as crystal, and the river of Babylon, casting up the mire and dirt of a humanly devised religion which received its source from men of the earth, free will and free agency, and such like things, which seems to be a conglomerated mess of contradictions, inconsistencies, disgusting and abominable to those who know and love the truth. We draw from this breast of consolation the very nutritious food which sustains the true

heaven born soul; for we are taught that we receive grace for grace. It takes a heavenly doctrine to feed a heavenly child. This eternal life principle recognizes the fact that nothing but that which comes down from heaven will satisfy its thirst or its appetite. God has thus provided our food for us when we cry, as he is said to open his hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature—the living creatures of Jerusalem he especially provided for, with that bread which came down from heaven, which if we eat we shall not hunger, and that water which if we drink we shall not thirst. The satisfying nature of the true bread every true child feels to enjoy richly, as the Lord ministers this bread continually to his children when they cry; this water, this river of life, which is also ours to enjoy in the paradise of the gospel church, the city of our solemnities, the Zion of our God; for there is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God; this blessed covenant, ordered in all things and sure, so fitly represented to Peter upon the housetop; and the net that break not; and the sealed book; and the river which proceeded from the throne of God and the Lamb; the choice spoken of before the foundation of the world; the "two immutable things," the promise and the oath. We have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.—Heb. vi. This is the unskimmed milk of the world, calculated to make the children grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

LIGHTSVILLE, Ohio, Feb. 6, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I have a remittance to make to you for our paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I feel also a desire to write some of my views on the fall of Adam, and what came by it, if the Lord will enable me to do so; for I feel that it will be through fear and trembling if I can do so at all. I am such a poor, weak mortal, it seems to me that I cannot write; but I hope that I have been taught of the Lord the things which I will try to speak of.

We read that man was made from the dust of the ground, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. And also, God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. Now we believe that the man was a perfect natural man, having all the faculties for acquiring the knowledge of this world. He was so wise in natural things that the Lord God had every beast of the field and every fowl of the air brought before him to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called them, that was the name thereof. The next thing in order was to make him a help meet. "And they were both naked, and were not ashamed." We read that there were different kinds

of trees in the garden; and in the midst was the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God commanded them not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; for said God, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Brethren, I wish to present to your minds an experimental view of this matter. I believe their enjoyment was of this world only, of which they had as much as a natural man could have. I think the definition of the word Eden is pleasure or delight. Eden is a figure of this world, or the pleasures of it. There is where every child of God starts, in Eden; the pleasure of this world is all that he knows anything about. He is dead in sin; he does not see his nakedness; therefore he is not ashamed. He only knows the evil part of the tree as yet. The serpent (or devil) takes a part in the work, for he told Eve that they should not surely die. "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Brethren, have you not been there? It seems to me that if I ever was brought to a knowledge of good and evil, it was when I saw that I had been deceived by the devil; or, in other words, I fell under condemnation of the law, and it slew me, as in Paul's case. He verily thought he was doing God service when he was persecuting the saints of God; but he was deceived; for he was arrested in his career on the road to Damascus. He met with a fall, and I believe it was a similar one to that of Adam and Eve; for we learn that his eyes were opened, and, as it were, great scales fell from them. So we see that he was brought to a knowledge of good and evil. Prior to this his works were evil, and the penalty was death; for he says in Romans vii., "For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Notice now, "sin revived." "For without the law sin was dead." "And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death; for sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." Brethren, that is the death that Adam and Eve died—fell under the condemnation of the law. They were made to see their helplessness; their eyes were opened to a knowledge of good and evil; they saw their nakedness, and hid themselves. Ah, dear child of God, I feel that I have traveled that road. I saw that I had been deceived by the devil, and was made to cry to the Lord for help. But hark! methinks I have heard that small, still voice that called to Adam in the cool of the day. I presume it was in the morning of righteousness with Adam. "Where art thou?" How calmly, how mildly, how quickly Adam answered. But he must have come forth with trembling; he saw that he was naked; he had tried fig leaves sewed together for aprons. I believe an apron does not cover the body completely. But now the blame was

laid on the serpent, and God pronounced a curse upon him above all the beasts of the field. But it was not so with Adam and Eve. He told the serpent that he would put enmity between his seed and her seed. But before this they seemed to be on good terms. Now hear what God said to Eve. "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception." This shows that she had sorrow before. Was not that the case with all of God's children? Well, do I remember when I was made to feel that the Lord had spoken peace to my troubled soul. I thought my sorrows were over; but O how mistaken I was! It seems to me they have been greatly multiplied. Now we come to Adam, the figure of Christ, and Eve a figure of the church, his bride. Her desire shall be to her Husband, and he shall rule over her. So God cursed the ground for their sakes. "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living." A living church. And God made coats of skins and clothed them. Ah, brethren, there is where the covering comes from: a figure of righteousness, an everlasting garment. God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." Now Adam was turned out of the garden of Eden, or the pleasures of this world. What was once his pleasure, he is now separated from, or he has died to the love of it, so that the earth brings forth thorns and thistles to him. He has to eat bread in the sweat of his face. Now the serpent was made to go upon his belly and to eat dust all the days of his life, while Adam was made to walk uprightly.

My dear brother, there is so much in this subject that I hardly know where to leave off. I feel as though perhaps I have written an unprofitable letter; but I hope you will peruse it with a charitable eye, and look over the imperfections of a poor worm of the dust; and after you have considered it well, if you should conclude that there is anything in it worthy the notice of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you are at liberty to publish it.

A brother in hope of eternal life,
JOHN P. LIGHT.

WAVERLY, N. Y., June, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—While attending the several associations this spring I learned from several brethren that the story was afloat that I am a "faith cure" man; and to unbias the minds of any who have heard such reports, I feel it my duty to write a few lines. I will say in the outset that I have no more confidence in or fellowship for the "faith cure" doctrine, as practiced and preached by men, than I have for the devil, where all false doctrines come from. I do not doubt the power of God to perform miracles, and I feel that there is a wonderful miracle performed whenever one of the fallen sons or daughters of Adam is brought to a knowledge of the truth, raised from the dead, blind eyes opened, deaf ears unstopped, a new heart

given, and a new song put in the mouth, even praise to God. Truly wonderful, is it not? Neither do I doubt the power of God to raise the dead, or to heal the sick in a literal sense, if it is his will. And now I will state the circumstance that gave rise to the false report about me.

Two years ago last January I was taken sick with what the doctor called congestion of the brain. I was very sick about eighteen days. The first three or four days of my sickness I felt the sweet presence of my dear Savior continually, and the Scriptures flowed sweetly through my mind, although suffering terribly with pain in my head. I never can describe the joy and the suffering that I experienced during those few days. About the fourth day, I think, I was made to mourn the absence of my dear friend Jesus, and from that time until I was made well, or the most of the time, I saw myself in a condition that I felt I was neither fit to live nor die; that I was a burden to the church, and to my family and friends. But strange as it may seem, I never felt any desire to live or to die. There was no prayer in my heart to get well, nor was there any one praying for me, that I know of. My strength seemed to be all gone, and I felt that I could scarcely move hand or foot. While in this condition, as I lay on my bed, these words came to my mind as though they had been spoken by some one, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me whole." And following those words, "Lord, thou wilt make me whole." And then followed the words, "Lord, thou hast made me whole." When these last words came, something seemed to break in the top of my head, and a strange sensation passed over my whole body and limbs. I never can describe it. In a moment I felt as strong as ever. I got out of my bed and went about my business as well as ever, and for two years or more afterward I was more healthy than I had been for fifteen years previous.

I am sorry that I ever mentioned the circumstance to any one, for it has given me a great deal of trouble of mind. I know that but few can understand me, and I did not intend to mention it in our family paper; and if it had not been made a lie of, I would not have anything said about it. I have said but little about it, but perhaps have said enough to clear up the minds of my brethren.

Now, brethren editors, do not publish this if you have any fears that it will injure the SIGNS. Let me suffer reproach instead of yourselves or any one else.

I want to say to the brethren and friends that I met at the Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick Associations, that I thank them for their kindness to me, a poor, unworthy sinner. Through the abounding mercy of God I arrived home safely and found my little family well, for which blessing I desire to be thankful. May God bless you all, for Jesus' sake.

M. VAIL.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 23, 1887.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—It has been a long time since I have been impressed to write for the SIGNS; but brother Hancks' letter has stirred up my mind, for he has expressed what have been the sentiments of my heart for years. I hope the Lord will lead others to write upon the same subject.

I will only mention one sentiment now, and that is prayer. Some say that prayer is only a form. I will ask for information, as I wish to stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and find rest for my soul. Those who regard prayer as only a form have not the same view of it that I have. I understand that it is presented as a duty throughout the Scriptures. I am often led to meditate on Solomon's prayer, when the Lord said to him, "Ask what I shall give thee." And Solomon said, "I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked for this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days."—1 Kings iii. 8-13. O what wonderful language is in this chapter. But I will forbear to write upon this subject, lest I should darken counsel by words without knowledge. My object is to draw out others on the subject. May the Lord be pleased to draw them out, and his name have all the glory. I feel myself to be a poor, ignorant creature, and I hope that I desire to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him, for I have found it the safest place. I never go astray when I am there. O may I ever be kept there. I am now in my seventieth year. When I look back and see how the Lord has preserved and kept me, it humbles me in the dust; for if he had not kept me by his almighty power I should long ago have been shipwrecked. It will be fifty years next month since I professed a hope in Jesus. O how little I have honored my profession. I hope I am thankful for the blessed privilege of sitting under the sound of the gospel, and of meeting with the dear brethren and sisters and hearing them tell of the dealings of

the Lord with them. I feel that the church at Southampton is blessed with that liberty. Sometimes we go with a heavy heart, with nothing to say, feeling dull and gloomy; but some brother or sister will tell our feelings better than we can describe them; another will have a portion of Scripture or a hymn; and soon we are cheered up, the time is too short, and we are loth to leave the place. But the Lord is not confined to time or place. I hope I experienced something of this during the past winter. I was laid upon a bed of sickness for several weeks, and I hope I experienced his loving-kindness to me. I felt to say, It is good to be afflicted. It brought my Savior near me. I felt I had faith given me to put all my trust in him, and that he would do all things well. I felt that peace of mind that the world cannot give nor take away. I experienced such a resignation to his will and such nearness to him that I felt at times I could almost embrace him. O what glorious seasons to call to mind. You who have had such seasons know the reality of them. When they are past we are made to look back and wonder if they were real; but at the time there was no room for doubt. Since that time I have been enabled to have sweet communion with my heavenly Father, if such a poor creature should call him such. O how heavenly to feel that we are his, and that his grace is sufficient for us in every time of trouble. He is an all-sufficient Savior for poor sinners. O that I could live more to his honor and glory. The psalmist says, "O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him." "The Lord is nigh unto them of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."

Dear Editors, I wish you to use your own judgment in publishing this. I have written more than I thought I should when I began. If there is any comfort in it for the little flock, may God have all the praise. Your unworthy sister,
A. M. FETTER.

BATAVIA, N. Y., May 6, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is always of interest to the children of God to learn of the prosperity of Zion. All who are walking in love and fellowship will rejoice when they hear of the work of the Lord in calling sinners from death unto life, and manifesting them as his own peculiar people. None but those who are in the Spirit can discern such spiritual blessings. They are made glad and rejoice that the work of God is still manifest in adding to the church such as shall be saved. The very interesting account of Elder Cline, of Iowa, given to us through the SIGNS,

of the work of grace in the Sharon Church, caused many to rejoice and praise God, for that wonderful manifestation of God's power and goodness to them. All these are evidences that God still has a people in the land, and that he is still making them manifest to those only who can see and know the great blessing of such a work to the church of God. In the church at Caroline, N. Y., recently six persons related their experience and gave good evidence of having passed from death unto life. On Sunday, May 1, they were all baptized by Elder Bogardus. The meetings that day and the scenes at the water will long be remembered by those present. It was one of the most remarkable events in the history of the church. Some two or three hundred were present at the water. It was a very solemn and impressive occasion. The Lord seemed to manifest his presence to his people, and others are inquiring what they shall do to be saved. The Lord, by sending a heavy rain on Friday preceding this meeting, provided the "much water," and convenient to reach from the meeting house. The members of the church feel to acknowledge with much gratitude and deep humility this work of God in their midst. It will be remembered by many that this church has recently passed through some very severe trials, in separating from those who did not hold sound doctrine. To all those who so kindly extended their helpful sympathy and christian fellowship to this church in their time of need and distress, these tokens of the favor of God and of his goodness will be received with joy and gladness. Many in the church could say with David, "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come."—Psa. cii. 13.

Yours in hope of glory through Jesus Christ,

B. F. HAMILTON.

HANNIBAL, Mo., June 20, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have the pleasure of sending you the name of a new subscriber for the SIGNS. I hope he may be instructed and kept aloof from the wiles of false professors, for truly his home is "where Satan's seat is," in this city, which seems to be, as the apostle found Athens, "wholly given to idolatry." "Evil men and seducers" were never more prolific of blasphemous plans and devices than at this day; not in this place only, but everywhere. The hearts of the children of God sicken at their blasphemy. Truly are the words of our blessed Savior, as recorded in Matthew xxiii. 15, applicable to them, especially their hireling revivalists, plodding around from place to place, doing their vile work for any or every denomination, applauded by the secular and corrupt press of the places they visit, while they belch forth their blasphemy against the truth. Truly have we fallen upon evil times. Never was wickedness of every form more rampant than now, and just in proportion does false religion seem to pre-

vail, and among such people. Truly are they "blind leaders of the blind," and our dear Lord has told his disciples to "let them alone." "Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up," are also his words. And even among some who profess to be Old School Baptists are some things not much better; but they seem to prefer to be called "Regular" Baptists, which indeed may be quite appropriate in many respects.

But I did not intend to write even so much as I have already, and so I will conclude.

As ever, truly, I hope, but unworthily, your brother for the truth's sake,

W. F. KEROHEVAL.

STATE ROAD, N. C., June 21, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I should have sent an account of my tour in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, but my circumstances have been such that I could not. I would say to all the dear brethren and sisters who requested me to write through the SIGNS, and also privately to them, that I could not have written sooner, and it has been out of my power to write them privately, for my troubles have been more than I could bear; but God has enabled me to bear all. My wife was in better health when I arrived home from the Baltimore Association, but has been in very delicate health ever since. And this is not my greatest trial, for on the morning of June 9th my little boy was taken with cholera infantum, and died on the 14th. He was the pride of my life, my sweetest and most interesting company; but God took him. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

As ever, your unworthy brother in a precious hope,

WM. R. WELBORN.

ST. LUCIE, Brevard Co., Fla., June 15, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—You are certainly mistaken about our accusing you or Elder S. Hassell of dishonesty. No such thought ever passed through our minds. We live here in an isolated country, far away from post offices. Our nearest post office is thirty-five miles from where we live, and it is a long way to go after our mail. I received notice from you that you would forward the books, and waited a reasonable time and did not receive the books. I wrote by request of brethren Raulerson to know something about the books, so that if there was any delay on the route, or anywhere else, we might be advised of the fact. I am sorry you would think that your Primitive Baptist brethren would call you dishonest, when we thought of no such thing. I must say that if I said anything to hurt your or Elder S. Hassell's feelings, I am truly sorry for it. We received our Histories in March last. Truly,

JOEL W. SWAIN.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Oak Creek Church, Douglas County, Oregon, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1887, and the two succeeding days (to wit), Saturday and Sunday, to the several churches composing her body, and to as many as love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—

Another year of our many cares, joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, trials and deliverances, is numbered with the past since we last met in our yearly assembly; but these things are our inheritance here on earth. God hath promised them to us, and he will fulfill his promises, and we should rejoice rather than grieve, because he knows better what is for our good than we do. He saith, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord."—Zeph. iii. 12. Now, although we have the promise of being an afflicted and poor people, yet we should rejoice and be exceeding glad that we also have the promise, "And they shall trust in the name of the Lord." This is enough. Paul could say, "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God."—1 Tim. iv. 10. Zephaniah further saith concerning this afflicted and poor people, for their comfort (for such are the people whom the Lord delighteth to comfort), "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy. The King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing."—Zeph. iii. 12-17. Now we are commanded as ministers of the new and everlasting covenant of grace, by the Lord, who is ever in the midst of his afflicted and poor people, saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isa. xl. 1, 2. But those who are at ease in Zion need no comfort, they need no rest, they are not afflicted, neither do they feel any concern for the afflictions of God's people; but the God who dwells in the midst of his afflicted and poor people hath denounced a woe upon them. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are

named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came."—Amos vi.

1. But although these are an afflicted and poor people, yet they are heirs to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for them, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. And although their name is cast out as evil by the world and its religion, they "dwell on high; their place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given them; their waters shall be sure. Their eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off. * * * Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby."—Isa. xxxiii. 16-21. This afflicted and poor people are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light.—1 Peter ii. 9. They are the children of a King, even the King of kings, and Lord of lords. And their King dwells in the midst of them, in his holy city, the New Jerusalem. And they sing a new song, which the wise and prudent of this world could never learn, not even in a theological seminary. As it is written, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation that keepeth the truth may enter in."—Isa. xxvi. 1, 2. O what a beautiful song this afflicted and poor people sing! This strong city is the new, the heavenly Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife. The bride is the righteous nation that keepeth the truth; also the afflicted and poor people that trust in the name of the Lord. The inhabitants of this strong city consist of "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. * * * And one of the elders said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—See Rev. vii.

9-17. That day spoken of, Isaiah xxv., is not measured by the risings and settings of the sun, or any other planetary system. It is one eternal day. "And 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."—Rev. xxi. 23. The Lamb of God is the light and strength of the strong city. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory," &c.—Psa. lxxxiv. 11. "The [created] sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous [yea, even the afflicted and poor people that trust in the name of the Lord]; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."—Isa. lx. 19-21. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings," &c.—Mal. iv. 2. Thus you see, dear brethren, that that day is the gospel day. It is a day that shall never end; for the Lord Jesus, the Sun of righteousness, is the light of that day; and he has risen, and shall no more go down. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."—Matt. iv. 16. "For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—Isa. lx. 2, 3. The old Jerusalem was walled around with stone; but it, nevertheless, was not impregnable. The enemy battered down those walls, entered in, and took possession of the city, and it was left to other people. So you see they could not sing that new song, "We have a strong city," &c. But concerning the New Jerusalem it is said, "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."—Isa. xxvi. 1. All the battering-rams of hell cannot ever batter down these walls; for we read in verse four, "Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." He is the strength of the walls, as it is written, "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. Then, what power is there in heaven, earth or hell that can scale or undermine these walls? They are as high as the topless heights of eternity, deep as the eternal depths beneath, wide as the vast and boundless expanse of eternity. "And they shall call them [who inhabit the city], The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken."—Isa. lxii. 12. "Not left to other people."—Dan. ii.

44. Then dry your tears, ye afflicted and poor people. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."—Deut. xxxiii. 27. "In that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength; he also is become my salvation."—Isa. xii. 1, 2. And now, dear brethren, we commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.

W. S. MATTHEWS, Mod.
E. T. T. FISHER, Clerk.

The Chemung Old School Baptist Association, convened with her sister church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., June 15th, 16th and 17th, 1887, to the associations and churches with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Again, through sovereign mercy, as has been our custom in the years past and gone, we address you in this epistle of love and fellowship, and would call attention to a portion of the Scriptures recorded in 1 Cor. xv. 48, 49. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." This divinely inspired apostle of our Lord has not left us to speculate or to merely reason according to our depraved minds, respecting the characters of the first and the last Adams, but in the full assurance of faith has declared the first to have been made a living soul, and the last a quickening Spirit; and he has, by the favor of the Lord, removed any necessity for asking if the first Adam was spiritual, by saying, "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural." Also, the apostle speaks of Adam in the present tense, "is," &c., showing that though the creature which God had made had died, after living nine hundred and thirty years, Adam still lives. And so we still see the first man is of the earth, earthy, minds earthy things, loves earthy things, seeks for nothing better or higher than what earth affords. Therefore we conclude there is nothing in our nature specially differing from that of Adam. Our mortal structure is after the same pattern; the blood coursing through our veins the same; our thoughts running in much the same course religiously, disposed to make us aprons of fig-leaves; inclined to listen to the doctrine of devils; to disbelieve what God has said; to build a Babel whose top shall reach to the heavens. So, as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy. But the apostle does not leave his brethren in this sad state, but gives them the assurance that as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And we believe and are sure there is

no heavenly or spiritual resemblance to our glorious and reigning Lord except that life we possess in him. Being born of God, we are manifested the heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Therefore he is our life, he is our righteousness, he is our King, our salvation, our God, in whom we trust. As it was his delight to do the will of his Father and be in submission to him, so it is the delight of his loved ones to obey and be submissive to him, by walking in his commandments and ordinances, and to do those things which are pleasing in his sight. They desire to be heavenly in doctrine, in their walk and conversation; to look for deliverance from no other source but from his Father and their Father, and from his God and their God. Surely, as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. Through and by that eternal life given to all the family of God in Christ, their head, they reflect or bear his image here. But in another sense we believe the apostle, in verse forty-nine, was showing that they should bear his image by being clothed with immortality, by their being made like Jesus, when this mortal body shall be changed and fashioned like the glorified body of our dear Redeemer, when death is swallowed up in victory. Paul does not hesitate to declare positively the doctrine of the resurrection, although like every point of the doctrine of the gospel it is a sublime and mysterious truth, received, believed and rejoiced in by faith only. And however much professed belief in this and other gospel truth there may be found in the religious world, yet none do or can believe those things except the saved of the Lord; and may it please the Lord to give his ministers who stand upon the walls of Zion that spirit of holy boldness in his name, to preach the word faithfully, and to warn his people against the abominable idolatry and God-dishonoring doctrines of men so prevalent in our day; and that we as a people may be saved from the impositions of a modern priesthood, who compass sea and land for gain; and may the churches of the several associations in our land, far and near, be found in peace and harmony, contending with earnestness for the faith once delivered to the saints; and may no root of bitterness be allowed to spring up amongst us, to mar our sweet fellowship in the Spirit; but may we live and love as dear brethren, and walk as dear children; and may the blessing of the Lord, that maketh rich, be ministered to all the people, that in the mountain of the Lord they may offer sacrifices of righteousness to him that liveth and was dead, and behold, is alive forevermore, amen, and has the keys of hell and of death. And may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

D. M. VAIL, Mod.
J. C. BEARD, JR., Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, now in session with the Oak Creek Church, in Douglas County, Oregon, to her sister associations with whom she corresponds, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—Again we have been permitted by the loving-kindness of our heavenly Father to meet together once more in an association, and again take the cordial hand of many of our brethren and sisters, and hear of the welfare of our churches, and also to hear the glorious doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ faithfully and ably proclaimed by our beloved Elders, which cheers and comforts us in our pilgrimage here on earth. We were glad to learn through your Corresponding Letters of your peace and prosperity, and we hope the Lord is still blessing you with his goodness and mercy, and adding to your number such as he will finally bring into his eternal kingdom. We will again send you our Minutes by mail, from which you can see what we have done while we have been together, and when and where we expect again to meet, at which time we hope to hear from you again. We rejoice that no divisions have sprung up among us to mar our peace, but that our churches are in union and fellowship, and love abounds; and we take courage, hoping that the Lord of hosts will guide, guard and lead us; for he is our shield and high tower, our rock of defense. The Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our judge, in him we trust. He will deliver his people out of six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake them; but he will bring them off more than conquerors through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

W. S. MATTHEWS, Mod.
E. T. T. FISHER, Clerk.

The messengers composing the Chemung Association, to the associations and churches with whom she corresponds, send christian love and salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE FAITH OF OUR LORD:—Once more we have enjoyed the privilege of meeting together in the capacity of an association. We have listened to the joyful sound of salvation by grace as proclaimed by several able ministers of our faith and order, each of whom has spoken with power to the comfort and upbuilding of Zion. We hope our messengers to you will be received in the spirit of charity and brotherly love we feel toward you. We desire a continuance of your correspondence and fellowship.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the Charleston and Sullivan Church, in Tioga County, Pennsylvania, to begin on Wednesday after the second Sunday in June, 1888.

D. M. VAIL, Mod.
J. C. BEARD, JR., Clerk.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS.

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1887.

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

WALK IN THE SPIRIT.

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."—Gal. v. 25.

In the perfect law of liberty given by the King in Zion to all who love him, there is full instruction for the guidance of his saints in every age and under every circumstance. This law is not graven on tables of stone, like the heavy precepts which were ordained on burning Sinai and given by the hand of Moses to the natural seed of Abraham; but with the Spirit of the living God it is written in the fleshly tables of the heart of all who are led by that Spirit. They in whom God works the will to walk in the pathway of obedience to this law, are thereby sealed as the chosen vessels of mercy which he hath "afore prepared unto glory." As Jesus himself has led the way of holiness, all who would be his disciples must follow him. The first step in this only way of life is obedience to the injunction of our Lord, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—Matt. xvi. 24. This cannot be done by any other character but the one specified, who has the will to come after Jesus; and that will necessarily supersedes the natural will, which directly opposes the mind of Christ. Therefore, the follower of Jesus is required to bear the cross in all the way. This is not merely an external form of obedience to the letter of the commandments and example of our Lord. It requires holiness in the heart; and since the natural man cannot produce any perfection, there is a perpetual opposition between the fleshly or carnal mind and the love of holiness which is wrought in the saints by the Spirit which dwells in them. The opposing force of these principles is felt by none but those who have the Spirit of Christ, and they are the only people who can deny self and walk in the Spirit; hence no others can take up the cross in obedience to the command of Jesus. Without the Spirit the observance of the letter of the law of Christ comes no nearer to obedience than did the mocking of Ishmael to the joy of the true-born child of promise.—See Gen. xxi. 9. So Jesus says, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 23, 24.

"If we live in the Spirit." This form of expression is not to be understood as implying a doubt of the saints living in the Spirit, but to call to the attention of these bewitched believers the fact which they well knew, that their life was not in the observance of carnal ordinances, but

in the Spirit of Christ which was in them. In that Spirit every saint lives; and when their faith cannot lay hold on that eternal life in the Spirit there is nothing but death in the experience of the subjects of grace, even though they are literally obeying every direction of the inspired law as written in the New Testament. It is only in the Spirit that we live; there is all our comfort and strength. When the Spirit is not manifestly present our life is brought so low that we are ready to perish. As that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, so they whose faith is in Christ experience life only when his holy Spirit dwells manifestly in them. In the Spirit is the spiritual or eternal life of those who are born of God, as in the pure air is the natural life of men. We live in the Spirit, because there is no life anywhere else. In this truth is an abiding witness to assure the genuineness of the hope of every one whose life is in the Spirit. And the same truth exposes the deception of all who can live in themselves without that Spirit. There is no need of such characters depending upon the grace of God for life and strength; but they who "live in the Spirit" cannot live in their own fleshly minds, and do the works which can give life and joy to themselves. So Paul says, "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."—Rom. viii. 13. Then the force of this appeal is manifest in the experience of every saint, and especially to such as have become, like the Galatian churches, bewildered by the doctrines and commandments of men. It is a settled truth with every believer that there is no eternal life anywhere but in the Lord Jesus Christ; and that life is not separated from himself when he gives it unto his sheep who hear his voice. It is indeed to each one to whom it is given, Christ in you the hope of glory; and when Jesus gives to his sheep eternal life, he gives them himself as that life, for there is no other revelation of immortality but that which is exclusively in him. The folly of those who have this life, in yet looking to their own works for justification, is very forcibly rebuked in this epistle to the churches of Galatia. "If we live in the Spirit," says carnal reason, then let us continue in sin that grace may abound. If we are already saved by the blood of Jesus, then we may with impunity add sin to sin. The apostle has set the seal of divine condemnation upon this suggestion of Satan, saying, "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"—Rom. vi. 2.

"Let us also walk in the Spirit." While to the natural mind there appears in the doctrine of salvation by grace encouragement to follow the sinful inclination of the depraved heart, the grace of God shows a higher and better deduction from that truth. They who are taught of the Lord have learned that sin is exceeding sinful; and instead of seeking permission to revel in the corruption

which has brought upon them the just condemnation of the holy law, they long for deliverance from the heavy bondage of sin under which they groan. As all our worship of God is in spirit, therein is our experience of life. It is clearly inconsistent for us, therefore, to walk in utter defiance of this truth. Since "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts," they cannot consistently walk in the flesh which they have renounced. Here is the ground of all the contention between the flesh and the Spirit in the saints. Hence, the exhortation to such characters to walk in the Spirit is in accordance with the will which is given them by the Spirit of Christ, by which they are manifested as followers of Jesus. To every one who feels that it would be the most desirable of privileges to obey this direction, it is a witness that the grace of God has given that desire. All such are led by the Spirit of God, and are the sons of God. But how are these to walk in the Spirit? They learn that walk only by the teaching of experience; and all the way is contrary to that which seems right to natural wisdom. No efforts of ministers, nor even the sacred writings of inspired apostles, can teach the saints how to follow in the narrow way of life; yet when they have learned that walk by the guidance of the Spirit, they can see the same truth clearly written in the Scriptures. Often have they been made to wonder that such plainly written instruction had so long escaped their attention, and perhaps they have thought they certainly could show it to others; but when they have attempted to tell it they have found others as blind to the wisdom they present as they themselves had been until they received light in the teaching of the Spirit of truth. While walking in the Spirit the saints shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. This appears to them as evidence that they are not walking in the right path. The fleshly mind sees in the self-denying way everything to discourage the hope of the saint; but in the Spirit faith shows that narrow and lonely path as the way of life. There is no other walk in which we can follow Jesus. He learned obedience in deep suffering; we cannot follow him without enduring afflictions. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin; and as he has suffered and overcome all the trials which his followers can ever encounter, he is able to succor them that are tempted. He has the victory, and gives it to his followers. As they are never prepared to receive deliverance until all their own ability has failed, they are led to ascribe all the glory of their victory to the grace of God alone; therefore they walk in the Spirit in confessing their entire dependence upon that grace for every good gift, and even for the desire which moves them to cry unto the Lord out of the depth of their affliction and distress. But for the gift of the Holy Spirit to lead them into all truth they would be unconscious of

their need of delivering grace; hence when the vilest enemy against divine truth is brought to pray in the felt sense of his need, he is even then walking in the Spirit. So the Lord gave to Ananias this evidence in the case of the zealous persecutor Saul.—Acts ix. 11. Doubtless Saul had often before that time "said prayers," but this was the first time that he really prayed. So every helpless sinner walks in the Spirit when out of the depth of conscious depravity and sin he cries to the Lord for that help which can only come from the sovereign favor of God.

They who walk in the Spirit are not puffed up with self-confidence in that walk. Their own pollution and sinfulness are more painfully felt by them as they are more closely guided by the light of the Spirit. Hence they are more troubled on account of the law of sin which they find in their own members, than by all the sin of other people. Walking in the Spirit, they are not disposed to trust in their own righteousness; yet they are often made to mourn because of their inability to do the good which they would do. It does not seem to them that in this experience of bitter grief they are complying with this direction to the saints. So Paul says, "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."—Philippians iii. 3. Since disappointment has invariably attended every trust reposed in the flesh, it would seem that the saint would learn to cease to look there for any good thing; but such is the deceitfulness of sin that we are continually prone to trust in ourselves for something to commend us to the favor of God. In this trust we live after the flesh, and consequently all its promise ends in death to our comfort in that salvation which rests exclusively upon the grace of God revealed in Christ Jesus. But the delivering power of the Spirit of Christ revives us by the manifestation of his immutable faithfulness and love, by which he has secured us in the everlasting covenant of his grace. Notwithstanding all our unworthiness and sin in ourselves, this abundant grace given us in Christ before the world began still raises us up and gives us the fellowship of the Spirit, whereby we are made to walk in newness of life. This walk is in the Spirit, and therefore the flesh or the carnal mind can find nothing in it to pamper pride or enable the saint to trust in self. Thus boasting is excluded from the system of salvation by grace, and they who walk in the Spirit are cut off from all confidence in the flesh.

As the Spirit without measure dwells in Jesus, obedience to every injunction of his law is included in walking in the Spirit. The love of holiness is the fruit of that Spirit of which the saints are born and by which they are led. The only perfect example of holiness revealed to men is in the pattern given by our Lord Jesus. Therefore in following him the saints do walk in the Spirit. This

is the strait gate and the narrow way which leads unto life, and it is found only by the few who are led by the Spirit of God. In obedience they find the answer of a good conscience toward God in this narrow way; and in disobedience they feel the rod which is provided in the everlasting covenant. Although it is a fearful thing for the saints thus to fall into the hands of the living God, yet since it is whom the Lord loves that he chasteneth, even his rod yields comfort and the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby.—Heb. xii. 5-11. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is fulfilled only by walking in love. No formal duties are acceptable in the sight of God without that heavenly principle which is called by inspiration "charity."—See 1 Cor. xiii. In the absence of this living principle the performance of works esteemed good by men is but empty show and sound, without life or spirit. For those who are born of God there is life and peace in the enjoyment of the approval of the Lord alone. All other joys are but gilded death to them. It is therefore glaringly inconsistent for such characters to walk after the flesh while claiming to live in the Spirit. The exhortation in our text requires only that walk which is earnestly desired by every one to whom it is addressed; and in so walking they but manifest that they are led by the Spirit of God and are the sons of God. Since they who walk in the Spirit must deny self, there can be none who thus walk but such as bear the cross continually. Natural reason looks for a smooth and easy path for this walk in the Spirit; but faith sees the dear Redeemer's pathway stained with bloody sweat, and hails the thorny road with sweet assurance, knowing that the footsteps of Jesus lead only in that way of tribulation. In no other path can we follow him. Then one requisite mark of that walk which is in the Spirit is the opposition of every fleshly desire. This constitutes the cross which must be borne by every follower of Jesus. None can walk in the Spirit without feeling this cross; and none know anything of the weight of this cross unless they are walking in the Spirit. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. iii. 12. They cannot escape this suffering even by hiding in a desert, or in dens and caves of the earth. They carry with them their most malignant persecutors even in their secret closets; for they find a law in their own members warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin in their members. They who have all the religion they choose to live for do not know anything of this suffering; but it is in this heartfelt affliction that the saints do "walk in the Spirit." Only in this walk do they follow the Lord Jesus.

To all who thus walk the law of Christ speaks. In every commandment from his throne in Zion he addresses those who love him. Such

are not their own, being bought with the price of their Redeemer's blood. In rendering willing obedience to his commandments they walk in the Spirit, and receive the reward of the answer of a good conscience toward God. In following the directions of their own will they sow to the flesh, and shall of the flesh reap corruption. May the Lord grant to all who love his truth the abundant grace whereby they may be enabled to "walk in the Spirit," and to his holy name be glory evermore. Amen.

CHURCH NOTICES.

DEFOE, Ky., June 23, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—We have received the following from Beech Creek Church, which we desire you to publish with the annexed notice:

WHEREAS, Beech Creek Church did not ask through letter or messengers for the next meeting of Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, and it was voted here against her will; and,

WHEREAS, The scattered and enfeebled condition of the membership makes it too much burden to entertain the Association; therefore,

Resolved, That the church in her sovereign right decides that she cannot entertain the Association, nor is she willing that it shall be held here the present year.

Resolved, That the Clerk send a copy of these proceedings to the Moderator and Clerk of the Association, and let them take such action as their judgment may dictate.

Done by order of the church, on the second Saturday in June, 1887.

J. E. NEWKIRK, Mod.

J. T. TINSLEY, Clerk.

FORASMUCH as the order of the last Association was made to hold "with our sister church Beech Creek;" and according to the above it cannot be done, and there is no power to force Beech Creek, nor would it be a christian act to intrude upon her; and as it would not, in our judgment, be prudent to call a council at the present time to appoint another place; we, the Moderator and Clerk of said Association, hereby give notice to the churches composing the same that the association will not be held this year, nor till such time as we deem the churches in a condition to counsel, and appoint a place to meet in peace.

J. M. DEMAREE, Mod.

W. C. SAMS, Clerk.

SALEM, Oregon, May 26, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please do me the kindness to say to our brethren through the SIGNS that my residence is on Liberty Street, North Salem, Oregon, and any of our Oregon brethren visiting Salem we will be pleased to have call upon us.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

M. H. BOWMAN.

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to a call by the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, N. Y., to the several churches of the Lexington Association, to send their Elders and chosen brethren to sit with her in council, to examine the gift of brother JOHN CLARK, and if thought proper to set him apart to the work of the gospel ministry, the following churches responded:

Lexington—Elders L. Gass, I. B. Whitcomb, brethren E. White, Wm. P. Kirk.

Second Roxbury—Elder I. Hewitt, brethren W. Scudder, J. S. Carroll, E. Hewitt.

Halcott—Elders D. Earl, J. Miller, brethren C. W. Mead, J. H. Scudder, W. Hubbard.

Olive & Hurley—Brother W. H. Bush.

South Westerly—Call received, but messengers failed to come.

Jefferson—Elder J. Miller, E. Hix, licentiate, D. Hix.

Schoharie—Elder D. Earl, Dea. P. Mowers, George Gurnsey.

Middletown—Elder I. Hewitt, J. Abner Morse, R. W. Hull, M. C. Sanford, John A. Morse.

Gilboa—All the male members present.

Middleburg—Elder I. B. Whitcomb, Dea. N. P. Cooper, George J. Borthwick, Henry Denton, Ezra Vanvalkenburg.

Andes—Elders J. Miller, D. Earl.

Clovesville—Elder J. Miller.

The church, through her Clerk, stated the object of the call.

The council then organized by appointing Elder Earl Moderator, and brother John A. Morse Clerk.

The church received the council and presented the candidate, who related his call from nature to grace, his call to the ministry, and his views of doctrine.

The council then retired for deliberation, and being satisfied, voted to proceed with the ordination to-morrow, at ten o'clock, in the following order:

Ordination sermon by Elder I. Hewitt.

Prayer by Elder L. Gass, with laying on of hands of the presbytery.

Charge by Elder D. Earl.

Right hand of fellowship by Elder I. B. Whitcomb.

Elder I. Hewitt preached from 2 Tim. iv. 2, and the ordination was proceeded with as above.

D. EARL, Mod.

JOHN MORSE, Clerk.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

ACCORDING to a previous agreement and call of the brethren and sisters living in the vicinity of L. K. Martin and James E. Raterree, the undersigned Elders and Deacons met at the residence of brother L. K. Martin, for the purpose of organizing a church, to wit, Elder J. P. Jenkins, from the church at Middle Fork, Obion Association; Elder F. R. Hendricks, from Bethlehem, and also Deacon W. T. Taylor; Elder F. P. Chandler, from Clear Creek; Deacons W. W. Haley and A. H. Hart, from New Salem, Soldier Creek Association.

They organized the presbytery by choosing Elder J. P. Jenkins Moderator, and F. P. Chandler Clerk.

Read Church Covenant, Abstract of Principles and Rules of Decorum.

Letters presented, read and received, by the following brethren and sisters, to wit, brethren L. K. Martin, James E. Raterree, John M. Chilcut, Asa Raterree, A. C. Raterree, J. L. Townley, F. P. Patterson, James Gibson and H. N. Oliver. Sisters Ruth Chilcut, Nancy C. Martin, Adith L. Martin, Ann Raterree, Harriett E. Townley and Flora Jarrell.

They were pronounced a church in order.

Prayer by Elder F. P. Chandler.

Charge by Elder J. P. Jenkins.

Church to be called HEPHIZIBAH.

Proclaimed the door of the church open for the reception of members. None received. General business. The church agreed to go into the choice of a pastor and clerk by private ballot, which resulted in the election of Elder F. P. Chandler as pastor, and brother J. L. Townley as clerk.

The church will meet on the first Sunday in each month, and Saturday before.

J. P. JENKINS, Mod.

F. P. CHANDLER, Clerk.

PARIS, Tennessee, June 15, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request I send you the proceedings of a church organization, for publication in the SIGNS. This church was organized in the northeast corner of Henry County, Tennessee. There was a brother Oliver received at the meeting on Friday night, and baptized on Sunday morning. One was received on Saturday night, to be baptized at the next meeting.

Your unworthy brother,

F. P. CHANDLER.

MARRIAGES.

JUNE 23, 1887, by Elder Benton Jenkins, at the residence of the bride's mother, in Unionville, Orange Co., N. Y., Frank W. Dennis, M. D., and Miss Mary Wisner, granddaughter of the late Deacon Asa Elston.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of our afflicted sister, Sarah Rogers, I send you the particulars of the life of Elder William Rogers, as they were dictated by himself a few years previous to his death, and written by sister Rogers, who also added some particulars of his death.

In my acquaintance with brother Rogers I can truly say I always found him an able and faithful defender of the faith, always tender of the feelings of his brethren, whom he highly prized; and though in his latter years limited in the goods of this world, he always welcomed them with joy to his humble home. He loved and cherished his children tenderly, and divided his estate very early in life, so that his remaining means of support proved scanty in his old age. But the Lord did bless him with his promise, and fulfilled it by the kind attention of many brethren and friends, who contributed to his needs. But none were so faithful and attentive as the dear sister who now remains to mourn with us. May the Lord sustain her and bless us all with a remembrance of her faithful and tender care of him.

Brother Rogers was blessed in his earlier life with ample means, and had sufficient to assist his children to a comfortable start in life; but being a great sufferer at times, he thought his remaining years would be few; therefore he reserved a scanty supply for his old age. I have thought that the lessons of life, as seen in the experience of such aged brethren, should be of great value to us. Brother Rogers could bear with his brethren who differed with him on minor matters of faith, and though he could not claim to understand fully the "Absolute Predestination of all things," yet he always talked freely and lovingly with me, and never spoke in harsh or unfeeling terms to censure or deride my faith; thus showing a fatherly tenderness and a commendable brotherly spirit, that drew me to him in ties akin to veneration. I received a telegram a few days previous to his death, and hastened to his bedside; and though he seemed a little easier at times, it was evident that he was a great sufferer. He seemed pleased to see me, and soon after the first salutation and a few moments of spiritual conversation he requested me to preach to what few could be gathered together, and remarked that it might be considered his funeral; and it seemed to be more agreeable to his feelings than to have a sermon afterward. I tried to use Isaiah lxi. 1, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good things 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." I speak of this to show that as I spoke of Jesus in his good and effectual ministry, as the liberator of his people and their comforter in every one of their sorrows and sufferings, although brother Rogers was in suffering, his eyes and countenance filled with a radiance of loving joy at the mention

of so holy and heavenly a theme; and though spoken in much weakness, yet I felt as I would wish to feel upon my dying bed, so near heaven, in the presence of an aged pilgrim just receiving his desired and most cherished hope.

Brother William Rogers is no more, but we cherish his memory still.

A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, April 27, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS.—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been requested by Elder B. R. Warren, of Bentley, Ill., to write obituary notices of three departed saints, for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but the information furnished me concerning the parties is so meager that I shall have to make them very short.

Jacob Lionberger was born in the state of Virginia, and died in Hancock Co., Ill., March 26, 1887, in the eighty-sixth year of his age; and at the April meeting of the Providence Church Elder Warren addressed a large audience in respect to the memory of the deceased, from Rev. i. 18. I have written for particulars concerning this aged and worthy brother, but have failed to receive anything. I have known the deceased for many years as a faithful and beloved member of the Providence Church, where Elder Castlebury was a member, and the pastor.

ALSO,

DIED—March 21, 1887, **Mrs. Phebe Castlebury**, aged about ninety years. She was the widow of Elder Jacob Castlebury, who died about two years ago, and was several years older than he. This aged saint was a member of the same church as her husband, and lived an unspotted life as a humble follower of her Redeemer. Elder Warren spoke on the occasion, on March 23, from Isaiah xxvi. 19.

ALSO,

DIED—Near Piqua, Allen Co., Kansas, Jan. 8, 1887, **Mrs. Mary Preston**, wife of Wm. J. Preston. Sister Preston was a daughter of brother John Gibson, of Union Church, McDonough Co., Ill., and was raised there; but after her marriage she resided some years in Hancock Co., Ill., then removed to Kansas, where she died. At the request of her husband, Elder Warren spoke in her memory, in Bentley, Ill., on the third Sunday in May, from John xi. 25. On the same day Elder S. L. Clark spoke in her memory at Union Church, where she was raised; and on or about the same time we learn that a funeral discourse was preached in her memory in Kansas, and, I presume, a suitable obituary has been written there.

ALSO,

DIED—Near Bentley, Ill., March 23, 1887, **Elder Thomas Jones**, aged seventy-five years, eight months and twenty-nine days. At his own request, two years before his death, that I should speak on the occasion of his departure the "glorious doctrine of salvation by grace," if I survived him, a meeting was arranged for the purpose, at Bentley, on the fifth Sunday of May, where I spoke to an immense audience, from 1 Cor. xv. 51, &c. Elder Warren took part in the services, and there were also present Elders George Jackson, of Missouri, and R. Harris. A more lengthy notice of this worthy brother and faithful minister has been written for another paper, hence the brevity of this notice.

Your brother in Christ,

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, Ill.

By request of the family, as well as a duty I owe the deceased, I forward for publication in the SIGNS a notice of the death of **George Rounds**, Elder J. L. Staton's father-in-law. Brother Rounds was baptized by the writer in fellowship with the Old School Baptist Church called Indiantown, July 5, 1885, and lived a consistent member until his death, which occurred April 22, 1887, at his home near Powellville, Wicomico Co., Md., aged seventy-two years lacking twelve days.

Brother Rounds had been a lover of the truth a long time before he publicly professed it before many witnesses. He was one of the most humble, childlike Christians I ever knew. He was not a man of many

words, but a clear exhibition of the sanctifying work of the Spirit was manifest in his every day appearance. I yet remember the day he was baptized. He was as humble and childlike as an infant. When I raised him up out of the water he said, "Poor old man." I have reason to remember the occasion. I have ever felt satisfied that he was a heaven-born child. His sufferings were short. He was taken with a chill on the 16th, and died on the 22d. His disease was pronounced typhoid. His companion told me that he did not seem to dread death at all.

Thus the Lord is taking his redeemed to himself when and as he wills, and we wish to bow in humble submission.

He leaves a heart-stricken widow and a number of children and grandchildren, with the church, to mourn. The family have our deepest sympathy.

T. M. POULSON.

Our only child, **Laura Bell Black**, was born in Jefferson County, Iowa, Nov. 25, 1874, and died near Almena, Norton Co., Kansas, May 25, 1887, aged twelve years and six months. She lingered seventeen days with rheumatic and spinal fever, and died, as we believe, in full assurance of a living faith. Though young, for the last several years her mind has been attracted from earth to heavenly things, almost wholly. During the last year she often remarked to her parents that she would like to be back in Iowa where we could go to Old Baptist meetings and hear our own preachers; that those here did not preach like our preachers. Many other evidences we have that her spiritual eyes were opened.

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!) That saved a wretch like me," &c.,

was a great favorite with her. The day before she died she sang the verse,

"He will gather the bright gems for his kingdom," &c.

Brethren and sisters, pray for me, that I may be able to bear my sad affliction, and to say, O Lord, thy will, not mine, be done.

"A precious one from us has gone,

A voice I loved is still;

A place is vacant in my home Which never can be filled."

"It is the Lord, enthroned in light, Whose claims are all divine; Who has an undisputed right To govern me and mine"

LOUISA BLACK.

ALMENA, Kansas.

DIED—In Great Falls, N. H., May 9, 1887, brother **William Hill**, aged seventy years. He died very suddenly, confined to his bed but five days. I baptized him in 1850. He was the first or second one that I baptized. He related a good experience and was very attentive to our meetings until some years ago, when he moved to where he died, which was quite a number of miles from us, so that he did not meet with us so often. He was sensible to the last and willing to die, with a hope that it was better to die than to live. He has left two sons and other near relatives to mourn.

I preached at his funeral to a large number of people.

ALSO,

DIED—In Wells, Maine, May 19, 1887, Mr. **John West**, aged eighty-seven years. He gave good evidence that he was a child of God by birth, and was as firm an Old School Baptist as ever I talked with, but never united with the church. He was a hard worker, honest in all his dealings, a kind husband, father and brother, and a good neighbor, so that he has left a good record behind. He sent for me to go and see him a short time before he died, and I found him well reconciled to his fate, happy in the Lord, feeling that he was almost home. He was buried on Sunday, and it being a pleasant day people from all sections around him were there. He has left one son, with his companion, two brothers and others, to mourn.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of the family of the deceased, please insert in the SIGNS the death of **Mrs. Ann Thomas**, who departed this life April 22, 1887, in Washington, D. C. The subject of this notice was not a visible member of the church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. She was a constant attendant at the meetings held by the Old Baptists, and, like one of the little hidden ones, seemed to enjoy the crumbs that would fall from the Master's table. At the time of her death there was no Old School Baptist minister present that could conveniently attend her funeral, and at the request of the family I met with them on the day of her burial, and in my poor way made some remarks from John xi. 25, 26, thereby paying the last tribute of respect to the remains of the deceased that mortals can do for each other in this land of the dying. The following verses were sent to me by her daughter, Mrs. Mary C. Holle:

"A precious one from us has gone,
A voice we loved is stilled;
A place is vacant in our home
Which never can be filled.

God in his wisdom has recalled
The boon his love had given;
And though the body moulders here,
The soul is safe in heaven."

Affectionately,

JOSEPH BRODERS.

ALEXANDRIA, Va.

OUR beloved sister, **Elizabeth C. Constant**, was born in Sangamon County, Illinois, June 7, 1836, was married to John T. Constant (deceased) April 16, 1854, and died March 8, 1887, at Jacksonville, Ill., after a lingering illness of consumption. Sister Kate was an ornament to her profession. She seemed as near perfection as any one can be in the flesh. Hoping to gain strength from the climate, she went to Canon City, Colorado; but her separation from her dear mother and her children was more than she could bear. She returned only to die near them. She was all that a mother could be to her children. She wrote January 1, 1887, at Canon City, in a diary, "Far from the loved ones, but I do pray the dear Lord we will meet them again. I pray that I could live near my dear Savior. O I pray him to keep my dear children." We might write much of her life as a Christian, helping the poor and doing good to those around her; visiting the sick, and taking that motherly care of the needy that makes up the Christian character. But to those who knew her no more need be said than that she died in the faith in which she lived. She was for fourteen or fifteen years a true and consistent Old School Baptist, belonging to the church at Buffalo Hart Grove, in Sangamon Co., Ill. She leaves a mother, aged and invalid, five children and many friends, to mourn their loss. But we suffer it, feeling that she has gone home. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

Yours in the hope of the gospel,

JAMES H. RING.

OUR darling babe, **Annie F. Holloway**, died on Wednesday, May 25, 1887, aged twenty-one months lacking five days. She was taken sick on the 17th. Her sufferings were not very long, but were intense. She was taken with a fever, followed by convulsions, which resulted in brain fever. O how hard to part with her, our only child. Our home seems sad and lonely now. I cannot tell how much I miss her. We only hope that the little one is at rest, and may God grant us the spirit of reconciliation, and make us willing to bow in humble submission to his dealings with us.

MARTHA E. HOLLOWAY.

NEWARK, Md.

DIED—At the residence of his daughter, Mrs. Wm. H. Walters, **Mr. E. N. Holley**, at the advanced age of eighty-seven years. Mr. Holley was born in Deckertown, New Jersey, in the year 1800. He moved from there to Yates County, N. Y., and then to Steuben County, where he spent the last fifty years of his life. Seven children (five girls and two boys) survive him. His wife died eleven years ago, and since her death he has lived

with his children. He was a man of sterling integrity, and his purse was always open to calls of charity. It would be well for us all to follow the precepts and examples that he set for us.

His funeral was held at the Baptist Church at North Urbana, May 20, 1887.

MRS. E. HOLLY.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Lebanon Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Mt. Carmel Church, situated in Hancock Co., Indiana, commencing on Friday before the third Saturday in August, 1887, and continue the two following days. Brethren coming from the east will come on the C., C. and I. Bee Line R. R. Those coming from the west will take cars at Union Depot, Indianapolis, on same road, and get off at Fortville. All will get off at the same place, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is given to brethren of our faith and order.

Done by request of the brethren.

GEORGE S. WEAVER.

THE Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold its next session with West Liberty Church, in Des Moines County, Iowa, two miles west of Sperry, on the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railway, beginning at ten o'clock a. m., on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1887. All those who come by railroad will stop at Sperry, where there will be conveyances to meet them. A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren to meet with us.

M. W. BYRAM, Clerk.

THE Salem Association of Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Gun Powder, Boone Co., Ky., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Friday in August, 1887, and continue the two succeeding days, at ten a. m. Brethren and friends are respectfully invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Those coming from the north, east and west will come by way of Cincinnati or Ludlow, where they may call on brother E. Helm or Elder P. W. Sawin, in Ludlow, and then take the train for Erlanger, where they will be met by sister Comer and brother M. L. Ayler. Those coming from the south on the Southern R. R. will stop at Erlanger. Those coming on the L. C. & L. Short Line will have to change at Walton and take the Southern R. R. to Erlanger. Should any of the brethren have to stay all night at Walton, they will do well to call on brother B. S. Johnson, about one mile west of Walton.

JOHN R. JOHNSON, Clerk.

OUR association (the New Hope) will convene with the church at Union, in Drew Co., Ark., nine miles northeast from Monticello, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October next. We hope the Lord may move the hearts of some of our northern and eastern ministering brethren to visit us at that time.

A. TOMLIN.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Conference will be held this year with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 2, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days. We now expect that Elders Chick and Purington will be with us through the meeting. All that have a mind to do so we hope will purpose to be with us through the meeting, if God will; for we shall be glad to see you. There will be teams at the depot the day before the meeting to take all who come to the place of the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

THE Virginia Corresponding meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1887.

THE Tygart's Valley River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Valley Church, Randolph Co., W. Va., to begin at 11 o'clock on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1887.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

NOTICE is hereby given that a two days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the second church of Old School Baptists of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday (7th and 8th) of September, 1887, to begin at ten o'clock a. m., where we hope to meet those who love the truth and peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Ministers especially are invited. Those coming from the north by rail will stop off at Roxbury, and from the south at Kelly's Corners, where they will be cared for and conveyed to the meeting.

J. D. HUBBELL, Pastor.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

W D Agee 250, J R Respress 25, O F Webb 250, Mrs Amelia Barron 2, J M Bench 4, Orange Gaylord 2, J J White 5, Mrs E L Moore 2, Mrs Mary A Carney 2, Mrs Kate T Little 2, E Rittenhouse 2, Mrs Malinda Mason 4, H H Green 5, B A Walker 24 50, Peter Forester 2, Eld W A Melton 2, Sophia Rockwell 2, D T Scudder 2 50, John Walker 2 50, Mrs Dugald Walker 2 50, Mrs Phebe Benedict 2 50, Rate Ransom 2 50, W J Pamell 10 50, Eld W J Candle 2 50, Miles F West 2 50, James Brown 2 50, Allen Arnold 2, W S Fufts 2, Ebenezer Clark 2 50, Eld John N Caldwell 2 50.—Total \$130 00.

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We still lack about twelve hundred dollars of enough to pay for the actual cost of publication, allowing Elder Hassell nothing for his labor and expense, which amounts to several thousand dollars, for part of which he is still in debt. About two thousand persons who subscribed their names for the work, and are therefore obligated to take it, have not yet paid in the money which they have promised. Address,

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

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Opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper will be observed a date, this date denotes the time at which such subscription expires, and when a remittance is made to renew the subscription the date should be watched to see that it is forwarded to such time as the remittance pays to, and if neglected, by informing us, it will be corrected. By this method each subscriber has his own account, and can see that the proper credits are given for his remittances.

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CHURCH IDENTITY.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1887.

NO. 15.

POETRY.

THE SAVIOR.

Saw ye my Savior, saw ye my Savior,
Saw ye my Savior and God?
Saw him die on Calvary,
To atone for you and me,
And to purchase our pardon with blood?
Jesus hung bleeding, Jesus hung bleeding,
Three dreadful hours in pain;
O! the sun refused to shine
While his majesty divine
Was derided, insulted and slain.
Darkness prevailed, darkness prevailed,
Darkness prevailed o'er the land;
O! the solid rocks were rent
Through creation's vast extent,
While the Jews crucified the God-man.
When it was finished, when it was finished,
And the atonement was made,
He was taken by the great,
Embalmed with spices sweet,
And was in a new sepulchre laid.
Hail! mighty Savior! hail! mighty Savior,
Prince and the author of peace;
O! he burst the bands of death,
Triumphant from the grave,
And ascended to mansions of bliss.

GALILEE.

The Master walked in Galilee,
Across the hills and by the sea;
And though in every place he trod
As man, yet he was very God.
The twelve, who deemed him King of men,
Longed for the conquering hour when
The peasant's robe without a seam
Should be the purple of their dream.
Yet daily from his lips of love
Fell words, their thoughts as far above
As wisdom's utmost treasure piled
Upon the stammering of a child.
Like frost on flower, like blight on bloom,
His speech to them of cross and tomb;
Nor could their grieving spirits see
One gleam of hope in Galilee.
What mooted it that he should rise,
Were death to hide him from their eyes?
What meant the promised throne divine,
Were earth to be an empty shrine?
Low drooped the skies above the band,
Too dull the Lord to understand;
Alas! as slow of heart are we,
Abiding oft in Galilee.

OLD TESTAMENT.

The great Jehovah speaks to us
In Genesis and Exodus;
Leviticus and Numbers see,
Followed by Deuteronomy;
Joshua and Judges sway the land;
Ruth gleams a sheaf with trembling hand;
Samuel and numerous Kings appear,
Whose Chronicles we wondering hear;
Ezra and Nehemiah now,
Esther, the beauteous woman, show;
Job speaks in sighs, David in Psalms;
The Proverbs teach to scatter alms;
Ecclesiastes then comes on,
And the sweet Song of Solomon;
Isaiah, Jeremiah then
With Lamentations takes his pen;
Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea's lyres,
Swell Joel, Amos, Obadiah's;
Next Jonah, Micah, Nahum come,
And lofty Habakkuk finds room;
While Zephaniah, Haggai, call;
Rapt Zachariah builds the walls;
And Malachi, with garments rent,
Concludes the ancient Testament.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNTO WHAT AND UNTO WHOM THE SAINTS ARE COME.--HEB. XII. 22-24.

NUMBER SIX.

"AND to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."

This is the sweetest and most wonderful of this sweet cluster of wonderful sentences. The light and life and power and blessedness of the whole subject is in this. The character here presented is the glory of mount Zion, the light and beauty of the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the wisdom of the innumerable company of angels, and the life and everlasting joy of all the general assembly and church of the first-born; and his name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. I have had some comfort in meditating upon the preceding portions of this subject, but have written with an unusual sense of my short-sightedness, ignorance and inability; and have sent forth each of these numbers with much hesitation, because it seemed to present so little of the glorious fullness of the subject. But I approach this expression of the inspired apostle with more trembling of soul, more hesitation, than I have heretofore felt; for the more my mind is led into the subject here presented, the greater, wider, deeper, higher, grander, more infinite it appears, so that the question arises whether I ought to try to write at all concerning that about which I know so very little, and especially when I do not feel able to tell the half that has been shown me. Yet it is a subject that does at times thrill me with solemn and inexpressible joy, and inspires me with a holy desire to speak of the wonderful acts of this dear Savior, and declare the glorious majesty of his kingdom. I feel unworthy to speak of such holy things, unworthy to mention that blessed name; and at times I am overwhelmed with a feeling of solemn wonder that I am graciously allowed to entertain a hope that he has loved me with an everlasting love, has redeemed me from all iniquity, and that I am a joint heir with him to all the glory of heaven. It seems too much to claim or to think of by such a sinner as I am. When I consider this I cannot readily continue the investigation of a subject, but feel that I must speak of the matchless wonder of such love and compassion, such goodness and grace, such wisdom, power and mercy. How can it be that I, so vile a sinner,

should be beloved so? And often the question arises, Am I not mistaken? But then how could it be that I should know the sweetness and blessedness of loving him, of feeling his love shed abroad in my poor heart? Surely in this I cannot be mistaken. Though I often wonder, "Do I love the Lord, or no?" yet there have been times when my soul has rejoiced in the experience of that perfect love which casteth out fear; and I have at such times known that "we love him because he first loved us." This is his love, not ours. It did not originate with us, but came from him, as the sunlight that fills this room with its golden glory did not originate here, but came from the sun. It is the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts.

We are come to Jesus. But Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The Father hath drawn us in his own set time and way, and now teaches us by his Spirit, through his word sent into our souls and interpreted to us, through the preaching of the gospel, concerning what we have felt of that mysterious drawing. We did not come to Jesus in pursuance of a set purpose of our own. A determination to go to Jesus is not possible on the part of a man. Those who come to him are in his presence before they know they are on the way. No man can teach an other to go to Jesus. In no schools of men can the way be presented. It is on no map which the natural man can see. When the Father draws his people, instead of appearing to themselves to be on the way to salvation, heaven and glory, they seem to be going the other way. When he finds them, that is, when they are first conscious that the Lord sees and knows all about them, they are always where the Lord found Jacob, in a waste, howling wilderness. There is no exception. This wilderness cannot be pointed out on a map of the world. Its location cannot be designated so that a man can go there in order to be found of the Lord. It is by the Lord finding him that one comes into that wilderness, for it is his own vile nature, his own sinful condition; and no one knows that it is a waste, howling wilderness until God's presence in the law manifests it to him. The law shows it to be a wilderness, destitute of all righteousness, but filled with the fearful howlings of evil passions and sins that cry out against the soul.

Thus under the old covenant we are in desolation, terror, and without hope. The Lord leads us about and

instructs us, shows us fully our state of just condemnation, and then in his own time brings us experimentally under the new covenant, under the sweetly constraining power of its blessed wills and shalls, and thus sweetly reveals to us Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. Thus he draws us through our hunger to Jesus as the bread of life; through our nakedness to his righteousness as our robe; through our wretched vileness, felt and deeply mourned, to the precious blood that cleanseth us from all sin. He draws us to Jesus, the Mediator of the better covenant, founded upon better promises. It is not, "I will if you will," as the old covenant was; but, "I will and they shall." That old covenant was faulty, "weak through the flesh," because it was not possible for its conditions to be performed by sinful man. It is taken away, and the new covenant appears, with all the perfect righteousness which it necessarily contemplates on the part of those who are under it abundantly provided by this blessed Mediator. Whatever the law considered binding upon them he took upon himself, and was able to bear all that would have fallen upon them, that they might be free. The sins, the curse, the death, the sinking into the lowest hell, he bore all, suffered all, endured all, fulfilled all, and then arose in holy triumph, and now manifests himself with all this sin-bearing and death-conquering, as in them. He is given for a covenant of the people. In him they are safe as those in the ark were; safe from the curse of the law, safe from the floods of wrath against sin, safe from sin. He is their shelter from the enemy, their hiding place from the wind, their high tower.

What Jesus is now to his people he always was, for he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." In his mediatorial character he is set forth in the Scriptures as from everlasting. "His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." To fulfill the mediatorial work the Son of God was sent forth, made of a woman, made under the law. He did not partake of the flesh and blood of which the children are partakers in order to become the Mediator, but because he was the Mediator; as the priestly garments were not put upon Aaron to make him the high priest, but because he was the high priest, in order that he might fulfill the work. The ladder which appeared to Jacob, set up on the earth, the top of which reached to heaven, represents Jesus as the Mediator, who was both God and man. In the flesh he suffered.

This suffering of the Son of God is a mystery far beyond my understanding. He took part of the flesh and blood of which the children are partakers in order that he might suffer, might be tempted in all points like unto them, yet without sin, might become obedient even unto death; but if he had not been God, infinitely holy, as well as man, absolutely pure and sinless, such suffering as he endured would have been impossible. The distinctness of a stain will be according to the degree of whiteness and purity of the surface on which it appears. The divine nature of our dear Redeemer, in which there is always an infinite abhorrence of sin, was that which caused his soul to be filled with sore dismay and anguish, and to be exceeding sorrowful even unto death, when the full weight of his people's loathsome sins came upon him. Such sorrow can never be fully known by any one of his dear children; and yet only by an experience of the fellowship of that sorrow and suffering in measure can any come unto him. They are brought with weeping and with supplication. No one can feel any measure of the fellowship of his sufferings without being a partaker of the divine nature. By the Spirit of God only is sin abhorred, and true sorrow for sin caused to be felt in the soul. When we have had godly sorrow for sin, when we have felt it to be a burden and a grief to us, when we have struggled vainly against its desolating power, when it has humbled us in the dust before a holy God, and in solemn contrition of soul we have confessed before him all our sins and vileness, then, in our sorrow, and self-abhorrence, and humility, and tender contrition, and suffering, we have come unto Jesus as the Mediator of the new covenant in his suffering for our sins. In his own time and way he shows us that he has put away our sins by this suffering which we are thus learning something about. It takes all the experience of our mortal life to learn that the distance from us to which they have been removed is as immeasurable as the distance between the east and the west. When we are graciously given to know that we have come unto Jesus as the Mediator, we are made to rejoice in the Lord; but we shall not get beyond feeling sorrow and affliction on account of sin till we get beyond mortality.

In our low and dark seasons, in our days of mourning on account of the felt vileness of our nature and of our transgressions in thought and word and deed, we are nearer to the dear Redeemer experimentally than when all is bright within and without. It is when we are sorely tried, and become feeble and sore broken, that our humble souls, our broken and contrite hearts, seek after God, and call upon him in broken cries and sighs and heart groanings; and we are told that he is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit; and also that he is nigh unto them that call upon him, to them that call upon him in truth.

And when the poor soul feels some little token of his presence and favor, how we nestle like little tired babes in the arms of everlasting love. Then is the time when we feel the weakest, and it is then that we are truly the strongest; for in our weakness is the Lord's strength made perfect in us. We do not at such times feel like going abroad after worldly things, and are safest from temptation. We do not feel like entering upon fields of speculation, seeking to gratify ambitious desires, and so are safest from error. We do not feel like seeking great things for ourselves, but like walking softly before the Lord, waiting for him, and desiring to hear what he will say to us.

This low valley of humiliation is the safest and sweetest place in our experience. We can get no lower, having come to the bottom of our own strength and wisdom and righteousness. We have found these mountains to be less than nothing, and vanity. All we want is the strength and wisdom and righteousness of the Lord; and when he favors us with a token of his love we do rejoice in him truly. The sweetness of those moments when we can see all our sins blotted out by the precious blood of Jesus is inexpressible. Then we sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. The whole cluster of this precious fruit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, as we taste it in our own souls by the exercise of the Spirit in us, is very sweet. It produces no boasting; for we know it is not of the flesh, not from ourselves, but from Jesus, that our fruit is found. Through his infinite grace and mercy and loving-kindness those who are come unto Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, are made to rejoice in the exercises of those graces of the Spirit within them; and by these tokens they are confirmed in the precious hope that they are come unto him.

SILAS H. DURAND.

PLEASANT VALLEY, Va., July 1, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In compliance with an oft-repeated wish of brethren and sisters among whom I spent about five weeks recently in the state of Kentucky, I will drop a line to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you see proper to do so. Time would not allow me to write to each one separately; but as all of them are readers of our family paper, they will all see this, and I hope accept it as a token of remembrance of the pleasant visit had among them, and of the sweet gospel fellowship which I trust I realize in the Spirit toward them.

One thing above all else which was particularly gratifying and comforting to me was that I found all those whom I met well established and walking in the truth. This was cause of joy to John, the beloved disciple. In his second epistle, writing to the "elect lady and her children" (the church), he says, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking

in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." However much the Lord's people may be favored in this world, they realize the fulfillment of the saying of our Lord, "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" but even in these things, the trials and afflictions of the saints, many of the most valuable lessons are learned. Indeed, had we always freedom from trials, we should soon forget from whence cometh our help; but trials bring us to the feet of sovereign mercy, and in the time of need are we enabled to come in the boldness and confidence of faith to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Jesus also said, "It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him through whom they come!" How careful ought we to be that we be not the ones to give or cause the offense. This is not to say that we should sacrifice truth in order to avoid offense. This would be an offense of itself, and a most serious one, as in Revelation Jesus testifies "unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."—Rev. xxii. 18, 19. We are not judged of men, but of God; he shall do it; and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. "Our God is a consuming fire." Some quote, or rather misquote, "God out of Christ." To us there is no God out of Christ; but in him (Christ) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In him we see God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also." How infinitely glorious is our God in all his wonderful attributes and in his works. Above all is his salvation truly wonderful and glorious, that the infinitely holy and all-wise, the Creator and sovereign Ruler of the universe, who cannot behold evil, and will not look upon sin, should condescend to view such insignificant worms of the dust, and before the world began to set his love upon them, and in time to make a display of his love in the gift of his Son! "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." For whom? For sinners of Adam's fallen race, who, by virtue of that eternal life which was with the Father, and which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and appointed to obtain salvation; predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Now the apostle 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, but is now made manifest by the appearing of

our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Thus we see that the full purpose of salvation was established in the counsels of eternity, and is manifested in time. I do not understand that God has made anything new since the end of the sixth day, when he finished all his works; but all subsequent time has been devoted to unfolding and developing that which was created in the beginning. "The works were finished from the foundation of the world." In the development of God's purpose of the salvation of his chosen people, who had sinned in their Adamic or earthly head, he "sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." It is therefore true that Christ came to save the sinner. It is correct to say that the sinner was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and all the work of Jesus was for the sinner. It is also correct to say that the sinner is born again; not born over, not remodeled, not a new man made out of the old one, but man is born again by virtue of that life which God hath given him. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son." When a man receives the manifestation of that life in his own personal experience he is said to be born again; and this is truly a spiritual birth, of the Spirit, wholly and entirely, the flesh having nothing to do with it; born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. It is holy and incorruptible, and is called the "seed of God." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed [God's] remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." It is incorruptible, "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." In every one thus born is seen all the product of both births; and these are as separate and distinct in their nature as though they did not exist in the same person. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Every true born child of God, therefore, has both a fleshly and a spiritual nature; the one derived from the earthly head (Adam), and developed in the first birth, that of the flesh; the other derived from the spiritual head (Christ), and developed in the second birth, and is Christ—"Christ in you the hope of glory." In him is also witnessed the effects or results corresponding to the nature of which he is born. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit." The old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and all the works of the flesh, "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and

such like," are manifest and constantly realized in the experience of the child of God, causing him to mourn and groan, and to cry, "O wretched man that I am!" &c. These things are a constant witness that he is not a child of God. But the fruit of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," are also felt, and are a witness that he is a child of God. Thus the Spirit is against the flesh in the experience of every subject of God's grace so long as we are here in the world. While this warfare is waged with such terrible earnestness, and the poor child of God cannot do the things that he would (desires to do), yet the result is by no means uncertain. Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and has obtained the victory, which victory shall be fully manifested to all the saints in the final triumphant resurrection from the dead, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. "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?" Our glorious Captain has gotten us the victory. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death," &c., is his declaration. His inspired servant says, "Christ hath redeemed us from under the curse of the law," &c. May the Lord bless his truth. May he sanctify every trial to our good and the furtherance of his declarative glory. Amen.

I left home on the 19th of May, and returned on the 24th of June, finding all in tolerable health, and with abundant reason for gratitude to our God, who watches over us, and who kindly disposes all events, working all together for the good of his chosen. One of the most pleasant and comforting incidents of my trip was the meeting at Turner's, Henry County, with the Cane Run Church, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 10th, 11th and 12th. On Sunday brother Hamston administered the Lord's supper to a large number of communicants, representing ten churches. It was truly a season of refreshing. I also stopped off and spent a few days with one of the churches in the Burning Spring Association. I found some good, strong brethren there, but there is a good deal of Ashdod in the language of some of them; they cannot pronounce the "Shibboleth." There is a sifting going on that will be more fully developed at the next meeting of their association, when doubtless the true disciples will come out from among the disorderly, corrupt part, who are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.

Yours to serve in the gospel,

A. B. FRANCIS.

LEESVILLE, La., June 8, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As the time for me to renew my subscription has come, I feel it my duty to write to you. I

will also pen for your consideration a few thoughts on what I regard as the duty of brethren and sisters in dealing one with another. In doing so I will call attention to the order of the house of God, which house is the church of Jesus Christ, to whom Jesus has given all the laws and regulations that are necessary to govern the same; and for a rallying point I will use the words, "Let brotherly love continue."—Heb. xiii. 1.

This is the language of an inspired penman to the called subjects of grace among his fleshly kindred; and, like all the rest of his epistles, it is applicable to those of like precious faith everywhere. Dear brethren, how are we to obey the command? I will say that we cannot, unless the Spirit of God be with us; and for him to be with us, we must not only be chosen subjects of salvation, but we must also be the called subjects of divine grace; called to a knowledge of that love which we are commanded to let continue; and this knowledge makes us to know God, and this is life eternal.—John xvii. 3. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."—1 John iv. 8. That brotherly love is a holy principle and of heavenly origin, both our experience and the Scriptures abundantly teach; so that we who have that love are prepared to love one another with that love which Jesus commands, in his new commandment, his little ones to love one another with. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."—John xiii. 34. Thus we see at once that brotherly love is not a mere sense of affection, but is more: it is love not only in word, but in deed. Then what deed or action will be its exercise? There is quite a difference between the practice of brotherly love and the love exercised by publicans; for publicans only love those who love them. But brotherly love extends far beyond this, for it is love in exercise; yea, it prepares the members of Christ's kingdom to execute the rule as laid down by Christ, their King. But says one, You do not think that a strict adherence to gospel discipline is an exercise of brotherly love. Certainly I do. But, mark you, there is quite a difference between the execution of the rule as prescribed by Christ, and the exercises of many who are often called Christians; for the one prompts the individual to endeavor to reclaim the erring, while the other tends to drive the poor offender farther away. "But," says a brother, "he is such a desperate sinner that I have lost all confidence in him." Well, my brother, what has he done, and what is his standing in a moral sense? "Well, in a moral sense there is nothing against him; but we differ so widely. He has become so strenuous, and such is his condition that when I went to tell him his fault, or how angry he had made me, instead of acknowledging his fault he immediately insulted me, and made me more angry." But, my

dear brother, did you strive to let brotherly love continue. "Well, I cannot say that I did, for I felt little of that about me." Well, my dear brother, let me admonish you to "First cast the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."—Matt. vii. 3-5. For it is evident that you went to your brother while under the reign of a bad spirit, which is not the way to let brotherly love continue. "Well, what am I to do?" That you may understand me, I will call your attention to Matthew xviii. 15-17, which is a plain rule to guide you, and which, I understand, means that you shall go to your offending brother in love, and tell him his fault; and it may be that when you have cast the beam out of your own eye, you will be convinced that your brother is not such a sinner as you have thought. But if indeed you find him to be a transgressor, and if after laboring with him as prescribed by Christ, he does not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And this, though a plain portion of Scripture, is much caviled with. I have heard some contend that impenitence and a denial before the helps or witnesses thus called, establishes the charge; but, in my judgment, it does not; for the right of denial, according to both civil and divine law, certainly belongs to the accused. "But," says a brother, "if the one or two I am to take with me cannot be used against him in proof of his guilt, what are they to be taken for?" I answer, If they are acquainted with the circumstances, they can and are the proper ones to take, for they can the better help you show your brother his fault; but if they are not, and you have no other witnesses, they can only testify that you in their presence did accuse your brother of guilt, and that he denied it; which, of course, would prove a contradiction between you. "But," says one, "am I to take this case before the church, as other cases of offense, when the accused remains impenitent?" In answer I will call my brother's attention to the necessity of having at least two witnesses; for it is required in the New Testament that every word be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses; and in the Old Testament (the spirit of which is still in force) it is said, "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."—Deut. xix. 15. There are other Scriptures that I could refer to, but I will forbear. As I have seen much confusion grow out of such cases as I have described, I will advise my brethren to exercise much caution in such cases, and to be as forbearing as possible. In fact I do think that in such cases the offended brother ought to bear all that he can without wounding his own conscience, rather than bring such difficult cases before the church,

and in so doing obey the command, "Let brotherly love continue." Should the sinner remain impenitent after due labor has been had, the offended should, for the purpose of letting brotherly love continue, tell it to the church, whose duty it is to investigate; and if in her judgment she finds him a violator, she should admonish, rebuke and reprove, according to the merits of the case; and if he does not hear the church, she should, in order to let brotherly love continue, let him be unto her as an heathen man and a publican; that is, she should exclude him. "But," says a brother, "am I under any obligation to him any longer?" Of course you are. You should not maltreat him or use harsh and uncalled for expressions about him, for this is unchristian, and is also overbearing in the extreme; for your poor, fallen brother is suffering the full penalty of the law (that is, he is dead, in a disciplinary sense), and you ought to be satisfied when the law has given you the life of the poor sinner. And again, my dear brother, if brotherly love will not prompt you to discharge your duty toward the poor, fallen transgressor, let me say to you that God, whose eye is over the sparrow, is his protector. Remember that God has said, by the mouth of Solomon, "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth; lest the Lord see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him."—Prov. xxiv. 17, 18. Again, my dear brother, let me say that the time may come when Jesus will visit the poor, fallen one, by the quickening power of his Spirit, and call him from the dead state into which he has fallen by sin (for no doubt you have seen the effect of the quickening power of Jesus in the return of the erring, and probably have felt it); and if you have given him unjust treatment, O what remorse of conscience you will have when you meet the returning one, who was once the object of pity; but the scale is now turned, and you, under such circumstances, are now the object of pity; for Jesus has made him free, and he shall be free indeed.

Let me say that it is the duty of brethren, when they express forgiveness, to mean it. And that brotherly love may continue, do not in after time lay the brother's sins upon his head, after he has forsaken them; for such conduct would prove that you did not act faithfully on his return; and such is God's mercy that he has said concerning them, "None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live."—Ezek. xxxiii. 16. And again, dear brethren, let me say to you, Do not let your brother's former error cause you to watch over him for evil, but rather watch over him for good; and that brotherly love may continue, labor to encourage him to love and good works, that he, with you, may endeavor to keep the unity of the

Spirit in the bond of peace. And that brotherly love may continue, I will exhort you to "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. v. 16. And I know of no better way to obey the command than to let brotherly love continue; for love is the christian's banner, which is to be displayed for the truth's sake. Says the bride of Jesus, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."—Song ii. 4. Again, "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners."—Psa. xx. 5. And, dear brethren, as our God has given us such a banner, let us not be ashamed to unfurl it and spread it to the breeze; for it is not only a sign of nationality, but it is also an evidence of relationship; for "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."—1 John iii. 14. And such is the nature of the brotherly love that we are to let continue, that even those who know not God can see its effects; and not only so, but they will say, as did the Jews at the grave of Lazarus, "Behold, how he loved him."—John xi. 36. For brotherly love is one of the peculiarities that characterize the children of God. Let us not be found sowing to the flesh; for "the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19-21. And Paul says that "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Again, dear brethren, in order to let brotherly love continue, let me call your attention to another evil that is often practiced by people called christians, which is the habit of tale-bearing. This is not proper in good worldly society, much less in the church of Christ. Remember that "A fool uttereth all his mind; but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards."—Prov. xxix. 11. Again, "It is an honor for a man to cease from strife; but every fool will be meddling."—Prov. xx. 3. Again, "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth."—Prov. xxvi. 20.

Let me call the attention of my brethren to another evil. Do not place a different construction upon a brother's language than what he intends; for this is wrong; yea, it is pharisaical in its nature. Again, in order to let brotherly love continue, do not deprive your brother of the right to explain, in matters wherein he has been misunderstood; for in doing thus you may do him serious injury; and not only so, but it is evidence that you do not love him as you should. And remember that Jesus says, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."—Matt. vii. 12.

I will now speak a few words to my preaching brethren; for I do think we are given to our brethren, not only to comfort the little ones relative to their souls' salvation, but that brotherly love may continue. For our heavenly Father says to us, speaking by the spirit of prophecy, "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me."—Ezek. xxxiii. 7. Then let us as faithful watchmen stand at our post; and when we see the enemy approaching (the different evils by which the church is surrounded), let us immediately give the alarm. Let us speak against error wherever we find it, whether coming into the church, or already within. But says one, "I am afraid I would offend my brethren, or drive away my hearers, and thus make to myself many enemies, and hinder the progress of the church." But let me tell you, my brother, that your commission is to do what your beloved Lord has commanded you. And if your brethren should turn against you, it is no more than your Master and your ancient brethren suffered. And as to the outside world, if the truth drives them away it is no more than it has done in ancient times; for unbelievers ever have and ever will turn a deaf ear to the truth. And as to the progress of the church, that is the Lord's business, and he will attend to it. So, my dear brother, you have nothing to do but discharge your duty, and let brotherly love continue. But says a brother, "What am I to do when the church of which I am moderator or pastor becomes self-exalted, violates the rule of subordination, and takes steps that are not proper?" I answer, It is your duty to immediately advise against her disorderly course, and to reprove and rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine.—2 Tim. iv. 2. And if she pursues a wrong course toward a brother or a sister church, and you fail to discharge your duty as an Elder or pastor, in that of ruling against her disorderly course, according to the authority and power vested in you, you become equally guilty; for by keeping silence you give your consent to the erroneous course of the church of your charge, whether you in sentiment agree with them or not. But says my brother, "Is not the church an independent body?" I will say that she is not, only in this, that she is independent of the world; but she is dependent upon Christ, her Head. And as the church, like the human body, is composed of many members, and each member of our body is dependent upon the others, so are the members (different organizations) dependent upon each other. And if the brethren and sisters generally would consider their standing properly, we would not so often hear the uncalled for saying, "We are an independent body."

Yours in love,

J. K. P. BURNS.

P. S.—Dear brethren, I wish to say

to my brethren and friends who write me, that my post-office is not Hineston (which is about thirty miles from my residence), but Leesville, Vernon Parish, La., where I wish them to address me.

J. K. P. B.

GHEENT, Ky., April 21, 1887.

BRETHREN G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother O. Bell, of Jacksonville Texas, of which the following is a copy, except some slight changes in the verbiage.

"Dear Brother:—Some year or so since I wrote to you for some comfort, and received through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES your answer to my request, which I read with great interest. If one so weak and so little in the faith as I feel myself to be should ask you some questions, do not think hard of me, for I feel to be an inquirer after the true way. Why was Christ made of a woman? What was he made for? What did he come to redeem? Why did he come to redeem the church? That had fallen in the first Adam, who transgressed the law of God, the penalty of which was death. 'In Adam all die; even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.' We see he came and bore our sins in his own body on the tree of the cross. So by the coming of Christ the church has been redeemed from under the law. Then we are no more under the law, but under grace. So it is by grace that we are saved, through faith; and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them. Is not this a time salvation which we are called to work out? For it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Was our eternal salvation not hid with Christ in God? I think so. Some believe the coming of Christ is at the last day. I do not see it so. I find him coming to me in various ways; sometimes in love, sometimes in chastisement, sometimes in mercy, sometimes in calamities. Whom he loveth he chasteneth; and if we are without chastisement, we are bastards, and not sons. So we see that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Without the coming of Christ there would have been no shedding of blood. Without the shedding of blood there would have been no remission of sins. So we see the coming of the Savior was ordained of God; and he was made of a woman, made under the law. I would like to know if the coming of Christ means that he is to come, or has come. According to my knowledge of the word, he has come, and that without sin, unto salvation, to every one that believeth. And he continues to come to all the children that were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. Did he not come to you, my brother, when he manifested himself to you? Is he not

manifesting himself to all the redeemed vessels of mercy? Does he not say he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth? So he continues to visit us. He says, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' So he will continue to come, from one generation to another, as long as time lasts. We find no end to God, for he is from everlasting to everlasting, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

"Dear brother, I find a great deal of trouble among the Primitive Baptists. I hear of divisions and subdivisions. I am filled with sorrow when I see that once united and happy people now divided. Brethren, let me in love and sorrow ask you, What is the matter? Are you not carnal and walking after the flesh? Now I beseech you, brethren, in the name of our Master, that ye all speak the same things, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in one mind, and in the same judgment. I have been taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but the times are now so hard that I am not able to pay for it. I have always been well pleased with it. The editors are sound. So after you have read this, let it go to the SIGNS, if you think it fit for the public; and if you should write me, address me at Jacksonville, Texas."

I do not fully know whether brother Bell expected me to answer the questions suggested in the first page of his letter or not. But if I should answer them briefly, he will please pardon me.

The first question that he asks is, "Why was Christ made of a woman?" The apostle answers that question when he says, "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."—Heb. ii. 14, 15.

The second question that he asks is, "What was he made for?" The apostle also answers that question when he says, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5.

The third question is, "What did he come to redeem?" The apostle also answers that question when he says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 13, 14. The pronoun "us" in that quotation includes all that were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; all that were given by the Father to the Son; all that were included in the everlasting covenant of redemption. They all, having an Adamic relation, are unprepared to

enjoy the benefits of that redemption. But by the grace of God they are prepared in regeneration to have a foretaste, while clothed with mortality, of the sweets of that redemption, and in the great and glorious day of the resurrection that redemption will be fully accomplished; for then will be fulfilled the saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In that great and glorious victory this mortal will have put on immortality, and this corruptible will have put on incorruption. But, glory be to God, it is a victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. But here let me remark that the Arminian has no more power in any other part of the work of salvation than he has in the great and wonderful work of redeeming God's people from the power and dominion of the grave.

But the last question asked on that page of brother Bell's letter is, "Why did he come to redeem the church?" The prophet answers that question thus, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."—Jer. xxxi. 3. The great plan of life and salvation has for its sure foundation the love of God. The apostle says, "God is love." He is immutable; he changes not. Then his love for his redeemed is an everlasting and unchanging love. It rested ere time began on his chosen people; for they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. Being chosen in him, and redeemed with an everlasting redemption, and loved with an unchanging love, surely all things pertaining to their full, complete and everlasting glorification at the right hand of God, where there are joys forevermore, are made as certain as the eternal throne of our God.

Brother Bell seems to entertain some doubts as to the second coming of our Lord at that great day when the redeemed shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth to the resurrection of life. He says in his letter, "Some believe the coming of Christ is at the last day. I do not see it so." He also speaks of Christ coming by his Spirit to his people in love, in chastisement, in mercy and in calamities. None of the dear saints will doubt the experience of brother Bell, for they have traveled the same road and have received the same visits of their glorious Lord. "All thy people shall be taught of the Lord." And it is in those visits that they receive his wonderful and glorious teaching. But those visits of our Lord are very different from his coming declared at his ascension by the two angels clothed in white apparel, who said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts i. 11. Here is

the prophetic testimony of two witnesses sent from the eternal throne to bear testimony to the five hundred saints who were standing on the mount and witnessing that most wonderful event. Yes, and to you, brother Bell, and to all the dear saints who have lived and will live on the earth till that great and glorious day shall have fully come. The angel said to Joseph, "His name shall be called Jesus." In that name was embraced all things pertaining to our Lord. In that name he will come. And as he came to you, brother Bell, in regeneration, and sowed in you the seeds of spiritual and eternal life, he will come to you on the great day of the resurrection, and will give to your body, which was sown in weakness, the power of that spiritual, eternal and immortal life with which your glorious Lord ascended. That life was his, and all the dear saints are joint heirs with him; and hence they will receive that same life which brought again Jesus from the dead. As he came to all the saints in regeneration, so will he come in the resurrection. In regeneration a wonderful change is made in all the redeemed, and in the resurrection a greater, more wonderful and more glorious change will be made in them. In regeneration the seeds sown by the wicked one are left to grow; but in the resurrection Satan will be forever vanquished, sin will be destroyed, and death will forever lose his sting. The apostle, when speaking of this wonderful subject, says, "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. The apostle again says, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thess. iv. 15-18. The second coming of our Lord and the resurrection of the saints are presented to us as events that will occur at the same time. Looking forward to the coming of those wondrous events, let us comfort one another by talking and writing about them.

I concur with you, brother Bell, in regard to the disturbed condition of the Zion of our God. O that brethren would cease to find fault one of another, and be joined in union, harmony, love and sweet fellowship, and thus wait upon the Lord in all his appointed ways; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; to whose wondrous

name may the saints in every land and every clime offer adoration and thanksgiving, saying, "Alleluia. Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God."

H. COX.

GRAFENBERG, Ky., April 3, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The following is a copy of a letter from our much esteemed brother, Elder W. T. Ritter, the contents of which have been of much comfort to me; and as they may be the same to others, I therefore send them to you for publication in the SIGNS, should you approve. Our much loved paper, the SIGNS, comes regularly to us, heralding forth the praises of the great I Am, and filled with "a feast of fat things" for the hungry little ones; yea, it is to them as the small rain upon the tender herb. Dear brethren, may the residue of your lives be both long and peaceful, and may you be cheered on your way in the future as in the past by bright manifestations of Jesus, is the sincere wish of your unworthy little sister, if one at all,

BETTIE VAWTER.

SOUTHVILLE, Ky., Sunday Morning.

MISS BETTIE VAWTER—DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND:—With pleasure I now hasten to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 5th inst. We had indeed come to the conclusion that you had grown oblivious of us; but its reception brought us the happy assurance that such was not the case; and it was timely, inasmuch as it revived my drooping spirits. It is a great boon from the beneficent Father that we can thus address each other; and truly when one is in a desponding mood, feeling less than the least of all saints, it gives great relief to unbosom his soul to dear, sympathizing friends, the nearest and dearest of whom is Jesus; yea, he is the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother," and as we truly and sweetly sing,
"What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear."

And,

"'Twas Jesus, my friend, when he hung on the tree,
Who opened the channel of mercy for me."
Expressing your trials, dear sister, you inquire, "Has it ever been thus with you?" I answer, Yes. I am a poor, afflicted, tempest-tossed one, and have been made to loathe myself to such a degree that instead of being willing to be just a silent listener in the house of God, I have felt like fleeing from the presence of the dear brethren. But you will remember Paul says the "strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." And again, "Let each esteem others better than themselves." And I am persuaded that when these two admonitions of the apostle are strictly adhered to or complied with, we shall never hear the doleful words, "You are not as good as I. I am a big I, but thou art a little you;" but instead, the acceptable prayer, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." Dear sister, I have lately been much refreshed by two letters from our dear

old father in Israel, A. J. Bickers, in the last of which his cup of bliss seemed to be running over, because of his daughter Cora (such a true, precious jewel that she is) having been made willing to come home to her people and tell them what great things the Lord has done for her, whereof we are glad and happy to rejoice with the dear old brother. You, sister, are also made to rejoice in that the Lord of glory is manifesting his power in thus bringing into your banqueting house, Little Flock, such precious hidden ones, the purchase of his own precious blood. I call them hidden, because they are hidden from the world. "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." My desire is that these little ones may ever be kept unspotted from the world, and enabled to consecrate their lives wholly to the service of their Lord and Savior, ever manifesting the word of God's grace in the heart, and shewing forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light; thus giving all diligence to make their calling and election sure. You will perceive, sister, that I am here, while speaking of obedience to the faith, giving God all the glory; and truly, methinks, the heaven-born children are ever willing to ascribe all praise to him for any good act they may ever perform, knowing it is he that is working in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure; and they have the blessed assurance that Jesus, of God, is made unto them wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Consequently it is with fear and trembling that they, the little ones, work out their own salvation. Do they repent and come home to the church and declare what the Lord hath done for their souls? It is because God makes them willing in the day of his power, leads them unto repentance, draws them with loving-kindness. Do they sing praises? It is because God puts a new song in their mouth, even praise unto his holy name. Do they in their daily walk and conversation glorify God? It is because he has chosen them as vessels of mercy unto it. Do they in this faintly reflect the image of Jesus, their Savior? It is because Jehovah has predestinated them thereunto. Do they in all this, in a small degree, manifest that they are children of the Most High? It is because the same omnipotent power has predestinated them unto the adoption of children to himself, and by it they have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father, and at the final consummation of which they shall come forth divested of mortality, under which they now groan, wearing the full image of their glorified Redeemer, and forever resting satisfied, being made like him, and also knowing even as they are known. O the ecstasies that await the dear children of God, to be wafted on the wings of love to climes of eternal bliss and glory, even at the right

hand of God, where there are pleasures forevermore. May it be our happy lot to be of that innumerable host who have come up out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. We know that it is through much tribulation that we are to enter upon the peace of the heavenly Jerusalem. But I would try to say, Let doubts and fears annoy, let the winds of adversity howl, let the raging, mighty waves of sin threaten to destroy or swallow us up, let come what will, may each of us ever be enabled to look unto him who can calm the adverse winds, roll back the raging billows, and who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear, and whose grace is sufficient for us. As it is so comfortingly written,

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow."

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

But this letter has become quite lengthy, so farewell, dear sister. You have much to fare well upon. You have God's love richly dwelling within you, his grace to sustain you, and his Spirit to guide and direct you through life's sore trials and conflicts, and finally to waft you to the eternal climes of glory. Amen.

W. T. RITTER.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., July 5, 1837.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—
DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a copy of a letter written by Elder T. P. Dudley, and addressed to the four churches of his pastoral care, to be delivered after his death. It was found among his private papers on deposit in the bank where he transacted business. Believing that the brethren generally would love to read anything from his pen, and having obtained consent of the churches to which the letter is addressed to copy and send it to you for publication, I now inclose it, hoping that you may give it space in the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Sincerely,
J. TAYLOR MOORE.

*To the Particular Baptist Churches at
Bryans, Elizabeth, Mount Carmel
and Georgetown.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—The relations which have existed between us as pastor and people, extending through almost as many years as are commonly allowed to man on earth, with your kindness, sympathy and forbearance, amaze me. Knowing as much of myself as I do, I am constrained to confess that it is the kindness and mercy of God to which I am indebted for all the kindness shown. Very soon after I embraced a hope in the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin, and the righteousness of Christ to clothe and present me unblamable before God, I was greatly embarrassed by hearing from the pulpit, from one who was more experienced, as I supposed, and understood the teaching of the Bible

better than I did, and to whom I accorded much more real piety than I dare claim, "In regeneration, or the new birth, the soul is changed from the love of sin to the love of holiness, and the enmity of the heart is slain." Immediately I concluded, If this be true, I am not born again. I engaged in examining the principles. If the soul is thus changed, it would be as wholly devoted to holiness subsequently as it had been to sin antecedently to the change. Again, if the enmity of the heart is slain, whence the wicked and rebellious passions which so much annoy and distress me? After much trouble and anxiety of mind I was relieved by two passages of Scripture. First, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." The second is, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." In prosecuting my investigation of the subject I came on Paul's declaration, that the old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and the new man after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Considering the antagonism in nature of the two men inhabiting the same body or temple, there was no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that struggling, striving, running and fighting would be the result to believing; and I have so preached for about forty-seven years. The next error with which I was brought in contact was Andrew Fuller's general atonement and special application, a heresy which I could by no means countenance, as it saps the foundation of my hope for salvation, under values the precious blood of the Lamb of God, tramples under foot the Son of God, and counts the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. [The writer here seemed to leave out some expression.—J. T. M.] "And hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." "But by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Now, if that blood can fail in one case to deliver from the curse of the divine law, each heir of promise will conclude that mine may be that one, for none are less worthy or less deserving of the mercy of God. But Fuller's system, if it deserves the name system, is more inconsistent than Universalism, erroneous as both are.

Campbellism was the next heresy I felt called upon to oppose. I heard Mr. Campbell once about three hours, as the exponent of his theory; immediately after which an esteemed friend and admirer of Mr. C. approached me and asked, "How did you like Mr. Campbell?" I replied, "Mr. Campbell speaks with great ease to himself, uses good language, and seems to be well acquainted with Jewish history; but there is a radical defection in his theory." He had no use for the Spirit of God to impart life to the sinner; that all that is necessary

is to read, believe and obey, which all are capable of doing, and this secures their eternal salvation. I was somewhat surprised that a man who seemed to be so well acquainted with the history of the Jews as a nation should have overlooked the fact that they are but a typical people, and should have stopped short of the antitype. My conclusion was that his theory was neither more nor less than natural religion, and I had no fellowship for it. Next came the brood of unscriptural institutions, combining Missionary, Bible, Tract and Temperance Societies, with Sabbath Schools as auxiliaries, helps, means and instrumentalities in evangelizing the world; for which I had no more fellowship than I had for other antichristian measures, whose effect is to deny the sovereignty of God in the work of salvation. The next development of the man of sin in his prophets was the denial of the eternal, vital oneness of Christ and his church, in the absence of which they are utterly unable to reconcile the justice of God with inflicting the penalty of the law on his Son, "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" "who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Yet it pleased the Lord to put him to grief. Surely "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." As a consequence, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

The next war was made on our views of the christian warfare. I have read nowhere in my Bible where the Lord has said that except a part of a man be born again, but "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now all intelligent persons know that it takes soul, body and spirit to constitute the living, natural man; and Paul tells the Thessalonian brethren, "And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." If the soul is born again it cannot sin, for John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." But again, if the soul be, as intelligent men tell us, the intelligent, reasoning part of man, and the body and members only move in action as they are moved upon by the soul, that they only do the bidding of the soul, they would never sin unless moved thereto by the soul. Again, the soul is allowed by the learned to be the seat of the thoughts; and the Bible tells us that the thought of foolishness is sin. If the soul is born again it cannot sin; but have christians no foolish thoughts? If they have not, then I am no christian. The conclusion is, that while the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful

lusts, and the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, dwell in the same body, temple or tabernacle, the fighting, running, wrestling and striving will continue. But, thank God, he has said, "The elder [or old man] shall serve the younger," or new man; and he has assured his people, thus annoyed with this continual conflict while in the body, of the final victory; that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; and the heirs of promise shall live eternally in glory, while the wicked who shall live in the future shall go away into everlasting punishment. You and your ancestors in the church will bear witness that I have steadily maintained the same principles of truth throughout a ministry of fifty-seven years. You and they have witnessed many of the trials, the bitter denunciations, misrepresentations and persecutions I have had to encounter. You have stood by me as a faithful band of brethren and sisters, and have afforded me your countenance; and not to me personally, but in support of that truth of God on which we live and hope. I should be wanting indeed of gratitude to God if I did not highly appreciate the bestowment of such friends, who have at all times been ready to afford all the encouragement in their power in every time of need. I have been with you in trouble and in joy, in prosperity and in adversity, under the clouds, and, as I trust, when the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings. In conclusion, I most sincerely thank you for all the kindness shown.

Fifty-seven years have I served the church of Bryans. Fifty-four years have I served the church of Elizabeth. Forty-seven years nearly have I served the church of Mount Carmel. Forty-five years have I served the church of Georgetown. If those churches have been profited by the service, I beg they will thank God, and remember that an apostle said, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

Yours to yet serve while life and strength last,

THOS. P. DUDLEY.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Nov. 25, 1837.

WADE'S MILL, Ky., June 22, 1837.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Not till within a few years past have I seen so plainly the wide contrast between the life which is born of the first Adam and the life which is born of the second Adam, and especially so in the past year; for in that time especially I have been a victim of such wrongs that at times I feel what I might call almost a devilish, reckless, mad resolve to hurl back guile and fierce resentment. Then again a sweet, holy feeling possesses me, and it all lies on me as light as a feather. I can forgive everything, endure all things, suffer long, and be kind. But my constant failures under trial and temptation teach me how appropriate are the words, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." How much I feel I have need

to pray God that he will continually create a new heart in me, and renew a right spirit within me. How I feel, to my bitter sorrow, that cruelty. My fleshly nature lusts against my spirit, until I am sore and pained and distressed beyond measure, and feel to cry out in agony, "O wretched man that I am!" What a beautiful, sweet, heavenly thing is that nature in the christian which sins not, but abides patiently, meekly, in its calm, holy frame, in the midst of whatever wrong or injustice, whatever trial or temptation, it may be subjected to; that sweet plant, exotic to earth, whose flower yields richest perfume, whose fruit is love. Truly it is a lily among thorns, the fir and myrtle trees among thorns and brambles. When I see, as I trust I do now, the infinite contrast between my two selves, how I hate myself on account of my sin and iniquity, my vileness and depravity. O how hard I beg the Lord to protect, guard and defend me against my black, hateful, sin-defiled self. How terrified I often am when I see myself led to return evil for evil, to feel anger, to give way to malice and evil speakings. I often want to say to all about me, especially to my brethren, that my black self is not my true self; my sinful self is not my true self. I hate it with a perfect hatred; repudiate it; I desire so earnestly to be delivered from it. Yet it is a part of my being still, and will be till I leave this time state; and the holy God of heaven only knows how much I will have to suffer yet on account of it. All the opposition and persecution from without could not hurt me if it were not for my own hateful self.

Now, since I see so plainly, as I trust, the infinite contrast between that life in me which is earthly, sensual, devilish, and that which is willing to endure all things, which is born of God, born of an incorruptible seed, is it any wonder that I should as a conscious man oppose, firmly oppose (but I desire to do so kindly), indorsing the untruth that the Adam man is born again? for in my judgment that would destroy the warfare. I have suffered so much because of the depravity of my Adamic nature that I would be glad to have it born again; but I cannot have it so in this life, nor can I subscribe to any preaching or views which do leave the impression on me that the view is held that the Adam man is born again. My hope is that my body, soul and spirit, which were born of the earthly Adam, will be raised to a state as perfect, holy and happy as Christ in his glorified state. As the Bible teaches, there can be a redemption and resurrection, consistently with justice, only by reason of a union of life, as actual, in and with the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Adam, in his obedience, death and resurrection, as it was actual with the natural progenitor, the first Adam, in his disobedience.—Rom. 8. 19. May God strengthen us all with might by his Spirit in the inner man, to enable us to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. Yours in love,

CHARLES E. STUART.

REMARKS.—We cannot doubt the power of Christ in the writer of this letter; but we would in love suggest that the deeply mysterious doctrine of the new birth cannot be explained to the natural man by using unscriptural terms. The invariable result of such efforts is to excite confusion, and alienate brethren who have been dwelling together in unity. Every one who sees the kingdom of God is born again; yet he can no more explain that birth than he can speak from personal knowledge of his natural birth. The Spirit of truth says, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."—1 John iv. 7, 8. Walking according to this admonition we shall not err.—ED.

TROY, Mich.

DEAR EDITORS:—Another year has rolled around, which reminds me of my remittance; therefore inclosed you will find two dollars for the coming year.

As I have written on business, may I be allowed to write a few lines for your paper? I wish to go a little farther, and relate briefly some of my experience in my early days. I was born in Washington County, N. Y. At the age of four years, with my parents I moved to Onondaga County, central N. Y. At the age of fifteen years I was instantly struck with a sense of my lost condition, without God and without hope. I continued in this state of mind for four or five months, and in the meantime much of my time was spent in clinging to some Arminian arm, in order to save myself. But the more I strove, the farther I sank in despair and gave up all hope. As I was laboring one day in the field, in an instant there appeared to me a bright light, the brilliancy of which I cannot describe. I raised my eyes and beheld the leaves on the trees (it being in an orchard). I never before saw them appear so green and beautiful. As I gazed about, all seemed to be praising God. Then I wanted to drop my hoe and go and see a christian. As time passed on, in a few weeks a certain Baptist deacon called on me, and stated that he had learned of some of my exercises. I gave him but a few brief answers. He invited me to a covenant meeting, and I promised him I would go; but upon reflection I was led to inquire of myself, Why should I go there? They are christians, and I am not. I rather settled down upon that resolution. After this I dreamed a dream. I dreamed I found myself lying upon the margin of a small stream of water, which seemed like just awakening. I found myself in a small place, in the same brilliant light that I saw in the orchard, and midnight darkness all around me. I looked up and saw the cause. There stood the very Christ. I had no doubts. He bade me rise, and with him gather up some fresh fish that lay at his feet. I did so, and after we had them in our arms he then

bade me, "Now follow me." And in all there was not an audible word spoken. He passed off, and I followed. After passing some distance, he came to the foot of a high mountain and a dense forest. As he ascended, being far ahead, he was soon out of my sight. I then, for the first time, saw myself in a narrow path, in the same brilliant light, and midnight darkness upon either side. And as I ascended some distance, I looked forward and saw a hedge of bush and briars, and the light plainly passed over. I soon decided, I cannot get over that. I passed along by the side of the hedge, in the dark. Seeing I was going farther and farther from the light, I resolved to try and climb over. I did so, and returned to the light, and commenced ascending the steep mountain side. I soon saw another hedge of the same kind. I took the same course, hedge after hedge, a long distance, until I arrived at the top of the mountain. I raised my eyes, and the same light spread all about me as far as the eye could reach. I looked back over that dense forest, and saw the trickling waters in that small stream, though far away. I looked in an opposite direction, on the other side, and saw at the foot another stream, and much larger. I cast my eyes down before me, and found myself in the same path, and darkness again upon either side. I began to descend, and looking forward saw another hedge. Upon arriving, and being upon the upper hillside, I resolved to climb over. I did so, and passed on my way, but soon came in contact with another hedge. After going a long distance down the mountain-side, I arrived at the margin of the large stream of water. I found it to be the same water that I saw in the lesser stream from which I started. Seeing the lights pass over the stream, I passed over, and upon rising out of the water I found myself in a beautiful interval. The light spread about some distance. I looked forward and saw a new road piked up. Its straightness and smoothness attracted my attention. I looked to the right and saw the end. As I cast my eyes along the road, I saw again the very Christ standing in the center, and a company of men marched very systematically down by the edge of the pike. They would wheel about and pass to the opposite side, up again to the center; and the road was formed in this manner, with not a tool to be seen. I stepped forward, and for the first time saw that my arms were full of fresh fish. I laid them down at the feet of the same being that I picked them up with. I awoke, and found it to be a dream. After much reflection upon the matter, and passing in meditation back and forth over the mountain, I was constrained to decide, It is enough; I will follow; but, Lord, help. My first impression was to go to that covenant meeting, and I did so. Being called upon to express my mind, after a few brief remarks I was received and baptized. I promised in the outset to be

brief; but I cannot close without relating some of the circumstances which transpired in my after life. About the year 1818 or 1819, Dr. Rice returned from Burmah, and came to the church where I was then a member. He reported the condition of the "christian" organization in the heathen land, and also made his appeal for money to defray the expenses of the organization. Soon there were men appointed to attend to the business, and among them was Elder Alfred Bennet, of Homer, N. Y. Soon I discovered extra exertion for money, money; and from that day until the present I have noticed that spirit more or less increasing, and at the same time have witnessed many institutions that were calculated to stimulate even those of the world to take interest in the matter and aid in the raising of money.

Fifty-four years ago I came into this state, then a territory, and an almost unbroken wilderness, with my family, consisting of myself, wife and five small children. I soon began to discover a far greater zeal for both foreign and home missions. "Evangelizers" were crying aloud through the land, churches organized, meeting houses speedily erected, and many efforts put forth to add numerical strength to the churches. But alas! as time passed on, too lengthy for me to relate, I now find that ardent zeal in a measure gone. There appears to be a waning. That old crying of alarm does not seem to have as much effect upon the people: Many churches are dwindling down, until many years ago I was constrained to take my leave. The church that I then left numbered from eighty to one hundred members. The last report that I heard was thirty-three, all told. Such I learn is the state of many churches about.

Much more I would like to say, but I have gone much farther than I intended. But let me just say here that I am still firm in the belief that salvation is through grace, and grace alone, and that God's ways ever were and ever will be immutable, and will all be culminated in the end. Myself and aged companion are very much interested in reading the SIGNS, together with the Baptist History; also a book from sister Swartout, with many thanks to her; and I hope we may hear from her. Space and strength fail, therefore I must come to a close. I am now in my eighty-ninth year, and very feeble, hardly crossing the room without fear of falling. I find myself upon the margin of the larger stream, and shall soon pass over.

Yours as ever,

BENJAMIN ELDRED.

My grandfather, not feeling strong enough to write, commissioned me to write this letter at his dictation.

Very respectfully,

L. MAY ELDRED.

FORBEARANCE AND LOVE.

My mind has been greatly exercised of late on the subject of brotherly love and forbearance. We are all poor, contaminated, sinful crea-

tures, and we get in the flesh many times, and say very hurtful things about good and precious Baptists, because they cannot see through our eyes. And Paul says, "For we know in part, and prophesy in part." "For now we see through a glass darkly." We are all imperfect creatures, and can only understand in part. If Paul could understand the depths of the mystery of godliness only in part, shall we kill our precious brethren who cannot see every point just as we do? No. There would be no forbearance in such a course.

There is a contagious disease among the people of God which wounds my poor heart, and that is fault-finding. Old brethren engage in finding fault with the brethren so much, until it becomes habitual, and they cannot be satisfied unless they are working at the mote in their brother's eye; and the younger brethren hear so much of it that they conclude they will not be sound, faithful Baptists unless they find fault too. The poor, little lambs become starved on such, and are driven farther and farther away from the fold. I see some who are perfectly sound on the doctrine of election and predestination, salvation by grace, special atonement, final preservation, and the resurrection of the bodies of the saints; but because brother A does not understand the new birth just as brother B understands it, they get at variance with each other, while they are agreed on the cardinal points of doctrine. The point that concerns me most is, Am I embraced in the covenant of grace, and have I been born again?

I hear some say that such and such brethren are sound on all points of doctrine, but they do not understand the new birth as I do, and I am not going to fellowship such a brother. Brethren, these things ought not so to be. Such a fleshly spirit as that will keep up a general confusion among the people of God. While you are trying to devour each other, you are getting no nearer, but farther apart all the time.

Some are going into vain speculation, which is not comforting to God's humble poor. Some try to exclude the sinner of Adam's race, as not being known or having any part in salvation; and some will go so far into speculation on their fine-spun theory as to deny the sinner being a child of God. It is the sinner of Adam's race that is redeemed, called, justified and glorified. It is the sinner of Adam's race who is given eternal life, who is made to mourn on account of his sins, and who is made to rejoice in Christ as his Savior. He (the Adam sinner) is led by the Spirit of God, and is a son of God; for "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." It is not the Spirit of God led by the Spirit of God, but it is the Adam sinner. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." That is not a family of eternal children or abstract spirits that are taught of God, but

men and women of Adam's race, who are taught of the Lord. John says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." Were they angelic spirits who were thus exhorted to keep themselves from idols? No; but they were regenerated sons and daughters of Adam's race. All the apostles in their writings addressed sinners of Adam's race, who had been born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Every child of God while here is in possession of natural life, and also of spiritual or eternal life. The natural life is the life he received from Adam; the eternal life he received from Christ; for Christ is our life. There is no good thing in the flesh; but it is Christ in us the hope of glory that causes us to love things we once hated, and to hate things we once loved. It is Christ in us the hope of glory that enables us to put off the old man with his deeds, and to have spiritual desires. The Christian does desire to live to the honor and glory of God. Show me a man that possesses the Spirit of Christ, and I will show you one that has a different walk from what he once had. He hates sin.

Now, while you may view this differently from what I do, I shall not try to kill you; and do not you try to tear me down because you can see farther than I can. Sometimes if we would examine ourselves we could see a very great sinner, full of error, without going off out yonder to try to tear good brethren down. There seldom arises a trouble in the church but what we all get in the flesh before it is settled. Sometimes brethren get to worshipping the preacher; some for Paul, some for Cephas, some for Apollos, and a few for Christ. Preachers are men, and we should follow them no farther than they follow the Scriptures. How dreadful to see the servants of God envying one another. Envy is of an evil spirit. I know I am not able, and I do feel thankful to God that he has gifts who are able to defend the cause of my Master. If I were the ablest gift, we would be in a bad condition. But, thank God, he has placed able watchmen upon his walls, who will never hold their peace, day nor night. Then must I try to destroy my brethren because I cannot go into the depths of God's mysteries like they can? By no means. I am glad we have able defenders of the truth. We should feel thankful for all the gifts.

Brethren, let us lay aside all envy, malice and strife, and dwell together in unity. Then you will see the dear lambs coming home and telling of the wonderful dealings of God with them. They would rather stay on the outside than come into confusion. O that I could write in such a manner that it would unite the dear ones in fellowship throughout. How delightful to see love existing among the people of God. It hides a multitude of faults. You will never hurt each other while in possession of love. If you love one another,

you will have forbearance, and will not be saying evil things about one another.

We are greatly blessed here in south Alabama. We have no leaders, but are all little ones, and glad to see each other when we meet, and are separate from the world.

Brethren, let us all examine ourselves, and work for peace. I desire to write more soon.

In love,

LEE HANCKS.

KELLY'S CORNERS, Mich., April 11, 1887.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As my subscription to the SIGNS has expired, I will say, Please send it to me another year, as I do greatly appreciate the contents of our dear family paper, and do feel that the dear writers are very near my heart. Love and gratitude to the divine Master flow forth, I do hope, for granting me a name with the poor and despised; for we read that he was despised and rejected of men. And if we follow the divine Master we shall have our name cast out as evil. O how many have been the tears of grief I have shed in looking over my past life, and wishing I could live more and more as a child of God should. I fear and tremble, knowing that the very secrets of my heart are known to the high and lofty One, and none can in any wise deceive him. Then should we not fear him with a godly fear, and remember what the dear Savior said when here? "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."—See John xiv. 21. It is them that have his commandments and keep them. And there is the great and heart-searching question, Am I one that hath his commandments? Truly it was a great comfort to his disciples to have the blessed Master talk to them in that sweet, consoling manner. Yet they did not fully understand him; and so it is now. Do we understand? Not until he is revealed to us, as he is the great revealer. Those sorrowing disciples in sadness walked and talked, not knowing it was the same Jesus that was crucified three days before. O how glad would they have been had they known it. But with what joy did they exclaim, when he was made known to them, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way?" And when communing with the divine Lord and Master, as those dear disciples did, it must have been sweet to them. But he vanished out of their sight, and they talked of the lovely visit they had. So it is now. Sometimes he comes in the still, small voice, and sometimes when the great billows of sorrow overwhelm us, and always there is a calm. O that the writer of these imperfect lines could have more of his loving visits. O that it were with me as in days past, when first he revealed his lovely face. It was truly a love visit.

"Nothing but Jesus I esteem'd;
My soul was then sincere;
And everything that's dear to him,
To me was also dear.

"But ah, when these short visits end,
Though not quite left alone,
I miss the presence of my Friend,
Like one whose comfort's gone."

May we be kept by his divine power,
and all the praise shall be to him forever.

MRS. M. P. LEWIS.

WAVERLY, N. Y.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please publish the following letter, if you think best.

M. VAIL.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 4, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—We have just received the photographs of yourself and wife, and your kind letter. After reading it I have had some sweet meditation upon the goodness and mercies of God to poor sinners, more especially to myself. Therefore I concluded I would try to answer your letter at once, while I felt to be in a comfortable state of mind; for such frames are of short duration. But when we have the privilege of meditating upon spiritual and divine things, whereby we are made to rejoice in that hope that passeth understanding, is it any wonder that we should contend for the truth as it is in Jesus? Unto whom else can we go? for he has the words of eternal life. I feel to realize very sensibly myself all that you write of your unworthiness, and my wife says you have plenty of company. Sometimes I am tempted to think that there is nothing in religion anyway; that when we die, that will be the end. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, he has not permitted me to remain long in that mind. He has shown me that without him I can do nothing, but that in him all fullness dwells; and I am made to rejoice in that joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, and to know that he controlleth all things, and that he ruleth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and doeth all his pleasure. And what a comfort to the poor, dependent child of God to know that all things, including us, are kept by his power, through faith unto salvation. We love him because he first loved us. How true this is; for where is there one that would ever have loved that Redeemer if he had not been drawn unto him by the cords of his love? And he promises that his loving-kindness shall not be taken from us. Now how can we doubt his promises? We cannot spiritually. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. That is what causes doubts to arise in our minds about our being accepted in the Beloved. If it were not for doubts, we should have much more comfort than we do; but then where would the cross come in? It is through much tribulation that we are to enter the kingdom.

We had Elder Chick to preach for us on last Wednesday evening. My

wife is about as she was when you were here. I am in fair health.

From a poor sinner saved by grace, if at all,

W. L. CRAVEN.

CRAMER, Ill., March 31, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have just received the seventh number of the SIGNS, have read it through, and was very much interested in brother Jones' communication on the subject of predestination. I am well aware that we may have a theory and yet be destitute of the grace of God. I have had many serious thoughts because I differ from some of my dear brethren, whom I hope I love. Am I, after all, mistaken, and without God and hope in the world? I have had such fears lest I am not one of those that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love; being predestinated to the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will. In whom they have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. If I am one of that number, an object of his mercy, then surely I was to be a sinner; and then sin surely was predestinated to enter the world, and we were to be in a state of captivity to the enemy, and to be redeemed; so that in the dispensation of time he might gather together and make known to his captivated people the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself. For there was a time when we were without Christ, dead in sins, and strangers from the covenants of promise. If sin had not entered into the world, his people never could have sung the song of redeeming grace. Nothing has nor can transpire to frustrate the eternal purpose of our God.

But I seated myself to ask your views on the subject of temptation. I would refer you to James, and to the prayer Jesus taught his disciples, "Lead us not into temptation;" also the temptations of Job and Abraham, also the temptations of the Savior, when he was led by the Spirit to be tempted.

If you will gratify me, a poor sinner, I will be thankful to the good Lord for gratifying your unworthy brother,

E. D. VARNES.

(Editorial reply on page 177.)

SANDY HOOK, Ky., April 24, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Will you please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, from an unworthy brother, if a brother at all, a few thoughts? This is the first time that I ever attempted to write for publication, either politically or religiously. I have not been a constant reader of your valuable paper, but have read it a few times in the last twelve years. I became identified with what is called the Old School Baptist Church, in June, 1873, and began to try to preach on Friday be-

fore the fourth Saturday in February of the same year. Dear brethren, I trust I have fellowship with you—that fellowship which is given to all the children of God in him who is the Head, even Christ. I do not attempt at this time to write on any particular subject, but only desire to drop you a few thoughts; but I shall, if permitted, write to you again. We are not in the condition, in our association, that I would like to be. I belong to the Burning Spring Association, situated in northeastern Kentucky. Our association is divided in doctrine and discipline, and we speak often one to another of how we will obtain union and correspondence with the Primitive Baptists in North America. I have the care of three churches, to which I have been trying to preach for several years. Some of my own brethren have made war with me. I have ever tried to preach the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, and the eternal, vital unity of Christ with all his members; and I had been trying to preach it for some time before I knew how to name it.

Brethren, dispose of these few thoughts as seemeth good, and all will be right.

As ever, yours in hope,
ROBERT T. PARSONS.

JASPER, Fla., July 18, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I received by this morning's mail the Church History and the numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES containing your views on predestination. I immediately quit my work and went to reading what proved to be a feast to my soul.

I was waited upon a few days since by the deacons of my church and requested to desist from preaching the absolute predestination of all things. I replied that I could not do so, and would suffer expulsion first. Until then I did not know that there was a Primitive Baptist on earth but what believed it. As for me, it is the doctrine that my soul loves.

The Church History by Elder Has-sell is the best that I ever saw.

Returning you my heartfelt thanks for the feast of to-day, I remain

Your brother in hope,
JOHN M. CALDWELL.

ALBANY, Mo., April, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The Church History is received, and I can hardly find language to express my great satisfaction and full realization of the work. I feel that, under God's blessing, it will prove a great comfort to the flock of God.

Go on, brethren, in defense of the truth of God, and may the Spirit of Christ be with you.

Please give your views on sanctification, in the SIGNS.

Your brother,
ISAIAH. J. CLABAUGH.

REPLY—Our views on the subject of sanctification (Jude 1) will be found in volume fifty-three, page 200, of the SIGNS, to which we refer our brother.—ED.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1887.

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

TEMPTATION.

"BLESSED is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."—James i. 12-14.

In compliance with the request of our esteemed brother, E. D. Varnes, on page 177, we submit the following thoughts on this subject, which is very closely interwoven with all the experience of the followers of Jesus. The text quoted from James will lead to the consideration of the other portions of the sacred word to which our brother refers.

In the investigation of any subject connected with the doctrine of God our Savior it is necessary first to recognize the truth of all the testimony given by inspiration in the Scriptures. This fundamental principle must never be forgotten; for so soon as it is admitted that there is the least disagreement in this divine revelation, we lose all possibility of finding any certainty in anything. So it is enjoined to bring every witness to the test of this sure word; and if any testimony fail to endure this trial it is necessarily false. The eye of reason not only sees the things of the Spirit as foolishness, but in the very record which God has given this blind guide finds contradiction, as appears from a superficial view of the texts cited by our brother in connection with this expression of James. Without the guidance of the Spirit of truth even the saints can see no consistency in the revealed word; but when the Comforter takes of these things of Jesus and shows unto them their true signification, they see that all their confusion originated in their own dark understanding, while the whole spirit of prophecy in the Scripture is concentrated in the testimony of Jesus. That one testimony is consistent with itself throughout, and each portion of the inspired record is essential to the presentation of the fullness of that glorious truth. No portion can be omitted without loss to the man of God, who is only perfect in the thorough furnishing found in all inspired Scripture.—1 Tim. iii. 16, 17. This truth requires no argument.

There is deeper and more important meaning in the words spoken by the Spirit of Christ than what is found in their literal signification as defined by human intelligence. For this reason every saint must be taught of the Lord, and none can give to another the instruction thus received. The object of preaching and writing to the subjects of grace is not to teach them the knowledge of divine truth, but to call to their mind that doctrine which

they have learned of the Lord in their personal experience, that is, to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance. Thus in the first expression of the text the man that endureth temptation is exclusively declared to be blessed. This is the same man who is the subject of all the blessings pronounced in the word of truth. No other character is blessed in the sense of the text. This is one of the peculiar marks by which this blessed man is identified. He endureth temptation. When the Lord himself led the way in which his followers should walk, he was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." It is only as identified with him as being members of that body of which he is the Head that the saints endure temptation. No others ever have this fellowship of suffering with the Lord Jesus; and he will never fail to sustain his own members under every trial. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."—Hebrews ii. 18. This blessedness gives to the tempted one the assuring evidence that he is following in the tribulations of that way in which the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings. There is no room to question the reality of this mark which is set upon the subjects of divine grace. They often doubt the genuineness of their joyful seasons and pleasant experiences; but they know that the bitter wormwood and the gall of temptation and sore trials were no delusion. Their suffering has graven as with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever this evidence of their unity with Christ; therefore they are enabled to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." In such precious results of temptation and trial the individual saints are enabled to realize that their sufferings were indeed richly fruitful in blessing to them; but there is yet more glorious truth in the text as applied to the whole body of Christ as the Man that endureth temptation. To the tempted and weak child who feels that he cannot deliver himself out of the troubles which surround him, it is inexpressibly sweet to rest in the truth that this very trial bears witness to his unity with the triumphant Redeemer, who was afflicted in all the affliction of his saints, and the angel of his presence saved them.—Isa. lxiii. 9.

It is sometimes suggested by the adversary that the blessing is confined to them who successfully resist the temptation; but that is not the declaration of the text. The power which overcomes temptation is entirely of the Lord. If it were left to the tried saint to overcome by his own strength there would be no hope, for none ever did gain the victory until all their own strength was gone. As Jacob was made utterly helpless before he received the blessing in the new name Israel (see Genesis xxxii. 24-32), so it is in every case with them who are led by the Spirit of God. All their strength is exhausted before they are blessed with that victory which is given them in Christ. Never

is the saint more completely overcome by temptation than when he imagines he has strength in himself to stand against the devices of the tempter. So Peter learned when he was sifted.—Luke xxii. 31. It did not then appear to him as a blessing when he went out and wept bitterly as Jesus looked upon him; but without the record of that temptation how could Peter have strengthened his brethren in all subsequent ages? The same weakness and sin still easily besets, the poor, frail brethren of Peter. They must still endure temptation; and still the blessing is found there which can never be found elsewhere. When they are brought so low as to have no confidence in the flesh, then they are in the only condition where they can worship God in the Spirit and rejoice alone in Christ Jesus.—Phil. iii. 3. Here they realize that it is a blessed portion which they have received in enduring temptation.

"The crown of life, which the Lord hath promised," is not conditioned upon the ability of the saints to overcome temptations in their own strength. It is positively secured "to them that love him;" and they do overcome temptation and every opposing power by the victory which is given them of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Of this victory John says, "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. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."—Rev. xii. 10, 11. No earthly victory can ever compare with this; for as their Leader through death destroyed him that had the power of death, so they that love him have the victory over death itself; and

"Who first in such a conflict dies
Shall speediest victory know."

Nor is the glory of that crown graduated in proportion to the toil and service rendered by them to whom it is given. Although Paul might claim that the grace of God which was with him was manifested in more abundant labor than all the other apostles, he did not therefore claim a brighter crown, but gloried in the assurance that he should receive of the Lord, the righteous Judge, the very same crown of righteousness which shall be given "unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Tim. iv. 8. The endurance of temptation is the conflict which necessarily precedes the receiving of this crown.

While temptation is so needful to the display of the victory of faith in the saints, it is not true that they are tempted of God. The experience of every one who mourns on account of his own sinfulness bears witness that the temptation to which he is subjected is but the development of that lust in his own carnal mind which bringeth forth sin; and when it is finished it ends in death. In no case

does the saint find encouragement to sin on the ground that it is in the purpose of God that he should do so. When Peter denied the Lord it afforded him no comfort to remember the word of the Lord who had foretold his sin. So with every saint who is tempted; he feels and knows in the end, if not at the time, that all the evil by which he was enticed was in his own carnal mind, by whose wicked lusts alone he was moved in sinning. When any one can justify his own wickedness by pleading the appointment of God in the case, he is not led by the Spirit of God; and if he is a subject of grace at all, he is for the time overcome by temptation, and is taken captive by the devil at his will.—2 Tim. ii. 26. Such captives shall be delivered by the power of almighty grace, so that they shall not be finally lost; but they shall suffer under the cruel bondage of corruption and sin, to which they have yielded themselves servants to obey.—Rom. vi. 16.

In the instruction given by the Savior to his disciples when he taught them to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," he gave the same direction which is written in the new heart by the Holy Spirit. While the faith of the Son of God is able to secure those who are led by the Spirit under every form of opposition, the saints are not thereby authorized to tempt or try the Lord by willfully going into temptation. To illustrate our idea, the saint is not to act upon the suggestion of the tempter by seeking how far he may venture in sin while relying on the efficacy of that prayer for his protection. To do this would be to live after the flesh, and would certainly result in death to all spiritual joys. Where there is a felt sense of the weakness of all our efforts to keep ourselves, there will arise in the heart this very prayer; and that is the only time when we can pray "after this manner." The words of this petition may be repeated without any prayer; and the manner of the prayer may be retained without the repetition of these words. In the case of our Lord Jesus, Matthew and Luke say he was led of or by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he was tempted of the devil. Mark says of the same event, "Immediately the Spirit driveth him," &c. The truth is the same. The Spirit being his perfect guide, he was driven irresistibly where that Spirit led him. But while the Spirit led him into the wilderness expressly "to be tempted of the devil," he was not tempted of God. And as he "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," so we are not tempted of God. This then is in perfect accord with the text quoted from James.

In the temptation of Abraham the record plainly shows how it was that God did tempt him as it is written in Genesis xxii. 1. The inspired reference to the circumstance explains the sense in which the word is here used, where it is said, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac." The trial of the faith of the saints is a very different thing from that

temptation which prompts to sin, and which is, as James says, the work of carnal lusts. In the case of Job, so far from the Lord tempting him, it was his protection which restrained Satan in every trial, and finally forbade him to touch the life of his servant. This case is presented as one of those holy examples which shine in the spiritual heaven as stars forever, reflecting the praise of the infinite grace of God in Christ Jesus, to the consolation of the tempted saints in all ages to the end of time. James by divine authority settles this case beyond cavil when he says, "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."—James i. 11. Then there can be no disagreement between the truth spoken by this inspired apostle and that which is written of Job or any of the ancient saints.

In thus briefly complying with the request of brother Varnes we have necessarily but glanced at the passages to which he referred. Much more of importance might be written on the subject of Temptation, but we will add only a few reflections on the vitally important subject which underlies and to faith explains all the deep mystery of the events of time; in which evil workers and enemies against God "set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth."—Psa. lxxiii. 9. It is because that God did set them in slippery places, and did cast them down into destruction. The contrast between the prosperity of the wicked and the afflictions of the people of God is painful to behold. The whole mystery is revealed only in the sovereign will and immutable purpose of God. Without this eternal truth there is no foundation for the hope of any sinner. In the strength of this sacred principle every one who loves the holiness of God can rejoice that the eternal counsel of his righteous will governs all things in heaven or earth or under the earth. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

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ORDINATIONS.

At the regular church meeting of Pine Knob Church of Regular Baptists, held at Pine Knob meeting house, Grayson County, Ky., April, 1887, after consultation, on motion and second it was unanimously agreed to call a presbytery to meet with this church on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in May, 1887, for the purpose of considering the propriety of setting apart brethren C. M. SHAIN and ELLIS KELLY, members of this church, to the work of the gospel ministry. All the churches of Little Flock Association responded with a full delegation of members, with Elder W. B. McGrew. Also Little Zion Association, of Indiana, by Elder William H. Gammon.

The council selected Elder W. H. Gammon as Moderator, and brother Wm. Shain as Clerk.

The Moderator then called on the church to know if they were of the same mind they were when they made the call.

The church being of the same mind, the council called on the brethren separately to give a relation of their experience, call to the ministry, with their doctrinal sentiments, which was satisfactory.

Then proceeded with the laying on of the hands of the Elders present, with prayer by Elder W. B. McGrew.

Elder W. H. Gammon gave the charge to the newly ordained Elders.

The church and council gave the hand of fellowship.

WM. H. GAMMON, Mod.

WILLIAM SHAIN, Clerk.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

In answer to a request of Regular Primitive Baptists in Cowley County, Kansas, for ordained help for a council and aid in order to a church organization, Elders J. B. Hardy and J. M. Thompson responded.

After devotional exercises, and a discourse from the words, "Upon this Rock I will build my church," by Elder J. B. Hardy, he was chosen Moderator.

The council having received satisfactory evidence of the standing and worthiness of those desiring to be constituted into a church, unanimously favored the organization of said applicants into a church union, with five members. And since the organization, we have received three by experience, one by letter and one by relation, making our number ten.

Our church is called MOUNT VERNON, in Vernon Township, Cowley County, Kansas, about three miles northeast of Kellogg, on the Southern Kansas R. R. And if any of the Baptists in the east think of coming to this country, we would be pleased to see them, and especially the ministering brethren.

CAROLINE H. YEOMAN.

KELLOGG, Cowley Co., Kan.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

I SEND you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of sister Mary McIntyre, widow of the late Deacon Peter McIntyre, of Lobo. She had an attack of paralysis about eight years ago, from the effects of which she never completely recovered, and on the 18th of last May she had another severe stroke that prostrated her and rendered her unconscious, in which condition she continued until the evening of the 21st, when she calmly passed away. She was one of those that stood firm in the truth when several members of the Lobo branch of the Covenanted Baptist Church adopted the heretical notions of a vain and ignorant pretender, who, like some of old, had "crept in unawares to spy out our liberty." She was baptized when about twenty years of age, and had been a member of the church for sixty years of her life, during which time, by her consistent course and exemplary walk and conversation, she adorned the profession she had made. She was of a kind and amiable disposition, hospitable, generous to a fault, "especially to the household of faith;" and her house was always open to those that she believed loved the truth and practiced it. Her desire to always strive to conform her conduct to the divine commands, and to be

at all times found in obedience to the injunctions of the Savior, are evidenced by the fact that to the enemy who wantonly smote her on the one cheek, she actually turned the other also; thus obeying not only the spirit of the word, but the letter also. She is now, we believe, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary pilgrim is at rest. She leaves two sons and four daughters, who now experience the loss of an affectionate and loving mother.

ALSO,

THE death of brother **John McIntyre**, of Ekfrid, which occurred on the 4th day of June last, in the ninety-second year of his age. His health had been generally good until within a few weeks of his death, although it was evident that his strength was failing for several years previous. He was for many years a deacon of the church, and preached with zeal and fervor for a long time, in his native Gaelic language, as the majority of the members of the Ekfrid branch of the church had originally emigrated from the Highlands of Scotland. Since his eyesight failed a few years ago, his meditations were mainly upon the Scriptures, many chapters of which he could repeat verbatim, and the aptitude with which he could quote Scripture, and particularly the Psalms, in illustration of his subject when in the pulpit, and in his prayers, was remarkable. He bore his last illness with resignation, and patiently awaited his dissolution, when he would be placed in full possession of the inheritance of which he had many foretastes in this life. He leaves an aged widow, two sons and six daughters, who keenly feel the loss of a dear husband and an indulgent father.

D. T. MCCOLL.

WALLACETOWN, Ont., July 11, 1887.

DIED—In Washington, D. C., June 5, 1887, **Mr. L. A. Ledmon**, in the thirty-first year of his age. The deceased was killed by a fall of a stick of timber while at his work. He was a young man beloved by those who knew him. His death falls heavily upon his family. He leaves his wife, two children, two sisters and two brothers to mourn their loss. They have our sympathy in their bereavement. We rejoice to know that life, death, hell, and worlds unknown, hang on the firm decree of our God.

ALSO,

DIED—June 20, 1887, near Dumfries, Va., sister **Brawner**, relict of the late Deacon W. Brawner, of Bethlehem Church, Prince Wm. Co., Va., in the seventy-ninth year of her age. The deceased had been a faithful member of the church for many years. She was a lady of an amiable disposition, held in high esteem among those who knew her. She and her husband were widely known among our people, and many will remember them as members of a generation of Baptists well nigh gone; a generation of Baptists who waited upon the ministry of the late Elder R. C. Leachman, and who, like their firm and faithful pastor, have gone to their eternal home.

ALSO,

DIED—At her home in Occoquan, Va., July 3, 1887, sister **Alseinda Smoot**. The deceased was the youngest sister of my father, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Occoquan Church, July 9, 1882. She was a consistent member of the church. In early life she had been connected with the Methodists, and later with the New School Baptists; but finding no home among these people, she came to us for rest. She seemed entirely conscious of her approaching death, and spoke with cheerfulness of her departure, looking to the eternal throne, and longing to enter her heavenly home.

Thus one by one the Lord gathers his children from the pathway of time, to enter forever the portals of bliss. May he graciously prepare us to follow those who have gone before, sustaining and guiding us in wisdom's path.

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va., July 13, 1887.

By request of her daughter, I send for publication the obituary notice of her dear mother, and my own aunt, **Mrs. Ann Y. Michener**, who died Feb. 18, 1887, aged near-

ly eighty-nine years. She experienced a hope in Christ when quite young, but from a sense of unworthiness never made a public profession or united with the church, although she had a great love for the church at Southampton, where she went during her childhood. She had been in delicate health for many years, and lived quite a distance off, so that she was not often permitted to meet with the church; but I have heard her say that the very name of Southampton did her good. She was very patient, and always seemed submissive to every dispensation of providence. She was a great reader, and her Bible and the SIGNS were a great comfort to her. The seventy-first psalm was a great favorite of hers. She retained her mind until the last, but her strength gradually failed, and she passed peacefully away, like a shock of corn fully ripe for the harvest. Her children were most untiring in their attention and care for her, and most deeply mourn their loss, but have the sweet assurance that for her to die was gain.

ALSO,

OUR aunt, **Mrs. Ellen M. Verkes** departed this life March 24, 1887, in her seventy-first year. She had been a member of the church at Southampton for many years. She suffered very much during her illness, but was very much resigned to the Lord's will. She longed for the time of her departure, saying that the world had lost its attractions for her. Almost her last words were, "Come, Lord Jesus, and take thy servant home."

Elder Durand spoke at both funerals.

A. H. ADDIS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 13, 1887.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Lebanon Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Mt. Carmel Church, situated in Hancock Co., Indiana, commencing on Friday before the third Saturday in August, 1887, and continue the two following days. Brethren coming from the east will come on the C., C., C. and I. Bee Line R. R. Those coming from the west will take cars at Union Depot, Indianapolis, on same road, and get off at Fortville. All will get off at the same place, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is given to brethren of our faith and order.

Done by request of the brethren.

GEORGE S. WEAVER.

THE Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold its next session with West Liberty Church, in Des Moines County, Iowa, two miles west of Sperry, on the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railway, beginning at ten o'clock a. m., on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1887. All those who come by railroad will stop at Sperry, where there will be conveyances to meet them. A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren to meet with us.

M. W. BYRAM, Clerk.

THE Salem Association of Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Gun Powder, Boone Co., Ky., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Friday in August, 1887, and continue the two succeeding days, at ten a. m. Brethren and friends are respectfully invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Those coming from the north, east and west will come by way of Cincinnati or Ludlow, where they may call on brother E. Helm or Elder P. W. Sawin, in Ludlow, and then take the train for Erlanger, where they will be met by sister Comer and brother M. L. Ayler. Those coming from the south on the Southern R. R., will stop at Erlanger. Those coming on the L. C. & L. Short Line will have to change at Walton and take the Southern R. R. to Erlanger. Should any of the brethren have to stay all night at Walton, they will do well to call on brother B. S. Johnson, about one mile west of Walton.

JOHN R. JOHNSON, Clerk.

OUR association (the New Hope) will convene with the church at Union, in Drew Co., Ark., nine miles northeast from Monticello,

on Saturday before the third Sunday in October next. We hope the Lord may move the hearts of some of our northern and eastern ministering brethren to visit us at that time.

A. TOMLIN.

THE Virginia Corresponding meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1887.

Friends coming to the meeting from a distance by railway will take the cars for Manassas at the Potomac depot in Washington, or the Midland depot at Alexandria. Trains leave in the morning and arrive at Manassas in time for the meeting. Those wishing to do so can come to Manassas on Tuesday, and will be met and cared for.

A hearty welcome is assured to all lovers of the truth who may favor us with their presence.

Affectionately,

J. N. BADGER.

THE Tygart's Valley River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Valley Church, Randolph Co., W. Va., to begin at 11 o'clock on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1887.

THE Licking Association of Particular or Old School Baptists will hold her next session, the Lord willing, with the Drift Run Church, Robertson Co., Ky., beginning on Friday morning, at ten o'clock, before the second Saturday in September, and continue three days.

Brethren, sisters and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to attend. From Cincinnati cross the river to Covington, take the cars on the Kentucky Central (K. C.) R. R., at 8.05, city time, for Falmouth. Those coming via Lexington will take train on the same road, for same place, at about 7.00 a. m. on same day, where conveyances will be in waiting to carry friends to places of entertainment.

It is desirable for as many of our brethren as can to come in their own conveyances, as it is eighteen miles from the station. Should any come too late for the conveyances, there is a stage line running to the place of meeting daily. Take the Milford and Mt. Olivet line.

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Valley Church, at Waynesville, Warren County, Ohio, on Friday (16th) before the third Sunday in September, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m.

Those coming from the south will come to Cincinnati, and there take the Pittsburg & Cincinnati R. R., at the Little Miami Depot, to Waynesville. Those coming from the west will come to Xenia, and there take the Pittsburg & Cincinnati R. R., to Waynesville. Those coming from the north will come from Columbus on the Pittsburg, Cincinnati & St. Louis R. R., stopping at Waynesville. Trains arrive from Cincinnati 7.34 a. m., and 3.48 p. m., and from Columbus 9.07 a. m., and 6.15 p. m., Central Standard time. Brethren will be at the trains to care for those coming on Thursday.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and a special invitation to ministering brethren of our faith and order, to visit us at that time. Arrangement has been made for reduced rates of fare on return, as heretofore. Persons must obtain a certificate signed and stamped by ticket agents wherever tickets are purchased, certifying that full fare has been paid. Ask the agents for the certificate, as they are furnished by the company to all agents, and they are bound to fill them up when called for.

Those coming in their own conveyance will call on sister Elizabeth Right, near the Medelle Run Baptist Church, or the undersigned near Ohio, Green Co., Ohio.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

If the Lord wills, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church in Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday, the ninth day of September, and

continue three days. A hearty welcome will be given to all strangers and pilgrims who may visit us for the worship of the living God at that time. Those coming by rail will be met at Gardiner Station, on the Maine Central R. R., about three o'clock p. m., on the day before the meeting.

H. CAMPBELL.

THE Morgan Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, the Lord permitting, will convene with Little Flock Church, six miles east of Chandlerville, Cass Co., Illinois, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1887. Brethren from a distance are cordially invited to attend.

GILES REEDER, Clerk.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1887, and continue three days.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

THE Pocatalico Old School or Particular Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Liberty Church, Kanawha Co., W. Va., to convene on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1887, at 10 a. m.

JEHU BYRNSIDE, Clerk.

THE Union Primitive Baptist Association have appointed to hold their next session with the Harmony Church, in Union County, Arkansas, to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri has appointed to hold its next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Hope Primitive Baptist Church, at Miami, in Saline Co., Mo., to begin on Friday before the first Saturday in October, and continue three days (Sept. 30th, Oct. 1st and 2d). Elders, brethren and sisters of our faith and order, and all others who may feel an interest in us or a desire to visit us, are cordially invited to attend.

Miami is on the Missouri River, and between the Chicago, Alton & St. Louis, and the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific railroads, about twelve miles from the former and two miles from the latter. Those coming by the former railway from the west will come on the morning train from Kansas City to Norton, on Thursday morning, Sept. 29th, and those from the east will come on the train in the evening of the same day, to the same place, where they will be cared for by brother Wm. Griffith and others. Those coming by the latter named railway will come to Miami Station, from both east and west, on Thursday morning, Thursday evening, or Friday morning; but the Friday morning train from the west will be rather late for the opening services. If any come on a late train to Miami Station, they will take lodgings there till morning, when conveyance will be provided in the town of Miami. Those who find it necessary, will inquire for Mark Whitaker, living two miles southeast of Miami; or T. A. Easton, two miles northeast of Miami; or Mrs. Christwell or Mr. Cressap, her son-in-law, one-half mile east of Miami; or old mother Watson, living in Miami.

R. M. THOMAS.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish in the SIGNS our yearly meeting, to commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in August, at Hughesville, Loudoun Co., Va. We invite our brethren in the ministry to come and see us at Hughesville. We also invite all others of our brethren and sisters who feel to unite with us in the worship of God. This point is fifteen miles from any Regular Baptist Church, and is easy of access. There are two trains every day from Alexandria to our depot, Hamilton, one in the forenoon and the other at night. Those coming must give notice on which train, so they can be met. Write me at Hughesville, Loudoun Co., Va.

JOSEPH FURR.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., to commence on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1887, at two o'clock p. m.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

NOTICE is hereby given that a two days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the second church of Old School Baptists of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday (7th and 8th) of September, 1887, to begin at ten o'clock a. m., where we hope to meet those who love the truth and peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Ministers especially are invited. Those coming from the north by rail will stop off at Roxbury, and from the south at Kelly's Corners, where they will be cared for and conveyed to the meeting.

J. D. HUBBELL, Pastor.

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

These books can be ordered sent either to the subscriber sending the new names or to any other addresses he may desire; but in all cases the FULL AMOUNT OF CASH MUST ACCOMPANY THE ORDERS.

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The "Signs of the Times,"

DEVOTED TO THE
OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,
IS PUBLISHED
THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH
OF EACH MONTH,

BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS,

To whom all communications should be addressed, and directed, Middletown, Orange County, N. Y.

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B. L. BEEBE.

WM. L. BEEBE.

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Our subscribers will confer a favor on us, and enable us to keep their accounts with more accuracy, by observing the following instructions:

HOW TO REMIT.

The most convenient and the safest way of sending remittances is by post-office money orders, which should invariably be made payable to G. BEEBE'S SONS, at Middletown, N. Y., and not at the New York City Post-office, and always enclose the order in the same envelope with the letter containing the information for what it is to be applied. When it is not convenient to procure a post-office order, the money can be enclosed in the letter, and registered, and it may then be considered safe. But we especially request our friends not to hand the money to postmasters to enclose for them, nor to send us postage stamps, as they are not easily disposed of, and soon accumulate to a cumbersome amount. We must also request that bank checks on distant banks be not sent, as they are subject to quite heavy discounts.

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Opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper will be observed a date, this date denotes the time at which such subscription expires, and when a remittance is made to renew the subscription the date should be watched to see that it is forwarded to such time as the remittance pays to, and if neglected, by informing us, it will be corrected. By this method each subscriber has his own account, and can see that the proper credits are given for his remittances.

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Our assortment of the small books embraces First Quality, Turkey Morocco, full gilt, very handsome, \$2 75 single copy, or per dozen, \$30 00.

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THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. We have just republished a large edition of the above named very interesting and instructing pamphlet. Many thousands of copies have been scattered through England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to that degree as to induce us to present to the public this new 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.

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CHURCH IDENTITY.

We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size as the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each or the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1887.

NO. 16.

POETRY.

SPIRITUAL LONGINGS.

O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free;
A heart that's sprinkled with the blood
So freely shed for me.

O for a heart submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.

O for an humble, contrite heart,
Believing, true and clean,
Which neither life nor death can part
From him that dwells within.

Thy temper, gracious Lord, impart;
Come quickly from above;
O write thy name upon my heart;
Thy name, O God, is Love.

GOD'S WILL AND DECREES.

ERE creatures were made, before time had
its birth,
Or God, the Eternal, had fashioned the
earth,
His mind was then fixed, and his will had
decreed
His future intentions to all his loved seed.

He resolved that his providence, joined to his
grace,
Like links in a chain, all his chosen should
trace;
The thoughts of his heart and result of his
will
With wonder amazing their minds he would
fill.

But onward and onward for thousands of
years
This world must progress amidst sorrow and
tears,
Till his time should arrive and his purpose be
known
To those he ordained to be bone of Christ's
bone.

In sin are they born, and from God go
astray,
From the time they draw breath on their fixed
natal day;
And forward they run in transgression and
sin,
Till he in their hearts his good work doth be-
gin.

His word is then sought for, his grace is de-
sired;
His hand is much watch'd by the soul thus
inspir'd
By the Spirit of Christ to breathe after his
love,
Those infinite depths and heights from
above.

Some drops from the ocean of life, love and
blood
Are sent from the hand of the merciful God,
Their griefs to redress and transgressions
o'ercome,
And assure them their sins in this ocean are
drowned.

More and more of these drops the true pil-
grims desire
From the Savior of sinners, the God they
admire;
For contended they are not, nor ever will
be,
Till they wake with his likeness, his glory to
see.

J. D.

—Gospel Standard.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SEEING AND NOT SEEING.

"AND Jesus said, For judgment I am come
into this world, that they which see not might
see; and that they which see might be made
blind. And some of the Pharisees which
were with him heard these words, and said
unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said
unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have
no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore
your sin remaineth."—John ix. 39-41.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will
permit, I will try to suggest a few
thoughts upon the above words for
the readers of the SIGNS. Like every
one of the words of inspiration, they
are valuable, and contain lessons for
our profit to-day. It seems to be a
part and parcel of poor, feeble, hu-
man nature to look at things in parts,
and to regard the Bible in the same
way. We are apt to get certain ideas
(even those which may be true) in
our minds, and fasten our gaze upon
them, to the overshadowing of other
equally important things; and so we
are apt to have our minds and hearts
drawn to one class of texts, or to
passages which specially bear upon
some one principle of doctrine, and
to pass by other portions of the word
lightly, which present other princi-
ples of equally important truth. This
should be guarded against, as far as
we are able. I have seen some people
who were impatient, and thought
time was wasted, and who were even
disposed to call in question the sound-
ness of a man, if he did not all the
time preach or write about election,
predestination, and salvation by
grace, and did devote a part of his
time to preaching or writing about
the multiplied obligations of Chris-
tians to God, to each other, and in
all their relations among men in the
world. I do not find fault with those
dear brethren whose gift leads them
to speak or write oftener about some
one theme than about another; but,
on the other hand, let them also re-
member that other gifts and other
themes are equally important and
profitable to some one, if not to them-
selves. I think that every text and
every theme in the Bible is for our
learning. There are lessons in them
all, from the first verse of Genesis to
the last verse of Revelation. I may
differ from a brother's views of a text,
or I may think that he has unwittingly
perverted it; but I dare not say
that his text was unprofitable, or that
it was not for profit that it was given
him to use. If what he says or what
he does not say sets me to examining
the text, that is the profit God meant
for me in that discourse. And so I
will try to suggest a few thoughts
upon this Scripture, believing that it
is intended, as all the Bible is, that

we through patience and comfort of
the Scriptures might have hope.

Almost all the discourses of our
Savior grew out of certain circum-
stances which had occurred, or were
replies to things done or said by
others; and if we would at any time
know the real drift and bearing of
his words we must know the circum-
stances and ascertain the thoughts,
ideas and words of those to whom he
spoke. This is the only safe way of
interpreting anybody's words; and it
is very manifest that the same words
spoken under different circumstances
may bear a great diversity of mean-
ing. In the words of Jesus under
consideration it is therefore very
needful that we know the occasion of
their utterance, and to whom they
were spoken. The occasion was this.
Jesus had in a wonderful way healed
one who was born blind. It became
a notable case. The disciples, before
the healing was performed, had ques-
tioned much as to why he had been
born blind. Afterward the man's
neighbors noticed him, and inquired
after the manner of his healing; and
in response he testified of Jesus, and
told the manner of his healing. Soon
they brought him to the Pharisees,
and their miserable formality and
hypocritical ritualism at once became
apparent. Instead of praising the
infinite power and goodness apparent
in this work of the Savior, they begin
to question and quibble because this
had been done on the Sabbath day.
They said, "This man is not of God,
because he keepeth not the Sabbath
day." But others said, "Can a man
that is a sinner do such miracles?"
It is wonderful to read along through
this chapter and trace the workings
of the carnal mind, which is enmity
to God, in these self-righteous Jews.
Their enmity was so bitter against
the very name of Jesus that nothing
could change it or keep it in check;
and because this blind man would
continue to bear testimony of Jesus
they cast him out of the synagogue,
that is, they excluded him from all
his rights and privileges as a Jewish
citizen. That a miracle had been
wrought by the Lord they did not
and could not deny, but he had done
this work on the Sabbath day; and
because the poor blind man could not
testify against the man that had done
him so much good they were ready
to destroy him also. They did not
find fault with the works of the Lord,
but they hated his doctrine. He
made light of their traditions. He
trampled upon their multiplied forms
and ceremonies. He stripped the
mask from their religion, and showed
them up in their true colors. He

taught that neither birth nor rituals
nor outward morals could avail any-
thing when the heart was filled with
pride. He proclaimed to them that
they were but whited sepulchres. No
wonder that they hated him, even as
they hated all goodness and truth
and genuineness of every kind.
Hypocrites and formalists themselves,
they loved their kind, because it was
no better than themselves; but incar-
nate goodness and truth they hated,
because it constantly stripped the
covering from their sin. How little
Jesus thought of forms! how much
of what was genuine and real! Let
us all, brethren, have a care, lest we
be satisfied with mere forms—forms
of worship, forms of speech, forms of
doctrine. When any church becomes
wedded to forms it is at once a petri-
fied church, and there can be no more
growth; and then right on the heels
of formalism comes Phariseeism, and
then persecution.

But God appoints and overrules
all the persecutions of his people to
their spiritual good. In this case the
healed man might have been satisfied
to remain where he was, still a com-
municant among those who had no
experience in common with his, and
where there could have been no real
joy of fellowship; but when he began
to tell his experience, and to ascribe
all the glory to Jesus, they at once
demurred, and a division was appar-
ent at once. There was a difference
the very moment this man was healed,
nay, there had been a difference ever
since he was born. Now he begins
to just tell how it has been with him,
and how things are with him now,
and at once it is seen that the story
is irksome and hateful to them. It is
irksome and hateful not because he
had been blind and is now healed,
but because Jesus had healed him,
and he would persist in saying so.
They hated Jesus, and now they
hated this man to whom Jesus had
done such great things. It is so to-
day. Let any man rise up among
Methodists, Presbyterians, Luther-
ans, Episcopalians, Congregational-
ists or New School Baptists, and be-
gin to tell an experience that is all of
grace, and keep on telling it, and
never deviate from it, and in every
case he will soon find himself hated
and cast out of their churches.

But God works good for his people
in such ways. He worked good for
this man. No sooner was he cast out
of the synagogue than Jesus found
him, and revealed himself to him as
the Son of God, and spake comfort-
ingly to him. There had been great
things done for him in the flesh, and
besides God had given him an honest

spirit, so that he would not lie for fear or favor of men; and now to his honest heart Jesus comes, after he has been tried awhile, with further revelations of himself, his grace, and his love. This is the invariable rule in every case. To him that hath shall be given. He that has the grace of God in his heart shall find more grace as he has need and as he can receive it. When forsaken of those who have been to him as a father or mother, the Lord will take him up. This man was turned out of the earthly, formal system of worship, but in this he lost nothing; and immediately Jesus finds him, and leads him up into higher truths and feeds him in greener pastures and by stiller waters. He already knew the work of Jesus, but the Lord now reveals to him his person. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" "Who is he?" "I am he." When importuned to tell his enemies who and what he was, he always pointed to his works; but he grants a boon to a poor, humble blind man, which he had denied to doctors and lawyers. Other men may see his works and cavil at them, but to the humble inquirer he reveals himself. With such he freely communes. If therefore any one, the poorest, the vilest of all, wants to know Jesus, to such an one he says, "I am he."

Now, out of all this narrative preceding Jesus says to the healed blind man, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." Here the word "judgment" signifies "a sentence; an award; an administration; decree." Jesus came into the world to execute these two things. On the one hand to give sight to those who see not; and on the other to take it away from those who have it. So in chapter fifth Jesus said again, "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son." To the same import were the inspired words of Simeon, "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, * * * that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." This was Jesus' work in the world; it is still his work. All that he said or did tended to this end. He divided all men and all things; he does so still. He did not in his ministry make men other than they were, but he revealed them. In the ministry of the word of Jesus he does the same to-day. There is never a preaching of Christ anywhere to-day where Jesus does not still come forth as a judge; and the thoughts of many hearts are still revealed. Men are either saying "Amen," or "This is hard doctrine; who can hear it?" Men who did not know that they were believers in the Bible, gospel sense, find it out by this holding forth of Christ; and men who think that all is right with them, hate the doctrine because it tells them that they are all wrong. It is still true that for judgment Jesus came into the world, and for judgment he abides here in his word and ordinances. He passes sentence, he issues decrees, he

declares awards still. He reveals what men are; he shows them their true place in the sight of God.

But solemn and awful as these words were, they were like healing balm to the soul of this blind man. He had been blind in regard to his natural vision, and Jesus had given him sight. He had made no pretensions to any understanding, such as could be gained at the feet of the doctors of the law. In this respect he was blind also. There was no room for boasting in him, either naturally or spiritually; and now Jesus preaches good gospel news to him. "I am come that they which see not might see." If anybody is blind, halt, maimed, poor, sick, hungry or thirsty, to that man I am sent. I come to seek and to save that which was lost. All these expressions present the same truth. Jesus is the Friend and Savior of those who humbly confess their sins before him. He not only saves them if they come to him, but he seeks and saves them. What need of an anxious-bench or of an altar if this be true? All such things imply a distrust of the power, love, and all-sufficiency of Jesus. Jesus seemed to say to this blind man, "This which I have done for you is not a strange work for me. You need not think strange of it. This is what I came to do, and this is what I shall continue to do."

But there is also another part to Jesus' work: "That they which see might be made blind." It is manifest that Jesus does not speak of natural blindness. It is evident from what follows that the Pharisees did not so understand him; and neither did he mean that in any case he would destroy the power to discern spiritual things. This need not be argued, for none will claim this. I have no doubt this sentence belongs to the living experience of his chosen ones, as well as the first expression. All men suppose themselves capable of seeing spiritual as well as natural things. Paul said, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died." It is just as though he had said, "I could see without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I became blind." That is, he came to realize that he was dead, or blind. The same word that afterward comforts now condemns. The glad gospel news at first only causes trouble instead of joy. Such ones are beginning to find out that they are ignorant and blind; and they humbly confess it. One who is now a dear sister in the church said to me that there was a time a few months before when, if she came to the meeting and heard the preaching, every word seemed as a word of cursing, and she was by it hopelessly cut off; but there came a time one day when "every word seemed a word of blessing." So Jesus, the same Jesus, is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. Thus this poor blind man was taught that in Jesus Christ the lowliest is exalted, while the lofty must be made as lowly as he. Here

is the one common brotherhood of the saints.

The Pharisees heard these words, and said unto him, "Are we blind also?" Blind as they were naturally, and blinded also by hate and passion, yet they could perceive in his words that for them there was promised no blessing in his coming. They could not confess that they were blind, for they did not believe it; and if they said that they were not blind, he would say, Why concern yourselves about me then? If ye have no need of me, why be troubled because I go to those who have need? So they propose the question, "Are we blind also?" No doubt they hoped, as they often did, to catch him in his answer; and Jesus answered them in bold words of accusation and condemnation. "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." For some time I understood these words as though they had read in this way: "If ye realized and confessed that ye were blind, ye should have no sin; that is, it would be evident from this that God had granted you repentance and forgiveness. But now ye say, We see; that is, you do not confess your sin; therefore it is evident that ye are unrepentant and unforgiven." Of late, however, this has seemed to me a forced construction of these words, however true all these sentiments may be in themselves. I have come to think that these words mean the same thing as the words of Jesus recorded in the fifteenth chapter of John. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." Read also the whole connection, where it will be seen that Jesus exhibits to view the natural enmity of the human heart to God. I now understand the words of Jesus in the text thus: If ye were blind, that is, if ye had not both seen and heard my words and works, ye would not have been chargeable with this sin of willful rejection of me; but seeing these things, and rejecting them, and hating me, the sin of your hearts and your stubborn rebellion against God and unreconciliation to his will are plainly manifest. But now, after all this, ye say, We see; that is, they claimed to know the things of God, and therefore that they needed no instruction, but rather could instruct others. Now if all this be so, if indeed ye do see and know divine things, it is evident that your rejection of me and my words is from deliberate hatred to God and rebellion against him. They were in rebellion against God in reality before, yet they claimed to be the friends of God; but their rejection of him in the healing of this blind man showed plainly the bitter enmity of their hearts. Their sin remained in them. It was an evil heart

of unbelief, of rebellion and hatred. If the time, however, should ever come when one of them should begin to bewail his blindness, then he would no longer hate Jesus or his Father, and he no longer would have that sin.

Now just a closing word. The comfort of all this is for the poor blind ones who confess their need. Their sin does not remain. They no longer hate, but love, Jesus and his word; and their chiefest comfort is that they may love God. If you confess your blindness, you do honor and love God.

As ever, your brother in hope,
F. A. CHICK.
REISTERSTOWN, Md., July 22, 1887.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., June 9, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed I send you numbers five and six of sister Stimpson's letters. The first, number five, at the time it reached me, did me special good, and it has called up very joyfully the experience of that time as I have read it again to-day. I trust both letters may be blessed to others, as they have been to me. There are but two more remaining, which I will send after a little time.

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

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Oct. 9, 1871.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your very, very welcome letter of August 29th was duly received. I was greatly pleased by its reception, both on account of the comfort and edification I derived from its perusal, and that you again were able to write me. I looked eagerly for a letter from you (as I ever do) before I learned of your sickness. I would render praises to our God for his goodness in restoring you to health again. I felt sad when I thought you were sick, unable to write. O, my brother, your letters are indeed a great comfort to me. I should be very unwilling to get along without them, and it is this desire that causes me to take my pen to-day and attempt to address you; but I sensibly feel my unworthiness, my brother. Could I expect another word from you without my replying, I believe I would keep silent.

I have no good thing to tell you of myself; all is sin and pollution, as ever; but I could tell you much of the love, mercy and goodness of my God, had I language to express what I have felt. But I feel assured that language will fail me to give you even a glimpse of how that mercy has appeared to me for the past few weeks, so wonderful and so free; that mercy and grace that can extend to such a vile worm as I. I believe I never felt more sensibly my utter helplessness and entire dependence upon a sovereign God than I have since my return from our fall meetings. During the meetings I enjoyed much, just while the speaker's voice was heard; but as soon as the meeting was closed all would be gone from me—a sort of forgetfulness of all those glorious truths which they had uttered; but great comfort and happi-

ness I felt in mingling with the dear saints during all the meetings. Thus the time swiftly passed, as it seemed to me, and I had not stopped to think. As soon as I returned home my thoughts came to me in this way: You hypocrite! you vile sinner! what have you been doing? Going around pretending to be one of God's children, mingling with his children as one of them, and they think you are one of their number, when all the time you knew that you had no right there. These are only a very few of the thoughts that rushed upon me, and for a few days I feared to raise my eyes to heaven, or even call upon the name of Jesus, such was my distress. I believe I was alone. Jesus hid his face from me, and O the darkness of those few days! My pen fails to express even a glimpse of the agony I endured. If ever you were in such darkness you will understand my feelings; but I cannot think you ever were. I have been in the darkness many times before, filled with doubts and fears, but such darkness, a darkness that could be felt, I never experienced before. I could find no relief in reading my Bible. I found my own condemnation written everywhere; yet I felt that I had no place to go but unto Jesus, so I did say in my inmost soul, "Jesus, have mercy on me."

"Other refuge have I none—
Hangs my helpless soul on thee!
Leave, ah, leave me not alone!
Still support and comfort me!"

In his own good time and way he spoke comfort to my soul. This state of mind continued about one week, and since that time I have been blessed beyond what I can describe to you. Such a view of the love and mercy of God, his long-suffering, his tender care, his unchangeable love to his own dear ones, and the fullness of his salvation, all so complete in Jesus' blood, free and full; and this salvation was for just such as I, the vilest of the vile. O, my brother, I would if I could express to you the beauty I did then and do now see in the glorious truth of the Bible. Those sermons I heard during the meetings have come home to me with much power and truth, I have lived them all over again, and have felt to say,

"Thee will I love, O Lord, my Strength,
My Rock, my Tower, my High Defense;
Thy mighty arm shall be my trust,
For I have found salvation thence."

And now, as I write, I feel to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

I have again read your kind and loving words to me, and I wish I could tell you how precious every word is to me. I do believe, if I can claim certainly no other evidence as mine, this one, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I can claim this evidence. I believe they were never so dear to me as now. I feel that I have no other company in this world, and I desire no other. I would that I could ever dwell in their midst. The privilege of looking upon their faces is dear to me; and receiving words from the pen of one

is indeed sweet comfort, my dear brother. But you speak of being cheered by my words. That astonishes me. O that I could write to your comfort, as you do to mine; how grateful I should be. If the divine Spirit dictates one word, that word goes to comfort, I know full well; and sometimes I do feel that Jesus has directed your pen to my comfort. As you feel your own weakness, the more it rejoices you to think upon the strong refuge there is in this salvation by grace; and what a blessing it is that we have that refuge to flee to. O, my brother, how well that describes me. It is even thus with me. The weaker, the more helpless I feel, the more glorious does this truth appear, that our God is of one mind, and none can turn him. My brother, did you ever think that not one sin can one of his children commit that he did not know of; not one temptation can they have that he has not foreseen; not one condition can they be placed in that he knows not of, and provided just such help as is needful for their good and his own glory? Thus it has been presented to me these past few days. Jesus knows just how to succor us when we are overcome by the evils, temptations and sorrows of this life. When sickness comes, as you can testify, as well as myself, then he buoys us up by his almighty power, and gives comfort and strength.

You ask me in your letter if ever I feel that I must speak of God's goodness, and yet struggle in vain for an expression of the depth of that feeling. O, my dear brother, such is my feeling to-day. When I commenced this letter my desire was that I might tell you something of God's goodness and mercy and long-suffering to me; but I find that I have failed. I have written very lengthily, and have expressed but a faint glimmer of my present feelings; but I feel that the eyes of a dear and loving brother can pardon such imperfections, knowing the weakness of the flesh. I cannot tell you how much I thought of you and our good meetings of one year ago, during our meetings this year. I shall be glad when the time comes for you to return to us again, filled with this glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, which is so delightful to contemplate. I love to sit under its sound. No other language produces any food for my soul save that which glorifies our God; that which renders all the honor and praise to his name; that which tells of an almighty Being who has power to do his will, and creature man is subservient to that will. O that I could have this great privilege oftener; but it is best as it is, I know. I feel that my steps are all marked out, if indeed I am one of the little ones.

Will you not pardon the length, as well as the many imperfections, of this letter, and pray for one of the very least of the saints, if I can be one at all?

Your loving sister,
HANNAH STIMPSON.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Jan. 31, 1872.
ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR

BROTHER:—Your very kind and deeply interesting letter of November 17th was duly received; and O that I could but express to you the comfort and encouragement I derived from its perusal. I have read it again and again, and each time with great interest. As I read where you say that my letter was a comfort to you I feel astonished, and wonder how it can be that I can write one word of comfort to a dear child of God. O, my dear brother, could you look into this heart of mine and see one-half the sin and corruption which I see there, I do feel that you could have no fellowship with me. I often feel that could the brethren live nearer me and know me better, they could not have any fellowship for me. To be denied their love and fellowship, it seems to me, I could not bear; for their society is the only society I care for in this world, although I know I am too sinful to enjoy the great privilege I do enjoy of being numbered with these dear saints, and occasionally meeting with them. O that I could oftener meet with them. During this winter I have had such a desire to meet with these precious ones, that I have felt I could not be denied. I have felt to say, with the psalmist, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." I have attended three conferences and meetings since the association in September. I know full well, dear brother, that I have many, many more blessings than I deserve, for I deserve naught but to be banished forever from the presence of that God who is pure and holy; but in much mercy I am still spared, and blessed with a hope that one day I may lay aside this vile, sinful body, and be raised with that incorruptible body which the saints shall appear before the throne of God with, all pure and holy, no more to be annoyed by the sins and snares of Satan. Yes, dear brother, I am blessed with this hope, though at times it seems so small; yet it clings to me, and buoys me up in times of deep distress. It is an anchor to the soul; and O that I ever could praise my God for all his mercy shown me.

You speak of your own sins and depressions. O, dear brother, can it be that you can have any such feelings of sinfulness as I feel? It seems to me almost impossible for one of the dear saints to know anything about such a heart of corruption as I have within. You say you feel that sin is mixed with all you do, and you ask me if it is thus with me. Dear brother, could you know how every act I perform is filled with sin, is produced by a sinful, selfish motive, even what might be called my best acts (and even my thoughts are corrupt), you would not ask again. But can it be thus with you? How each line of your dear letter comforts me as I read. But O, if you are deceived in me! I cannot help this coming into my mind. When I wrote you last my mind was peaceful. I was

enjoying, and continued for some time to enjoy, the sweet, refreshing presence of our blessed Savior; but since that time dark clouds have arisen and overspread my sky, till I have been filled with doubts and fears again, but not as I spoke to you about in that letter. O may I never again pass through such a trial. Yet I would say, May the will of God be done. If I am his, I shall not have one too many trials. O, my brother, could my will be ever in subjection to the divine will how glorious it would be; but so much of my time I am unreconciled to everything. I want to trust, but cannot trust, the God of providence.

I have been deeply interested in reading Elder Wm. J. Purington's communication in the SIGNS of January, 1872, as he speaks of temptation. I feel that if I am not kept by the almighty power of God every moment I shall surely fall, I feel so weak, so helpless. I believe every day I have fresh reasons for this feeling, this dependence upon a sovereign power to save; not only to save my soul at last from the power of Satan, but to save me from day to day from wounding the cause I do so dearly love. Do you not believe there are times when our God withdraws his restraining power from his saints, and they may plunge deep in sinful acts, that they may feel from whence their strength cometh? I was very much interested in your piece in the SIGNS of January first, and also in the experience you sent. As you say, you are interested in the first experience of the dear saints, but you love to know also their daily experience after that. It is so with me. I have often thought, were it not for the daily travels of the child of God I should throw myself away; for I so often feel that my first experience was but a delusion, imaginary, no reality in it. O how much I am tried on this account. But when I hear those who I feel assured are true disciples of Jesus telling my own daily experience, I take new courage and hope on.

My dear brother, I am weary; I am weary of myself; I long for rest—rest from sin. But where shall rest be found—rest for the weary soul?

"Jesus, my love, my chief delight,
For thee I long, for thee I pray;
Amid the shadows of the night,
Amid the business of the day."

As I have been alone much during the winter I have been blessed with many hours of sweet communion with my Jesus. At times I have longed to see some of the dear saints and share my joy with them; but much of my time I have spent in moaning for sin. At other times I have felt cold and lifeless; no feeling either of joy or sorrow. I do believe there cannot be another being on earth like me; but notwithstanding all, I do rejoice that the foundation standeth sure, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Safe and secure in his hands are his saints. This is enough to call forth eternal praises from the lips of his saints, and O could I only praise him; but I am so sinful.

Remember and pray for your loving but very unworthy sister in hope,
HANNAH STIMPSON.

GIRARD, Illinois, June 7, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have often thought I would send to you the exercises of my mind from a child, how the Lord has led me, if it has been by an implantation of his divine Spirit, quickening me into life, which I have often doubted. One thing I know, there has been a change. What I once loved, I now reject; and the things in which I once had no pleasure, I now love. I was born in Prince Edward County, Virginia, March 31, 1805. When a child, my parents moved to Botetourt County, Va. In the spring of 1816, when I was eleven years old, they moved to Christian County, Ky. I was under the admonition of Baptist parents, my father often holding prayer with his family. When quite young I often had serious thoughts about dying and a future state, unprepared to meet a just and holy God. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."—Hab. i. 13. I thought I ought to perform some good act to recommend me in the eyes of that God before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear. Yet my sin-defiled nature desiring the pleasures of the world, my treasure being fixed on sublunary things, no marvel that my heart was there fixed. Satan would suggest that I was too young to give up the pleasures of the world; that I could seek the Lord when grown. I verily thought by my prayers and supplication the Lord would pardon my sins. I had a carnal mind, enmity against God, not subject to the law of God. Time passed, and in a careless way I lived, up to my fifteenth year. One day while sitting before the fire, noticing my eldest brother, who was tying up a broom, on a sudden he stopped, apparently in a deep study, then spoke to himself, as though no one was by, saying, "Work hard, die and go to hell at last." There being none but children present, I the oldest one, the solemn thought entered my mind, What is my condition? A sinner, justly condemned before God. I thought I ought to pray for mercy, not knowing that mercy cannot be extended at the expense of justice. I often went to some secret place, where no eye but God's could behold me. Often have I prostrated myself on my knees or breast. Not being gifted in words of prayer, I could only say, "Lord Jesus, be merciful to me, a sinner;" or, "Lord, save my soul ere I perish." Then again I would try to get rid of those impressions. Often in my mind I would be pleading for the intercession of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. A short time after the remark made by my brother John, he professed a hope in Christ, went before the Primitive Baptist Church called Barren Spring, in Christian County, Ky., related what great things the Lord

had done for him, was received, and baptized by Elder Willis L. Meacham. He then took a deep interest in his Lord's vineyard, by exhortation. After being filled by the Spirit, and speaking in public on the fourth Sunday, their monthly meeting, he came home; and at night, being filled with love, he delivered an exhortation in the family before father and mother (who were Baptists), a brother and sister grown, and three brothers younger than myself, which made the number of his hearers. A lasting impression took hold on me, which continued up to October 17, 1820, the day brother John died. I had wept and stated my lost and undone state, which expression was told to an uncle and aunt of mine, who were Baptists. One of their sons, my cousin, about my age, heard what I said and twitted me. In order to keep my true condition from him, I dissembled, putting a natural construction upon it, saying that I never was so lost but what I found where I was. Those heart-rending troubles lay heavy on my mind, while I was trying to get rid of those impressions. At times my mind would be at ease, and again the solemn thought of my awful condition would loom up before me. Some eight or ten months after my brother joined the church, he was taken down with bilious fever. He was taken sick on Saturday away from home, came home the next evening, and that same day I was taken down sick. We lay in the same room on separate beds. He retained his strength, while I became very weak and prostrate. Up to my sickness I had no evidence that my sins were borne away into a land of forgetfulness. The family thought that my brother would recover, but had given me up, I being extremely low. About the tenth day an unusual stir occurred in the room, with weeping. Then they would be hurried out of the room. As my father passed me, I asked how brother was. In my low condition he feared to tell me, saying he was either better, or as well as could be expected. His answer failed to satisfy me. I believed he was either dead or dying. I said, "Father, you need not fear to tell me; it will not alarm me." He then said, "He is dead." I then was calm, completely composed, resigned to the will of God. I fully believed without a doubt he was taken home to paradise. Was that faith? I have often been made to wonder where that belief came from. Was I capable, without evidence, of believing any truth? Was my brother born again, prepared to enter the portals of immortal glory? If so, and I was but a boy in a state of unbelief and death, how did I obtain that knowledge? Was I then quickened into life by the Holy Ghost? Will some brother answer the question through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, or by private letter, why I could not receive the evidence in my case, instead of applying it to the confidence I had in my brother's happiness? I have never had any

knowledge of a special evidence that my sins were forgiven me through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. From that time the burden that had laid heavily on my mind gradually left me. I could not comprehend how my mind appeared to be at ease, with no fear of death, yet I did not realize that my sins were laid on Jesus when he was nailed to the cross and cried, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. At that time divine justice was satisfied for all that were given to Christ by the Father. I then did not understand that glorious truth that Christ bore the sins of his people, given in the covenant by the Father to the Son. Time passed, I grew up to manhood, believing from the Scriptures that immersion was the proper mode of baptism, and a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has an evidence of the pardon of sins, the only gospel subject. Here I sat in judgment on my case, rejected myself, not having an evidence that fully satisfied me I was a proper subject to go to the church and tell them what a vile sinner I was. The Lord found me like Jacob. 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. Being fully convinced that I had no power of my own to appease the wrath of a sin-avenging God, my dependence was alone on Jesus; that if saved, it would be of mercy alone; if banished, it would be just. Being fearful that my travel would not be accepted as a work of grace, and not wishing to impose on the church, I thought I would have to abide alone. I was a regular attendant at the Regular Baptist meetings, heard their sermons, listened to their conversation, refrained from advancing any idea on religious subjects myself, for some thirty years or upwards, not having had a travel of mind on predestination and election, up to the time of the split in the Red River Association in Kentucky, part teaching that the sinner had to work in order to the remission of sins, the other part holding all that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, their sins were laid on Christ, who was made an offering without spot unto God; for their justification he arose, and ever liveth to make intercession for them according to the will of God. After moving to Illinois, and settling in Macoupin County, there was a Regular Baptist Church called Bethel constituted in my neighborhood, in the year 1836. About six or seven went into the constitution, with some additions, increasing to nine or ten. Not having a preacher to go before them, only as they could obtain the labors of Elders in attending them, they became disheartened, and dissolved by lettering each other out in 1841, lasting five years. I had a great deal of sorrow and trouble of mind about the dissolution of the Bethel Church, believing the Lord had a people here not made manifest,

that he would set at liberty in his own time. I grieved to think that the members of Bethel Church could not live up to their church covenant. I still believed the Lord would plant a vine here in his earthly vineyard, at his good time. In ten years all the members of said Bethel had moved or died. I stood by the bed of the last two who died, September, 1851. From the dissolving of the Bethel Church in 1840, up to 1850, many were the events in that period which I have passed unnoticed. During all that time I believed the great I Am would manifest his love by quickening dead sinners into life. I will here notice that in the ten years passed by, I was often doubting my fitness to be numbered among the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb. About this period, having heard a great deal said about the Mormon faith and their Bible, and falling into company with an Elder, by request he agreed to preach on Saturday night and Sunday at my house. During the week I dreamed that I met a man, apparently a stranger, and was pleased with his views. After staying a day or two, my guest was about to leave me. I tried to prevail on him to stay until after the Mormon's appointment. When he heard of the appointment he said he could not be at the meeting. When about departing, I then saw that my guest was my Savior. How I regretted his leaving. That was my dream. The Mormon was late in coming, the company were gone, except a few that stayed over night. Said Elder professed to have the gift of healing and the interpretation of dreams. In the morning I spoke of my dream. He asked me to tell it. My brother, thinking I would be sold, said he could make known the interpretation of dreams. I said, "As I have two interpreters, surely the interpretation will be correct." I then said that I had read of a great king who once dreamed a dream that departed from him. He called his wise men, the magicians and the astrologers, to tell the dream and give the interpretation thereof. None were found among all his wise men that was able to tell the dream and give the interpretation. The king then sent forth a decree to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. Then Arioch, the king's captain, sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain. They were Hebrews, taken captive into Babylon. Daniel asked, "Why is the decree so hasty from the king?" The thing being made known by Arioch to Daniel, he asked time of the king, and he would tell the dream and give the interpretation thereof, which he did. In describing the kingdoms, the head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his feet part of iron and part of clay. "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces." "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, diverse from all other

kingdoms, that shall never be destroyed nor left to other people." Said kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, set up in the hearts of all that are born of the Spirit. I had a great desire that his kingdom or church would again be set up in this part of his earth. After the Bethel Church had dissolved, there would occasionally be preaching by some Elder stopping over night. I took an interest in trying to get preachers to preach in this vicinity. On the night of August 24, 1850, Elder Stephen Coonrod, on his way to Sangamon Association, preached at my brother's, Henry Boggess. In the midst of the room, after the congregation was dismissed, I was accosted by a son-in-law of my brother, who asked me how I liked the sermon. The sermon was in accord with the Scriptures. I asked him how he liked it. He answered, "Very well. There was much difference between that sermon and one preached by Elder Isaac Conlee a week or two prior, who said there was no space between death and life." In my short-sightedness I failed to see the difference. When I reminded him that Elder Conlee said there was no space between life and death, he spoke of the man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, who fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Here my brother asked what condition the man was left in? Was he dead? Was he alive? Was he neither dead nor alive? Here the argument was taken from me, it being a great relief to me, not wishing to be brought into notoriety in an argumentative way. On August 25, 1850, several of us went to the Sangamon Association, held with Horse Creek Church, Sangamon Co., Ill. We returned home on the 27th. Elder John Record came with us, staid over night with brother Henry, and the next day preached at the house of H. Boggess. After the sermon, some of the members related their experiences. Four that had not joined any church related their lost condition, and how the Lord had given them an evidence of the remission of their sins. My companion, Mary R., my brother's daughter, my sister's son, and a neighbor woman, those four were not members of any order. I heard their experiences, was satisfied with them, and the members were satisfied. My niece, Mary A., wife of Solomon Pinkley, who had asked me what I thought of Elder Coonrod's sermon (said Pinkley was a Methodist class-leader), asked Elder Record to baptize her and let her go. He said he did not mark sheep and turn them out to the wolves. There being no Regular Baptist Church in the settlement, Elder Record proposed to go to the Apple Creek Church, Morgan County, Ill., and preach on the following day, having got Mary R. Boggess, my nephew, John H. Wristen, and my own consent to attend there. Early next day Elder Record and brother Henry went to the Apple Creek Church and had the

appointment circulated. While reflecting about going with my companion to see her buried beneath the liquid wave, the idea was presented to me as though some one had spoken, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Upon those words my mind commenced traveling. Do I love them? Why do I go far and near to be with them? Why has the leading of my mind been with them? Why was I grieved when the Bethel Church dissolved? Have I not longed for the travail of Zion, that she should bring forth children born of the Spirit? Is this in truth loving the brethren? On August 29, 1850, we went to Apple Creek Church. After preaching by Elder J. Record, the church organized, and an invitation was given to all that were desirous to join the church, to tell what great things the Lord had done for them. Mary R. Boggess, J. H. Wristen and I related the travel of our minds, were received by the church, and baptized by Elder John Record the same day, where my companion and I remained members up to Saturday before the first Sunday in January, 1861, when we received a letter of dismission, and on May 18, 1861, were constituted into a church at Girard, Macoupin Co., Ill., called Head of Otter Creek Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church, where we remained up to March 23, 1881, when she was called from the church militant to the church triumphant, leaving me alone and lonely in this sin-smitten world. I have been cast down, groping in darkness and unbelief, wondering in my mind how the Lord has led me to Christ (if it be his work), the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. That little hope, I cannot tell when nor how it came. Though often and for years I tried to throw it away, like a coal of fire buried in ashes, in every trying event of my life it has apparently revived, and I have been buoyed up to trust in the Redeemer. He hath done all things well. He maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak. He saith, "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." Was it that voice that raised Lazarus from the dead, that quickened me into life, working in me to will and to do of his good pleasure? I, like doubting Thomas, will not believe except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side. For more than thirty years have I been looking for a more reliable evidence. "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Had I not all those years been groping in darkness, without that blessing, denying myself the privilege of the gospel kingdom? I was appointed clerk of the aforesaid Otter Creek Church, on May 18, 1861. When constituted, thirteen in number; additions, twenty-one by experience;

by letter, sixteen; by relation, four; numbering fifty-four. Decrease: dismissed by letter, sixteen; excluded, two; deceased, ten; making twenty-eight from the fifty-four, leaving the present number twenty-six.

S. R. BOGGESS.

GHENT, KY., June 24, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter mailed at Kinderhook, Michigan, to which the writer failed to place his name; but from the whole tenor of the letter, which was quite interesting, I conclude that the omission of the name of the writer was an inadvertence. But he says, "If you please, give your views in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Luke xvi. 9, which reads as follows: 'I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.' By which you will oblige an unworthy brother."

This language is part of the closing words of the parable of the unjust steward. In the introduction to this parable our Lord said, "There was a certain rich man." In this chapter he spoke the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in the commencement of which he used the same language, "There was a certain rich man." It is evident that the words used in the introduction of both of those parables, "A certain rich man," were used to convey the same idea; to present to his disciples and to the Pharisees who heard him in figure the same people. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus he described the rich man as being one who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. That purple and fine linen fitly represented the righteousness under the law. The law, with all things that pertain to it, was given to the Jews. All the offerings made in the temple service, with all the wonderful things prefigured by those offerings, belonged alone to the descendants of the twelve patriarchs. Then surely they were rich. That "certain rich man" had a steward. Anciently a steward was a man employed in great families to manage the domestic concerns of the household, to keep accounts, collect rents and incomes due his lord. The house of Israel as it was organized under the law had its priests, its scribes and Pharisees. They were the stewards. Before the end of that dispensation they became unjust. They failed to make the offerings in strict compliance with the law. The prophet says, "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord. But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." When the fullness of the time should have fully come, that one would appear who is described by the prophet as being poor and of a con-

trite spirit. Then he would suddenly come to his temple and make that great offering for sin prefigured by the shedding of blood under the temple service. The prophet declares the character of that unjust steward who would appear at that time in that temple. "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations."—Isa. lxvi. 1-3. The priests, the scribes and Pharisees, who made offerings and taught, in the temple, when our great High Priest appeared in that temple, and with a scourge of small cords drove those that polluted that temple out, and said, "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise," were described by the prophet. They delighted in their abominations. Their sacrifices were an abomination to the Lord. Although oxen and fatlings were offered in the temple service, yet the Almighty, speaking of the abominations of those priests, said, "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck." Surely their wickedness was great, and they were unjust stewards. But while they saw the bleeding lambs which pointed away to the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God, yet they denied him, and in their unbelief witnessed their own overthrow and the complete failure of all things that pertained to them as a nation. The disciples to whom the Lord spoke that parable, as well as the Pharisees who heard it, were all descendants of the twelve patriarchs, and by their relationship to them were all entitled to all things that pertained to that dispensation. When our Lord said, "Make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations," his language was prophetic. In it was declared the overthrow of Jerusalem and the failure of the Jewish polity. In his infinite wisdom and foreknowledge he beheld them scattered among all the nations of the earth. The words, "mammon of unrighteousness," declared the characters of the people among which the Jews would be scattered after the overthrow of Jerusalem. They were Gentiles, steeped in idolatry. When he said, "They may receive you into everlasting habitations," he used the word "they" in the plural number; conveying the idea that the words, "mammon of unrighteousness," meant a people; and there being but two divisions or classes into which the inhabitants of earth were divided—the Jews and the Gentiles, without doubt the Jews, being about to fail, were directed by our Lord to make friends of the Gentiles. This applied to the disciples as well as to the unbelieving Jews, who were soon to suffer the awful calamities consequent upon the fall of Jerusalem.

In the mission of our Lord to earth the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles was broken down. He said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." Old Simeon, when he had taken the young child in his arms, being blessed with prophetic wisdom, said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before all people [Jews and Gentiles]; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." In fulfillment of that prophecy Peter was sent to the house of Cornelius, and there preached to those gathered the glorious and everlasting gospel; not to Jews alone, but to Gentiles also, saying, "He [Jesus] commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." "To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Peter, in obedience to the instruction of the Lord, and under the direction of that wonderful vision, made friends of those Gentiles, and they received him into their habitations most gladly. Paul and Barnabas said, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles; for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation to the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." These two apostles were set by their Lord to be a light unto Gentiles, and made unto themselves friends among that people wherever they went preaching the everlasting gospel. When our Lord said unto the disciples, "Make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" (the Gentiles), he used no unmeaning words, but words that bore in them and set forth a great and wonderful blessing, not only to the disciples, but to the Gentiles also. But this wonderful language of our Lord, when applied to the unbelieving Jews, presents to him who earnestly desires to understand the teaching of our Lord a subject that is full to overflowing with interest. From the fall of Jerusalem to this day that people have been scattered among all the nationalities in the civilized world. But wherever they have been found they have sought to make friends, with wonderful success. One single object have they had in view, and that was to make money. To accomplish that purpose they have labored successfully, to make friends of all with whom they have been surrounded. At the time our Lord spoke that parable, and said in its conclusion, "Make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," the Gentiles as a people regarded it exceedingly wicked to recognize any of the wonderful teachings of the Bible. In a word, idolatry pervaded the minds of all to such an extent that any

intimation of the overthrow of that idolatry was met with the sword or the cross. It was that that gave rise to the fearful persecutions of Christians in the early ages of the church. But in those persecutions the love of many was made manifest. When Paul was brought before Felix, and reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him." This historic fact is given to show that the Gentiles, with Felix at their head as their judge, were fitly described by our Lord when he called them the "mammon of unrighteousness." The intensity of their wickedness was shown when this Gentile judge was willing to accept a bribe to let Paul go. But he made Felix his friend without the use of that money, without resorting to a bribe. Hearing the wonderful reasoning of this apostle of the Lamb, he trembled, and said, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." Here the wondrous power and unchanging love of our glorious Lord for and over his people is made manifest in making the wickedness of man to praise him. The power to reason on those deep and profoundly interesting subjects was the gift of God to his servant Paul, and in that reasoning he accomplished the great purpose of making to that servant friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. Paul had gloried in a law righteousness, but now he had been made to know that "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified before God." Surely his reasoning before Felix was of that righteousness which is by faith in the Son of God. Being of that righteousness, he must have presented to that idolater the wonderful power of our Lord made manifest in his mission to earth; the fulfillment of the law which his people had violated; his death in accomplishing that great work, and his glorious and triumphant resurrection from that death. Surely that idolater had cause to tremble. Then that idolatry began to fade before the bright glories of the everlasting gospel, and those who had for ages and centuries been enshrouded in the fearful darkness of pagan worship saw a light. The prophet says, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."—Isa. ix. 2. The glorious light of Zion shone upon the Gentiles when Christ in all his fullness was preached to them. But our Lord worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. It was his will and purpose that the Gentiles should be brought in and made the blessed participants in the never-fading glories of the gospel. It was evidently his purpose that they should be made the friends of the apostles, as well as all who might follow them in after years,

preaching the everlasting gospel. Then, my strange brother, is it not clearly evident that our Lord in using that language declared his power to work all things together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose? And is it not clearly evident to us now that the unbelieving Jews, after being driven from their great city and scattered among the nations of the earth, should find among the Gentiles those that would protect them—receive them into everlasting habitations?

The word "everlasting," as used here by our Lord, commands our careful thought. The habitations into which the Jews were to be taken after their dispersion, pertained to temporal things, and were such as would exist as long as that dispersion continued. The idea is held by many good brethren that when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, spoken of in the eleventh chapter of Romans, then the Jews will return and rebuild Jerusalem, and will no longer need those habitations. My understanding of the Scriptures is too feeble and limited to accept that idea. To me the words, "everlasting habitations," look on and on to that period when time shall be no more, and all spiritual Israel shall be brought in and made happy recipients of all the blessings and glories secured to them in Christ their glorious Head and Redeemer. Then all Israel will be saved in the Lord, to whose name be all the glory.

If my strange brother should ever read these feeble thoughts, he will please accept them as a token of my love for him and all others who are seeking to know and understand the wonderful teachings of our glorious Lord; and may he bless all such with the light of divine grace to enable them to know more and more of the wonderful teaching of our Lord, is the sincere prayer of this little one.

H. COX.

FISHER'S STATION, Ind., Dec. 15, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have concluded to pen you a few thoughts on the "congregation of saints." "Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints."—Psa. cxlix. 1. Now, dear brethren, I wish to give a reason why I go to associations, as I have known three men in Ohio, and some in Indiana, and recently I learned of some in the south, that are opposed to associations. Now to the text. "Praise ye the Lord." Everybody will say that is right, Arminians and all, so we will pass to the second proposition. "Sing unto the Lord a new song." We know just how he is to be praised; not with the old song, which runs in this wise,

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky."

But the new song in which he is to be praised, as I understand it, runs thus,

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;

I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

It was the new song that Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "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." This is the grace wherein all the saints trust, and by which they are enabled to serve God, acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. This may suffice for the new song. We will now look to "the congregation of saints." I presume that none will deny that the characters that Jesus chose for his companions were those to whom he said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Such were baptized, as he was. A thought here with reference to the gospel baptism. The first administrator was a man sent from God, who was a Baptist; for "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan."—Mark i. 9. Now here is gospel baptism. The administrator is a man sent from God. The candidate was the Son of God. As there has been a great deal said about modes, &c., here it is plainly taught that it was in Jordan the ordinance was attended to. The candidate was applied to the water, and not the water to the candidate. One thing more. This man baptized in the name he came, Baptist. Now my conclusions are that none have the right to baptize but those that have that name. Of this class thus baptized Jesus meets on the sea, amidst tempest and tossing, and brings them to land. These are they whom he puts to the test, "Whom do ye say that I, the Son of man, am?" They answer, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Thus they differ from all the rest of men in their confession of him. While men can see nothing but a man, or a dead prophet, the disciples see him as the Son of God. And again, when the people said, "These are hard sayings, who can hear them?" and they turned away and followed him no more, the others said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." These are they to whom he said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." To those he gave the keys of the kingdom, saying to them, "Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." These are they to whom he said, "Ye are clean through the word." These are they whose understanding he opened, that they might understand the Scriptures; and he said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." "But tarry ye in Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

We are further informed that when Jesus was taken up from them, they came to Jerusalem, and there tarried. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place, and the Holy Ghost came upon them. Here is a "congregation of saints," ready to praise God. Now we will notice how they praised him. First, they spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. Their preaching divided the congregation. So it is to-day. Some said, "These men are full of new wine." Others said, "How hear we in our own tongue wherein we were born, the wonderful words of God?" Thus being pricked in the heart, they cried, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter gave the instruction. Then we are informed, "They that gladly received his word were baptized." And there were added to them about three thousand souls. Now we see one of the apostles' meetings, at which time they had preaching, and received members. So do the Old Baptists to-day. We find another meeting after the disciples had multiplied. There arose trouble concerning the care of widows. Jealousy arose. Now something must be done. "Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Then they gave the names of those they chose. They set them before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. This is another meeting, and here is the meeting that I attend, to lay hands on deacons. This is the second. The next is the meeting for the ordination of ministers, which was at Antioch. This kind of a meeting we still have. The church calling her presbytery, the ordaining is by the authority of the church. This is the third meeting. Now to the next. But first let us go back to Acts vi. 7, "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Now, brethren, it does not say that they believed, but were "obedient to the faith." Now turn to Acts xvii. 34. "Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed, among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them." Now, brother Beebe, I could be obedient to the laws and rules of your family, but that would not make me your child. There is a service in the letter, and not in the spirit. As soon as the disciples were scattered, and the apostles were left at Jerusalem, these Judaizing teachers began preaching their false doctrine. This caused trouble; so much so that a council was called, or a conference, to settle this matter. After much disputation, they of the apostles, and brethren with them, gave their decision against that conditional doctrine; and every one that has left the church, from that day to this, has had more or less of that which pleases carnal nature, and they of the world think

a great deal more of them than they do of the true ministers. "Much disputation." Now, brethren, turn to the "Editorials" of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also to "J. F. Johnson's Writings," and they will give you a faint idea of how it was. There will be such expressions as "hair splitting," "abstruse doctrine" and "fine spun," which are only the fore-runners of what has already passed. Now the weak ones come up and say, "I wish you would stop that controversy." But, dear ones, it cannot be done. There was "much disputation," and it takes that to fill God's word. This false teaching, this resisting the truth, these withstanders of our words, as John says to the beloved Gaius, the apostles have decided against, and so should we. If all troubles were settled by a council, and all the brethren would abide the decision, there would be no occasion of trouble in the association. Then the association would be only for christian fellowship and correspondence. Now we have four meetings of the apostles; so we have these four yet. The apostles have one more meeting, in or at which there were contributions and letters; and there were those that were approved by their letters, which were sent by the churches; and in speaking to the Corinthians, in which they were "forward a year ago," and now them that were to be inquired of were "the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ."—See 2 Cor. viii. 23. Now, brethren, if this last is not an association, or if our association does not answer to this last meeting, pray tell me what will? and without it there is one less meeting than the apostles had. And now, brethren, I am well aware that the church has a right to set apart, of her members, to the work of the ministry, as did the first disciples, and to judge of her gifts; and having this authority, she has the right to send messengers to organize an association for the furtherance of her christian correspondence and fellowship. This may answer for my reason for attending associations; and I think our fathers have followed the law of the Lord, and in this I do not want to change the order.

You will see by the date that this has been laid aside, but by the request of brethren and sisters I now finish it, and send it to you for publication, if you see fit.

Yours to serve in hope,
GEORGE S. WEAVER.

THE POOL CALLED BETHESDA.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Upon reading the commencement of your editorial, using the words, "It is with some reluctance that we comply with this request," &c., I thought, if an able minister has some reluctance in writing upon what is set forth by the inspired writer and beloved disciple John in such plain, positive and emphatic words as are here used, showing the exact location of this wonderful pool, and also its construction, as well as the troubling of the water by an angel, and the healing

effect upon those who first stepped into the water, can it be that the views I have are correct? Now, dear brethren, in writing this I do not wish to set forth myself as an instructor, but as one who greatly needs to be taught. This subject was to me surrounded in darkness; and having read and heard different views presented, and none giving a complete solution of the inspired writer's words, I will endeavor to write the view presented to my mind while working in the field.

"Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool." "Now," at the present time; and its location, "by the sheep market," the place where sheep are bought and sold. Sheep is a name applied to designate the children of God in many places in the Scriptures. The apostle Peter, writing to and addressing only those that have "obtained like precious faith," says, "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." This location will be more fully set forth hereafter. "Having five porches." There were, at the writing of the apostle, some very contagious diseases, the leprosy one of them; also some of a nervous kind, so that they required different apartments to lie and rest in; therefore the necessity of these porches. A little more than half a century ago the Baptists were one; but what is known as Fullerism caused a division. If the pool is a figure of baptism, we see one apartment or porch; then Campbellism another apartment or porch; then Parkerism another porch; and others, showing to my mind the true presentation of the figure. I do not think the number five is to be taken in its limited, literal sense, to represent five, no more, no less; but the whole number who "went out from us, because they were not of us," and who yet hold dipping or burying in the water, and raising up again, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as the true mode of baptism, as an entrance into their respective churches; though this, like many other links of gospel truth, is wrongly applied. A house may be so surrounded by porches that no one can enter into the house except by going through one of its porches; so was this pool, and so is antichrist, or that part who practice immersion as the entrance into their communion, and as none do but those who "went out from us, because they were not of us." Yet several denominations will either sprinkle, pour or immerse, as the candidate may wish. As this pool was near the sheep market, it represents especially Baptists, or those who are called by that name to take away their reproach, while they are a part of antichrist. These so-called Baptists are better qualified to mislead the sheep and lambs, because of their baptism, than any other of the various branches of antichrist; "having damnable heresies." "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you."—2 Peter ii. 3. Yes, of those who "have obtained like precious

faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Some of these remain with them; others come to us, telling how they were deceived by their feigned words and fair speeches, and were led to believe that they were doing the commandment of the dear Lamb of God, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness;" and felt sure for a time that they were healed of their disobedience; but being now undeceived, they see that they were made merchandise of, as the apostle says. And doubtless many others would, if their experience of many years had not taught them that when they would do good, evil is present with them; and the good that they would they could not do, because of their very great infirmity, that in their flesh dwelleth no good thing; and the evil that they would not, that they do, by reason of the law of sin in their members, which was continually leading them into the captivity of sin—the exact figure of the impotent man.

The healing properties of the water of this pool are so positively and emphatically stated that it would be the greatest folly for me to try to prove it otherwise than as stated. As to what angel troubled this pool, it was certainly one that had not the power or will to cure those who, like the impotent man, had no strength to go into the healing water, or, if so, was not an angel of mercy, as the dear Savior; not a very present help in time of trouble, but only a striking representative of the savior of this antichrist; as they believe and teach that their angel, or savior, came to make a way possible, or to open up a road for them, if faithful and obedient, to reach heaven by their works and merit. Therefore I was led to view the pool, its location and surroundings, its healing water and its angel, as the type of those Baptists, by whatsoever name called, who went out from us because they were not of us, and to particularly set forth their baptism; though true in its kind or mode, yet as false as sprinkling or pouring, as to rendering obedience to the God we adore and worship, for taking our feet out of the mire and the pit, and placing them on the Rock. Though for a time they seem entirely satisfied and healed, yet after rejoicing for a time they are like the man who has what he believes is a bank note, which he believes is amply sufficient to pay all his debts; but when he presents it, lo, he finds it a base counterfeit and worthless. Follow not after them who teach for doctrines and practice the commandments of men.

Dear brother, it has been resting upon my mind to write you since the closing of our association. I was in a frame of mind to even doubt that I was an Old School Baptist. My views and understanding of the cardinal points of doctrine seemed to differ so very widely from some of the expounders who had written upon them, that I felt like one alone. I was truly glad when the wise Ruler of all events put it into the heart of

Elder A. B. Francis to visit us and proclaim to us the unity of Christ and his body, the church, from the figure of Adam and the rib made woman. Then came our association, and your wonderful opening sermon, which was pointed in the doctrine of the sovereignty of our God, conducting and ruling all things after the counsel of his own will; "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." You were followed by our beloved brother, Elder E. V. White, who, as he said in his opening remarks, never wants to hit a man except he can hit him right. While he was before us speaking, using the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, so powerfully and effectively, my vision beheld good old Samuel as he hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord. The remarks of Elder Staton, verifying what you had said, caused me to go on my way rejoicing. Being prevented from attending the meeting the second day, I come to speak of Elder Benton Jenkins' clear and interesting sermon from the declaration of the Savior, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," &c. The revelation to Peter, and to every manifest child of God who knows Christ, and sees the glory of God shining in his precious face, and given them in the free, unmerited grace of their Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of his church. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."—Psalm xxv. 14. That covenant is recorded in the thirty-second chapter of the prophecy of Jeremiah, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God." This forever prevents the gates of hell (error and false doctrine) prevailing against his own blood-bought flock; for it is the good pleasure of their heavenly Father to give them the kingdom. When this glad, good news of salvation by grace, all the work of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was so fully, heartily and thankfully indorsed by the loved Moderator and Clerk of the Association, I was taught to know of a surety that we all in deed and in truth are bound in one bundle of life.

Yours with love,

THOMAS H. SCOTT.

PANORA, Iowa, June 12, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, June 15th number, a request by Susan C. Parker, of Kalona, Iowa, for the views of some of the brethren on Luke xvii. 12-18. I trust it will not be presuming too much for me to take the liberty to answer the request. Perhaps others may do the same; but as the request is only for our view, we hope no harm will be done.

The twelfth verse reads, "And as he [Jesus] entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off." Some teachers and writers are prone to spiritualize every word and every line that is found in the Bible; but I understand that many of the Testament

writings are only historical facts, to be understood in connection with what the writers are speaking about. Hence we must not understand that in thus standing "afar off" it is meant that they (the ten men) were vile sinners, and were far away from knowing the truth of the gospel, but simply that they came not nigh Jesus. This leprosy is a skin disease of a very loathsome character, and is contagious; therefore a person with the disease of leprosy, at the time named, was not allowed to remain in the camp, nor come near people that were clean; hence they "stood afar off." Being a considerable distance away, it became necessary, as we see in the thirteenth verse, that they should speak loud. "And they lifted up their voices [all of them crying out], and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Now Jesus, being full of compassion, and having a mind to comply with their request, sends them to the priest. Now bear in mind that Jesus says, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill." So we find in the Levitical law that the priests were the judges of such matters.—See Leviticus xiii. Jesus, not wishing to antagonize the doctors of the law (his mission not being to judge the law, but to fulfill), tells them to go show themselves to the priests. So saith the law. "And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." We understand here, in the fourteenth verse, as also in the seventeenth verse, that the ten men were healed; that is, they were cured and made well of their malady. It is not my purpose to moralize on the subject as to the probability or possibility of their not being healed if they had not went; but to the facts. We find they went, and as they went they were all healed. But one, finding himself healed, returned and fell down at Jesus' feet, and gave him thanks; and he was a Samaritan. Bear in mind that the Jews and Samaritans had no dealings with each other; consequently this man could not have belonged to the Jewish church; hence he must have been a "sinner."

Now for the lesson. We find in the nineteenth verse (for we have got to go to that verse to get the key) that Jesus says, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." I do not understand the making whole named here to mean the cleansing or healing named in connection with the ten men, for the other nine had gone their way, which is clearly shown in the lesson to be the way of the unthankful, the unmerciful, the ungodly and unregenerate; but the good seed having fallen on good ground in the one out of ten, he returns to give thanks; and when he falls down at the Savior's feet, as every one of God's children who comes to the knowledge of the truth does, he hears the welcome voice, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." He was now made whole in a double sense; first cleansed of the leprosy of the skin, and then of the leprosy of the soul. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest

any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8-10. Now, sister, how was it with you? Were you not cleansed of the leprosy of self-righteousness before you returned to give God glory? I know you will answer yes. Now ask the first sister or brother you meet how it was with them, and they will say yes. Go to the next, and the next, until you have asked ten thousand. It is the same story. As it was in those days, so it is now. Nine out of ten that come to Jesus for healing come without regeneration; consequently, having no preparation of the heart, their cleansing is only skin deep, and they return not to give glory; but they have assumed to say, "Have we not obeyed God? hence we are healed." But the little few, the one in ten, see that they are healed; and as it was with the unworthy writer, they run to Jesus, fall down at his feet, and clap their hands for joy, crying, Lord Jesus, long have I waited for thee. Glory to God for his mercies. My Lord and my God, have I found thee at last? Jesus speaks peace: "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Now, dear sister, a few words and I have done. You say that you have been a helpless sufferer for over four years. May God give you grace to bear up under your afflictions. We find no Scripture that teaches the Arminian policy, that we must try to reconcile God to us; but we find all the teachings of the glorious gospel of our blessed Master, and all the prophets and apostles, setting forth the glorious doctrine that we must be reconciled to God. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." How can those afflictions work for our good? They wean us away from the desire to remain in this world, so that when our change comes we can say, Come, death, we welcome thee. We take not hold of the plow to look back, but are looking forward, abiding God's time with pleasure, at the thought that our light afflictions will soon be over. No accidents happen with God. Everything stands one eternal present with him. It was no accident that those ten lepers came to Jesus. It was no accident that Lazarus died. It was no accident that the thief upon the cross asked to be remembered when Christ came into his kingdom. There is a grand and glorious lesson in every incident that came to pass during the ministry of Jesus. It was not the mission of Jesus to heal the sick, or to restore the blind to sight, or to cleanse the lepers. His mission was something higher, to wit, the atonement; but the incidents were all arranged in their order, to establish the fact that he was and is the Messiah, the Jesus, the Son of God. For illustration: if you were to send an agent to a far-off country to redeem a tract of land that had been sold for taxes, his mission would be wholly to make redemption; but he could not make redemption

until he identified himself to the court of the country, and gave proof that he was your agent. So it was with Jesus. All his ministry on earth was to identify himself to his children, the elect; but his mission was for the redemption of his captivated elect; not to make a way possible, but he is the way, the truth, and the life. If his mission had been to heal the sick, then healing would have continued; but in his death, resurrection and ascension his mission was accomplished. Now we, poor, frail mortals, must wait and trust God's mercies, looking forward to that blessed time when we shall meet our blessed Jesus beyond this vale of tears. May God bless all his children with patience to wait all the time appointed of the Father.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

JOHN CLINE.

STAR PRAIRIE, Wis., Dec. 12, 1886.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the tender mercies of him who was, and is, and is to come, I still remain a living monument of God's amazing mercy. Though I am vile and sinful, he yet spares me, for good, I hope, and not for evil. I yet remain a firm believer in salvation by grace, and not of works. The apostle John says, "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." Grace, mercy, peace and repentance are the gifts of God, and not of works; for he has 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. Not who hath called us, and will save us if we will let him. He broke down the middle wall of partition, blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, taking them out of the way, nailing them to his cross. All glory to God in the highest. Even so, amen.

Will some brother in the ministry give his views on 1 John ii. 2, through the SIGNS? It reads thus: "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." I do hope that some of God's ministers will comply with my request, for I am here alone; yet not alone, for I hope that God is with me; and I pray that he will grant me wisdom, knowledge and understanding of his holy truth, that I may through him put to silence those who deny his power.

To you, G. Beebe's Sons, I will say, I hope that through the mercies of our God you may continue to publish the truth as it is in Jesus, to the edification of the saints and to the lifting of Jesus on high.

Now to him that is able to keep us from falling be all praise, honor and glory, forevermore. Amen.

With love to all the household of faith, I subscribe myself their sincere brother, if one at all,

C. S. LOCKWOOD.

JEFFERSON, N. Y., June 7, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Although I never saw you in the flesh, yet I have read so much of your writings, and have so often written to you for others and myself, that it seems as if I had always been acquainted with you; and I sometimes feel to claim a relationship that is nearer than that of the flesh.

I agree with the sentiment or doctrine of predestination as expressed by Elder Purington, and I feel that it is the doctrine of the Bible. I cannot see any difference in his views and those of your father on that subject, and I have felt like telling him so. But there are some who think that if God predestinated all things, both good and bad, that it would certainly make him the author of sin; and yet they claim to believe that God works all things after the counsel of his own will. It seems to me that they would like to have it read all good things; but we read that all things work together for good. No one can be a believer in absolute predestination unless he believes that God is supreme and controls all things. It seems to me that it is Arminianism to say that a part, or almost every thing, that transpires, is left to chance. I have believed and do now believe that he rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth.

D. C. HIX.

WATER VALLEY, Miss., June 28, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The brethren and friends for whom I sent for Church Histories, eight in number, have all received their books.

What does the apostle mean, "He was made sin for us?" Was it by imputation, or was it because he was made of a woman? What law was it under which he was made? Please answer this in your editorial.

This leaves me eighty-one years, four months and nineteen days old, almost blind, and nearly unable to get about. The little church in Water Valley has lost two meeting-houses, and we have purchased a third one. We ask the brethren and friends to help us pay for it. All who are willing, send the amount to me, and it will be highly appreciated. The amount that we need would have been "but a drop in the bucket" before the war; but now it is a heavy burden, straitened as we are. If any money is sent to me it will be receipted for, and applied to the debt which the church owes.

Your brother in hope,

E. A. MEADERS, SR.

(Editorial reply on page 189.)

MACOMB, Ill., July 27, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—This spring I baptized a man at Union Church, Morgan Co., Illinois, in the seventy-ninth year of his age, and the next meeting a dear sister, and one or two are now waiting there for baptism. Last Sunday I baptized two beloved sisters at Union Church, in this (McDonough) county, and another is waiting there for baptism. The Lord reigns.

I. N. VANMETER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1887.

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

CHRIST MADE SIN.

"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.

In reply to Elder E. A. Meaders, Sr., of Mississippi, on page 189, we submit the following as our limited understanding of the subject presented in his inquiry; not that we presume to be capable of instructing our venerable and highly esteemed brother, but that our views may be tested by the infallible standard of inspired Scripture. All that endures this trial is truth; all else is false, however it may be cherished by the wisest and best of men.

The expression cited by our brother in his first question is a very common phrase; and while it is in substance authorized by the text quoted above, we have not found it in that form in the apostolic writings. It is unquestionably true that only through that principle of unity with his people by which their sin is his, could he bear their sins in his own body on the tree.—1 Peter ii. 24. By no law either natural or revealed could the sin of the guilty be imputed to the innocent. Even though there had been found a sinless angel willing to die for the sin of Adam, without life unity with the sinner infinite justice could not accept such a substitute. The holy law demands the life of the transgressor. Any proposition to substitute something else for that life must be regarded as an attempt to bribe divine justice. Then, even if the sinner might be delivered from suffering the penalty of the law upon the ground that a substitute had borne the punishment for him, it would leave the guilt of sin still abiding upon him. He would not be free from the sin, although released from suffering its punishment. Nor could the sufferer assume the guilt of the sinner. But in the text this is just the wonderful mystery of salvation which is declared by the inspired record. Christ, the sinless and holy, bore the sins of all his people in his own body on the tree.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." From the preceding context it is clear that it is God who hath made Christ to be sin for us. This agrees with all the testimony of revelation on this important point of truth; and it is also the ground of hope in the experience of all who are led by the Spirit to know the truth of salvation by grace through the atonement which is in Christ Jesus. In this wonderful truth is involved the whole system of redemption, both in its manifestation to lost sinners and in its complete fulfillment in the glorification of Christ Jesus as exalted at the right hand of God, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is

named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 21-23. It is not in his eternal Godhead that he is exalted; for as God he is infinite in all the perfection and glory of his own self-existence, and can receive no additional exaltation; nor yet is it in his humiliation as the Son of man that he is thus exalted, for in that character, while foxes and birds were provided for, the dear Redeemer had not where to lay his head. But in his identity with his body, the church, including all who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, he was brought low, even to the depths of condemnation and death, and raised again by the glory of the Father. In his death all his members for whom he died were dead with him. Since in himself as the Holy One of Israel he was without sin, as such death could have no power against him. Yet he alone could save his people from their sins by the sacrifice of himself. In order that he might be qualified for this work he must be made sin. This was done by his being identified with his body, the church. It was not a new design after sin had been developed in the world that Christ should be made sin for us. He was from the beginning chosen of God to bear the iniquities of all whom he justifies. They are his seed, his portion, and his own peculiar people.—Psalm xxii. 30; Isa. liii. 10-12; 1 Peter ii. 9.

It is exclusively on the ground of this unity with his people as their very life that he could bear their sins. When after his resurrection he opened the understanding of his disciples that they might understand the Scriptures, he said to them, "Thus it is written, and THUS IT BEHOVED CHRIST TO SUFFER, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."—Luke xxiv. 46, 47. This wonderful truth can never be received or known without the same gracious work of Jesus in each saint which was so essential for those favored disciples. Even the clear statement of it by inspired servants of the Lord can no more manifest it to the natural man than the testimony of others could satisfy the disciples of the resurrection of Jesus. This is seen in every case where the proclamation of divine truth is joyful gospel to some who hear, while to others it is but the empty sound of words abstractly true, but without vital power. This difference is often witnessed even between those who are alike subjects of divine grace. Hence it is very important that all should continually remember that it is only by grace they are saved from delusions and error, as well as from all sin. This consideration will enable the strong to bear the infirmity of the weak, and lead every one to be subject one to another, and be clothed with hu-

mility.—1 Peter v. 5. Any knowledge which exalts its recipient in his own estimation is of the world, and is opposed to that wisdom which descendeth from above, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."—James iii. 17, 18. It is very essential to our own comfort and peace that we examine ourselves by the divine standard whether we be in the faith in every sentiment we hold; for all must be either approved or condemned by that inspired record.

In his unity with his body, the church of his redeemed people, the condemnation of all law which rested upon any of them fell upon Christ, since "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." As justice could admit of no arbitrary transfer of iniquity, it necessarily must be that he is one with his people in the sight of that law which condemns them. This was beautifully expressed in the first Adam. When Eve was made, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Notice he does not say this *was*, or this *shall be*, but "This *is now*." This is essential to a correct understanding of the figure. Eve was under no law but that which she received in Adam; and being still acknowledged and identified in him when being deceived she was in the transgression, it is evident that in unity with her Adam was involved under the condemnation which rested upon Eve, although he had not as yet eaten himself of the forbidden tree. If he had not transgressed, can we not see that his bone and flesh was already dead? Now here is the figure of him that was to come, and the likeness of God in which man was made. It was after the transgression that the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us," &c.; the likeness was then complete, and he is "the figure" of Christ. It is a common error to speak of every married couple as a figure of Christ and the church; but the inspired apostle specifies particularly "the similitude of ADAM'S TRANSGRESSION, who is THE FIGURE of him that was to come." In some legal marriages among men there is a more striking figure of Satan and his synagogue than of Christ and the church. In his life unity with his wife Adam stands alone as "the figure" which was never duplicated. When Eve had sinned death had already passed upon that much of Adam; so when his people, the elect members of his body, the church, had become involved in sin, their life was the only satisfaction which could be accepted by the infinite justice of God. Therefore, it is not any remedy devised after sin had come into the world that made Christ to be sin for us. He in himself is indeed holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; yet in his unity with his children, who are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of

the same.—Heb. ii. 14. It is only as identified with his people that he could be made under the law. In that relationship he is not only under all law to which they are accountable, but with them he is under condemnation for their sins.

While we are sure that there is no law in earth or heaven which can demand of one member of the body of Christ anything which Jesus has not rendered, it seems to our view that the particular law referred to in the text is that law whose penalty is death, under which all the world is guilty before God. The giving of the Sinai law made neither Jew nor Gentile any more sinful than they were without it. Yet it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.—Gal. iii. 19. As there were some of the chosen vessels of mercy held under bondage to that law which was given by Moses (John i. 17), it was needful to their deliverance that Christ Jesus should be sent forth as the Son of God made of a woman, made under that law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they should no longer be under that schoolmaster. The one offering of himself without spot to God thus delivered all his people from all condemnation, whether under the Sinai law or among the Gentiles. While the whole race of man was under death in Adam, those among the Jews were under still further demands from the law given by Moses. Hence, it was needful that they should be redeemed from that law also; and this was completed in the perfect work of Jesus. He took that handwriting of ordinances out of the way, nailing it to the cross. This was needful for the benefit of his people also who were among the Gentiles, since while that legal dispensation yet existed there could be no salvation revealed outside that nation to whom that covenant was given. Hence, when our Lord sent forth his chosen twelve apostles to preach before he was crucified, he bade them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. x. 5, 6. So also the seventy were limited to "every city and place whither he himself would come;" which was only to the same "lost sheep."—Luke x. 1; Matt. xv. 24. But after he had broken down that middle wall of partition by fulfilling its every jot and tittle, he then sent them forth with the commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."—Mark xvi. 15. In finishing the work of saving his people from their sins he fulfilled every demand of infinite justice which was against them, whether written in the law given to Adam in the garden or in the Sinai law, or in any revelation of the righteousness of God. He came under the deepest requirement which could rest upon one of his chosen people. He paid their whole debt, and thus redeemed them from death, and ransomed them from the power of the grave. The purpose of

God in all the work and suffering of the dear Redeemer is clearly stated in the text.

"That we might be made the righteousness of God in him." In the experience of the saints it is not often that the tempter will question the fact of the suffering and death of Christ; but he would rather rob them of their joy in believing by the suggestion that their conscious sinfulness forbids their hope in his salvation. The text shows conclusively that the very object of all the humiliation and suffering of Christ is that we, poor, vile sinners, might be made in him that righteousness of God which justifies us in his sight. That this is sufficient none can question; but they are sometimes ready to perish in despair in view of the very infinite display of such amazing grace to such worthless worms. The more earnestly they realize this great grace the more they will tremble with humble joy in their trust in the salvation which is alone in Christ Jesus.

In the hope that what is written may bear witness to our venerable brother of our sincere wish to comply with his request, we submit it to his ripper judgment. The truth will bear examination; nothing else is worth a thought. We feel sure that those who remember Elder Meaders' visit to the eastern associations and to Canada, in 1857, will be glad to hear from him, and to know that even in old age he is a living illustration of the truth written by the psalmist, "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to shew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him."—Psalm xcii. 13-15. We trust that those who have the ability will feel it a privilege to respond to the appeal of this tried old veteran on the behalf of the church in Water Valley, Mississippi. May he sweetly realize the supporting presence of the Lord in his declining years, and rest in the full assurance of that truth which has shielded him through the long pilgrimage of his earthly sojourn, and afterward may he awake with the likeness of the Lord he has so long preached, and in whom alone he has trusted.

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CHURCH NOTICES.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the following notice from Beech Creek Church, which the brethren are desirous of your publishing.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
ERNEST F. RANSELL.

In the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of July 15, 1887, there is a notice signed by the Moderator and Clerk of the last association (J. M. Demaree and W. C. Sams), and also a notice that Beech Creek Church cannot entertain the Mount Pleasant Association, nor is she willing that it shall be held here the present year.

We, the undersigned members of Beech Creek Church, in Shelby Co., Ky., do cordially ask the sister churches of the Mount Pleasant Association to meet with us in an associated capacity, commencing as stated in our minutes of last year; and we furthermore state that the association was sent to us, as it was our regular time, and was accepted by our messengers of last year. In the vote that was taken on the second Saturday in June, 1887, there were three for entertaining the association and four against; and we declare that the church did not act in her sovereign right, as some of us were not present to vote.

We take this method of informing the brethren, as it will be too late after our next meeting to have it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. A cordial invitation is given to brethren of our faith and order to meet with us.

MONSON HEDDEN.
MARY HEDDEN.
JOHN W. SHELburn.
JANE SHELburn.
B. Q. MORTON.
SOLOMON BRIGHT.
LOUISA TINSLEY.
A. HEDDEN.
H. M. HEDDEN.

WM. H. BLANTON, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of the bereaved widow, I write for publication in the SIGNS the following notice of the death of brother Charles Bright, at his home in Shelby Co., Ky., May 29, 1887, aged eighty-eight years, five months and four days. After a long life of usefulness, spent for the most part in the vicinity where he died, he was gathered as a shock of corn fully ripe, in the full assurance of a blessed and comfortable hope. Brother Bright was twice married; first, Nov. 16, 1827, to Phebe Morton, who died Nov. 24, 1867; and Nov. 16, 1869, he married Mrs. Mary Bussey, who survives him. He never had any children; was a faithful and consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church for fifty-five years; first at Beech Creek, Spencer County, from whence he removed his membership to Bethel, Shelby County, where he continued till called into the joy of his Lord. May the bereaved widow, thus left in her old age without her natural protector, find in that God, in whom she trusts, a very present help in her time of trouble.

Elder Lester was sent for to preach on the occasion of the funeral; but he being absent, the writer tried to preach from 2 Tim. i. 9, 10, to a large congregation, who by their presence attested the esteem in which they held their old neighbor and friend.

ALSO,

DIED—At her residence in Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., Miss Duffila B. Sutton, on May 20, 1886, aged sixty-nine years and ten months. Miss Sutton never made a profession of religion, nor even gave any sign by word that she had any special interest in the Old Baptists, but was a good friend, and a constant attendant upon the preaching of the word, and was not offended. Jesus has said, "Blessed is he who is not offended in me." May we not hope, therefore, that our loss is her gain? Hers was truly a blameless life in every respect; kind-hearted and obliging, a lover of peace and quiet. Her name was never mixed up in the usual gossip of a neighborhood. She was sick about eight months, most of the time unable

to sit up; still her sister and niece, who attended her in her last illness, hoped for her recovery till a short time before she died. Elder Purington preached a comforting discourse at her funeral, from 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DIED—At her residence in Middletown, N. Y., on June 13, 1887, of apoplexy, Mrs. Mary K. Perry, aged sixty-one years, seven months and ten days.

Sister Perry was born Nov. 3, 1825, and was a daughter of Deacon George Doland. Her husband, Lewis S. Perry, died Oct. 23, 1860. It will be remembered by many that in the year 1860, within a few weeks, her father, two sisters and her husband died of typhoid fever. Sister Perry was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the fellowship of the Middletown and Walkkill Church, a number of years ago, and she remained an esteemed member of the same to the time of her death. She had been in ill health for a number of months, but her death was very sudden and unexpected. Her funeral was attended on the 16th, when a short discourse was preached by her pastor, Elder Benton Jenkins, from Psalm cxlvi. 5, after which her remains were deposited in the cemetery of the New Vernon Church, by the side of those of her father, husband and two sisters, whose remains had been removed thither from a cemetery in Middletown, several years ago.

She is survived by her three daughters, who sorrow not without hope. May the blessing of the Lord, which maketh rich, rest upon them.

"Welcome, sweet hour of full discharge,
That sets our longing souls at large;
Unbinds our chains, breaks up our cell,
And gives us with our God to dwell."

THE Middle River Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, at her meeting for business on Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1887, passed the following:

WHEREAS, In the providence of God it has pleased him to remove our brother and pastor, Elder Preston Doty, from our midst, and from this state of existence, to his eternal inheritance, thus saddening our hearts and causing the church to mourn her seemingly irreparable loss; therefore,

Resolved, By the church, that she has sustained the loss of an able, fearless and faithful exponent of the doctrine of salvation by the atoning merits of the once crucified but now risen and exalted Savior; a brother indeed and in truth, who shunned not to faithfully declare the whole counsel of God; not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind; always contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. And be it further resolved by the church that she extends her sympathy to his mourning and bereaved family.

W. T. TERRY, Mod.

ASA B. SMITH, Clerk.

WINTERSSET, Iowa, July, 1887.

John P. Sirmon departed this life May 6, 1887, very unexpectedly. Brother Sirmon was tilling some land at his son's, Isaac W. Sirmon, and as he was returning from his work he stopped his horse in front of the house, to have some talk with his daughter-in-law, and she inquired for his health. He replied that he was feeling better than usual; but in a few moments he commenced complaining with his head, and then became very sick, and said he was almost blind. His son was sent for, they took him into the house, the doctor was called, but all of no avail. He sank gradually until he breathed his last, which was three days after he was taken. His disease was considered a paralytic stroke. Thus passed away an honorable, industrious citizen, a kind father, a firm and orderly christian. Brother Sirmon was bred and born in Sussex County, Delaware, but spent the last half of his life in Wicomico County, Md., being in the seventy-fourth year of his age. His christian character was without a stain, as every one that knew him can bear witness. I had been intimately acquainted with him for over fifteen years, and I have yet to find his superior. He was regular at his meetings, and was thoughtful

concerning the expenses of the church. He was baptized July 11, 1858. He leaves four children, a number of grandchildren, with the church at Nassau, to mourn.

T. M. POULSON.

DIED—September 27, 1886, suddenly, Mrs. Sarah Warren Prentiss, aged seventy-one years, eleven months and ten days. Sister Prentiss was formerly a member of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, of New York City. They moved to Washington, South River, some years since, and she united by letter with the Old Baptist Church of this place, and remained a faithful and devoted member until God called her, we trust, to a heavenly home. She leaves a husband here, and some relatives in New York City, to mourn their loss. Her funeral was attended by the writer in the Old Baptist meeting house, and a discourse was preached. May the Lord sanctify to the bereaved husband and relations the dispensation of his providence, is our prayer for Christ's sake.

WILSON HOUSEL.

MILLTOWN, N. J.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Lebanon Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Mt. Carmel Church, situated in Hancock Co., Indiana, commencing on Friday before the third Saturday in August, 1887, and continue the two following days. Brethren coming from the east will come on the C., C. and I. Bee Line R. R. Those coming from the west will take cars at Union Depot, Indianapolis, on same road, and get off at Fortville. All will get off at the same place, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is given to brethren of our faith and order.

Done by request of the brethren.

GEORGE S. WEAVER.

THE Des Moines River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold its next session with West Liberty Church, in Des Moines County, Iowa, two miles west of Sperry, on the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railway, beginning at ten o'clock a. m., on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1887. All those who come by railroad will stop at Sperry, where there will be conveyances to meet them. A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren to meet with us.

M. W. BYRAM, Clerk.

THE Salem Association of Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Gas Powder, Boone Co., Ky., commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Friday in August, 1887, and continue the two succeeding days, at ten a. m. Brethren and friends are respectfully invited, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order. Those coming from the north, east and west will come by way of Cincinnati or Ludlow, where they may call on brother E. Helm or Elder P. W. Sawin, in Ludlow, and then take the train for Erlanger, where they will be met by sister Comer and brother M. L. Ayler. Those coming from the south on the Southern R. R., will stop at Erlanger. Those coming on the L. C. & L. Short Line will have to change at Walton and take the Southern R. R. to Erlanger. Should any of the brethren have to stay all night at Walton, they will do well to call on brother B. S. Johnson, about one mile west of Walton.

JOHN R. JOHNSON, Clerk.

OUR association (the New Hope) will convene with the church at Union, in Drew Co., Ark., nine miles northeast from Monticello, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October next. We hope the Lord may move the hearts of some of our northern and eastern ministering brethren to visit us at that time.

A. TOMLIN.

THE Virginia Corresponding meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1887.

Friends coming to the meeting from a

distance by railway will take the cars for Manassas at the Potomac depot in Washington, or the Midland depot at Alexandria. Trains leave in the morning and arrive at Manassas in time for the meeting. Those wishing to do so can come to Manassas on Tuesday, and will be met and cared for.

A hearty welcome is assured to all lovers of the truth who may favor us with their presence.

Affectionately,

J. N. BADGER.

THE Tygart's Valley River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Valley Church, Randolph Co., W. Va., to begin at 11 o'clock on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1887.

THE Licking Association of Particular or Old School Baptists will hold her next session, the Lord willing, with the Drift Run Church, Robertson Co., Ky., beginning on Friday morning, at ten o'clock, before the second Saturday in September, and continue three days.

Brethren, sisters and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to attend. From Cincinnati cross the river to Covington, take the cars on the Kentucky Central (K. C.) R. R., at 8.05, city time, for Falmouth. Those coming via Lexington will take train on the same road, for same place, at about 7.00 a. m. on same day, where conveyances will be in waiting to carry friends to places of entertainment.

It is desirable for as many of our brethren as can to come in their own conveyances, as it is eighteen miles from the station. Should any come too late for the conveyances, there is a stage line running to the place of meeting daily. Take the Milford and Mt. Olivet line.

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Valley Church, at Waynesville, Warren County, Ohio, on Friday (16th) before the third Sunday in September, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m.

Those coming from the south will come to Cincinnati, and there take the Pittsburg & Cincinnati R. R., at the Little Miami Depot, to Waynesville. Those coming from the west will come to Xenia, and there take the Pittsburg & Cincinnati R. R., to Waynesville. Those coming from the north will come from Columbus on the Pittsburg, Cincinnati & St. Louis R. R., stopping at Waynesville. Trains arrive from Cincinnati 7.34 a. m., and 2.45 p. m., and from Columbus 9.07 a. m., and 6.15 p. m., Central Standard time. Brethren will be at the trains to care for those coming on Thursday.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and a special invitation to ministering brethren of our faith and order, to visit us at that time. Arrangement has been made for reduced rates of fare on return, as heretofore. Persons must obtain a certificate signed and stamped by ticket agents wherever tickets are purchased, certifying that full fare has been paid. Ask the agents for the certificate, as they are furnished by the company to all agents, and they are bound to fill them up when called for.

Those coming in their own conveyance will call on sister Elizabeth Right, near the Medelle Run Baptist Church, or the undersigned near Clio, Green Co., Ohio.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

If the Lord wills, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church in Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday, the ninth day of September, and continue three days. A hearty welcome will be given to all strangers and pilgrims who may visit us for the worship of the living God at that time. Those coming by rail will be met at Gardiner Station, on the Maine Central R. R., about three o'clock p. m., on the day before the meeting.

H. CAMPBELL.

THE Morgan Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, the Lord permitting, will convene with Little Flock Church, six miles east of Chandlerville, Cass Co., Illinois,

commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1887. Brethren from a distance are cordially invited to attend.

GILES REEDER, Clerk.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1887, and continue three days.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

THE Pocotalico Old School or Particular Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Liberty Church, Kanawha Co., W. Va., to convene on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1887, at 10 a. m.

JEHU BYRNSIDE, Clerk.

THE Union Primitive Baptist Association have appointed to hold their next session with the Harmony Church, in Union County, Arkansas, to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri has appointed to hold its next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Hope Primitive Baptist Church, at Miami, in Saline Co., Mo., to begin on Friday before the first Saturday in October, and continue three days (Sept. 30th, Oct. 1st and 2d). Elders, brethren and sisters of our faith and order, and all others who may feel an interest in us or a desire to visit us, are cordially invited to attend.

Miami is on the Missouri River, and between the Chicago, Alton & St. Louis, and the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific railroads, about twelve miles from the former and two miles from the latter. Those coming by the former railway from the west will come on the morning train from Kansas City to Norton, on Thursday morning, Sept. 29th, and those from the east will come on the train in the evening of the same day, to the same place, where they will be cared for by brother Wm. Griffith and others. Those coming by the latter named railway will come to Miami Station, from both east and west, on Thursday morning, Thursday evening, or Friday morning; but the Friday morning train from the west will be rather late for the opening services. If any come on a late train to Miami Station, they will take lodgings there till morning, when conveyance will be provided in the town of Miami. Those who find it necessary, will inquire for Mark Whitaker, living two miles southeast of Miami; or T. A. Easton, two miles northeast of Miami; or Mrs. Chriswell or Mr. Cresap, her son-in-law, one-half mile east of Miami; or old mother Watson, living in Miami.

R. M. THOMAS.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Conference will be held this year with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 2, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days. We now expect that Elders Chick and Furlington will be with us through the meeting. All that have a mind to do so we hope will purpose to be with us through the meeting, if God will; for we shall be glad to see you. There will be teams at the depot the day before the meeting to take all who come to the place of the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

THE Spoon River Association will meet, if the Lord will, with Friendship Church, Knox Co., Ill., on Friday, September 2, 1887, three miles from Mermon, on Iowa Central, and six miles east of Abington, on the C., B. & Q. R. R. Those who love our Redeemer and the old paths are cordially invited.

I. N. VANMETER, Clerk.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1887, at Hope, in LaSalle Co., Ill., four miles southwest of Tonica, on the Illinois Central R. R., and about the same from Lostant. Those coming from the north will stop at the former place and those, from the

south at the latter place, where they will be met by friends to take care of them. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Salem Association of Regular Baptists will meet, Providence permitting, with Smyrna Church, at Bently, Hancock County, Ill., on the third Saturday in September, 1887, at ten o'clock, and continue three days.

This church is on Kehokuk Branch of the Wabash rail road. Our brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to attend.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Olive and Hurley, commencing on the 21st day of September, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m., and will continue two days.

Brethren coming from the south by way of the Ulster & Delaware R. R., will be met and cared for at Olive Branch, at 3.20 and 7.15 p. m., Tuesday, preceding the meeting, which will commence on Wednesday. Those coming from the west will be met at Shokan and Broom's Station, at 4.29 and 4.39 p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren to meet with us.

J. MATTHEWS.

THE thirty-sixth annual meeting of the Western Association will be held at Dillen, Marshall County, Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887.

WM. J. REEVES.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, will be held with the Pleasant Grove Church, one mile east of Pardee, at the house of Russel Higley, in Atchison County, Kansas, commencing on Friday before the last Saturday in September, 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming by railroad will stop at Cummingsville, on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Rail Road, where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting, two miles and a half north west. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

RUSSEL HIGLEY, Church Clerk.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., will commence on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, and continue two days. Meeting to commence at ten o'clock, not two, as published in our Minutes.

Friends coming from Baltimore can leave Calvert Street Station at 1.55 p. m., on Friday. Those from Philadelphia will leave Broad Street Station at 2.10 p. m., and come on the P., W. & B. R. R., to Perryville. Both trains arrive at Perryville in time for the train to Conowingo, Cecil Co., Md., where the friends will be met and cared for. We extend a cordial invitation, and hope to see many of our brethren and friends at that time. Ministering brethren, do not forget us.

GEORGE JENKINS.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish in the SIGNS our yearly meeting, to commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in August, at Hughesville, Loudoun Co., Va. We invite our brethren in the ministry to come and see us at Hughesville. JOSEPH FURR.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

NOTICE is hereby given that a two days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the second church of Old School Baptists of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday (7th and 8th) of September, 1887, to begin at ten o'clock a. m., where we hope to meet those who love the truth and peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Ministers especially are invited. Those coming from the north by rail will stop off at Roxbury, and from the south at Kelly's Corners, where they will be cared for and conveyed to the meeting.

J. D. HUBBELL, Pastor.

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THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

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Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1887. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

UNTO WHAT AND UNTO WHOM THE
SAINTS ARE COME.—HEB. XII. 22-24.

NUMBER SEVEN.

"AND to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

This is the last of this wonderful array of the "better things" of the gospel which the apostle has placed in contrast with the things pertaining to the law; and how striking is the contrast between the brightness and blessedness of the one and the darkness and terror of the other. This last expression of this full and glorious sentence presents that by which we are prepared to enjoy all that has been named before. By this precious blood of sprinkling we are cleansed from all sin, fully justified, made pure and holy, and so prepared and enabled to come to mount Zion; to dwell in the heavenly Jerusalem, into which nothing impure can ever enter; to hear with comfort and rejoicing the sweet messages of heavenly love sent us by the innumerable company of angels; to rejoice in the fellowship of the general assembly and church of the first-born; to stand with humble confidence, holy and unblamable, before God, the Judge of all; to enjoy sweet communion with the spirits of just men made perfect; and to rest in the finished work of Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, having redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, and being made nigh by the blood of Christ.

This is called the blood of sprinkling, as represented by the blood of calves and goats with which Moses "sprinkled the book of the law and all the people," and also "the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry." "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."—Hebrews ix. 19-22. Because death is the wages of sin, it must be represented in all ceremonial cleansing. It was represented whenever "Moses entered into the holy place made with hands, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people." But in the mediatorial work of Jesus death was actually suffered, and the wages of sin fully received by the sinner in him. He entered not into the holy place made with hands, nor with the blood of others; but "with his own blood he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," "having obtained eternal redemption for us." Those for whom

he died are dead with him.—Romans vi. 8; 2 Timothy ii. 11. "If one died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. "Dead to the law by the body of Christ."—Romans vii. 4. In the work of Moses there was a ceremonial cleansing only; "for it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." But in the work of our dear Redeemer there was and is experienced a real and actual cleansing. His blood has effectually purged his people from every transgression. Death lies between them and sin. As a deep and mighty ocean into which they have been buried with Christ in baptism, it has washed them clean from every stain. Being dead with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him. He is now our life, and we live not unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again.

Although when Jesus died the sins of all the elect were forever removed from them into a land of forgetfulness, yet the poor convicted sinner does not and cannot know this until the Lord's appointed time comes for him to experience it. Only in that way can he come to a knowledge of it. An angel from heaven could not make him know this blessed truth. They shall all be taught of the Lord, and receive from him alone the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins. When the set time is at hand he says to them, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee."—Isaiah xlv. 22. When the glad tidings of that redeeming love and mercy are borne into the dark chambers of the sin-stricken soul, what a change is felt! What light and love and joy come in and chase out the darkness and grief. Now a holy desire is experienced to come near to the Lord with praise and thanksgiving. There cannot be an experience of sins forgiven without this, for he has said, "Return unto me;" and he does not say to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye me in vain."—Isaiah xlv. 19. One testifies, saying, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."—Psalm xxvii. 8. When this amazing effect of the rich blood of Jesus is felt in the soul, then we can truly say that we desire but one thing of the Lord, and that we will seek after: that we may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.—Psalm xxvii. 4.

This blood of sprinkling is contrasted with the blood of Abel. The

blood of Abel cried unto the Lord from the ground for vengeance against his brother who slew him; but the blood of Jesus speaks from heaven with divine power and authority in behalf of his brethren, whose cruel sins pierced his sacred body. How surprised they always are when that precious blood is so wonderfully applied to remove the weight and guilt and filth of the very sins that caused it to flow from that holy, sinless body. How can it but amaze us when we, while looking for the wrath we so richly deserve, receive love and mercy and forgiveness instead? What wonder and love and thankfulness fill our hearts when we feel the black stains and agonizing stings of sin all washed away, and the conscience cleansed from all defilement, and made pure and sweet, and void of offense toward God and toward man. Truly it is a rich and lasting fragrance that is left in the heart and conscience by this blood of sprinkling.

The gospel is glad tidings to the poor, because it presents "better things" than are found in the legal dispensation. It is full of those "better things" which God has provided for us under this last dispensation, and for all who know its joyful sound.—Hebrews xi. 40. It presents "a better testament," of which Jesus is the Surety (Hebrews vii. 22); "a better covenant," ordered in all things and sure, of which he is the Mediator (Hebrews viii. 6); "founded upon better promises," which are not dependent upon our works, but are yea and amen in Jesus.—2 Corinthians i. 20. It presents the bringing in of the "better hope," which makes all things perfect (Hebrews vii. 19); the "better sacrifices," with which the heavenly things are purified (Hebrews ix. 23); the dinner of herbs with love, which is better than a stalled ox and hatred therewith (Proverbs xv. 17); the wisdom that is better than rubies, and its fruit better than gold (Prov. viii. 11, 19); the hope of obtaining "a better resurrection" (Hebrews xi. 35); the prospect of finding that "better country" which the Lord's people desire, and the assurance in themselves that they "have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Hebrews x. 24); and all these better things with which the gospel richly abounds are by and through that dear Savior "who is made so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

"Better things," indeed, are they which this precious blood of sprinkling speaketh; as love and pardon

and peace and joy and praise felt in the soul are better than guilt and terror and sins that are too heavy for us, and the curse of a broken law, and a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. O what an unspeakable blessing for a poor sinner to know these "better things" in his heart and conscience, to taste their sweetness, and enjoy their rich perfume. The precious blood of the dear Redeemer makes them all ours. What liberty it gives us. How it opens the prison doors to the poor soul, and sends us forth out of the pit wherein is no water, this blood of the everlasting covenant.—Zech. ix. 11. How easily and freely we can breathe now in this broad place where our feet are set. Where all was dark and polluted before, the fresh, sweet wind from heaven, which "bloweth where it listeth," has come in and brought purity and heavenly joy. "The Lord is unto us a place of broad rivers and streams" as soon as we feel the cleansing and reviving power of this precious blood of Jesus. What thanks we owe to him who shed his blood for us; who suffered all this unspeakable anguish that we might live; who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we might be rich. Truly for those who have heard these better things which the blood of sprinkling speaketh "it is a good thing to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely." It has healed all their wounds and sores, and brought them health and cure, and spoken peace to them, and assured their souls of the love and favor which the Lord bears unto his people, and that they shall see the good of his chosen, and rejoice in the heritage of his nation, and glory with his inheritance. It has spoken of eternal love and joy in the presence of that glorious Redeemer forever.

Through all their pilgrimage here below the saints of God have to experience more or less of affliction and groaning because of "the bondage of corruption" in which they are held. They are liable to be beset and harassed with temptations to doubt their acceptance because of the motions of sin in their members, and because they cannot do the things that they would (Galatians v. 17); and so there is much of suffering that they must endure. But may we remember that if we have ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, ever experienced once that our sins were forgiven, then we have the evidence that we have come unto the blood of sprinkling. If we have ever felt a love for the brethren because they

are those whom Jesus loves, then we have good, substantial evidence that we have passed from death unto life, and that we have come unto the blood of sprinkling. If we have ever felt a godly sorrow for sin, and a tender feeling of contrition and of repentance, then we have come unto Jesus, and to the blood of sprinkling, for he alone gives repentance unto Israel; and where he gives that, he gives also forgiveness of sins.—Acts v. 31. And may we remember that this blood of sprinkling is forever the same, and always speaks the same "better things;" and where once applied its work is forever; and that it

"Shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Aug. 10, 1887.

Ghent, Ky., June 27, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The prophet says, "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 mine hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7.

During the recent visit of Elder A. B. Francis, of Virginia, to Kentucky, I was blessed with the privilege of hearing him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, greatly to the comfort of God's dear people, and of holding sweet converse with him and other faithful brethren and sisters upon that theme of highest concern, the religion of our ever-to-be-adored Redeemer. In one of those conversations the above language of the prophet was quoted, when one present inquired what was taught by the Spirit in the words, "I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." After some conversation upon the infinitely interesting truths presented in those words, brother Francis requested me to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES my views upon that subject.

The sword of divine justice had slumbered from the time that man had violated the law and incurred its penalty, which was death, till that period in which the prophet in prophetic vision beheld the glorious Son of God coming to receive in his immaculate person that sword, and by the shedding of his blood render complete satisfaction to all the demands of the divine law. Man had sinned, and incurred the fearful penalty pronounced against sin. The law in thunder tones spoke to the sinner, saying, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." In all the vast universe there was but one relief from that fearful penalty, but one mode known to God or man, by which the sinner could be redeemed from the awful consequences of sin, and that was by the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God. Hence John the Baptist could appropriately say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." The apostle in after years said, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." God said to Adam, "In the

day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The psalmist says, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne." Then justice being one of the glorious attributes of our God, the sinner could not escape the penalty of the law unless it was fulfilled—unless one was found who possessed the right and power to make an offering commensurate with all its demands. Law and mercy are not companions. Our Lord said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Mark you, he said, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." He had not come to interpose mercy at the expense of justice. While justice and judgment were the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth went before his face; but they could not go before him till that sword had awoken from its long slumbers, and found in the Lamb of God an offering commensurate with all the demands of the law. More than five centuries intervened between the period in which the prophet beheld in prophetic vision the glorious Son of God, clothed with that body in which he received the thrusts of that sword, by which his sheep were scattered; but through that long period the purpose of God went on and on, revealing the accomplishment of all things needful to the ushering in of the new or gospel dispensation. It came not in the shedding of blood under the law, but it came when our great High Priest offered himself without spot unto God, by which he perfected forever them that are sanctified. It was then that the sword of divine justice awoke against the shepherd, who giveth his life for the sheep. Having given his life for them, justice was satisfied, and they were his, and he had an exclusive right to turn his hand upon them—upon the little ones.

Now this question suggests itself, In what manner does he turn his hand upon the little ones? The psalmist says, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Here the power and omnipresence of our God are declared. The words "right hand" are often used in the Scriptures, and are declarative of the power of God. Here that great truth is made known to the little ones, to the poor, mourning saint, when searching for the presence of his glorious Lord. He rises on the wings of the morning, yea, at the very dawn of his hope in Jesus, and he soars far away to the uttermost parts of the sea, and there he learns with the most pleasing delight that the rolling waves, storms and tempests of the mighty waters cannot overwhelm him. Yes, he learns, and with joy and rejoicing sees by faith the hand of the Lord upholding him amidst all the cares, sorrows and persecutions of earth.

When he turns his hand upon them, and holds them by the right hand of his power, they with heavenly delight break forth in the language of one anciently, "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." Ah, in after years he says to them, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." They mourn by reason of the afflictions that are upon them, the afflictions that sin hath made; but they have this glorious assurance that they shall be comforted. They then realize that they are the little ones, and with joy they seek that hand that is turned upon them. For their comfort the prophet says, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." Then surely he will turn his hand upon the little ones. Lebanon means "white incense." White is an emblem of purity. The glory of that purity shall be given to all the little ones. Then their cry will be, "Lord, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Then they in faith look unto their glorious Lord, having none other to whom they can look. He has turned his protecting hand upon them. Then they with Peter can say, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." In Jesus is that eternal life. On that dark and doleful night, when our Lord was betrayed into the hands of sinners, he offered that wondrous prayer in which he 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." Those that were given to the Son are they who are described by the prophet as the little ones. In that eternal life is embraced all things that are included in the words of the prophet, "I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." In the new and spiritual birth they are regenerated from under the law; and he, their glorious Lord, having made them free, they are free indeed. In his regenerating grace the bars of their prison house are taken down. They rejoice to learn that his mission to earth was to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. O how dark and gloomy was the prison house of the law to you, dear saints. Then you were laboring to keep all its precepts; but by the light of divine grace you learned that

by the deeds of the law no flesh living shall be justified. But when he turned his hand upon you, and said to you in sweetest accents, "My grace is sufficient for thee," you were made to rejoice in the glorious truth that his strong hand had removed all the bars of the law by which you had been held a captive, and had set you free. When going forth in that glorious freedom you learned with hearts overflowing with praise and thanksgiving that he of God was made unto you wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Then you, my dear brother, my dear sister, when realizing that his loving hand was turned upon you, with tears of joy and rejoicing coursing down your cheeks, cried out, "O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord." This language comes welling up from the hearts of all upon whom that loving hand has been turned; but that loving hand has been turned upon you, dear little one, all along your earthly pilgrimage. Your Lord hath said to you by his apostle that ye "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." In all the cares, sorrows and afflictions of earth he is ever present with you. Amidst those afflictions he says to you by his prophet, and for your comfort, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." No; that loving hand that has been turned upon you will never be shortened, for he never changes; and you rejoice to know that the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cries. Again, he says for your comfort, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Ah, dear little one, do you not often call up in memory the days when you were a supplanter? You, like Jacob, were fleeing from home and from kindred, and pillowed your head upon the cold stone; but when the Lord turned his hand upon you, and revealed to you his loving-kindness and his wondrous grace declared in his promises to you, like Jacob, you were afraid, and said, "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." When you beheld the wondrous power of God reaching from heaven to earth, then from the deep recesses of your heart came this fearful exclamation, "How dreadful is this place!" But when your name was changed from "a supplanter" to "Israel, one who prevails with God," how delightful was that place which you once called dreadful. Then you rejoiced that his loving hand had been turned upon you, for you heard him saying in assuring accents, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Surely, dear little ones, when your glorious Lord by his re-

generating grace reveals himself in and to you, it is a day of rejoicing to you. Then with gladness of heart you hear him sing, "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior." You want no other Savior but Israel's God. In him is your hope, your trust, your all. Around his wondrous name shine in bright effulgence all his glorious and never-changing attributes. When you are enabled by grace divine to hope and trust that his loving hand has been turned upon you, by that grace you behold in him all that is needful for you, both in time and eternity. Then, dear brother Francis, if you and I are numbered among those little ones, the cares, sorrows, afflictions and persecutions of men that may be visited upon us are lighter than the lightest air when compared to the never-fading glories that will be revealed in all those little ones when he comes to call from the dark caverns of the tomb his redeemed, and fashion their bodies like his own glorious resurrection body, and present them to the everlasting Father as the trophies of his victory over sin, over death, and over the grave. Then in this last wondrous scene his loving hand and sweet voice will reach you, and bring you forth clad in glorious immortality. Then you, with the disentombed millions of every land, of every age, of every clime, will join in one unbroken chain of praise, thanksgiving and adoration to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one God, that reigneth forever and ever. Amen.

H. COX.

OBLONG, ILL., June 25, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS.—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the kind mercies of the all-wise and loving Savior I desire to pen a few thoughts to the dear saints of God. I scarcely know where to begin or what to say, as my thoughts are so wandering; but I trust that the Lord will be with me and give me what to say, for all our help must come from him. Dear ones, I have many besetments, temptations, doubts and fears. I am often made to ask, Is there any one like me? Can I claim one promise? I can but say that I trust it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. I have no righteousness of my own to plead, nor anything good of myself to boast. I feel that I am a poor, weak sinner, and without God I am nothing. But I do feel to plead the righteousness of Jesus, our dear Savior, who died upon the cross of Calvary, to redeem his people. I sometimes feel that though unworthy, I have an interest in that precious blood that was shed to save sinners. The apostle says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Who does the writer have under consideration here? Is it the whole world of mankind, as is generally thought, or is it the people that Jesus came to save from their

sins? Let us look to the testimony and see, for the truth is all that will benefit us. I truly desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus. The apostle Peter is here speaking "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." We see that Peter was addressing a people that had obtained the precious faith of the apostles; the faith of God's elect; that faith that was once delivered to the saints, which we are told to contend earnestly for; the only true and living faith. The reader might ask why I speak so particularly about this faith. It is because there are many vain faiths; but this faith is but one. The writer is here speaking to a people that have obtained this faith by the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ; not by their own righteousness, or something that man can do. Do we believe that the Lord will do what he has promised to do? Certainly not one jot or tittle shall fail; all shall be fulfilled. Then the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish. He is not willing that his children should die, should lose their spiritual life or enjoyment, but is long-suffering. How kind and loving and good he is to bear with us. Can we claim a promise in our disobedience? I think not. "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." We cannot serve God and mammon at the same time. We cannot enjoy the vanities of earth and love God with all our heart, strength and mind. We cannot serve him acceptably when our mind is entangled with the pleasures and allurements of earth; but we must deny ourselves, take up the cross and follow Jesus. O what a loving Savior, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Not, as it is generally quoted, he willeth not the death of any, but rather that all should turn and live. If you will look in Second Peter, third chapter and ninth verse, you can read for yourself. O what a cheering thought, that we are not cut off in our disobedience and forever banished from his peaceful presence, but that we can come to repentance. O what a merciful Redeemer, who will hear our feeble petitions and forgive our many transgressions. O that I could be thankful enough, and could praise his dear name for what great things he has done for poor, unworthy me. I try to be thankful, but I know not how to appreciate the greatness of his love. Dear brethren and sisters, how necessary that we repent. O that the Lord may give us that repentance which the apostle was speaking of.

Blest Jesus, come and rule my heart,
And make me wholly thine,
That I may nevermore depart.
Nor grieve thy love divine.
Thus till my last expiring breath
Thy goodness I'll adore;
And when my frame dissolves in death,
My soul shall love thee more.

Dear brethren, I have written very poorly, and do not know that I have touched the subject. I never heard it talked or preached on, only by Arminians, and they always quote it wrong; but it has been on my mind for some two or three weeks. I hope some one will take up the subject and give me information. I often feel that I would love to write, but there are so many able writers, and I am such a poor writer, that when I send my poor scribbles I hardly expect to see them in print. Some of the brethren and sisters have asked me at different times to write often. If I could write like some of our dear sisters, I would write more frequently. I have written as best I could. I submit this to your better judgment, praying that the Lord will be with you in all the changing scenes of this inconstant life, and guide you to his praise, for his dear name's sake. I will continue the subject in the future, if the Lord will.

MARY A. BIGGS.

OBLONG, ILL., Nov. 28, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The impression of my mind is, by your permission, to pen a few thoughts to the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also by request of dear ones. I feel my weakness and inability to write; for in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. Without God I am nothing, yea, less than nothing; for I have long since learned there is no strength in the flesh. In time of need it hath failed me, so I have no confidence in the flesh; but my trust and my confidence, if I am not deceived, is in Jesus; and should I write anything of interest, or worthy of notice, it will be because I am led by the Spirit of God, and directed by him who has all power both in heaven and in earth. Brethren and sisters, pray for me, that all I do or say may be in honor to his great name.

My mind is still on the same subject, or about the same, that I wrote on before, which has not been published. I suppose it was on account of my inability to do the subject justice, as the brethren know best what is fit for publication.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He has promised to come the second time, without sin unto salvation, to take his jewels or redeemed children home, that where he is there they may be also. Do we believe him, or do we think he has already come, and that the resurrection is already past, which is the conclusion of some? We learn that in the latter days deceivers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Little children, let no man deceive you. Do not be led away from the truth, into error, by their deception and cunning craftiness; but trust God for his grace, believe in Jesus, confide in the precious promises he has made, be faithful, be steadfast, unmovable, always

abounding in the work of the Lord. Are we looking for him to come? Certainly we are. That day shall come, and the things of earth shall be dissolved; the heavens shall pass away, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day. Then surely that day will come. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Just as he has promised, so it will be to a jot and tittle. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." In view of all these things, what manner of creatures ought we to be? Surely we should love one another with a pure heart fervently, and love God supremely, live in peace, walk worthy of the vocation wherein we are called, let brotherly love continue, and endeavor to know the truth as it is in Jesus; for the truth is all that will benefit us any. There is great comfort and consolation to the dear children of God in believing, for they know that his word cannot be changed, and that his promises shall never fail. He says, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "My grace is sufficient for thee." "Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." O, dear ones, do we love his truth and confide in his promises? In sweet meditation he always is near. He has said that his rod and staff shall comfort us, and even in death he will be with us, that we may fear no evil. Dear ones, have we faith in these precious promises? Do you remember the promise made to Abraham, and the faith that he had, with many others? We do not forget the promise of God's dear anointed Son, the promised Messiah, that the prophets spoke of long before he made his advent into the world; and we see that just according to the appointed time of the Father he made his appearance into the world, a sin-bearing Savior; and we see all is being fulfilled. Then account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you. "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness; but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; to whom be glory both now and forever. Amen."

"Touched by his dying love, I melted into grief;
Swift on the wings of love he moved and brought relief."

I will now mention something of the

interest and welfare of Zion in our country; also my attendance at the different associations this fall. I first attended Eel River, Otter Creek Church, Park Co., Ind., had a good meeting, quite a large attendance. Then I attended Kaskaskia, held with the Liberty Church, Fayette Co., Ill., had good preaching, and quite a large congregation. Then I attended the Big Spring, held with Hickory Creek Church, Jasper Co., Ill. Then I attended Wabash District, held with Concord Church, Clark Co., Ill., had a very large attendance, quite a number of preachers, had plenty of good preaching, and good order, and all well cared for. Peace and fellowship seemed to abound in all. It was a feast to my poor, hungry soul. Peace and prosperity abound among us here in our country, for which we feel grateful to the blessed Giver.

MARY A. BIGGS.

WASHINGTON C. H., Ohio, July 17, 1887.

ELD. WM. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Months have passed since your precious letter came to me as a cup of cold water to a thirsty traveler, full of words of comfort and cheer for both dear sister Mary and myself. We were glad indeed for a word from you. Knowing that your time is so much taken up in your editorial labors, we had not hoped for a special note; but so it is. We are both made to look up from our tiresome and thorny pathway by a sound which is as music to our ears—the united voices of loved ones who hold us in kind remembrance; and when we realize the refreshing influence of the cheering notes upon our almost despairing spirits, how can we doubt that they come from heaven, reminding us of the sweet promises of the Lord to his people, his afflicted people? for if we are not poor and afflicted, then the promises are not to us. When your letter was received I felt I could not keep silent long, and would reply as soon as I saw sister Mary. But, dear brother, ere I saw her a storm struck this poor vessel, which seemed to so benumb it that I felt I never could again venture to pen anything to be read by those I hold so dear, as coming from one professing godliness; for surely if our earthly walk is such as to bring reproach upon you as men and women, then how dare we venture to use our voices as children of the heavenly King. Many months passed before I had courage to attempt a reply to any of my loved correspondents. I hope they will bear with me. I cannot express the comfort and enjoyment I experience in reading cheering words from this one and that one, from all parts of our country; and what makes it sweeter still, it is in one voice and language. I almost fail to realize that it is from different bodies. Surely it is one body, that of Christ, of which he is the Head. So also I find it in reading our paper, the SIGNS. Sometimes I read the first letter, and am tempted to stop, lest the poor vessel overflow; but I

continue till all is read. Then I have to say, It is all one letter, written by one body, the body of Christ. When there is unity, how pleasant it is. What a blessing to have such a medium of correspondence. I appreciate our paper very much, and also your kindness and forbearance with me. I hope to be able to pay you ere long. I cannot think of giving it up. Often in reading letters from brethren and sisters, especially if their yoke is bowing their heads to the earth, I feel I cannot refrain from casting in my mite; but I choose rather to conceal myself by private correspondence; and my time and means are so limited that I cannot write to all with whom I feel to daily dwell. My letters in print do not look to me as do letters written by others. If I venture to read my letters before mailing them, I am tempted to burn them. But there is a voice which will not let me rest; and though I abhor them, there is relief in casting them upon the water, and looking up with the conscientious feeling that I have done what I could. Those words, "She hath done what she could," must have been consoling to Mary, when her soul was in her devotion to her Lord and Master, though she was accused of being lazy and wasteful. I have often felt the force of the Savior's words, both in answer to Martha and those who wished to economize. In the first case, I often find in my extremity such a beseeching and longing to learn more of the spiritual, to the forgetting of the temporal, that I feel there is reason for criticism by those whom I know to be careful and prudent in temporal things. I believe I desire to be faithful, but here is my weakness. I am not my own keeper. In the latter case, in the anointing of our Lord with oil, how I feel to bow my head in shame. How can I approach the throne of his majesty? Yet where else can I go? He hath the words of eternal life. He has led me about and instructed me. Often when clouds and darkness surround me, his voice breaks through that dreadful darkness, bidding me "Fear not, thou worm." "I have redeemed thee: thou art mine." And when the tempest is upon the deep, and the billows roll, dashing the frail vessel till all seems lost, he comes walking upon the waters of that same deep, saying, "It is I, be not afraid." Then when he is my hope, my salvation, both in this world and the eternal world, why shall I not bow my head and tell of these things in my weak and stammering way? Can I do more? Indeed it seems a necessity that I do this, for I have no rest from an impression to tell my brethren what great things the Lord has done for me. And yet when I look within, I shrink with abhorrence, and fear lest I bring reproach on the cause I hope I love. But I find in your letter to me an evidence of this same feeling of infirmity. While you daily, by your words, comfort thousands, in attempting to write to one so insignificant as myself you falter and fear.

Yet in that same letter you bring to the remembrance of us poor, afflicted ones, that there is succor; that the Captain of our salvation is the one Physician, who knows our ails and wants, and is even touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for he himself was made perfect through suffering. These are precious words to the weak and trembling, "Is touched with the feeling of our infirmities." How very near it brings the patient and physician, the bride to the husband. Yes, my dear brother, I am often tempted to doubt the reality of a joyful experience, and never have I endured more fiery trials in this way than of late. I have almost lost sight of the sun, my sky has been dark and gloomy, ominous clouds overspreading, threatening the overthrow of all my former hopes. I am left to grope my way in darkness, and almost despair. Surely I must be in a strange land.

I do hope that the dear ones who have been so mindful of me, and have ministered unto me in my weariness and weakness, being touched with the feeling of my infirmity, may feel that my seeming neglect of them was not that they were forgotten, for they are ever present in my mind. If it were not that I feel to love and dwell with the brethren, I would be desolate indeed; but we have this test to apply, when we lose sight of all others, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Even then the question often comes to me, Where is the proof of this love for them? I can only answer that my desire is with them. The Lord must provide the ability to serve them. I feel to be a burden to the church rather than a help. But the church as a family have large and small, weak and strong members in it, so that some are necessarily objects of care; but when we come down to our real standing, we feel this is more than we should expect, unworthy to dwell there. Notwithstanding all this, I have no desire to withdraw, but with Ruth feel to say, "Entreat me not to leave thee;" but to grant me a humble place among the people of my choice.

I am tiring your patience, but must yet tell you and the brethren generally, if you should see fit to publish this, that Elder Biggs and I went to visit our beloved and afflicted sister, Mary Parker, two weeks ago. To describe her sufferings since she last wrote would be impossible. Since the heated season began it is constant, threatening suffocation. The dropsy trouble is the cause, as well as the heat. While her face looks full, her skin clear, and when feverish a flush is on her cheeks, giving her a youthful, childlike appearance, and when provoked to a smile she looks much like she did before her sickness; but O that terrible, constant suffering of body as well as mind. No human help can reach her, not even to pity as she deserves. But there is One who abides very near her, who is her Savior, and of him she desired most to speak while we were there.

How it silences our murmurings when we behold her suffering and patience. On Sunday before we were there she had a severe chill and fever, and her life was despaired of, and for days after she suffered intensely from heat and suffocation. The water about her heart causes these attacks. When the dear brethren and sisters who have written such comforting and edifying letters read of her terrible suffering they can but feel not only to forgive, but to breathe a petition in her behalf, knowing the cheering and comforting influence of these blessed epistles of love, sympathy and sweet fellowship on her drooping spirits. I hope and desire those who feel so impressed will continue to serve her in any way they may feel inclined. Sister Mattie Derr sent her one of sister Swartout's books. I took it over when I went. She was very much pleased to receive it. She often tells me that anything coming from the dear ones of the household of faith is more precious to her.

I have written more lengthily than I expected. If you see fit, publish this, which to me seems a miserable scribble. I submit it to your judgment. I feel to ask those who have written me, though months have elapsed, to still bear with me, for I prize their correspondence too highly to forget them. You have another patron in our place, in the person of sister Caroline Leach. She is my father's sister, is a widow, and a zealous Baptist. She and her daughter came here in May, and if satisfied will live here for the future, as they were deprived of church privileges where they were.

Your sister in affliction and hope,
CORDIE A. YEOMAN.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., August 8, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—A few days since I received a letter from an unknown correspondent, whose letter was postmarked "Lexington, Ky.," asking me two questions, and desiring me to reply through the SIGNS. The handwriting I judge to be that of a lady; and I will say that, if I knew the name, I should much prefer writing a reply by private letter, as I have been filling up a large place in the SIGNS for the past two or three years.

The first question is, "Do you think all kinds of sins that a man may commit can be forgiven if he is a right penitent, especially murder?" The second question is, "Do you think it right for persons to unite with a church who cannot control their sins?" Now, since I have not the name of the writer, I will ask a space in the SIGNS to reply to her.

I might reply to the first question by referring to 1 John i. 7: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." This would seem to settle the matter that there is no sin so vile that the blood of Christ cannot wash it away; but in addition, the question calls up two or three suggestions that I will allude to. The writer of the question adds to it the adjunct, "If he is a right penitent;" and I suppose beyond a

doubt she means a true or sincere penitent. Now I would say that if any one is a true penitent, it is because Jesus has given that repentance; and if he gives repentance, he also gives the forgiveness of sins, according to Peter's testimony in Acts v. 31. No one ever did or ever can repent of sins except Jesus gives repentance; and if he gives repentance it is an evidence of his love and grace to the recipient.

But I suppose the real question in the mind of my correspondent is whether God will ever have mercy upon a murderer, for instance, so as to ever save that one, or bestow upon him repentance or any heavenly gift; and in reply to this I will suggest a few thoughts. And first, if there is no mercy or salvation for a murderer, then there can be no hope for any of us; for according to Bible testimony we are all murderers. God looks at the heart. The outward act only exhibits the inward nature. A man who takes the life of his fellow-man is no worse a man afterward than before. The act has only told us what the man is; God knew before. Have any of us ever wished that any other person were dead, or removed out of our way? That was murder in the spirit of our hearts; and John tells us that "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."—1 John iii. 15. This only says that he hath not now this life abiding in him, but does not say that he may never have. Who among us can say that we have never hated anybody? Therefore if any one of us has ever been forgiven, a murderer has been forgiven. While dwelling here I desire to refer to another thing that I have often heard—a mistake that is often made. I have heard it said that no self-murderer (meaning no suicide) hath eternal life abiding in him; but it is not so said in the text, nor is it said anywhere in the Bible. It is simply, "no murderer."

But if we limit our inquiry to those who have committed murder or adultery, or any other heinous sin against God and wrong against man, even here we are not left in the dark. In the Scriptures we have instances where such men have been saved. Surely if any man was ever a murderer, Saul of Tarsus deserved that title; and his was the worst kind of murder, the killing without provocation of the meek and lowly and loving ones of the earth. But if this be thought to hardly come under the head of what we generally call murder, we need only to look at David, who planned the death of Uriah, and was as absolutely guilty of his death as though with his own hand he had plunged a knife to his heart; and the occasion of this sin was still another sin, adultery. Witness also the thief on the cross, who was a highway robber, and no doubt a murderer as well. He was penitent, and was forgiven. Paul, after speaking of divers great sins, says to his brethren, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye

are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."—1 Cor. vi. 11. It surely seems to me that these quotations and reflections need not be enlarged upon to prove that murderers are and can be saved, or those who may have committed any other grievous sin. All sin betrays a depraved nature. The least drop of water that flows from a muddy fountain is as muddy as is the whole volume of water; and the least as well as the greatest quantity proves the source to be foul. We are expressly told that before God there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of his glory.—Rom. iii. 22, 23. Perhaps the friend who wrote to me proposing this question had in mind 1 John v. 16, 17, where indeed the apostle seems to make a distinction in the sins of the people. Whatever this last referred to text may mean, it certainly does not contradict the Scriptures already referred to, nor the principles of truth taught by them. I will just say, however, that while I would not venture to speak positively about a text concerning which many men much wiser than I have differed, yet it has seemed to me of late as though the apostle here means that there is a sin which would prove that he who was guilty of it was not a child of God; and for this we are not told to pray. On the other hand, there are sins of which a man may be guilty, and still we may feel confident that he is a child of God, and for him we can pray. For instance, if a man is abiding in a state of hatred of his brethren, it is manifest that he is not born of God, and is yet dead in his sins. This would be a sin unto death. I present this view very diffidently, and yet it seems to me more in harmony with the word generally than any other that I have seen.

The second question is, "Do you think it right for persons to unite with the church who cannot control their sins?" I would be very glad could I know more definitely just what the writer meant by this question. Was the question concerning other people who may have come into the church, and who still are not walking as they should? or was it with reference to her own self that this question was asked? And what sins are meant? I will, however, just suggest a few things that may help our friend's mind in this matter. And first, I will say that no one ever arrives at perfection in this life; all of us must confess, "The good that I would, I do not; and the evil that I would not, that I do." Often does the law of sin in our members lead us into captivity. I can only say that if I had waited until I could control my sins I should never have been numbered with the church of God by open profession; and from what I know of the church of Christ, if any one should come to them and say, "I can now control my sins, and therefore want to come in among you," the church would be constrained to tell them to wait, and to say, "It is not so with us." If they must wait till they can control their sins, how long a trial or

probation must be given them before we can be sure in this matter? The believer hates his sins, and fights against them, and strives to put off the old man with his deeds; but he learns that he has no might against his sins. God must keep him and control his sins, or he will not be kept. I would not think it right for a profane swearer or thief or liar or adulterer, who still went on in his sin, to come into the church, for such a course would prove him to be dead in his sins; but if he is sorry and ashamed for his sins, it shows the work of the Lord in his heart. If the writer is troubled because she cannot lay aside bad habits, or sins, I am glad; and if this is keeping her from the church, I would say, Be encouraged, for your brethren in Christ all feel the same trouble that troubles you. No rule can be laid down beforehand; but each one who comes to the church must be judged for himself or herself.

I hope that I have written here nothing amiss. If published, may God make it a blessing to some one.

I remain your brother in hope of life through Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

PANOLA, Ga., June 14, 1887.

MISS MINNIE HESS—BELOVED SISTER IN CHRIST:—I was surprised as well as comforted when I received the June first number of the SIGNS and read a letter from you, addressed to me. I thank you for the words of comfort you spoke concerning my poor letter in the SIGNS. Ever since I joined the Old School Baptists, which has been nearly five years, I have been trying to write occasionally for our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, amid many crosses. A sense of my inability, and a feeling of my unworthiness, together with other obstacles, have made it quite a cross to me; but yet I cannot get rid of the desire I have to communicate with the little children of my dear Father's family; and when I have impressions to write, I have no peace of mind until I write. Sister dear, how thankful we ought to be for our medium of correspondence, the SIGNS. Though we are separated, a long distance from each other, we have a fervent love and an inward desire to speak to each other; and if we cannot speak face to face, we can speak through the SIGNS from heart to heart in christian love and fellowship. And, my sister, what can it be but the Spirit of the Lord (which is love) that causes that desire? I have derived a great deal of comfort from reading the many sweet and precious communications from the dear scattered ones, who are very dear to me, although they are entire strangers to me; and even their private letters have been sweetly comforting to me. You spoke of your earthly sorrows. It seems that you have had to drink deeply of the cup of sorrow; but remember that the Savior drank the cup to the very dregs. It seems that four times you have had the bitter cup pressed to your lips, in having to give up

your dearly loved ones. O how sad to see our dear ones laid beneath the sod, never more to see their faces, never again to hear their kind voices, nor welcome their sweet smiles. But again, remember that the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Although your loved ones are gone, they have only left the thorny path below, to walk the golden streets above. Then why should you grieve, or mourn their departure, when you have the assurance that your loss is their eternal gain? O may the Lord give you grace to sustain you in all your trials, to enable you to cheerfully submit to every dispensation of his holy and divine will, ever remembering that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. We sometimes are inclined to murmur at his dealings with us, when he lays the rod upon us. But, my sister, every trouble laid upon us is for our own good, though at the time it may seem grievous to us and hard to bear. How often have we been brought, as we hope, to the Savior's feet by some deep and heart-rending trouble falling upon us. The Savior was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Then let us be willing to suffer for his sake, and not murmur at our lot, no matter how rough and rugged may be our way. The Savior emphatically says, "In the world ye shall [not may] have tribulation;" and it is sure to come in some form or other to the children of God. To you it comes in a mental form; to me it comes in bodily sufferings; to a neighbor, brother or sister it may come in some other form, for he says we shall have it. How soul-comforting to know that the Lord knows all our sufferings and sorrows; and what soul-cheering words to the weary and heavy laden pilgrim when he says, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer." In all your afflictions he was afflicted. In love and pity he redeemed the children of God, and the angel of his presence will save them in every trial. Then be of good cheer, for he has said he will not leave you comfortless; and his promises are sure; he changes not. His ways are just and true; his tender love is boundless, and his mercy endureth forever. Then let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy in every time of need. He will hear the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer. He forgetteth not the cry of the humble. He is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and will save such as are of a contrite spirit. His anger endureth but for a moment. In his favor is life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. I have been tossed up and down upon the billows of life's tempestuous ocean. Sometimes it seemed as if the billows would overwhelm me; but when that "still, small voice" speaks, "Peace, be still," there is a calm, a sure retreat; and what a sweet rest we then find. How secure we feel when in the arms of his tender love. We then feel like singing,

"Tis a heaven below
My Redeemer to know."

My desire is to be humble all the time; but I am so forgetful of his love, and so unthankful for the blessings he is constantly bestowing upon me.

"So far from God I seem to lie,
Which often makes me weep and cry."

I sometimes am on the mountain top, sometimes am low in the valley of darkness, doubt and despair, sometimes get so low that everything, music, birds and flowers, lose their sweetness to me. I try to sing, but there seems to be no melody in my heart to the Lord. I try to pray, but Satan meets me there, and frights my soul away. But when the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings, what a sweet change is realized, the birds sing sweetly, music is sweet to mine ear, and everything has a most lovely appearance, and I am filled with love and praise to the dear Redeemer. How pleasant to have such seasons of rejoicing, when we have nothing to wish or to fear. When we are shut up in darkness, we go mourning all the day long. My winters are long, O so long; but when we feel the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, then December is as pleasant as May. The christian is a stranger in this world, seeking for and journeying to a heavenly home. But it is indeed pleasant to have company on this tedious journey. Such we find are the poor in spirit. My sister, you spoke of your weakness and ignorance. Your letter to me was good and comforting. There is, no doubt, just as much grace in the heart of a feeble writer as there is in the more gifted writers; and however wise a child of God may be, and exalted in the church or world, they are as dependent upon the Spirit as the most lowly and ignorant. I feel to be one of the poorest and weakest of the flock, if one at all, yet I hope that I have been with Jesus and learned of him. My dear sister, I have almost resolved to never again write for the SIGNS; but I am again trying to write. If my heart deceives me not, my motive in writing this letter is to try to comfort you; and now, my sister, if you should derive any comfort from anything in this, my poor letter, give God the praise and not me, for I did not write it within myself. When left to myself I cannot write, neither can I have a pure thought or right conception of anything; for my thoughts are evil continually. You spoke of sister Kate Swartout. She is one among the brightest jewels of the dear Master's crown. She is very gifted in spiritual things. I have derived much comfort from the private letters I have received from her. I should like so much to have the pleasure of reading her book, "Life's Journey and Lessons by the Way." I presume it will be interesting, instructive and comforting to the child of God. It has a beautiful title. "Life's Journey" has been a tedious one with me, and I think I have learned many lessons by the way. I so much enjoyed the letter of

our dear sister, Mary Parker, in the May first number of the SIGNS, on the words, "Be ye angry and sin not," &c. There are none, I suppose, that have never felt the bitter pang of being angry. Often, often, I have had to grievously repent of something said or done in an angry passion; and, my sister, I feel it a very great blessing to be brought low, to confess my faults to the brethren and sisters. If I were to attempt to plead innocent before them, I would be standing guilty before my Judge, who is the searcher of hearts. We want to say to sisters A. Frankie McNaughten and Mattie V. Thomas, that we would like to read a letter from them through the SIGNS.

For fear my letter will be more lengthy than interesting, I will close. That the Lord may grant you such blessings as will be for your own good, and enable you to bear your afflictions with patience, is the sincere desire of one who wishes you well.

Your sister in affliction,

A. L. DULIN.

RIMER, Ohio, July 2, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The following is a letter from brother Newton Peters, which I have copied, and send to you for publication in the SIGNS, if you see proper and have space. If not, all will be right.

Yours in christian love,

URIAH TRUMBO.

PORTLAND, Ind., May 25, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER TRUMBO:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be may address you. I have many times thought of you since I saw you at our association, and of the last words you said to me when we separated at that, to me, very pleasant association. The request you made has many times come to my mind, and as a partial apology to you I would say that for some time past I have felt inclined to gratify those I believe to be God's people. I have only wished I could do so. I feel sometimes as though I would like to administer to their earthly wants, for I know that I am not able to administer to their spiritual wants. I want to be a servant in the things I am capable of, but I could not see why you should request me to write a letter to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I hope you will not think I wish to disregard your request by taking this course; for, dear brother, I regard the writings in the SIGNS as matter specially written for the comfort and edifying of the children of God, and by those who are instructed by the unerring counsel of God. When I look upon myself I can find nothing but what I dislike, and do not wish to offer such imperfections to those whom I esteem as taught of the Lord. If you recollect, my answer to you was that I had written a letter previous to your request, for publication, which if published you could read; but in the judgment of the brethren Beebe it has not been published, for which I do not know how

to honor the brethren Beebe enough for their wise judgment when I come to consider the responsibility resting upon them, having in trust the medium in which those that God has instructed declare the doctrine understood only by inspiration, and penned by those whom he has given a manifestation of the Spirit, for the perfecting of the body. Dear brother, I have learned that your health is very much impaired; that it is with much fatigue and weariness you labor, both in ministering to the saints of God and in supporting your family; but I hope and trust that the Lord may guide you by his unalterable will, and that your labor may be performed with a light heart. I understand that the eyes of the Lord are ever over his people, and that he will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way for their escape. If the saint's lot seems hard, it is to be remembered that the Lord and Master was tempted in all points like unto his brethren; which temptation was not laid upon him because of his sins, but because of the transgressions of those that were his enemies, lovers of wickedness, who deserved the death that was laid upon him, by which death they were liberated. And now who is able to ascribe praise that is in any way worthy of this deliverance? Dear brother, I am many times not able to realize the beauty of the truth contained in the Scriptures, especially in the third chapter of Romans, where Paul so pointedly and positively sets forth that there are none that doeth good; that they all have gone out of the way. Everything that was wicked he declared they were guilty of. How then could any one have a hope based upon natural purity? Even the heirs of salvation cannot have a ray of hope in anything that pertains to man, or any merit seemingly due to good men; for Paul tells them of their total depravity in a law sense, and that they were guilty of all that was possible for mankind to be guilty of. Then he turns and tells us where the hope of the children of God rests, and says, "For what the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." We can begin to see a purpose, which those that had the law were ignorant of. They thought the law was given that they might have life by the righteousness which was of the law; but when it begins to be manifest to them that by the law is the knowledge of sin, and that the law was added because of transgressions, and that it entered that the offense might abound, they must see that righteousness could not be by the law. It was then learned that the law could not make the comers thereunto perfect; for the law condemned, and by it was the knowledge of sin. Paul summed up the wickedness of both Jew and Gentile, and said, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. But now the righteousness of God without the law

is manifest." A new theme is brought forth, one which they, before Paul had declared it to them, were ignorant of, although it was witnessed by the law and the prophets. The righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ is unto all and upon all that believe. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." No doubt it was surprising to both Jew and Gentile for Paul to declare Christ's righteousness, "that he might be the justifier of him that believeth." Then Paul says, "Boasting is excluded;" not by works, but by the law of faith. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised. So it is here made known to the children of God that after they have been enabled to view themselves as worthy of death, and mourn because of their sins, Christ only can be just in the justifying of them that believe. Paul told the Ephesian brethren that they had been quickened, who were dead in sins, and had in times past walked according to the course of this world. He shows that they were an erring people. But while they were in that condition, entirely unworthy of the least of God's favors, he declares God's goodness toward his disobedient children, and says, "But God, who is rich in mercy." Dear brother, our God is rich in mercy; and for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, he hath quickened us together with Christ. Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." When we were enemies, and without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Yea, it was in due time, when hope was gone. God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, having saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not taking into consideration our works, but his wonderful love and mercy, which was given us in Christ before the world began. Therefore blessed are they to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works; being saved by grace, through faith, and not of themselves, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

Brother Trumbo, it seems I have hardly begun this glorious subject, but you will tire of reading a thing you know so much better than I can write it. I hope this will be satisfactory, without intruding upon the brethren Beebe; for matter better calculated to comfort and edify the readers of the SIGNS than anything

I could write should be printed, for the welfare of the brotherhood. The true shepherds of Zion alone can feed the flock.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

NEWTON PETERS.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN—With my remittance I desire to send a few lines for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if they are considered worthy of a place in your valuable paper. First, I would express my high appreciation of the many able communications and editorials with which it comes laden, and also the many experiences of the dear saints that come with such cheering effect to the poor, doubting members of the family. I fully approve your manner of controlling your paper, in disallowing space for controverting each other's views upon mooted questions, upon which the Baptists have differed as far back as our memory extends. Such discussions in public can only have the effect to alienate, instead of uniting, the hearts and feelings of the brethren; to weaken, instead of strengthening, the hopes and hearts of the little ones. I see no wrong in brethren giving their views upon any text of Scripture that may be upon their minds; but for a brother to publicly criticise and controvert another's views, when we may not understand them correctly, would certainly fail to give that food and nourishment that the dear, little lambs stand so much in need of. There is a doctrine that I believe the whole family of God understand alike, and that is the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. All feel their own inability to save themselves. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children," says the prophet. And saith the Lord, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." And says the apostle, "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." So it is by the writing of the law in the hearts of God's children that they are made to feel and know that they are poor, condemned sinners before God. Yes, that law gives a knowledge of sin that they had not been able to obtain through man's teaching. It is through that teaching that they learn the exceeding sinfulness of sin. It destroys all their confidence in themselves or in man. It is then that they are made to cry for mercy, "Lord, help, or I perish." The writer of this well remembers that about thirty-two years ago he was made to feel and see that he was a poor, condemned sinner before the righteous law of God, entirely unable to extricate himself from this awful dilemma into which sin and transgression had placed him; unable to do anything that would give relief, or see any way of escape from deserved wrath. He was made to mourn, and to implore for mercy, as he thought, of an angry God; and he has been a mourner ever since. But in the good Lord's time that feeling

of condemnation was removed in a mysterious way, and hope was given in return. But sometimes it seems like it is hoping almost against hope, darkness gathers so densely along his pathway. Many doubts and fears confront him, but all his experience serves to strengthen him in the faith that it is not in man to direct his steps, nor to deliver himself from the trials and temptations of the world and the flesh; but deliverance is of the Lord. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever."

Now, in conclusion, may I not say to the brethren, labor for the things that make for peace, and let brotherly love continue? There may seem to be some differences upon some of the more mysterious portions of the gospel that cannot be reached and comprehended by the natural mind, such as the doctrine of the resurrection of the saints, a doctrine as fully taught in the revealed Scriptures as a fact can be presented by language used. We have many scriptural declarations that are positive, and are certainly satisfactory to every child of God who has the mind of Christ; though nothing of this mystery can be understood by mortals, only as revealed to them personally by the Spirit and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus tells us that he is the resurrection and the life; and in contradistinction to the children of this world and the children of God, he says, "The children of this world marry and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 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. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; for he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him." And Paul says, "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised;" and, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." And another apostle could say, while acknowledging the mystery of this sublime doctrine, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Certainly none can have doubts of a glorious resurrection of all God's children; and to see our blessed Savior and be like him will be a full consummation of all our hopes, and an end of all our fears, doubts and turmoils of life. O glorious hope! Can we not all say with the psalmist, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness?"

Now, brethren, I send this for your disposal, as you think best.

With love to all the brethren, in hope of eternal life,

W. G. MATHENY.

Towson, Md., July 31, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I often think of you all, and contemplate the precious seasons I have had when meeting some of you. But when I look into my poor, sinful heart, and see how poor and helpless I feel to be, I hope I esteem it a blessing to have at times a hope that I have a hope in the blood of Christ. I will try to pen a few thoughts, and if you see in them anything of comfort to a poor child of God, you can give them a place in the SIGNS, if they meet with your approval.

While the church bells are ringing, calling people together for worship, my mind contemplates the subject of what it is to worship God. My mind has been led to the expression found in 1 Chronicles xvi. 29, which reads, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Under the old dispensation the worship of God was by offerings and observances of the Mosaic law, which called for the slaying of beasts, and images set up, made by the hands of man; and a strict observance of the ten commandments had to be observed, and especially the keeping of the sabbath day. "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."—Joshua xxiv. 14, 15. There is one thing to be remembered in this expression, and that is, Joshua is speaking of their gods. While they could serve their gods with their natural minds, it required a spiritual mind to serve the God whom Joshua worshiped. And while these Shechemites and Amorites had different forms of gods, we find the same worship to-day among the natural professors, teaching for doctrines the commands of men; teaching their children that observing certain rights and rituals will bring about the salvation of their souls. But David said, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name." To whom is he speaking? Why, to that class who have been brought out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and whose feet have been set upon a rock, and their goings have been established. None but the redeemed can ever give glory to this great King. All the human inventions of this enlightened age, with powerful organs and musical talent, cannot praise him, unless Christ has been revealed to the poor and lost sinner. And yet how often does the poor child of God feel to be disappointed when going to his house for worship. Well do we know that what is being said is the truth; but while the minister is speaking, our mind is running after the things

of this world, and we try in our weak way to fasten it upon what is being said; but alas! all our efforts are in vain, and we find that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. But the people of God are kept by hope, and trusting that there are times when they feel like giving God all the glory.

"Bring an offering, and come before him." What shall we bring? A missionary box full of money, each trying to bring more than some one else, to get a nice prize? Shall we come with some human invention, thinking that this will help to worship God? I answer, No; but the psalmist says, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Well has the poet defined it, saying,

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

When the poor child of God looks into his heart, and finds that it is corrupt, and feels so many evil thoughts and tempers arise, and is made to mourn over his misgivings, is this the kind of heart he wants? Yes, dear child of God, this is the broken heart, a heart of flesh, a heart that has feeling.

"And worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." O what a sweet season is it when we can worship him in beauty; when our minds are made to dwell upon his goodness and his loving-kindness to his chosen people. This people he has formed for himself, and has revealed things unto them which the world knows nothing of. It is defined as a secret. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." His people love him, because he first loved them. They do not worship him from a natural feeling of shunning the torments of perdition, but from a feeling of love wrought in them by the Holy Spirit. The world looks upon the saints as a do-nothing people, and say that if they believed as we do they would take their fill of sin, and go on doing as they please. Whenever we hear one speaking thus we may conclude that they are not yet full of sin; but to the poor child of God this sin is what keeps him from worshiping God at times to the enjoyment of the spiritual blessing.

I find I must now close, as I have written much more than I expected to when I began.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. N. HENDERSON.

ORLANDO, Va., July 22, 1887.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have thought I would write you and the dear people of God some of my experience. About thirty years ago I was deeply and seriously impressed with a sense of my sinfulness and my unworthiness; also I felt a great desire to experience the salvation of my soul. While thus concerned, the Methodists had a revival meeting in our neighborhood, and I thought that was the time for me to get religion. They all looked happy to me, and I thought surely they had

religion. I joined the Methodists, thinking I was converted, and remained with them two years, at which time I was married, my husband being a member of the New School Baptists. I thought it would be best for us to belong to the same church, so I went with him to his church, where we could commune together. There we both remained until 1878. At that date my husband and myself became dissatisfied and withdrew from them. But four years previous to the time that my husband withdrew from them, I was sorely distressed and found that I was not converted. One night, awhile before day, I felt a change while lying upon my bed, which enabled me to rejoice and praise my God as I never before had. I felt that a new song was put into my mouth, even praise unto God. I felt that I could praise God in the highest. I then felt that it was the dealings of God with me, and that I could pray and praise my God. With this I felt a burning desire in my heart, and prayed that the Lord would direct my mind to the church that I should go with. My mind was directed to the Old School Baptists, and about two years ago my mind was made up to go with them. While at the meeting I would think I would go with them; but something would keep me back. It was a hard trial for me to go before the church, for I had never made my request known to my husband, and he being a member of another order of Baptists, might object to my going with you. When I went before the church, on Saturday preceding the first Sunday in May, I could not tell the dear brethren what I desired to; but, blessed be God, I was received and baptized. Since that time my mind has been perfectly satisfied in regard to the course I have pursued, and I feel to say that I have pursued this way because I believe the Lord has led me thus.

GURLE H. LOW.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Ontario, to the associations with whom she corresponds, wishes grace, mercy and peace unto you from our Lord Jesus Christ.

WE received your corresponding messengers, and their preaching was acceptably received. Our meeting was harmonious, and we are united in the faith. Time brings changes amongst us. A new generation of men has within the last thirty years arisen, and occupy the places in the church that our fathers filled, who we hope are now resting from their labors. Dear brethren, be steadfast, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

By order of the church.

WM. POLLARD, Mod.

D. T. McCOLL, Clerk.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS,

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1887.

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

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY NO EXCUSE FOR SIN.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Please give your views on John xii. 24, and oblige
Your brother in hope,

E. M. HOLLINGSWORTH.

WOODLAND, Cal., June 20, 1887.

REPLY.

"VERILY, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."—John xii. 24.

It is with more than ordinary reluctance that we approach the consideration of this text, as it is one on which many very able and highly esteemed brethren have written, presenting different applications of the illustration herein used by our Lord. Yet it does not seem proper to refuse such light as may have been given us, when our views are called for. Therefore, with such ability as may be afforded us, we submit these remarks to the consideration of our inquiring brother, wishing them to be tried by the inspired record, and received only so far as they may be found consistent with that only authorized standard of truth.

The deeply solemn manner in which this verse is introduced shows the importance of the truth illustrated in this allusion to the familiar process of the germination of a corn (that is, a grain) of wheat. It should also be remembered that all this glorious truth is revealed for the profit of the subjects of his redeeming grace. They receive the benefit of this instruction here in time, for they will have no need of the information after they awake with the likeness of their Lord in ultimate glory. It was to instruct those to whom this language was personally addressed in reference to his own death and resurrection, and to show them the appointment of God even in that dark event, that Jesus used this similitude. He is himself the "Corn of wheat" which is appointed unto death. In the dark pathway of the tomb alone could he fulfill all that was written of him in bringing many sons unto glory. So very different was this divine appointment from the way which seemed right to reason that even the disciples who heard these gracious words were unable to understand their fulfillment which they soon after witnessed. When they saw Jesus delivered unto death, instead of understanding that it was the very way appointed by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, by which he ought to suffer and to enter into his glory, they were utterly discouraged, and sinking in despair they could only groan, in bitter, agonizing grief, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel."

In all the testimony of prophecy which foretold the coming of the Re-

deemer of Israel, the natural mind could see nothing higher than the promise of an earthly conqueror, whose coming should bring the natural seed of Abraham into a position of eminence and power over their enemies; hence the carnal Israelites could not see in the humble Son of man the glorious Deliverer, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write. If he had come in the full manifestation of his sovereign power, the natural mind could have recognized in him the mighty Ruler for whom they were looking, and then they could have known him by natural wisdom. That by his divine power he could have thus asserted his supreme majesty, if it had been the will of God, no sane believer in God will deny. Hence it necessarily follows that in his humiliation and sufferings, as well as in his death, he did but fulfill the eternal purpose and determinate counsel of God. Without recognizing this fundamental principle, there can be no assurance of the final accomplishment of any promise given in the divine revelation. Consequently the infinite sovereignty of God underlies the hope of every believer in salvation according to the will of God.

Finite intelligence can never comprehend the mystery of the hidden purpose of God in his providence in natural things, much less can mortals understand that deeper secret of the eternal purpose of his grace, which is declared to be the primary motive for which all the work of creation was designed and the material universe was called into existence. A correct understanding of this first principle of that wisdom which is from above will silence all caviling against the absolute sovereignty of God in all his works, whether in creating the gentle lamb and the ravenous wolf, or in taking Israel out of all the nations of the earth to be his peculiar people, and destroying seven other nations greater and mightier than they, to give them the land before promised to Abraham. When this is accepted as a settled truth, there is some preparation to receive the assurance of the same truth in its application to their comfort in the revelation of that same sovereignty in commanding his blessing upon his chosen people in their eternal salvation in Christ Jesus; and this is the only true consolation provided in the gospel for the support of the afflicted and poor people unto whom "it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; having the same conflict" which was in the apostle and in all the true disciples of our Lord. The importance of being firmly established in this truth cannot be overestimated, as it is only by the display of this unlimited sovereignty in the exercise of divine grace that hope can be extended to the conscious sinner. So very important is this truth to the comfort of his saints that "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was

impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."—Heb. vi. 17, 18. Then let the saints never entertain a question of this essential truth. It is not revealed to natural reason even in the subjects of divine instruction; but by the faith of the Son of God, which dwells in them, they see things which are invisible, and know that which hath not entered into the heart of man.—1 Cor. ii. 9. God has purposely hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; and for this discriminating grace our dear Redeemer gave especial thanks. This manifests one distinguishing peculiarity of the Spirit of Christ. It is always not only submissive to the will of God, but it ever prays that the will of God be done. Not even in that dark hour when the soul of Jesus was sorrowful even unto death did he ask for any change in the holy will of the Father. Let not any trembling one misunderstand this truth as condemning those who continually have to mourn the rebellion and enmity of that carnal mind which still is found in their members, giving them constant occasion to mourn their want of conformity to the perfect will of God. There is no more certain mark of the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ than that deep sense of sin, which produces perpetual hunger and thirst after righteousness. None ever did nor ever can thus hunger but such as are already blessed.—Matt. v. 6.

In the verse preceding our text Jesus answered Philip and Andrew, saying, "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified." This declaration necessarily implies the absolute and positive predestination of the event as well as the hour to which the Lord referred. As no more dreadful crime can be committed than the crucifixion of the sinless Son of God, which is expressly declared to have been included in the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts ii. 23), it is absurd to question the overruling purpose of God in every minor event, however it may seem to our narrow view to be wrong and unjust. Created intelligence can never find a deeper explanation of any of the mysterious events of time than that given by our Lord himself in his expression of submission when he said, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 26. Hence, Jesus was ready to yield obedience even unto death at the hour appointed by that determinate counsel, or predestination of God.

The repeated word "verily," with which this text is confirmed, shows the deep importance of the truth here declared. It is the strongest form of expression ever used by our Lord in his teaching. This is therefore no mere general remark, but a solemn assertion of truth in answer to the inquiry of those Greeks whose desire to see Jesus had just been reported to him. Like all other divine instruction, this answer of Jesus seems to the natural mind irrelevant and unsatisfactory; but when shown to

his disciples by the Comforter it is the direct and conclusive answer to the inquiry presented. Doubtless many did see the fleshly body of our Lord in his incarnation, who never saw him as that Jesus who was revealed from heaven to "save his people from their sins." Yet it is only as that mighty and perfect Savior that he is seen as JESUS. He is never seen except in his subjection to the suffering of death. Without this he can only be known in his revelation in the natural creation as the mighty God. To see Jesus we must see that God manifest in the flesh as being truly one with his elect people in their state of condemnation under the sentence of death by the decree of infinite justice. Jesus is not seen in those systems of religion which represent a merely voluntary sacrifice as a substitute for the guilty, even though it should be supposed that the offering were made by a sinless being. Instead of such an offering atoning for sin, it would be a most atrocious crime in the sight of God; for he says, "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord."—Prov. xvii. 15. In order to see Jesus, therefore, we must see him as so identified with "his people" that when eternal Justice demands their life that demand is written of him. He only can answer that just requirement, because he is the very life of his body, the church, including every one of those members which were from the beginning chosen of God unto salvation in him. The Spirit of Christ in David testified, saying, "My substance [literally translated, *strength*, or *body*] 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." In this language those whom he came to redeem are not only prospectively chosen, but declared to have been really seen before they had any manifestation in the material creation. It is evident that this could not be true without the positive and immutable predestination of that God who declares the end from the beginning, and who brings to pass all his sovereign will.

To the natural mind it seemed that when Jesus was nailed to the cross the hope of his people was forever cut off, but here was the miracle of mercy and grace; for when this "Corn of wheat" went down into death the whole election of grace in him fulfilled the holy sentence of divine justice, and in him they all arose to newness of life. This resurrection was not simply to a restoration of life under the law of sin and death; but in this glorious victory our Redeemer brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This was indeed a resurrection to glorious immortality. The same great truth is declared in the prophetic song, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come

again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—Psalm cxxvi. 6. Observe that in the text the Lord specifies "a corn of wheat," as that which must fall into the ground and die before it can bring forth much fruit. It is a familiar fact in the literal illustration here used, that the nature of the seed sown is not changed in the process of germination. So our Lord represents himself as the "Corn of wheat," which must fall into the ground and die before his much fruit can be manifested; but the life of all the harvest is in the seed which falls into the ground, and it is the same life after it is developed in the "much fruit" borne, as when it was hidden in the original seed. So the life of all the chosen seed was in Christ before it was manifest in the development of the subjects of salvation; and being but the same life after it is developed in them, they are thereby identified as one in Christ Jesus, who is that one life in every one of them. Only through death could this "much fruit" be made manifest as existing in this divine "Corn of wheat." There is nothing developed in the perfect work of the suffering Savior except the life which was in him before it was brought into manifestation; just as there is nothing developed in the germination of the natural grain except the life which was in the original seed before it fell into the ground and died. But there is still further instruction contained in this expression of divine wisdom. As in nature all the production of every seed is after its own kind, for so God ordained in the beginning (Genesis i. 11), so the whole innumerable company of his ransomed people are animated by the very same principle of life, which is nothing less than Christ in them: the hope of glory. This is the everlasting consolation which comforts those who are by the grace of God enabled to "see Jesus." In his death they see their sins blotted out through his all-atoning blood; and in his resurrection they see their justification declared by the power of that God in whose immortality he arose from the dead, and thereby attested his triumphant glory, in that he had conquered death; and having destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, he shows them freely delivered from that bondage under which they had all their lifetime been subject through fear of death. All the sweet assurance contained in this revelation rests upon the fact that Christ Jesus, the Seed unto whom the promise was made to Abraham, who is here designated as the "Corn of wheat" in the text, did fall into the ground and die, as declared by our Lord. The illustration does not imply any uncertainty in regard to the death of which it is spoken, but expresses the absolute certainty of the death of himself, as the embodiment of all those whose life he is. In all the events of time and all that is revealed of eternal things there is no more conclusive and unquestionable display of the absolute sovereignty of God in working all things after the

counsel of his own will than that which is illustrated in this answer of Jesus to the disciples who reported to him the desire of those worshipping Greeks. Without recognizing this truth there is no connection between the context and this answer of Jesus. But when it is seen that the design was to show the sovereign appointment of God in regard to his death, it is evident that this answer presents the very same revelation of Jesus by which he manifests himself to every one who is led by the Spirit to know him as that Jesus in whom alone there is salvation. In this understanding of the record not only is the answer of Jesus appropriate to the occasion stated in the context, but it presents in all its importance the great central and all-pervading truth of the eternal purpose and election of God as the principle on which rests the whole system of grace, as well as all the divine appointments in the providential government of his material creation.

Finite intelligence can never comprehend the fundamental truth that the visible creation is but an incident in the execution of the purpose of love in the salvation of the chosen people of God by Jesus Christ, in whom they were blessed with all spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world. A proper consideration of this great fact would answer all the objections of natural reason against the doctrine of the sovereign electing love of God in the salvation of his chosen people from their sins through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. When once this eternal truth is received as a settled principle, there will be no further difficulty in accepting the unlimited sovereignty of God in all things in heaven, on earth, or in the bottomless pit. It is not a result from the belief of this truth that we should continue in sin; but on the contrary, the belief of this truth is never received by any others except those in whom the Spirit of Christ has implanted the love of holiness, which produces in them hunger and thirst after righteousness; and there is no surer indication that any one is a stranger to this divine principle than to find him claiming it as an excuse for indulging in sin, either in that which is in open violation of morality, or as is perhaps more frequently done, in disobeying the commands given by our Lord to those who love him. Doubtlessly, many of the dear subjects of redeeming grace are beguiled by the deceitfulness of sin into rebellion against their Lord by the perversion of this true doctrine; but instead of this being chargeable to any defect in the doctrine, it is a confirmation of its truth, just as the value of an article is confessed by those who seek to counterfeit it. Certainly no one who loves the holiness of God will claim that the grace of God in redeeming his people from sin affords them encouragement to live in that element from which they are saved by the blood of their crucified Redeemer; hence, every one who claims shelter for disobedience to the law of God

under the doctrine of the divine decree, thereby confesses either that he does not understand the doctrine of God in this particular, or that he is not led by that love of righteousness which is the fruit of the Spirit. Any child of God who can thus excuse himself in rebellion against the divine rule as laid down in the inspired word is living after the flesh, and will surely reap in experience of death the fruit of the corruption he has sown in following the dictates of the carnal mind. Hence, the saints are thoroughly furnished unto all good works in the commands given by inspiration of God, and they are not at liberty to confer with their own natural inclination or judgment in regard to obeying the directions thus furnished them. In thus departing from the law of the Lord they are presumptuously defying the rod of his chastening, and they will bring upon themselves severe trials as certainly as God deals with them as with children. While thus mocking God, if any be without such chastening they are bastards, and not sons.—Heb. xii. 8.

With all the efforts of infidels to disprove this important point of the doctrine of God our Savior, there has never been an argument found by its opposers which is not already refuted by the inspired testimony recorded in the Scriptures of truth. The first denial of the sovereign government of God in all things was by the tempter in the garden of Eden. He led the way in which his ministers have ever followed, by admitting that God had indeed said that death should certainly be the penalty of disobedience to the command of God, but at the same time he denied the truth of the word of the Lord. So it is now the common practice of false teachers to profess great regard for the Scriptures, while they deny the very essential truth in which their whole testimony centers. No clearer evidence could be given to prove the truth of this point of doctrine than the fact that the substance of all objections ever brought against it by men or devils is anticipated and refuted by the apostle Paul in that conclusive argument recorded in the ninth chapter of his epistle to the saints at Rome. The enemies of the doctrine themselves are made witnesses that it is the same truth given by inspiration, in the fact that they bring against it the very same objection which is thus stamped with the seal of divine condemnation. Their whole argument is embodied in the question, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" And no further answer is needed than that given by the inspired apostle, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" If avowed infidels dare defy the Almighty, the controversy is not any affair of ours, nor need we be concerned about the result; but let not them who trust in the Lord for their salvation be found contending against that only truth upon which their hope is founded. The slander that this

doctrine affords encouragement to them who believe it to continue in sin, is the admission by its opposers that it is the same doctrine which was held by the apostles, who met the same slander.—Rom. iii. 8.

Instead of this doctrine affording an excuse for sin, to those in whom it is revealed it is the only doctrine by which the principle of righteousness is interposed as the reason for their hatred of and death to sin. Therefore it is conclusive evidence that one is led by the Spirit of God when he finds himself mourning on account of indwelling sin, and longing for deliverance from its power. And on the other hand, it is a plain admission that they are governed by the love of sin when any feel that the positive assurance of their final salvation would afford them liberty to live in sin. Indeed, the very fact that the love of righteousness is implanted in the subjects of saving grace makes sin a burden to them, even without considering its future consequences. Hence, it shows the ignorance of those who confess that it is to them an encouragement to sin when told of the absolute certainty of the predestinated purpose of God. If they knew that their confession proved them still the willing servants of sin, they would not be ready to make the statement which clearly declares them to be enemies against God and his revealed truth. To every one who knows and loves God there is joy and strong consolation in the perfect assurance of the unlimited sovereignty of God, because it is on this ground alone that they can rest with full confidence for their final salvation from sin and its dreadful consequence of death. This witness abides in the believer, marking the clear distinction between such as love God and such as would be suited better if they could themselves occupy the throne, and usurp the dominion which belongs alone to the Creator of all things. With the mind every saint rejoices in this truth of the sovereignty of God, while with the flesh they yet serve the law of sin. This is the reason for the unceasing warfare experienced by every one in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells.

That absolute sovereignty of God by which every saint was chosen in Christ unto salvation and ordained unto eternal life before the foundation of the world, is the same principle by which every incident in the work of salvation is determined. It is this sovereign appointment of God which ordained that this "Corn of wheat" must fall into the ground and die for the development of the "much fruit" by which his glory shall be manifested as the Savior of his people from their sins; and the same divine appointment has numbered the hairs of the head of his disciples, and even controls the fall of a sparrow. This divine sovereignty as certainly fixes the salvation, temporal and eternal, of every elect vessel of mercy, as it ordains that the gracious Redeemer must pass through the dark pathway of death for their redemption. By this fixed and certain appointment of

that God who declares the end from the beginning the saints are kept in perfect safety through faith unto salvation, which is not an uncertainty, but is ready to be revealed in the last time. When any sinner can receive this truth in the love of it, he sees Jesus as he does not reveal himself to the world. In every one to whom Jesus is thus manifested Christ as the hope of glory dwells, and by his Spirit witnesses that he is born of God. Of such are they who constitute the "much fruit" brought forth by this dying "Corn of wheat." This glorious consummation of the eternal purpose of the love of God is secured by the determinate counsel of God in his own divine sovereignty. While all who love righteousness must rejoice in the manifestation of the glory of God as revealed in this display of his grace, carnal enmity against God will always be found railing against this eternal truth, and accusing God of injustice in the exercise of his sovereignty, because the pride of man will never admit that he is justly subject to the supreme authority of his Creator. It is only from this principle of infidel rebellion against God that the thought arises charging that the doctrine of divine sovereignty affords an excuse for men to persist in the practice of sin.

MARRIAGES.

ON August 10, 1886, by Elder W. L. Beebe, at the residence of the bride's mother, near Middletown, N. Y., Mr. Charles B. Welch, Jr., of Jersey City, N. J., and Miss Mary E. Corwin, of the former place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At my home in Polk Co., Oregon, May 22, 1887, sister **Ruthana Turnidge**, being sixty-nine years and eighteen days old at the time of her death. She was born in Missouri; if I mistake not, in Ray County. Her maiden name was Crowley. Early in life she was united in marriage to John Turnidge, and after marriage united with Crooked River Church of Regular Baptists, in Ray County, Mo. In a few years her husband united with the same church and became a faithful minister of the gospel. He preceded her to the grave fifteen months and two days. Sister Turnidge was a firm believer in salvation by grace; that God's immutable purpose and foreknowledge embraced all events, and to that end all things work. The writer of this notice has been acquainted with her for over forty years, and it can be said of her that her deportment through life was such as to gain respect of all her acquaintances, always trying to make her brethren and sisters feel at home when at her house. Her seat was filled at church meetings when it was possible to be there. Elder Turnidge was called to take the pastoral care of Log Creek Church, in Caldwell County, Mo., where he moved, near where I lived. I united with that church in 1852. In 1865 I moved to Oregon, and sister Turnidge, her husband and part of the family came to Oregon in 1874, and settled in Polk County. She was afflicted with inward tumor and dropsy of the bowels. She was a great sufferer. Elder Turnidge and she, in the fall of 1885, being afflicted, moved to their son's, in Linn County, where he died the following February. Last October we brought her to our home, she being an aunt of my wife. All was done to make her as comfortable as possible, her daughter being with her all she could. She desired, if it was the Lord's will, to depart from this body of sin and suffering, believing that all would be well, death having no terror for her. She was a kind and affectionate wife and mother. She leaves seven children, two daughters and

one son in Missouri, one daughter and three sons in this state; two of her sons here are able ministers of the gospel. At her request, her remains lay over at Scio one night at her cousin's, brother Munkers, and next day were taken to the burying ground south of Scio, and there deposited by the side of her late husband. We believe she is enjoying the smiles of her dear Savior, on whom she called so often during her affliction. At the grave Elders Stipp and Bridges spoke words of comfort to the relatives and friends. She requested Elder W. S. Matthews to preach her funeral, which he did on the fourth Sunday in June, at the school-house near me, using for his text John xi. 25, 26.

DAVID PARKER.

By request I send for publication in the SIGNS the death of brother **C. Romine**, who died in Woodland, Yojo County, California, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He had a stroke of paralysis December 23, and died Christmas morning, without a struggle or a groan. He was born in Lincoln County, North Carolina; had belonged to the Old School Baptists for more than forty years; had preached nearly forty years, but was never ordained; was blind for the last twelve years; had not preached any in public for the last five years, but was sound on doctrine, and that was all his theme, salvation by grace. He leaves a wife but no children. She feels his loss very much. As she had led him so long, she hardly knows what to do with herself. When he was taken sick he would not have a physician called; for said he, "They can do me no good. I am in the hands of God; let him do as he will." He could talk but very little for the first day after he was taken; then he became unconscious and ceased to try to even make any signs. He had traveled through nearly all the southern states; came to California in 1848; went back to Missouri and brought his wife across the plains in 1852; went to Shasta County to live in the gold mines, until 1865. He with his wife went to Sonoma County, and joined the Old Baptist Church at Santa Rosa, lived in that county until September, 1885, came to Woodland and bought them a little home here where there was none of the Old Baptists except the unworthy writer. He was very lonely on that account. He enjoyed having me go to see them, and I went to see them very often, as I enjoyed going to see them; and can safely say that of all the people on earth I never received so much religious instruction as I did from him. He was deep in doctrine, and had a great memory. For the last few months before he died he was very much impressed with the thought that his days were about numbered, and often spoke of it; but we thought he was only discouraged; but sister Romine told me since his death that one day, a few weeks before he went, they were alone, and he got to preaching, and she said he preached for about an hour, as great a sermon as ever she heard. But the dear old saint is at rest; yes,

"The languishing head is at rest;
Its thinking and aching are o'er;
The quiet, immovable breast
Is heaved by affliction no more."

In hope of immortality,

E. M. HOLLINGSWORTH.
WOODLAND, California.

DEAR BRETHREN:—At the request of our sorely bereaved sister, it becomes my painful duty to request the publication of this obituary of her husband, **Camillus W. Collier**, who departed this life at his home in Washington, D. C., Friday a. m., July 1, 1887, in the forty-ninth year of his age. His disease was typhoid fever, from which he suffered about two weeks ere he was called away. He was born and raised in Quantico, and resided there until he moved to Washington, D. C., about two years ago. He was raised in the P. E. Church, but never made a public profession of religion. After moving to Washington, D. C., he attended our meeting regularly with sister Collier, whom it was my privilege to baptize there one year ago. He often expressed his interest in Baptist preaching, and said sometimes to others, "If you want to hear good preaching,

go to the Baptist meeting." He was of a naturally quiet temperament, but had the faculty of making each one feel at home in his house. In my short acquaintance with him I had learned to esteem him as a true, honest gentleman. No man bore a better name for honesty, sobriety, kindness, unselfishness and industry than he; and a good name is better than great riches. One of the kindest of husbands, the best of sons and an honest man, he had always been. How much harder, and yet how much easier, it is for us when such as he are taken away, than to lose the unworthy, whose life may have been vile instead of good. Our dear sister is well nigh inconsolable at her great loss; but still she remembers who has done it, and is still. I spent a few hours in her company yesterday, and felt that I had obtained another witness of the power of divine grace to strengthen and comfort the sorrowful. Mr. Collier's remains were taken to his old home for interment, where many friends assembled and gave every testimony of their esteem and sympathy. May God comfort the bereaved companion, the parents, and all who mourn, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

I remain your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

DIED—At her late residence in Kent County, Md., Monday morning, July 11, 1887, **Mrs. Julia Hendrickson**, in the thirty-sixth year of her age.

Mrs. Hendrickson was the daughter of sister Mary Roe, deceased, formerly one of the esteemed members of Bryn Zion Church. She had been sorely afflicted for the last seven years; though suffering intensely at times, she was always patient and resigned. She was married a little over twelve years ago to John P. Hendrickson, who, after years of constant, untiring devotion to his afflicted and suffering companion, is now left to mourn. I think Mrs. Hendrickson has long enjoyed a hope in Christ, and that she realized through all her sufferings that hope as an anchor to her soul. Occasionally she could get out to our meetings, although she lived twenty miles away. The constant attentions of husband, brothers and sisters, through years of suffering, showed the constancy of affection, and may afford some satisfaction now to the bereaved, when kind ministrations can be offered no more. How often are those taken from us that we think we do not have to spare. There was much in this instance to sweeten the cup of sorrow.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

DIED—On March 8, 1887, at South River, **Mr. Frederic Stults**, aged eighty-eight years, seven months and seventeen days, of general debility. He was not a member of the church, but one of its warmest friends, always filling his seat in meeting until deprived by infirmity. He was a strong advocate of the doctrine of God our Savior, and one of the model men in our community. His life gave evidence of his special regard and love for God and his cause, putting to blush many professors.

His funeral was largely attended, and Elder Wm. J. Parington and myself officiated on the occasion. He leaves a son-in-law, nephews and nieces to mourn, with the community, their loss. In life he filled many public positions with honor.

The Lord is reducing our little number. "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." May we be able to look to the Lord in our stricken condition.

WILSON HOUSEL.

MILLTOWN, N. J.

My mother, **Mrs. Harriet A. Clark**, died at my home in East Charleston, Pa., August 31, 1886, aged seventy-one years, eleven months and eleven days. She was sick but five days, and passed away as one going to sleep. She has gone to her long home, but we trust that it is far better for her than living in this world of sorrow. Her funeral took place at our home, September 2d, and Elder Wm. Campbell spoke to a house full of mourning friends.

Written by her daughter,

MARTHA CLEMENS.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

ON Saturday, July 16, 1887, 2 o'clock p. m., the following named churches responded to a call from brethren and sisters living on Fern Ridge, in Linn County, Oregon, for help in council, having in view the constitution of a church at that place.

Scio Church, by letter and ordained helps, to wit, Elders Judson Loofbourrow, Daniel Bridges, and Deacon Edward Loat.

Coast Fork Church, by letter, by the hands of Elder J. P. Allison.

Union Church, by Elder W. S. Matthews, who also stated that he was present at the last meeting of Siloam Church, and that they agreed to send their ordained help.

Bethel Church, by letter, presented by brother E. T. T. Fisher.

The letters from said churches were read, and a council organized by choosing Elder J. P. Allison Moderator, and brother E. T. T. Fisher Clerk.

The following brethren and sisters, to wit, brother Wm. Tucker and his wife, sister Nancy Tucker, brother Joseph E. Turnidge and his wife, sister Elizabeth Turnidge, Deacon Samuel Doty and his wife, sister Rebecca Doty, Deacon Wm. T. Loofbourrow and his wife, sister E. Loofbourrow, brother H. T. Nave and sister Hannah E. Carro, presented their letters from Scio Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists at Scio, in Linn County, Oregon, which were read, and said brethren and sisters manifested to the council that they still desired to be constituted into a church of Jesus Christ, of Primitive or Old School Baptists, and presented Articles of Faith upon which they wished to be constituted, which were read and approved by the council; whereupon the council, after ascertaining that said brethren and sisters were still in union and fellowship, agreed to constitute them into a church in the regular order.

The council withdrew for consultation, and chose Elder J. Loofbourrow to lead in prayer, and Elder J. P. Allison to give the charge to the church.

The council then came in, and Elder Loofbourrow led in praise and prayer.

The Moderator then pronounced them a Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, and gave them the right hand of fellowship in behalf of the council, which was followed by all the brethren and sisters present.

The charge was then given by Elder J. P. Allison, and the council was dissolved.

The church proceeded with their business. They chose Elder J. Loofbourrow Moderator, and Deacon Wm. T. Loofbourrow Church Clerk, and agreed to be known by the name of BETHLEHEM CHURCH.

Adopted Rules of Decorum, and also agreed to hold their regular meetings on the second Sunday in each month, and on Saturday before. Meeting on Saturday to commence at two o'clock p. m.

This church is situated about twelve miles southeast of the city of Scio, in Linn County, Oregon.

J. P. ALLISON, Mod.

E. T. T. FISHER, Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

ACCORDING to a call by the Darbyville Church, of Pickaway County, Ohio, for the ordination of ROBERT PETERS to the work of the gospel ministry, the following ministers were present: Elders G. N. Tusing, D. T. Poynter, Z. K. Holiday, Earl Marby, W. Yeoman, George Waddle and J. W. Hoppes.

Presbytery organized by choosing D. T. Poynter Moderator, and J. W. Hoppes Clerk. After hearing brother Peters relate his experience and his call to the ministry, to the entire satisfaction of the presbytery, the presbytery proceeded.

Prayer by D. T. Poynter, with the laying on of hands by the presbytery, and charge by Z. K. Holiday, after which the hand of fellowship was given by the presbytery, and also by the brethren and sisters present.

It was a time of rejoicing among the saints.

D. T. POYNTER, Mod.

J. W. HOPPES, Clerk.

The church proceeded to business.

An invitation for the reception of members being given, two sisters came forward and related the Lord's dealings with them, and were received for baptism.

The welcome hand was again given, amid much rejoicing.

Elder G. N. Tusing is their pastor, and his labors are greatly blessed. May God have all the praise.

J. W. HOPPES.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri has appointed to hold its next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Hope Primitive Baptist Church, at Miami, in Saline Co., Mo., to begin on Friday before the first Saturday in October, and continue three days (Sept. 30th, Oct. 1st and 2d). Elders, brethren and sisters of our faith and order, and all others who may feel an interest in us or a desire to visit us, are cordially invited to attend.

Miami is on the Missouri River, and between the Chicago, Alton & St. Louis, and the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific railroads, about twelve miles from the former and two miles from the latter. Those coming by the former railway from the west will come on the morning train from Kansas City to Norton, on Thursday morning, Sept. 29th, and those from the east will come on the train in the evening of the same day, to the same place, where they will be cared for by brother Wm. Griffith and others. Those coming by the latter named railway will come to Miami Station, from both east and west, on Thursday morning, Thursday evening, or Friday morning; but the Friday morning train from the west will be rather late for the opening services. If any come on a late train to Miami Station, they will take lodgings there till morning, when conveyance will be provided in the town of Miami. Those who find it necessary will, inquire for Mark Whitaker, living two miles southeast of Miami; or T. A. Easton, two miles northeast of Miami; or Mrs. Chriswell or Mr. Cresap, her son-in-law, one-half mile east of Miami; or old mother Watson, living in Miami.

R. M. THOMAS.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Valley Church, at Waynesville, Warren County, Ohio, on Friday (16th) before the third Sunday in September, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m.

Those coming from the south will come to Cincinnati, and there take the Pittsburg & Cincinnati R. R., at the Little Miami Depot, to Waynesville. Those coming from the west will come to Xenia, and there take the Pittsburg & Cincinnati R. R., to Waynesville. Those coming from the north will come from Columbus on the Pittsburg, Cincinnati & St. Louis R. R., stopping at Waynesville. Trains arrive from Cincinnati 7.34 a. m., and 3.48 p. m., and from Columbus 9.07 a. m., and 6.15 p. m., Central Standard time. Brethren will be at the trains to care for those coming on Thursday.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and a special invitation to ministering brethren of our faith and order, to visit us at that time. Arrangement has been made for reduced rates of fare on return, as heretofore. Persons must obtain a certificate signed and stamped by ticket agents wherever tickets are purchased, certifying that full fare has been paid. Ask the agents for the certificate, as they are furnished by the company to all agents, and they are bound to fill them up when called for.

Those coming in their own conveyance will call on sister Elizabeth Right, near the Medelle Run Baptist Church, or the undersigned near Clio, Green Co., Ohio.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Particular or Old School Baptists will hold her next session, the Lord willing, with the Drift Run Church, Robertson Co., Ky., beginning on Friday morning, at ten o'clock, before the second Saturday in September, and continue three days.

Brethren, sisters and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to attend.

From Cincinnati cross the river to Covington, take the cars on the Kentucky Central (K. C.) R. R., at 8.05, city time, for Falmouth. Those coming via Lexington will take train on the same road, for same place, at about 7.00 a. m. on same day, where conveyances will be in waiting to carry friends to places of entertainment.

It is desirable for as many of our brethren as can to come in their own conveyances, as it is eighteen miles from the station. Should any come too late for the conveyances, there is a stage line running to the place of meeting daily. Take the Milford and Mt. Olivet line.

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

THE one hundred and twenty-second annual session of the Kehukee Baptist Association is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, October 1st, 2d, and 3d, with the church at Skewarkey, near Williamston, Martin Co., North Carolina. This is the one hundredth year of the constitution of that church. Visitors from the north should come either by the Norfolk & Southern Railroad, or by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad; and those from the south by the Wilmington & Weldon, and the Raleigh & Albemarle Railroads. We hope to have a large attendance of our members, and especially of our ministering brethren at this centennial gathering.

S. HASSELL, Mod.

JOSEPH D. BIGGS, Clerk.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, will be held with the Pleasant Grove Church, one mile east of Pardee, at the house of Russel Higley, in Atchison County, Kansas, commencing on Friday before the last Saturday in September, 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming by railroad will stop at Cummingsville, on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Rail Road, where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting, two miles and a half north west. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

RUSSEL HIGLEY, Church Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Olive and Hurley, commencing on the 21st day of September, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m., and will continue two days.

Brethren coming from the south by way of the Ulster & Delaware R. R., will be met and cared for at Olive Branch, at 3.20 and 7.15 p. m., Tuesday, preceding the meeting, which will commence on Wednesday. Those coming from the west will be met at Shokan and Broom's Station, at 4.29 and 4.39 p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren to meet with us.

J. MATTHEWS.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Conference will be held this year with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 2, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days. We now expect that Elders Chick and Purington will be with us through the meeting. All that have a mind to do so we hope will purpose to be with us through the meeting, if God will; for we shall be glad to see you. There will be teams at the depot the day before the meeting to take all who come to the place of the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

If the Lord wills, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church in Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday, the ninth day of September, and continue three days. A hearty welcome will be given to all strangers and pilgrims who may visit us for the worship of the living God at that time. Those coming by rail will be met at Gardiner Station, on the Maine Central R. R., about three o'clock p. m., on the day before the meeting.

H. CAMPBELL.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1887, at Hope, in LaSalle Co., Ill., four miles southwest of Tonica, on the Illinois Central R. R., and about the same from Lostant. Those coming from the north will stop at the former place and those from the south at the latter place, where they will be met by friends to take care of them. A

cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

OUR association (the New Hope) will convene with the church at Union, in Drew Co., Ark., nine miles northeast from Monticello, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October next. We hope the Lord may move the hearts of some of our northern and eastern ministering brethren to visit us at that time.

A. TOMLIN.

THE Salem Association of Regular Baptists will meet, Providence permitting, with Smyrna Church, at Bently, Hancock County, Ill., on the third Saturday in September, 1887, at ten o'clock, and continue three days.

This church is on Kehokuk Branch of the Wabash rail road. Our brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to attend.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association will meet, if the Lord will, with Friesland Church, Knox Co., Ill., on Friday, September 2, 1887, three miles from Mermon, on Iowa Central, and six miles east of Abington, on the C. B. & Q. R. R. Those who love our Redeemer and the old paths are cordially invited.

I. N. VANMETER, Clerk.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1887, and continue three days.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

THE thirty-sixth annual meeting of the Western Association will be held at Dillen, Marshall County, Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887.

WM. J. REEVES.

THE Pocatalico Old School or Particular Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Liberty Church, Kanawha Co., W. Va., to convene on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1887, at 10 a. m.

JEHU BYRNSIDE, Clerk.

THE Union Primitive Baptist Association have appointed to hold their next session with the Harmony Church, in Union County, Arkansas, to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887.

THE Tygart's Valley River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with Valley Church, Randolph Co., W. Va., to begin at 11 o'clock on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1887.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., will commence on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, and continue two days. Meeting to commence at ten o'clock, not two, as published in our Minutes.

Friends coming from Baltimore can leave Calvert Street Station at 1.55 p. m., on Friday. Those from Philadelphia will leave Broad Street Station at 2.10 p. m., and come on the P., W. & B. R. R., to Perryville. Both trains arrive at Perryville in time for the train to Conowingo, Cecil Co., Md., where the friends will be met and cared for. We extend a cordial invitation, and hope to see many of our brethren and friends at that time. Ministering brethren, do not forget us.

GEORGE JENKINS.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

NOTICE is hereby given that a two days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the second church of Old School Baptists of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday (7th and 8th) of September, 1887, to begin at ten o'clock a. m., where we hope to meet those who love the truth and peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Ministers especially are invited. Those coming from the north by rail will stop off at Roxbury, and from the south at Kelly's Corners, where they will be cared for and conveyed to the meeting.

J. D. HUBBELL, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Aug. 12, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the SIGNS for April 15th, 1868, I published some thoughts on predestination, in which I said, "As I believe it is clearly set forth in the Scriptures that whatever transpires in time is because of and in accordance with the eternal decrees of God, so I believe it is taught in the experience of every child of grace." My mind has not changed with regard to this sentiment since it was then expressed. The publication of that article brought to my notice more opposition to the doctrine of predestination among those I esteem as children of God than I before thought existed. It is, however, generally believed by our brethren. In November, 1885, I published some thoughts on the same doctrine in the *Gospel Messenger*. Since then several clear, able and, I believe, profitable articles on this subject have been published in the SIGNS, which have always strongly and clearly advocated this point of Bible truth. It may not appear that any further discussion of it can be necessary; yet it is in my mind to present some thoughts for the consideration of brethren and friends.

There are those whom I acknowledge to be children of God who do not receive this doctrine of the predestination of all things; and yet, as I have said, I believe it to be taught in the experience of all. I will not here repeat the considerations presented in my former article in support of this belief, but will merely refer to the expression of our dear Savior in the garden, "Thy will be done."

All who have been taught the power of these words have in that teaching received this truth, and acknowledge it whenever they in the spirit repeat them. This expression recognizes the foreordination of all things. When evil comes upon us through the wickedness of men or devils, if we are given the spirit to say, "Thy will be done," we thereby acknowledge that nothing has been done but what the hand and counsel of God determined before to be done.—Acts iv. 28. When Eli was told what should befall his house, which was to come about through the wickedness of the enemies of God, he humbly acknowledged the Lord's hand alone, saying, "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good." Through the malice and power of the devil Job was afflicted and bereaved; but it did not occur to him to credit this disastrous work to Satan, although it was through his wickedness

it was done. He said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Wicked men of the world sorely tried and afflicted David; but he recognized them as merely God's hand and sword.—Psalm xvii. 13. Even when the vileness and wickedness of his own corrupt nature stood out before him in awfully wicked acts, in his contrition and humility and shame his mind is directed by the Spirit to see the purpose of God in it all, that the justice of God in the condemnation of the sinner might be clearly manifest, and that the best of men are as vile as the vilest, and will act out that vileness when not held back by the restraining grace of God. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."—Psalm li. 4; Rom. iii. 4. The prayer of the dear Savior when about to drink the cup of awful suffering prepared for him by the eternal Father, but which was to be administered by the wicked hands of men, is the prayer of all his dear children under mighty afflictions when his Spirit is exercising them; and indeed what could the poor, helpless child of God do if he were forced to believe that anything could possibly transpire which was contrary to the will and purpose of God? He could not then have the comforting assurance that he now has, "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.

Those who object to this doctrine appear to do so because they regard it as inconsistent with the character of God, and not because they do not find it expressed in the Scriptures. They argue first that it cannot be that God has predestinated the existence of evil, and the performance of actions that are sinful in those that do them, because it would not, in their estimation, be consistent on his part to have done so, and then to punish those who commit the wicked acts; and then they conclude that such a doctrine cannot really be taught in the Scriptures, whatever language may be found there, because it cannot be true. Instead of searching the Scriptures with a single desire to see what is taught there, and with a willing heart to accept that teaching, whatever it may be, when the enmity of the carnal mind is controlling us we shall engage in that search with a settled determination that the doctrine of predestination, which the carnal mind hates,

ought not to be there, and therefore is not there; and that everything that appears to teach such a doctrine, however plain the reading, must be explained to mean something else.

There are dear brethren who feel and say that although this doctrine is taught in the Bible, yet it is so deep and mysterious, and is opposed by so many, that it is best to let it alone; for it is, they think, of no comfort or profit, only tending to disturb and harass those who cannot understand such deep things. Of such I would ask, if one speaks or writes the truth of the Scriptures, upon what ground are we to decide, and by what authority declare, that the Spirit did not direct him to present that truth? I know that the natural mind may deal with the letter of the word, and that the truth in the letter may be presented when the Lord's people have no evidence that the Spirit directed it, and they feel no power or comfort in hearing; but it must be by the Spirit and in accordance with the Scriptures that this question is decided. We cannot say that the Spirit did not direct the preaching of a certain truth at a certain time because it did not make us feel comfortable, but disturbed and confused us. The truth of the gospel that the Lord sends to his children does not always make them feel comfortable at the time. It may find them in a very carnal state, with the enmity of the carnal mind against the truth of God strongly controlling them, and with a good deal of hay, wood and stubble in their religion. In that case the truth will confuse and overturn and consume, and will not let us find any rest in our own thoughts and ways, which are as much lower than God's thoughts and ways as the earth is lower than heaven.—Isa. lv. 9. The word is often sent as a fire and as a hammer, and then it does not soothe and quiet the one who is trying to hold fast those things that can be broken or burned up.—Jer. xxiii. 29.

When I was first rejoicing in hope, and was tasting a sweetness in all the word of truth, and feeling an especial joy and comfort in reading the Bible, and in all the doctrine of God, I met a former school friend, a man of superior intellectual abilities and attainments, who had become a Methodist preacher. While we were speaking of many things with reference to my experience upon which we seemed to agree, I referred to the doctrine of election. He asserted that God elected those whom he foreknew would be obedient upon the ground of that obedience. "That," I said, "would be according to their works; but 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.' "It does not mean so," he said, hastily and hotly. "If I thought it meant so I would not believe the Bible." At the time this produced a great effect upon my mind, and led to solemn reflections upon the opposition of our carnal nature to the truth of God; and I was very much humbled to find myself utterly unable to make any one see and love the truth which was so clear and dear to me. Since then I have heard this same principle advanced in argument against the doctrine of the predestination of all things by those I regard as having an experience of grace.

In an article written by one who is evidently an able and practiced debater, one striking sentence will indicate the tenor of the argument against this doctrine. "God is the author of whatever he has decreed." I will also quote another expression: "It is not enough for God simply to predestinate, but he must also perform his purposes." If God predestinated that Adam should transgress the law and so bring sin into the world, so the argument runs, then God himself committed that sin. Now there are most excellent brethren who are honestly bewildered by such specious reasoning as this, and who are thus inclined to fear that if they acknowledge that God predestinated whatsoever comes to pass they will thereby be declaring that he is the author of sin; and when this fear is in their minds they feel it necessary to seek some other meaning in such portions of Scripture as appear plainly to teach this doctrine, and when such meaning cannot be found the only argument left for them is that of my friend, "It does not mean so. If I thought it meant so I would not believe the Scriptures." This, however, they cannot say as an unquickered man could say it; for their belief of the Scriptures does not depend upon their will, but upon God's will concerning them.

In the article I have referred to, in considering the declaration of Scripture, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. xvi. 4), the writer, without explaining the text, or giving any idea of how he understands the wicked were made for the day of evil, says, "If God made the wicked as such, if they are exactly what he made them, then we should

conclude that he punishes the wicked just because they are exactly what he made them. And who believes that? This seems very much like saying, "It does not mean so. If I thought it meant so I would not believe the Bible." It seems like saying, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?"—Rom. ix. 19. If the argument of this writer is correct, Paul's illustration of the potter and the clay was incorrectly introduced; for according to this mode of reasoning our Potter never made a vessel to dishonor, never appointed that any should stumble at the word, never ordained any unto this condemnation; and if he did, the work that resulted from his appointment was his own.—Rom. ix. 21; 1 Peter ii. 8; Jude 4. Think of the terrible deductions to be drawn from this declaration, "God is the author of whatever he has decreed," when applied to such events as the crime of Joseph's brethren, in which God had a meaning or purpose (Gen. l. 20), the wicked acts of Pharaoh (Ex. ix. 16), the sending forth of the lying spirits in the mouths of Ahab's prophets (1 Kings xxii. 22), the wickedness of Shimei in cursing David (2 Samuel xvi. 10), and the many wicked acts in the performance of which wicked men are said to be God's hand and sword (Psalm xvii. 13); and above all, when applied to the crime of all crimes, the crucifixion of Jesus! It has been said that although God decreed this awful deed to be done, he did not decree by whose hands it should be done, nor the wickedness which should be manifest in its accomplishment. If this weak assertion were correct, still, according to the assertion that "God is the author of whatever he has decreed," he was the author of this awful crime.

In the argument against this doctrine there appears to be a very careful effort to place it in that light in which it will appear most objectionable to the carnal mind, which is "enmity against God;" and the statement of it is always in a manner to raise the question from this source, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" Indeed this question in some of its variety of forms is most generally embraced in the arguments against this most clearly taught and precious doctrine. The writer I have referred to is no exception to what I have here declared. He is one whose sincerity I would not be willing to doubt; but how a spirit of sincerity and candor could have suggested the following two sentences, which I quote from a late article, I am at a loss to understand: "It is a poor shift to argue, as some have, that after all there is a great virtue in sin, and that it is greatly to be admired, because it is supposed that none would have known the riches of his grace if sin had not entered." "How strange, then, that intelligent men will express an admiration for sin." If I had ever known one professing to love God who had ever expressed an admiration for sin, and a belief that there is a great virtue in it, I might understand how the above two expressions

could be consistent with an honest desire to seek and declare the simple truth in the fear of God.

When it is acknowledged that God foreknew the fall of man, and that he had power to have had it otherwise, it follows as a certain and undeniable conclusion that it was God's will that such a thing should be. If it had not been his will it would not have occurred. When, therefore, one argues that if it was God's will that man should fall, sin is a fruit of that decree, and that in that case the sin and wickedness must be the Lord's, such an argument must be with the intention of making the doctrine look more hateful, if that can be, to the carnal mind. What is the real difference between the declaration, whose truth is admitted, that God was able to have prevented the fall of man, but did not do so, and the declaration that he predestinated that fall? There is no essential difference. His purpose is as clearly seen in the first form of words as in the second. But God cannot be the author of sin, although he decree the sinful act. Sin cannot be in him. It can only be in the one whom he has been pleased to place under law. Sin is the transgression of the law; and where there is no law there can be no sin. God does according to his will, which is his only law. He destroys men and nations; is it sin in him? The same act that is sin in men is right when God does it, merely because he does it; and when we learn from the Bible that the Lord finds fault with men and punishes them for transgression, although none have resisted his will or purpose concerning them, by what authority shall we reply against him and try his acts?

This writer acknowledges that nothing transpires which is contrary to God's will, but appears to make a difference between his will and his imperative decree. How can an essential difference be recognized? It is explained that it was God's will to place man under law and leave him free to act as he would. Granted. Yet it is acknowledged that the Lord knew that he would certainly fall. How could he know this certainly if he had not determined that it should be so? Again, if nothing transpires contrary to God's will, then the fall of Adam was not contrary to his will. If not contrary to it, then it was according to it. Now, if it was according to God's will that Adam should fall, and if provisions of grace were made before the world began to save the elect and raise them to an estate in glory which they never could have had in the first Adam, and for the exhibition of the perfections of God in Jesus through the fall in this salvation from it, what is the meaning of the talk about things which the Lord *permits*? The Scriptures do not speak of God as *permitting* things. It may seem like a kind of compromise, but it does not deceive even the natural mind. To speak of the Lord as *permitting* what he might prevent, declares his eternal, unchangeable will as certainly as any other form of words. If it can be shown that it

was God's purpose that one act should be done which was wicked in the one who did it, then all the argument that God could not have predestinated that wickedness should exist without being himself the author of sin falls to the ground. It was a wicked act in Shimei to curse David; but the Lord bade him do it.—2 Kings xvi. 10. It was God's purpose that Pharaoh should do the wicked things he did. He had a purpose in the wicked act of Joseph's brethren. They thought evil, but he *meant* it unto good.—Genesis l. 20. In what sense did the Lord create the wicked for the day of evil, and "the waster to destroy," if it was not his purpose that wickedness should be in the world, and that acts should be done which are sinful in them that do them? It is as foolish and inconsistent to speak of the sin and wickedness as the Lord's because he decreed that they should be, as to say that the viciousness of the tiger and the venom of the serpent are his because he made them as they are, and decreed the work of death resulting from the exhibition of their terrible dispositions. The Lord determined beforehand the awfully wicked act of crucifying Christ, and by whose hands it should be done. Shall we say that because he predestinated it he did it? To declare the end from the beginning is the prerogative of a God; and without the power to show what is to come hereafter there can be no ground to claim to be gods.—Isa. xli. 22, 23. How could God declare things that are to come unless he had purposed that they should come? Is there a power beyond his that compels him to know and declare that things shall be which he did not desire should be?

If I am asked why the Lord finds fault with one who has not resisted his will (Acts ix. 19), I must answer that I cannot explain the mystery of his ways. He tells us that his thoughts are not ours, nor our ways his; therefore we cannot try his ways and thoughts by ours, nor find out his judgments, which are "past finding out." We are simply to hear with solemn reverence what he says; and in such measure as he is pleased to reveal his thoughts to us we shall know the preciousness of them.—Isa. lv. 8; Psalm cxxxix. 17. If I am asked if this doctrine does not take the blame from man, I answer, No. A child of God is made to feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Believing that God has predestinated whatsoever comes to pass does not make him feel it any the less. If I am asked what effect this doctrine has upon the unregenerate, I answer, No more than light upon a dead body. They are already wholly bent to evil, dead in sin. When the Lord gives life, he gives a hatred of sin and a love of holiness in that life; and when a living soul is given to see that all things are according to the purpose of God and work for his glory, and that through the wickedness of men his power and justice and long suffering and grace and mercy and all his glorious perfections shall be exhibit-

ed, in the punishment of those who are left to suffer the just desert of their sins, and in the salvation of his elect people, and his kind and merciful dealings with them in this time state, the sight of this great, mysterious, unsearchable truth causes him to feel with the psalmist, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Yet it does not make him hate sin the less, nor mourn less the depravity of his heart; but it inspires him with feelings of profound reverence for the infinite God, whose judgments are unsearchable, "and his ways past finding out." A great many questions may be asked as to the reason for the Lord's ways being as we believe the Bible teaches that they are, but none of them can be answered except in the Savior's words, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

This doctrine is held up by the opposing reason of the carnal mind to ridicule, and most absurd and blasphemous conclusions are drawn from it to make it appear hideous in the sight of men. We still have to remember that God's thoughts and ways are not ours. We can give no more reason why the Lord chose some to everlasting life, and left others to suffer the just punishment for their sins, than we can why he predestinated whatsoever comes to pass. Those who believe in a conditional salvation oppose both points of truth upon the same ground. The Lord "giveth not account of any of his matters."—Job xxxiii. 13. He will not be tried nor judged by man whom he has made. What he says concerning himself his children are to receive. His words are plain; and those who oppose this precious doctrine that is so clearly taught in the Bible, and which ascribes all wisdom and knowledge and power to God, may try to turn away Paul's sharp rebuke from themselves, and say, "We do not reply against God," but they cannot evade it. He speaks to them. God's sovereignty and predestination cannot be separated. To say that he only exercises sovereign control over all things, but did not predestinate them, is certainly to limit him in power and wisdom. How came those things to be which God did not intend should be? That we cannot understand why the Lord should ordain that evil and sin should exist, and that some should be left to suffer the just desert of sin, while others should be saved by the death of Jesus, is no reason for questioning this truth. Who can understand why the Lord should create the fierce and terrible lion and the venomous serpent, as well as the useful cow, the gentle lamb, and the harmless dove? Who can understand why he should create darkness as well as form the light? Why he should create evil as well as make peace?—Isaiah xlv. 7. When we can understand the least of God's wonderful ways, then we may have some slight ground for denying this doctrine because it is not in accordance with our reason.

One curiously argues thus, "If I believed that God predestinated all I did, good or bad, I certainly would have no uneasiness of mind about what I did, as all I did would be right because of God being the prime cause of it." And again, "If predestination is true, then we ought not to teach people that all manner of crime is wrong, but tell them that God has predestinated for them to keep on doing so." This is certainly taking predestination out of the hands of God, and assuming that we know beforehand what his purpose is. It is also assuming that predestination removes the distinction between right and wrong, and is a very unwarranted and foolish assertion as to how the writer would feel about his wicked acts if he believed differently from what he does. Many wicked acts, to some of which I have already referred, we are clearly taught were before determined by the Lord should be done. Were they therefore not wicked? Because his hand and counsel before determined the crucifixion of Christ, was it therefore right? Because it was his purpose that Peter should manifest the depravity of his nature, was it therefore not wicked? and does it follow that he has predestinated that Peter and all the rest of his people should keep on doing so? Because the Lord formed light and created darkness, are light and darkness the same? Because his hand formed the crooked serpent as well as the dove, are both alike harmless? If this writer believed predestination, he would, if he is a child of God, be uneasy about anything he did in which he did not have the answer of a good conscience. He would know that predestination embraces everything pertaining to the salvation of the Lord's people, either directly or indirectly, which includes every event that ever has transpired in time. He would know that it embraces a conformity of the Lord's people to the image of Christ, and that they will be so conformed; and that when the Lord puts his fear in their hearts they will hate evil, even though opposers of predestination should try to teach them that wrong is right. The power of that fear, as "a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death," will be greater than any adverse power. Although many questions may be asked in my own mind and by others about this doctrine which I cannot answer, it does not trouble me. The Lord will lead me into an understanding of the deep things of his kingdom and ways as fast and as far as he sees best, and that is all I want. But I do want to be kept from receiving any teaching that would limit the Holy One of Israel. "Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."—Psalm cxv. 3. "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places."—Psalm cxxxv. 6. "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, say-

ing, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xlv. 9, 10. He has appointed the bounds of the habitations of all men, that they cannot pass.—Job xiv. 5; Acts xvii. 26. Neither men nor devils can go beyond his decree, and therefore we know that all things work together for good to his people. He says, "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy."—Isa. liv. 16. Therefore he says to Zion, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper."

Those who receive this doctrine in the love and fear of God are as little children who dare not trust in their own judgment or lean to their own understanding. They exalt the Lord and his word above their own wisdom and all the wisdom of the world. May not those who object to what is written so plainly in the Scriptures have reason to fear that they are left to exalt their own understanding above the word and wisdom of God?

SILAS H. DURAND.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., August 10, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been reading carefully and as thoughtfully as I could the Church History, by C. B. Hassell and Sylvester Hassell, and have felt for some time like speaking to the brotherhood generally of some things that have been to me of much interest in it, through the columns of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been hoping to see a sort of a review of its leading features from the pen of some one else; but as no one has written I feel like saying a few words.

I looked for its appearance eagerly, and with high anticipations of profit and enjoyment in its perusal; and these anticipations have not been disappointed. It was my happy privilege to be acquainted with the senior writer while he yet labored in the ministry, and it is my privilege to know the son, the junior author of the history. Thus being acquainted with both, I felt sure that no pains would be spared to make it truthful and reliable; and I believe that it is so to a greater extent than any history of the kind that I have read. Nine years of hard labor were spent in its preparation. If any one imagines that such a history is easy to write, let him take any one of its thousand pages and try to write another like it, and he will be undeceived. No human production is perfect; and the authors of this history do not claim perfection for its pages. They only claim to have put into it hard labor, earnest and long continued research after the truth, and an earnest desire to tell nothing but the truth. It is impossible to put every event that research may discover concerning any nation or people or individual into one volume of a thousand pages, and therefore a vast mass of material must be read, digested, combined, and brought into

what may be called a bird's-eye view, so that in a few lines or pages a correct view may be presented. I am astonished at the vast amount of material condensed. I would instance pages 580-587, in chapter nineteen of the history, as one among many instances of the kind.

What we want is truth—truth above all things. I should be glad to find that those whom we recognize as our brethren in each century of the past believed in all things just what we as Old School Baptists now believe; but if they did not I want to know it. It will not shake the truth if in anything I find that they held error, for the Bible, after all, is our standard; but if we find that spiritual men, our brethren in the past, were not free from error, it may serve to make us more careful lest we also be in some way entangled in its meshes. Furthermore, the business of a historian is to free himself from opinions and prejudices as far as the weakness of the flesh will allow, and write down not what he wants to find, but what he does find, to be the facts. In reading the history I find that our brethren in the past centuries believed some things and practiced some things that seem to me to be unscriptural, and for this I am sorry; yet at the same time I am glad that in the main I find them humbly serving God, and in the midst of "flames" bearing clear testimony to his grace.

As to the utility of the history, it seems to me that God himself has stamped the seal of approval upon that innate desire possessed by every one for a knowledge of the past, by giving us plain history in a large share of the Old Testament, and in the gospels and Acts of the New Testament; and he by his prophets and apostles and disciples caused the bad of his people as well as the good to be recorded for our instruction, our warning and reproof, and for our comfort. But if any still feel to object to a history being written, upon the ground that history now cannot be absolutely correct, because not inspired of God, I would reply that our God still reigns; reigns in the hearts of men, reigns graciously and providentially, and can cause men to write truth as well as preach truth. Furthermore, our best brethren have thought it right to use history in their expositions of the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments; and our churches are writing history today in all their church books and in all their associational Minutes. Furthermore, we believe that baptism and ordination must be kept up by men qualified and authorized by regular baptism and ordination, received in the fellowship of the churches. How can I, how can any minister, know that my baptism and ordination are good and valid except by history—history first of those who baptized and ordained me, and then of their predecessors, and of theirs, and theirs, and theirs, in turn? Now the argument that would question the utility of this history, would question the utility of any church record of any kind. To sum it all up, is

ignorance of the facts of the past more to be desired than knowledge? Surely there can be but one answer to this. If God, the God of grace, whom we worship, is also the God of providence, then it is good for us to try to trace his wisdom and power and beneficence in the record of his providence; and history is that record. It might be a happy life could we be shut out from all knowledge of the world, its past or its present, and not know enough of history, either of yesterday or of hundreds of years past, to tell even the origin of the government that we live under, or the organization of the church to which we belong, and to only know the Bible; but I question it. The fact is that God has placed us in the world, and has not made monks or nuns of us, and we cannot help knowing something of the past and present. Now is it not better that we get as truthful a picture of the past as possible? I for one believe that I can trust my brethren better than any one else to paint me that picture; and so I am in favor of every Old School Baptist purchasing and carefully reading the history, and reading it again.

The introduction to the history is itself a mine of suggestive thought. Its words are weighty and solemn. It is a fitting opening to the book. It must be read to be appreciated. I cannot stop here to even give a synopsis of it. It is a most clear and convincing argument for the divine authorship of the Scriptures against the attacks of infidels of every name.

The first six chapters, down to page one hundred and eighty, are a synopsis of the history of God's chosen people from the creation down to the coming of Christ. Of course the authors have drawn the matter of these chapters mostly from the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, and Josephus' Antiquities of the Jews; but as I read what is written I find myself carried away at the clearness of the picture presented. I am continually wondering how so much could be condensed into so small a space, and yet no salient point be lost. I read it most carefully through, feeling benefited and profited all the way, and hardly willing to lay it down. I obtained a more definite idea of Old Testament history than I ever had before. The providence of God, as well as his gracious purposes, are lovingly and clearly set forth by a pen guided evidently by a reverent spirit. The opening chapter, on the creation, and the close of the sixth chapter, on the relation of the Old to the New Testament, I would point out as being specially striking and important; but all the way through are scattered rich thoughts and pertinent suggestions, showing how our God reigns, and will bring his purposes to pass. Every page of it is calculated to confirm the faith of the child of God, and to give him renewed confidence in his God.

The seventh chapter is an exceedingly interesting though rapid sketch of the ministry of Christ and the apostles, with some account of the

gospels and epistles, when written, to whom, &c. In the limits which the historian assigned himself it could not be more than a mere synopsis or outline sketch; yet it will be found full of valuable information to all who will read it. The author has kept fully in view in this chapter the dignity and honor of the Son of God and Son of man, and has carefully traced with a master hand the first beginnings of the manifestation of that spirit which afterward shed the blood of Jesus, and in coming centuries deluged the earth with the blood of saints. This chapter concludes with a presentation of the general design of each of the epistles, and a statement of the leading thoughts in each.

Chapter eight is occupied with a narration of the destruction of Jerusalem, the three periods of the apostolic age, in which first Peter, then Paul, and lastly John, were brought into special prominence, and an extended discussion of the book of Revelation. The intensely interesting subjects of the first and second beasts, Mystery Babylon and the false prophet, the number 666, the millennium, the final apostasy, the second coming of Christ, the general resurrection and final judgment, the everlasting punishment of the wicked, and the everlasting salvation of the righteous, are treated here. I would urge for it a careful reading.

In the ninth chapter we have what seems to me a well-nigh exhaustive review of the characteristics of the apostolic church. In it the twelve prominent marks of that church are set forth. I finished reading this chapter with the feeling that no body of people on earth to-day bore these twelve marks but the Old School or Primitive Baptists. I would be glad to see this chapter copied entire into all our papers; or what would be better still, that every Old School Baptist should purchase the book and read it for themselves.

Chapter ten is occupied with a statement of the New Testament doctrine of grace, and with an exhibition of the unscripturalness of the modern mission system, and of the scripturalness of the Old School Baptist ground. The historian has clearly shown that the church of Christ is not antimission, but antisociety; and the result of the modern mission system has only been to proselyte graceless men, who in the main are still graceless. Nothing in this chapter is more striking than the showing up of the practical unbelief of so-called advocates of missions in their own sentiments, or else of a horrible indifference on their part to the fate of perishing sinners.—See pages 344 and 345.

Chapters eleven to fifteen inclusive contain a record of the history of a time of almost total darkness in the main body of the professedly christian world, following the close of the apostolic age at the beginning of the second century down to the end of the fifteenth century. They show a gradual falling away even during the bitter persecutions of the second and third centuries, followed by a flood of ungodliness and corruption and

superstition when the church and the Roman government were united together. One turns sick at heart while reading the dark record, and is ready to cry out, "How long, O Lord, holy and true," dost thou suffer such things to be? But still here and there appears light; often dim and ready to die, it is true, but still light. God shows how little he thinks of ecclesiastical organizations by the rarity of godly men among those who carry on such organized politico-religious bodies. The record of all these centuries stamps the seal of heaven upon the truth that the wisdom of men is foolishness with God, and that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

The sixteenth chapter narrates the wonderful events of the sixteenth century, in which every believer in the divine sovereignty must believe that our God turned and overturned nations, rulers, systems and church organizations, to the furtherance of his own glory and the good of his people. The Bible doctrine of justification by faith, which in all these past centuries of darkness had been buried out of sight and out of mind by the popish doctrine of works, once more was raised up, and began to stand upon its feet. A noble work was done when this truth began once more to be preached, and grace was magnified instead of human merit. The narration of this chapter is most interesting; and yet in this very sixteenth century we find the beginning of persecution among those who were even then protesting against the oppressions of Rome. What a contradiction is poor human nature to itself. It seems wonderful that the persecuted should in their turn become persecutors; but what will man not do if grace does not prevent him?

Chapters seventeen, eighteen and nineteen take up each a century, from the sixteenth to the present time. The rise of various sects and various theories is noticed, with their unscriptural dogmas and societies, while the church of God is seen coming up out of her obscurity and darkness, leaning upon her Beloved. One thing especially is clearly presented, viz., that while the vast Catholic and Protestant world is found trusting in machinery, human authority, the sword, forms and ceremonies, learning, societies, &c., &c., the people of God have ever feared to trust these things, but have been well content to lean upon Christ, and to trust him to exalt them from their low estate. I think no one can read these three chapters without being convinced of this.

Chapters twenty, twenty-one and twenty-three contain a record of the Kehukee Baptist Association, with its churches and annual meetings from its organization down to 1885. In chapter twenty are given the full text of the old London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689, with all the Scripture references; the Kehukee Baptist Articles of Faith, adopted in 1777, and still maintained; a form of Church Covenant and Rules of Decorum; and of the license and ordina-

tion of a gospel minister; and of the constitution of Union Meetings.

Chapter twenty-four contains queries which from time to time have been sent by various churches to the Association, with the reply of the Association; a most interesting chapter altogether.

Chapter twenty-five gives the position of the Kehukee Association upon what constitutes a church, education, what is called itinerancy, Romanizing of Protestants, that is, by Protestants adopting Romanizing methods, secret societies, Sunday Schools, persecution, and feet-washing. Of it I can only say that it is a most valuable chapter.

I would, however, call especial attention to chapter twenty-two. I could wish that everybody in America who wants to know the truth would read it. It deals with modern religious inventions, and with the difference between the condition of things among Baptists at the beginning of this century and now. The confessions of Benedict (I can call them nothing else), a Baptist historian of the "New" order, show conclusively that they have forsaken the old ground, and that we occupy it. I consider this chapter alone worth the price of the book to any Old School Baptist. No; its value cannot be stated in money. If this shall induce any one to read it, or, having read it, to read it again, I shall be glad.

Chapter twenty-six deals with the churches of the Kehukee Association, and of course is more especially interesting to them, but still will be found to contain much that will interest the general reader.

Chapter twenty-seven is the last of the history proper, and contains sketches of a large number of the churches and associations scattered throughout the country. It does not claim to be complete or exhaustive, but is as much so as the most unremitting care could make it. Wherein there is lack, the junior writer of the history has informed me that it has arisen out of the unreadiness of many who were appealed to to furnish information, statistics, &c., &c. Many things in this chapter show forth most clearly the kind providence of God over his people. Then follows an Appendix, containing many matters of far more than passing interest to our Baptist brotherhood, and which add much to the value of the book; and the Index at the end is almost an encyclopædia of the book. Any name, any event, any place in the book, can be found by it in a moment.

In closing this brief and imperfect review I can only say that there is so much to praise that I have no time nor space to criticise or censure even the few things I might feel disposed to censure. I would only say that I shall not criticise it until I can write better myself. The matter of it is unexceptionable, and the style of the writing one long delight to me as I read it.

I remain, as ever, your brother in Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

WHITE CHURCH, N. Y., June 15, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I have been requested to write some of the Lord's dealings with me, I take my pen feeling how weak and small I am, even the least of his children, if one at all. When I see how sinful I am, I often feel that I am not a child of God, and that my wicked heart has deceived me and the people of God. At other times, when my heart is filled with love and praise to God, I can truly say, My Redeemer lives; and because he lives, I shall live also.

When I was but a child, about thirteen years old, I thought I experienced religion, as I distinctly remember how precious the Savior was to me then, and how I was many times cast down, and led to mourn and cry unto the Lord on account of my sins. It seems now that I was always wanting to live better, and nearer to God, but always finding that I failed and came short of what I believed the Lord required of me. I never like to speak of my early experience, as I cannot tell when the change took place. I united with the Methodist church and was sprinkled. I could have had my choice in the modes of baptism, but I believed what was preached at that time, that either way was right; so I was sprinkled.

As time passed, my trials and troubles increased, and the love of God grew stronger; but I think it was because, as I became older, I was more capable of understanding and realizing the dealings of God with me. I never saw the time that I had any desire to turn back to the world, as I believed at that time that any christian could; but my prayer was,

"Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee,
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me."

And it seems to-day that my prayer has been answered.

When I was about twenty-four years old, my mind became exercised on the subject of baptism, and I began to study the Bible, to prove to myself that sprinkling was right; but the more I searched, the more troubled I became; for I could not find sprinkling in the Scriptures, as baptism. I could find such passages as these, "Being buried with Christ in baptism," "Coming up straightway out of the water;" but kneeling at the water's edge and being sprinkled, as I had been, I could not find. Still I tried to think it was right, because many others were sprinkled. The minister preached it, and it seemed perfectly satisfactory to the church. But my way was not the Lord's way. I went deeper and deeper into trouble, until there was no rest of mind day or night, and it seemed that the Lord would cast me off forever. One night I shall never forget. Such a fear came over me, and such terror, that I knew not what to do. I tried to pray, but could get no relief. I knew that the Lord commanded me to be baptized, but I could not think of it. I felt that I could not go down under the water. But my trouble became so great that

I cried, "Lord, I will, if thou wilt make it known to me." When I said that, I felt the wrath of God upon me, because I had left myself a little chance to escape this duty. Then I cried, "Lord, I will, for thou hast shown it to me, and by that grace assisting me I will go under the water." In an instant my darkness left me, and light came into my soul. I felt then that the Lord was with me to own and bless. I thought that time was the happiest moment of my life. When my husband came home I told him how I felt, and together we rejoiced in the Lord. Soon the thought came, What will they all say if I am baptized? But I said, No matter what the world will say, I will be baptized. I no longer looked upon it with dread, but it seemed that I could not wait for the time to come. The next Sunday I spoke to our minister about it, and he opposed it, and said it was against the rules of the church. He said he had never heard of but one person before being dissatisfied with sprinkling, and she was partly insane. This did not change my mind a particle. I only felt the stronger, as I believed the Lord was with me. He finally told me to wait till summer, and he would see about it, as there were others expecting to be baptized at that time. But summer came, and no one was baptized. He never mentioned it to me again. It was my prayer, nearly every day of my life, that God would give me an opportunity of fulfilling my promise to be baptized. The next spring we moved to White Church, and being among Baptists I thought I could be baptized; but I soon found that I could not be, as I did not believe their doctrine. I removed my membership and united with a Methodist Church near here. I told them how I felt about baptism, and they told me I could be baptized again; but once, when an opportunity occurred, while others were baptized, I was sick, and could not go. So five years passed with that heavy load on my mind. Then I began to feel that I did not want a Methodist minister to baptize me, as he would do it for my sake, while he would consider it foolishness. And when I saw how the church upheld sprinkling, and secret organizations, I felt that I did not want to belong with them. When my husband left them and united with the Old School Baptists, I felt as if now was my time to leave the Methodists. I asked them to drop my name, or give me a letter, just which they preferred. They gave me a letter, and told me they were willing to baptize me, but I could not let them do it. My mind was as firm as ever to be baptized, but what to do I did not know. I knew of no church that believed as I did, and so I was left in this wretched state of mind. But thanks be to God, who drew me to himself and to my Bible. I read it nearly all my spare time, and prayed that he would show me the truth. As I read the Scriptures I occasionally found passages which looked like predestination; but I would pass

them by, for I could not think of believing the doctrine of predestination. It was contrary to all my early teaching. But as I read, day after day, I found things in the Bible that I never knew were there before, although I had always read it and attended Sunday School. But now it seemed changed. A part of it seemed to uphold predestination, and a part of it a conditional salvation; and so for weeks I was in this completely mixed condition, not knowing what to believe. This seemed to show me my utter helplessness. As I sat reading, one afternoon, it seemed that all I read was predestination. I could see nothing else but God's power and overruling hand in everything. Such a shaking and trembling took possession of me that I was led to cry out, "It is true, predestination is right." But before I had an opportunity to speak of it to the church, it seemed that God hid his face from me, and I was left again in darkness. Sometimes I felt as though the Lord was with me; then again I would continue in the same wretched condition, first believing one way and then the other; sometimes seeing the doctrine of predestination with tears and trembling, and then darkness following. These feelings came to me twice with the same result; but the third time this darkness came upon me I sat down to read the Bible, almost discouraged, and I did not know what to do; but my heart was lifted in prayer, that God would deliver me from my trouble. I felt that I was willing to believe anything, if he would but show me the truth. I commenced to read Matthew, and as I read it to the end I found no contradiction, but predestination all the way through. Thus the Lord opened my eyes to see the true meaning of the Scriptures. The subject of baptism was again brought to my mind. This Scripture was impressed upon me, "This is the very way, walk ye in it." I felt that it was the hand of the Lord dealing with me, and that I must obey. As I went to the door, everything seemed to be for the praise of God. Then my prayer was that he would not send darkness as I had felt before. As the days passed, all was light. The brightness of that particular time had faded, but there was no darkness, and my mind was more at rest. But soon other troubles came; one of them was the thought of how hard it would be to leave my near and dear friends; but when the Lord undertakes anything, he never fails, and I firmly believe that he led me in this way. Again I felt that the church would not want to receive me, as I was so unworthy to be a member among them. I felt also that I could not stand up before them and tell them what I had passed through. So one thing troubled me, and then another, until the church meeting, where the Lord enabled me to tell how I felt; and unworthy as I am, the church received me, and I was baptized by Elder Charles Bogardus, June 5, 1887.

It would be useless for me to attempt to express my feelings at the

time of my baptism. Only those who have experienced the same can know anything about it. There was such a peaceful calmness about it, that I have often thought if I could have the same feelings when I come to go down into the waters of death and feel the same supporting arms underneath me to bear me over the river, then I could say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The day of my baptism will always be a bright spot in my memory, and for a whole week I lived on the happiness of that day. Although my mind has at times been cast down since that day, yet my faith grows stronger in the doctrine of election and predestination; and what I once thought to be a hard doctrine, I now can believe, and rejoice that there is One "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

Now, as I look back over my life, I can see how the Lord takes his own way to carry on his own purposes, and it is a blessed thought that "he doeth all things well."

I do not know as any of my experience will reach the heart of any one who may read this, but if it is of no value to others it has cheered my poor heart to write it. As I close this letter, my heart is filled with the love of God and to the dear children scattered all over the world. God knows where they are, and in his own good time he will gather them to himself in glory.

Your unworthy sister,
F. E. STEVENS.

HOPEWELL CAPE, N. B., Feb. 28, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I would like to submit my views on Matthew xiii. 24, for your consideration.

I regard the parables as so many pictures of the same thing, but viewed from different standpoints; and in studying the lessons taught we should be careful not to blend them together, only so far as they have respect to each other.

"The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field." You will perceive that the field was his, and he was the kingdom; therefore the tares were his (Job xii. 16), and he had a right to do with them as he pleased. I think the field means the whole professed religious world, from the beginning to the end of time; and the tares refer to all false worshipers who die in their sins, and are the children of Satan, in a religious or spiritual point of view, being brought into this field by Satanical agency, and are under the influence of the spirit of antichrist.—2 Thessalonians ii. 11. The apostle says that if Satan be transformed into an angel of light, no marvel if his ministers shall transform themselves into ministers of righteousness. At a very early date we find these two classes of worshipers in the world; but they could never agree, though the enmity seemed to be all on the side of the tares; and so it will be to the end of time. The tares were plenty in Paul's

time.—Acts xxi. 20. We read that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."—See 2 Tim. iii. 1-8.

"While men slept." Sleep is a figure expressive of our ignorance of the true state of things, in which state we seldom dream the truth. You know how it was before the split in your churches. They dreamed that everything was prosperous and joyful, that the Lord was adding to the churches, but little thought that Satan was equally busy in sowing tares, until they were awakened to the fact that it is not all gold that glitters. As you are not allowed to judge, only so far as fellowship is concerned, you can have nothing to do with pulling up the tares; and, as you admit, there are many of the Lord's people in Babylon, though you cannot pick them out, because you cannot discriminate; so they must both grow together till the end of the world. Of course the world comes to an end with all who die. But as regards the devices of Satan, which are so apparent in his manifold inventions, schemes and stratagems to deceive souls, there is no need that I write unto you.

The manner of sowing the good seed is better understood, as in the forty-fourth verse: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field." The field is the same in both parables, so far as the good seed are concerned, and must be bought at any cost, even life itself, if called for. The Savior says, "He that is ashamed to confess me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and his holy angels." The field is called the kingdom, in the general acceptance of the term; and he will ultimately gather out of it all things that offend, and them that do iniquity. Now, as they of the circumcision represent the professed worshipers of God under the gospel dispensation, so the gospel state of the church is a representation of the heavenly kingdom.—2 Timothy iv. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 25-28. As the destruction of Jerusalem represents the final dissolution of all things, so the language that applies to the former must apply to the latter, or to the same effect.—Acts xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 8, 9. I think that the term "righteous," in verse forty-three, embraces the whole redeemed family of God. The poet sings,

"Babes thither caught from womb and breast,

Claim right to sing above the rest,
Because they've found the happy shore
They never saw nor sought before."

See Matthew xxi. 15, 16. But though the apostles filled such a conspicuous position in the church, yet they did not claim perfection.—1 Cor. xiii. 9-12.

I would like to give my views on Luke xvi. 19-31. To my mind the Savior is showing the difference between the child of God and the self-righteous Pharisee, with regard to their present position and the future; and in doing so he takes the most abject state of the former and the most favorable position of the latter.

The rich man represents the high priest, who presided over the Sanhedrim, and was judge in their ecclesiastical assemblies, and in olden times governed in the fear of God.—2 Chron. xxvi. 17-20. But in the latter days they were influenced by the spirit of antichrist.—John xviii. 19-24; Acts iv. 5-7; vii. 1, 2; xxiii. 2-6. The purple represents his authority; the fine linen represents his legal righteousness; his sumptuous living represents his head knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures; and his five brethren represent the different orders of the priesthood. He died, and was buried; that is, he had a pompous funeral, consistent with his dignity. But how sad his disappointment—his soul in hell. (I do not understand the Savior to teach that the saved and the lost hold correspondence in perdition. You are aware that a metaphor only gives the general outlines of the fact.) He had boasted all his life of having Abraham to his father, and thought that a guarantee for his acceptance with God; but now, though he calls Abraham father, and Abraham calls him son, it all avails nothing. He manifests the same selfish disposition, and preaches the same lies in perdition that he did on earth. But how different with Lazarus. While here he could hardly believe that Abraham would notice such a worthless creature as he considered himself to be; but to his joyful surprise he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. What if his body found a pauper's grave, or had no burial, since his soul or spirit is clasped in the loving arms and affections of his father Abraham.

If you can fancy a soul that is born of the Spirit living in a country where only a "do and live" or a yea and nay gospel is preached, and has no christian society, but is surrounded by the rankest Arminians, having no knowledge of the New Testament, then you may form some idea of the beggar; for although his natural understanding were unenlightened, yet through the teaching of the Spirit he would hate sin and love holiness, and would know that his heart was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; that he was wounds, bruises and putrefying sores from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, and there was no soundness in him; and the dogs, or those who make no pretension to religion, are more agreeable or congenial companions than the haughty Pharisee. (As regards the idea that the animal life constitutes the soul of man, see Leviticus xvii. 10-14.) The best evidence that I have of acceptance with God is love to the truth, and to those who love the truth; and as regards our different views on difficult subjects, it has nothing to do with fellowship. For my own part, I wish to be corrected when I err.

Yours in brotherly love,
GILBERT DIXON.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Aug. 6, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have just read the SIGNS for July 15,

current volume. I feel an impression to write a few lines in response to the request of A. M. Fetter, Southampton, Pa., in this issue upon the subject of prayer.

In the first place I will say that God's people have been a praying people in all ages of the world. To pray means to beg, beseech, plead with, &c. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and all the prophets prayed to the God of heaven, thus acknowledging him as the center of all adoration and praise and as the Supreme Ruler of the universe, to "whom belongeth the issues from death." The prayers of many of the ancient saints are recorded in the Scriptures, so that we know exactly the contents of their supplications. Jesus taught his disciples to pray. Paul said, "Brethren, pray for us." It requires but a casual observance of the Scriptures to see that God's people have always prayed, either in secret or in public, or both. Christ himself prayed both in public and in secret. As to the position of the body in praying I do not think it matters; as we have instances on record where they prayed both standing and kneeling. I think custom and tradition had a good deal to do with the position of the body in public prayer. In this country it is the custom among the Old Baptists to kneel when they pray; and it is regarded as almost sacrilegious to see a person stand upon his feet to pray. A person standing to pray is at least regarded too proud to bend the knee. Such things are practiced by other orders; but by the Old Baptists very rarely. I understand that it is the custom among the Old Baptists of the north and east to stand up when praying in public. God does not judge after the outward appearance or the position of the body. He looks at the heart. I think the surrounding circumstances ought to govern as a general thing. For instance, I have seen a brother get down to pray in a large concourse, and speak in such a low and broken tone that perhaps half the audience could not tell what he said; and from this course I have been led to regard public prayer in a different light to what I once did. My opinion is that public prayer is intended for the edification of the church, just as preaching is; and if the prayer or the preaching is in a tone of voice that cannot be understood by the church, they cannot say amen, and consequently are not edified. Paul says, "Let all things be done unto edifying." So I think where there is a large congregation assembled it is best to stand up to pray. It seems to me then that public prayer is intended to edify and benefit others as well as the one speaking in prayer; but secret prayer is quite a different thing. It matters not how broken the language may be, or whether the lips move at all or not. We are praying then for our own satisfaction and comfort; and God knows the

secret thoughts of our hearts; and often the "Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." But whether uttered or not, God knows the meaning of our groans; and he "understandeth our thoughts afar off." I believe that the Lord has made it our duty to ask him for such things as we have need of, although "your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." And "we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities." And he that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, &c. "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith; not wavering, &c.

"Ah! whither could I flee for aid
When tempted, desolate, dismayed;
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
Had suffering saints no mercy seat?"

The apostle says, "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace; that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need." I can say for myself that I often find my heart charged with involuntary prayer to Almighty God; and I know that when this is the case it is not formality. As to public worship I am satisfied there is more or less formality in all our devotions; and if formality be a just reason why we should neglect public prayer, for the same reason I think we should cease to preach and sing praises to God in a public capacity. But still I feel that we ought to dispense with all the formality we possibly can. The less the better, I think. O that God by his unerring Spirit would melt our hearts before him, and grant us the Spirit of true and contrite devotion, so that when we meet in the assemblies of the saints we may "ascribe greatness unto our God," and "Speak of the glories of his kingdom and talk of his power."

Dear brethren, I have just returned home from a tour of twenty-six days in Alabama and Georgia. I tried to preach about thirty-three times in the twenty-six days, and traveled about six hundred miles. I left my wife and five little children by themselves; but nothing harmed them in my absence, neither had they any serious sickness; for which I desire to thank the Lord. This is the second trip I have made to Georgia since the twentieth of May. I met many precious brethren and friends, and was well received and cared for. On my first trip I met with Elder Hancks, at Atlanta, and was with him about a week. He was on his return home from Indiana and Kentucky. On my last trip I had the company of Elder W. Lively, of Montgomery, Alabama, for several days, and heard him preach some able sermons. I left him at Columbus, Georgia, on his way to South Alabama, where he has appointments out till the first of September. At his request I stopped and preached for the little church in Montgomery at night, at which time a dear sister united with the church by experience. She came from the

Catholics. The church in Montgomery now numbers thirteen, but they have no house of worship yet.

I would say to the brethren who read the SIGNS that I am traveling and preaching nearly all the time. Now I am ready to go almost any time wherever I am solicited by the household of faith; which they can signify by writing to me. I have some thought of trying to go to Kentucky in September, and I feel a little inclination to visit the brethren in Texas before a great while. I cannot be satisfied except when I am traveling and preaching. If I could I should stay at home.

Your humble servant,

H. J. REDD.

NOTICE OF BOOK.

History of the Church of God, from the Creation to A. D. 1885; including especially the History of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association, U. S. By Elder C. B. Hassell; revised and completed by Elder S. Hassell. (G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, Orange Co., New York.) To say that a book is large may not necessarily mean that it is good; to say that it is small may not necessarily mean that it is bad. On the contrary, small books are generally better than large ones, as they often contain much in little.

Now, to say that the book before us is a large one would not give any idea of its magnitude; neither would it were we to say it consists of upwards of a thousand pages; but when we add that the Table of Contents consists of nearly fourteen pages, that there is an Index of about one hundred and thirty columns, and Notes and Tables making about twenty pages more—all, Contents, Notes and Tables, in Nonpareil type, too small for us to read without the aid of an eyeglass, and when we add that, taking it all in all, the book is one of the most interesting, of human production, we ever held in our hands, then our readers may agree with us in saying that the book is one of no ordinary character.

The Preface informs us that it took nine years to compile the work; and years of hard labor they must have been. The elder author worked at it for two years and a half, and was taken home in April, 1880; and the younger one, his son, was appointed by the Kehukee Baptist Association to complete it.

It is divided into twenty-seven chapters, with an Appendix. Chapter one dwells upon the Creation; chapter two carries us from the Fall of Man to the Death of Abraham; and so on; for our limits forbid particulars.

We have read a good deal of the book, as long, from time to time, as we could hold it up to our eyes, and have then laid it down, and then tried again; and we certainly have not to complain that any of the time was lost. We had some correspondence with the elder author, not only with reference to the Baptists in England, but also with reference to our views of the Establishment.

The account given of events in the

nineteenth century is a wonderful one, occupying upwards of eighty pages, and every page readable. We will make a few extracts, taken at random:

"The Old Catholics in Europe separating from the New [as they would not accept of the Pope's infallibility]; the Free Church of Scotland withdrawing from the Scotch Established Church in 1843; the Old School Baptists in the United States separating from the New School, 1828-42; the Strict Baptists in England separating from the Association Baptists in 1835 [we think our author must have taken this date from the commencement of the *Gospel Standard*; but the Strict Baptists began to separate from the Association at least thirty years before that time, on the settling of Mr. Gadsby in Manchester]; the Methodists dividing into at least a dozen sects, and in the United States separating into Northern and Southern, in 1844; the Society of Friends becoming heterodox in 1813; a very extensive decay of their ancient faith among Jews, Brahmins, Buddhists, Mahometans and Protestants—the latter almost universally abandoning their original Calvinism for Catholic Arminianism, and many going off into Pelagianism and Universalism; the decayed and deadened condition of Greek Catholicism; the vigorous revival and blasphemous culmination of Roman Catholicism (Ultramontanism), regaining a significance and influence such as it has not had for centuries; the affirmation by Pius IX., in 1854, of the sinlessness (immaculate conception) of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God and the Queen of heaven, thus increasing Mariolatry; the declaration of the Vatican Council, in 1870, of the infallibility of the Pope, from whose decision no one can deviate 'without loss of salvation'; the exhuming and deciphering of the ancient monumental records of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia, all tending to illustrate and confirm, in the most wonderful manner, the exact truthfulness of the Old Testament Scriptures, at a time when such a confirmation seems most needed by an unbelieving world; many new translations of the Scriptures into the languages of both civilized and uncivilized peoples; the union of the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches in Prussia; the Tractarian or Anglo-Catholic movement in the Church of England, resulting in Ritualism, Romanism and Scepticism; the foundation of the Broad-Church ('so broad that you cannot see across it,' says Mr. John Gadsby, of London), in addition to the High-Church and Low-Church parties in the Church of England; 'the Church of England,' says Mr. Allen, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, 'thus retaining in its folds those whom no other form of organized christianity could tolerate;' Bishop Colenso assailing the authenticity of the Pentateuch, &c.; the obliteration of almost all distinctions between the various Protestant Churches—self-styled sincerity, no matter what one

believes, any religion or no religion, being all that is necessary for salvation; the doubt, suppression or denial, by the most of Protestants, of many of the vital truths of christianity; a diminished sense of sin, and a fainter conviction of the indispensability of the atoning blood of the Son of God, and of the regenerating power of the Spirit of God; a disbelief in the special providence of God extending to all the events of human life; a degrading of the Scriptures to the level of all other books; the stigmatizing of those who adhere to the old unpopular doctrinal truths, proclaimed by the prophets and by Christ and his apostles, as being a hundred years behind the times; the steadfast and immovable adherence of a very small remnant, according to the election of grace, to original apostolic principles and practices, in the face of continual blasts of unpopularity, ridicule, slander, contempt and persecution, only those who have eyes to see being able to discern the unworldly and spiritual motives of these despised and calumniated servants of the Most High God," &c., &c.

For the present we must stay our pen.—*The Christian's Monthly Record* (London, England).

NORA SPRINGS, Iowa, March 5, 1886.

GENTLEMEN EDITORS:—The following letter is at your disposal. The letter will explain itself.

DEAR AUNT:—You ask me to write my christian experience for you. You say you never heard it, and would like to hear it so much, it makes me feel like trying to tell you the dealings of the Lord with me. Being a poor hand to remember dates, I cannot give you the year or the day of the month. I was thirteen years old when I felt that I was a sinner, and would like to be a christian. I always attended Sunday School and meetings, and loved to go and hear people talk, pray and sing. I thought they were good christians, but thought I was a great sinner. Sometimes my feelings would get the better of me. I would feel so guilty and sinful that I would find myself weeping. Sometimes some would talk to me, and tell me how to pray. One time I told them I could not pray. I felt as if it was mockery for me to pray in the way they told me to; for they told me to kneel down by the side of my bed, before my father and mother. I went on in this way until in the winter, when they had a protracted meeting at our school-house. I attended the meeting with my folks. As I was going to meeting, and thinking about being such a sinner, I thought I would go to the mourner's bench and see if I could get religion; for I thought it was something I could get if I went to work in the right way. When they called for mourners, I went with others. They gathered around us, and prayed, and then sung a verse, and then they wanted to hear from the mourners. But I did not feel any better, and I told them I did not. I went to the bench

through the entire meeting, but I did not get benefited. They told me that there was something I was holding to that was the reason I did not get religion. I tried to find out what it was. I was perfectly willing to give up everything, and did all I could to get religion. But the meetings closed and I was no better. After this the preacher went around to the houses to take the names of the converts. He came to our house to take my name. I told him I did not have religion, and was not fit to join the church. He wanted to have my name put down, and said it might be I would feel different. That killed all the faith I had in him, and turned me against them all, and I could not bear to go to their meetings any more. Then I went with my folks to the Old Baptist meeting. I went along in this way for about eight years, troubled at times with a great many serious thoughts, all of which I kept to myself. During this time I was married and became the mother of two children. My husband now made up his mind to go to Iowa, and left me with my father. You remember I came and stayed awhile with you in Illinois at that time. While I was there was the time of the monthly meeting at the Providence Church, and I went to the meeting. We had a good meeting. I felt happy, and I loved them all. When we went home I said nothing about my feelings to any one, but felt happy all the evening. I went to meeting the next day, which was Sunday, and afterwards I went whenever there was meeting. Every time I felt like I wanted to be one of them. Then I would look back and question myself as to what made me feel so. I knew they (the Baptists) believed in a change. Was there any in me? I was not troubled about my sins any more. Where had it gone to? I was wanting to join the church, but kept all these feelings to myself. I did not wish any one to know them. I went on this way about three years. When the Baptists commenced having prayer meeting every Wednesday evening, I attended the meetings. One evening as we were coming home from meeting I felt a calm, happy feeling all the way home. I went to bed, but I could not sleep. I asked the Lord, if he had forgiven my sins, to show it to me in a way I might know it and not doubt. What I then saw and felt I shall not forget. There was a rushing sound went all over me, from my head to my feet, and I noticed I was wet with sweat. I felt so light and happy, I could hardly keep still. I wanted to sing. I fell asleep, and when I awoke in the morning everything looked so bright and so good. I loved everybody, and felt like singing all the time. The next day we went to Mr. Sallee's to visit. As we were talking, Mrs. Sallee asked me to tell her the state of my mind. She said she believed I had a hope. Then I told her my feelings, and a part of what I had seen. I do not know why I did not tell her all. She appeared satisfied with what I told

her. But I could not rest, so I told her all I saw, and she satisfied my mind, so that I went to the church with my case, they received me, and I was baptized. Then I thought my troubles were all gone. The things I once took pleasure in were no comfort to me now. My mind was not on natural things. I loved to talk of the Lord and to trust in him. When I heard older ones tell of their doubts, I thought I never would doubt. But O how soon I found out my mistake. I was afraid I was deceived myself, and that I had deceived the church. So I have travailed along in darkness, my mind filled with the cares of this world, the greater part of the time, until about four years ago, when I hope and trust the Lord again showed me my duty, and I was again made to rejoice; and it was pleasure to me to talk about the Lord, and to read his precious word. But O, my dear aunt, I see so much sin mixed with all I do. If I read, or pray, or talk, or listen to others, it is not without sin. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace are ye saved." All my hope is in him. I cannot do anything of myself. I feel that I am less than the least of all saints, if one at all.

Yours in love,

MARY LOUISA FISHER.

St. Lucie, Fla., Aug. 10, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that you say the postmaster at St. Lucie, Florida, informed you that he delivered the Church History to my son-in-law, which is not so. He delivered the books to Charlton S. Swain, my son. My son, C. S. Swain, mailed the two letters which I spoke of in the *Landmark*, which I think you acknowledged in your reply. You say you spent over fifty dollars to get a hearing from the various subscribers to the Church History. You must certainly have received one of my letters, or you would not have mailed the books to St. Lucie, Florida. You stated in your postal card that it would take fifty cents in addition to the two dollars to pay for the Church History bound in leather. I wrote you to send on the two dollar books to our address, St. Lucie, Florida. I sent to the office for the books, and the postmaster told my son that they were not there, so I wrote to you again, but received no answer; hence the letter in the *Landmark*. We have all felt in and around our pockets, as you suggested, and no letter is to be found, so I think "Uncle Sam" must have miscarried them; or it may be that it was so trashy that it fell into brother Beebe's waste-basket.

Now, dear Elder William L. Beebe, I have known you by reputation for a long while. I used to read the *Southern Baptist Messenger*, edited by you in Covington, Georgia, and have always held you as one of God's anointed ministers of the gospel. I

have read and re-read my letter in the *Landmark*, and I fail to find anything in it that would intimate dishonesty either on your part or that of Elder S. Hassell. I assure you that I had no intention of accusing you or Elder S. Hassell of any dishonest intentions. I thought it might be that the History had failed for want of subscribers, or something else, and was a failure. The brethren Raulerson kept inquiring about the books, and looked to me to see after them. I wrote several letters to Elder S. Hassell about the History, and he always answered my letters satisfactorily, which would ease the minds of the brethren Raulerson on the subject of the History. I am always sorry to see criticism in Primitive Baptist papers; and when it comes to touching on dishonesty of intentions in Elders, I would be far from intimating such a thing. I ask you, in all candor, to show where I intimated any such thing as dishonesty in you or Elder Hassell. Truly,
JOEL W. SWAIN.

REPLY.—In reply to the foregoing letter we will say that we are perfectly satisfied with brother Swain's explanation of his letter sent to brother Gold for publication; but as he requests us to point out what seemed to us to be an accusation of dishonesty of intentions on the part of Elder Hassell or ourselves, we will very frankly do so.

In the first place the letter begins thus: "Dear Elder Gold:—Will you be kind enough to publish this article in your esteemed paper for the benefit of brethren who have subscribed for the 'Church History' five or six years ago?" The letter then goes on to state that there had been two letters written to G. Beebe's Sons, but no reply received. This we construed to mean that it would "benefit" those brethren who had already sent on their money, by saving them the trouble and expense of writing to inquire anything about it, and serve as a warning to those who might intend sending a remittance to not be caught in the same trap.

The letter closes with, "If they don't aim to send the 'History,' please send the money back to our address," &c. This sounded to us as if the brother thought there was danger of our keeping the money and not sending the books.

We have now stated as plainly as we are able how the letter seemed to us; but as brother Swain says that he intended nothing of the kind, we are glad to acknowledge that we misconstrued his meaning.—ED.

VERONA, Ill., Dec. 18, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I feel that I could not do without the SIGNS. It comes richly laden with heavenly treasures. I do love to hear from dear friends that I have never seen, and never expect to see in this world of sin and sorrow; but I have a hope through rich grace that we shall one day meet with all the redeemed in glory and join in that song to the Lamb that was slain. I sometimes

wonder if such a poor worthless thing as I feel myself to be will be there. My only hope is in Jesus. I have nowhere else to look, and have no other righteousness than that which Jesus wrought out on Calvary to cover poor sinners who feel that their own righteousnesses are but as filthy rags. But when

"These filthy rags are laid aside,
Jesus clothes us as his bride;
Himself provides the wedding dress,
The robe of perfect righteousness."

It is now nearly fifty years since the Lord opened my eyes to see what a poor sinner I was. I was made a beggar at mercy's door, and I continue to beg for mercy for Jesus' sake; for I am as poor as ever, with not one good thing in myself. Sin is mixed with all I do, say or think. I know that if the Lord has begun the good work he will carry it on and perfect it. I feel at times to wonder if that good work is begun in me. I feel so cold and lifeless, and am often led to cry to the Lord, that if it is not begun he will begin it, for I cannot. How many changes we often feel in one day, and, I might say, in one hour. But it is a mercy that we have a God who knows no change, and knows where his children are, and will never turn a deaf ear to their cries, whether they be far from their kindred in Christ or near them. We often ask why some are so situated; but the Lord knows what is best. His ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. We are poor, short-sighted creatures, and know but little; but this one thing we know, that we are poor, helpless things, and need an arm stronger than our own.

I have been permitted to meet with our little Ebenezer Church, and have felt it good to meet with my dear kindred in Christ. One hour spent with the dear brethren and sisters is sweeter than anything else I know. We have our dear brother Bradbeer come to us once a month, and he brings forward that truth which he knows and feels.

"I love to meet among them now,
Before his gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all."

Sometimes when the brethren and sisters are telling of the Lord's goodness to them, it is like a little heaven below. I have sometimes thought,

"If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the fountain be?"

When all the redeemed get home, and join in that song, "Worthy is the Lamb,"

"Then will we sing more sweet, more loud,
And Christ will be our song."

I remain, I hope, your sister in Jesus,

HESTER RUMNEY.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS,

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1887.

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

FOLLOWING JESUS.

"BUT Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."—Matthew viii. 22.

An esteemed brother requests the views of the editor and correspondents of the SIGNS on the question whether this command of our Lord forbids his disciples going to the burial of a worldling. It might be a sufficient reply to say that we do not so understand the record in connection with the text; but as there may be others to whom there may seem obscurity in this language, we will submit some thoughts in connection with the subject, which should be carefully compared with the inspired Scriptures, and received only as consistent with that standard of faith and practice.

In the immediately preceding context it is written that a certain Scribe came and said unto Jesus, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." To him the Lord replied very discouragingly, saying, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Then follows the text. Evidently the primary importance of implicit obedience to the commandments of the Ruler of Zion is the theme of instruction in the circumstances here written. It was not the mere history which the inspired penman was moved to record. That might have been done without the writers being specially guided by the Spirit; but they were moved by the Holy Ghost to write those things whose truth is attested in the individual experience of the saints, and thus every subject of divine teaching is a competent witness of the truth that "Salvation is of the Lord," and that salvation extends to all things in this present world as well as in eternity.

Under the ceremonial law of typical Israel it was very rigidly required that they should be separated from the heathen nations surrounding them, insomuch that they had no dealings even with their neighbors the Samaritans (John iv. 9), although they claimed to be worshipers of the one God of their fathers. This exclusiveness was so deeply impressed upon the minds of the Jews that Peter required divine instruction before he was qualified to confess that "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—Acts x. 34, 35. This was all inseparable from their peculiar nationality and their character as the type of the church of Christ; but the type is not the reality, nor is the shadow to be mistaken for the substance. Under the law of Moses every injunction was a mere external

requirement. No knowledge of spiritual truth was demanded of those whose natural birth brought them under its authority. They who are Christ's are the antitypical seed of Abraham; and such are not under bondage to the law of Moses. The Israelite who touched a dead body was unclean from that contact; so the saints under the law of Christ are contaminated by touching any lifeless carcase, whether of the satisfied law of Moses, or of the carnal elements of the religion of this world. They may never attend a literal burial, and yet by following after the doctrines and commandments of men they may dwell among the tombs; and they may be often found sympathizing with the bereaved mourners who are called to bury their dead, and yet never disobey the injunction in the text. The turning point is found in the two words of Jesus, "Follow me." The Spirit of Christ never leads anywhere but where he went; therefore it is always safe to obey this direction.

In rendering our assistance on funeral occasions it is not needful that we should indorse or approve either the faults of the dead or the false doctrines of those who may speak; but as Paul could eat meat in the idol's temple, knowing that an idol is nothing in the world, so the saints may contribute social services to their bereaved companions without uniting in their idolatrous devotions, even though necessarily compelled to hear and see things in opposition to their own belief. It is not possible to avoid associating with opposers of the truth while in this world; for even when hidden from all our fellow-men, self is still present with all the elements of enmity against God in the carnal mind. Therefore, it is highly important for the comfort and peace of the saints that they heed the admonition of Paul to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."—Eph. v. 15-17.

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is not a mere letter to be learned by study. It is the living principle of righteousness in the new heart which constantly desires to bear the likeness of the perfect Lord Jesus. When led by this Spirit there can be no departure from the right way of the Lord; when following the devices of the natural mind there is no obedience to the word of Jesus in the most exact observance of the letter of his directions.

RAILING AGAINST TRUTH.

"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 a one no not to eat."—1 Corinthians v. 11.

In all kindness and in love we are forced to the painful duty of calling the attention of our esteemed brethren, the editors of the *Gospel Messenger*, to the blasphemy implied and

expressed in the article against predestination in their September number, beginning on page 428. If it is not railing against plain scriptural truth, it would be hard to find such railing in the writings of any openly avowed infidel.

We do not feel called upon to argue the subject any more than to discuss pantheism or the tenets of Mahomet. The writer but advances the slander condemned by the Holy Ghost in the apostles' time; of whose authors Paul says, "As we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come; WHOSE DAMNATION IS JUST."—Rom. iii. 8. With the writer we would obey the command in the text to keep no company; "no not to eat." From personal acquaintance, it is incredible to us that the brethren editors of that publication indorse such palpable contradiction of the inspired Scriptures; yet its insertion without comment lends it the weight of their approval. Its inconsistency with Scripture is manifest to every careful reader of the Bible. That it opposes old Baptist doctrine is evident by comparison with the following paragraphs from the Confession of Faith adopted in London in 1689, by more than one hundred congregations of baptized believers, and indorsed by all the earlier churches in America, before they were corrupted by the false theory of Andrew Fuller. We copy from Hassell's Church History, and refer to the pages.

"God hath (Isa. xlii. 10; Eph. i. 11; Heb. vi. 17; Rom. ix. 15, 18) decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin (James i. 15, 17; 1 John i. 5), nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather (Acts iv. 27, 28; John xix. 11) established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness (Numbers xxiii. 19; Eph. i. 3-5) in accomplishing his decree.

"Although God knoweth whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all (Acts xv. 18) supposed conditions, yet hath he not decreed anything (Romans ix. 11, 13, 16, 18), because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions."—Page 670.

"The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence, that his determinate counsel (Rom. xi. 32-34; 2 Sam. xxiv. 1; 1 Chron. xxi. 1) extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men (and that not by a bare permission); which also he most wisely and powerfully (2 Kings xix. 28; Psalm lxxvi. 10) boundeth, and otherwise ordereth and governeth, in a manifold dispensation to his most holy (Gen. i. 20; Isa. x. 6, 7, 12) ends; yet so as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the creatures, and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or (Psalm i. 21; John ii. 16) approver of sin."

"As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as a righteous judge, for former sin doth (Romans i. 24, 25,

28, and xi. 7, 8) blind and harden; from them he not only withholdeth his (Deut. xxix. 4) grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understanding and wrought upon in their hearts, but sometimes also withdraweth (Matt. xiii. 12) the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such (Deut. ii. 30; 2 Kings viii. 12, 13) objects as their corruptions make occasion of sin; and withal (Psalm lxxxi. 11, 12; 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11) gives them over to their own lusts and temptations of the world and the power of Satan, whereby it comes to pass that they (Ex. viii. 15, 32; Isa. vi. 9, 10; 1 Peter ii. 7, 8) harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for the softening of others."—Page 672.

Carnal reason cannot comprehend divine truth; yet the word of God is true. "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places."—Psalm cxxxv. 6. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Primitive Baptists, in session with the Bethlehem Church, Prince William Co., Va., August 17th, 18th and 19th, 1887, to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—God has been pleased to spare many of us who have been accustomed to assemble ourselves together on occasions similar for many years. Truly goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life. O for a heart to remember and appreciate his blessings, and to praise him for his goodness to the children of men.

It is also true that some of our beloved ones have passed over and gone hence. As we are all hastening, soon to know for ourselves the reality of our hope, let us consider the solemn subject as brought to view in First Corinthians xv. 22, 23: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." We trust that in the consideration of these words we may receive comfort. Who but a christian can receive comfort in thinking of death? Death is the passage through which all must pass to the joys we live in the hope of. We must die to live.

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Our death in Adam is in some way or in some sense a likeness of and fitly represents our resurrection unto life in Christ; for the apostle is writing upon the resurrection in all this connection, and we cannot suppose that this expression is foreign to the subject. As is the one, so is the other. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It is clear to our mind that the apostle uses one to explain the other. He does not mean to say that all who die in Adam are raised in Christ; but as they die in Adam, even so in Christ they are made alive. It is as if he had said,

If you understand how and why all die in Adam, you will understand how and why all are made alive in Christ. That all die, we need no proof; and why, is explained by the apostle's own words. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. So then all men die in Adam; because, for the transgression of Adam death passed upon them. Not because of their personal sin or transgression, but because death passed upon them in Adam; and so inflexible is this law that those who never sinned were compelled to suffer its penalty. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Now, by the transgression of Adam all die. None are exempt; none are spared; none escape; the old and the young; those without law, or those with and under law; the godly and the ungodly. "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath."—Eccl. ix. 2.

"Even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."—Romans v. 17. Not only is the gift of righteousness, which is life, made as sure through Christ as was the death made sure through Adam, but "much more" so; for it is written, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—Romans v. 9, 10. Do any question that all will die? and it is because of the transgression of one man, and that one man the progenitor of all men. All sprang from that one man, all are begotten by him, and all live the life of Adam. Not another life, but the identical life of Adam is our life, who was cursed with death. Hence death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. Not all will, but have sinned. Neither can we question that in like manner and for similar reason all shall be made alive in Christ. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son." He is careful to mention which life—"this life." As the life that was given us in Adam, and is Adam's life, is the life in which he transgressed, and for which death passed upon the man, even so, in like manner, the life that was given us in Christ (according to the record), and is Christ's life, is the life that obeyed, and by which obedience the gift of eternal life came upon all that were given life in Christ; for all have obeyed. "For as by one man's dis-

obedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." It was the Adamic man upon which disobedience unto death passed; even so it is the Adamic man upon which the obedience passed unto justification of life. So the Adamic man whose life is in Christ (not the Adamic life) has rendered obedience unto the law, and is justified from all things; yet has he not received the life, but the promise of it, the spirit of it. And having faith in Christ, that he in Christ satisfied the law, he lives in the hope of the life of Christ. As Paul says, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2. So he has the "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."—1 Tim. iv. 8. As yet the man has not obtained this life, but shall be raised in Christ, raised in his life, made alive in Christ. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

"But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Christ was first in order; afterward they that are Christ's. No division, no difference in time, here mentioned between them that are Christ's; afterward they, all of them, at his coming. The order is between Christ and them, unless there be many comings of Christ; and as the apostle is here dwelling upon the resurrection, we can hardly believe there is more than one coming of this kind and for this purpose, that spoken of in 1 Thessalonians iv. 15-17. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." While it is here stated that the dead in Christ shall rise first, it is also stated that those which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them; so we think the order is between Christ and them. Christ the first fruits, then they that are Christ's, the after fruits. Then will have been accomplished that which is spiritually (that is, in Christ) true now. The whole harvest will have been reaped and gathered home to glory. As is the first fruits, so will the after be; that is, they shall be like him; no longer bear the image of the earthy, but the heavenly, Christ. This precludes the idea of a flesh and blood recognition in heaven. We will not bear this image. We will not appear as we do now. Christ himself will not appear as he did on earth. We shall know him no more after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Neither shall we know any man after the flesh. This is according to our experience. We know our

brethren by the Spirit of Christ that dwells in them. It does not yet appear what we shall be; why then speculate about it? Who would wish to be like Adam if they could be like Christ? The words used to express our future state are far beyond finite comprehension. A spiritual body, immortal body, quickened, incorruption, life. Who can understand what these words express? How are we to understand that which they express? The truth is, it does not yet appear. There are some things said of Jesus which are not said of us. It was never said of us that our body should not see corruption, but it was said of his. There was also a grand and glorious purpose in that identical body which was put into Joseph's new tomb, and which the disciples knew when it went down into death, being raised as it was, which is not found necessary in the resurrection of any other. That which crowns with glory and honor the entire work of the blessed Redeemer was his resurrection. Should that fail, all would be loss. All his suffering, his disgrace, dishonor and death would be of no benefit or comfort to any, if his resurrection is not established. This is not true of any other one. Not simply his resurrection, but before the eyes of those who knew him must his resurrection be established, that those who know them in the Spirit and believe their testimony may receive comfort in all their afflictions. This truth is clearly expressed in Acts x. 39-41. "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." Those who were witnesses of all things that he did, who could speak from actual knowledge, must also be able to speak from actual knowledge of his resurrection, that it was he, and not another. To confirm this, he ate and drank with them after he arose from the dead. Many things did he after his resurrection to establish the truth of it, because of the importance thereof, which importance is not attached to the resurrection of any one else. There is no more evidence that we will be raised in this identical body, because Jesus was raised in the same body, than there is that after our resurrection we will eat fish and honeycomb, because Jesus did eat fish and honeycomb after his resurrection. But it is expressly stated that it shall not be raised this body. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain." The apostle uses a natural figure to illustrate. It must be true, or he would not use it. That this body shall be raised is true, but it shall not be raised this body. It shall be raised in Christ, made alive in Christ. Then shall come to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed

up in victory," or mortality swallowed up of life, and for similar reasons to that for which we die in Adam. This body is not raised and then changed, but raised changed. Not that body that was sown, but a changed body. God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him; and he tells us what kind of a body pleases him. "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." What kind of a body a spiritual body is does not yet appear; but when we shall be raised in Christ's likeness, raised in him, it will appear, for we shall see him as he is. It does not appear before then, for no man knoweth the things of God but the Spirit of God. When we ourselves shall become that spiritual, then we shall know. That we shall become this spiritual, or life (we mean our body), is evidenced by this fact. "But 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 body by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." And thus shall he change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. There is no question then that this vile body shall be changed, that this vile body shall be raised; yet not in Adam, but in Christ. Glorious message of eternal truth. How rich the grace that conforms us to the image of God's Son.

We have had, we hope, a profitable meeting. Our correspondence has been about as usual. Our brethren in the ministry have come to us laden with the precious gospel of the grace of God, and we have indeed been made to feast while sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary; for all of which we desire to bow in heartfelt gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1888, when and where we hope to greet you again and receive your messages of love.

J. N. BADGER, Mod.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

BOKOSHE, Indian Territory.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If it is not asking too much of Uncle Ben Parker, of Texas, I would like to have his views on Acts iii. 23, which reads as follows: "And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."

R. O. BEENE, JR.

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEPARTED this life, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began," sister **Rebecca Lewis**, in the eightieth year of her age. She died on the morning of the ninth of August, at the home of her daughter-in-law, sister Rachel Lewis, in Lucas County, Iowa. Sister Rachel Lewis is a daughter of the late Elder John Parker, of Ohio, and a sister to our beloved and much afflicted sister, Mary Parker, of New Holland, Ohio.

Our departed sister Lewis had been an orderly and highly esteemed member of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church for more than sixty years. She joined when in her youth, and was baptized by Elder Thomas Harper, in the fellowship of the Scott's Creek Church, in Hocking County, Ohio, of which church she continued a member about thirty years, or till she removed to Iowa and cast in her lot with those of like precious faith. At the time of her death her membership was in the Iowa Church, formerly called Otter Creek. Sister Lewis was a sound, consistent believer in Jesus, remaining firm in the doctrine of God our Savior, and steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints, through all the storms of error, discord and delusion that have afflicted God's dear people during her pilgrimage, being kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation; and she died, we comfortingly believe, in the triumph of faith and the joy of the hope. She had been a widow over thirty years; her husband, Samuel Lewis, who was also a Baptist, and a member with her, having thus preceded her to their eternal home. She was the mother of eleven children, five sons and six daughters, of whom seven, that is, three sons and four daughters, survive her. One who has gone before her was a member with her, as are also the four surviving daughters. She died rather suddenly, her illness, which was congestion of the stomach and bowels, only lasting two days. None of her near relatives, save a portion of her daughter-in-law's family, were with her in her dying moments, but her youngest daughter arrived in time for her burial. Sister Lewis had, for many years, been living among her children, but chiefly made her home with her youngest daughter, sister Jarvis.

At the request of her daughter and daughter-in-law, the writer delivered a discourse to her memory, and for their comfort, on Sunday, August 14th, to a very attentive congregation, using 1 Thessalonians iv. 13, 14, and in connection, hymns 1224 and 1257 of Beebe's Collection.

R. M. THOMAS.

NEW MARKET, Mo., Aug. 18, 1887.

DIED—At home, in Harrison County, Texas, Jan. 25, 1887, of pneumonia, **Ira Thomas Woodall**, youngest son of R. B. and M. A. Woodall, after an illness of nine days, aged twenty-five years and eleven months. The deceased leaves a mother, one sister and three brothers, with many relatives and friends, to mourn his death. He was of a serious and thoughtful turn of mind, and was highly esteemed and loved by all who were acquainted with him. His mind had seemed much absorbed in the study of his future welfare for upwards of two years, so much so that his mother would cherish a hope sometimes that God for Christ's sake had pardoned his sins. Just three days before he died he talked a good deal, professing a willingness to go, saying he felt willing for the Lord's will to be done. His sister came to her mother and told her that she had just heard one of the sweetest sermons she ever had heard; that her brother had commenced at the first of the Bible, talking beautifully, until he came to the crucifixion of Christ. "Now," said he, "I am so nearly exhausted I cannot tell any more now; but it will be told as long as time lasts; for that is the good part of my sermon." The deceased was a firm believer in the doctrine taught by the Primitive Baptists.

ALSO,

DIED—At Ravenna, Fannin County, Texas, Mrs. **Sallie E. Newton**, daughter of B. F. and M. A. Halliburton. Deceased was born August 18, 1846, and died October 6, 1886.

She leaves a husband, four children, a mother one half-sister and three half-brothers. She was a kind, affectionate wife, an indulgent, patient mother. She professed a hope in Christ at the age of seventeen or eighteen years. The older she got, the more devoted she became to the religion of Jesus, and was ever ready to give a reason of her hope beyond the grave. She had a lovely disposition, was highly esteemed by all who knew her, and died in the triumphs of a living faith, saying she was willing for the Lord's will to be done.

By request of the mother of the deceased, sister Mary A. Woodall, I forward the above obituary notices for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord afford consolation to those who are left to mourn.

H. B. JONES.

GLENWOOD, Upshur Co., Texas.

DEPARTED this life on Thursday, July 14, 1887, at two o'clock p. m., at the residence of her son-in-law, Henry Wilson, at Oxford, Indiana, our dear mother, **Lucretia Layne**, wife of William Layne, aged seventy-five years, three months and fourteen days. Her maiden name was Searcy. She was born in Anderson County, Ky., March 26, 1812; was married to William Layne June 19, 1828; moved to Indiana, Montgomery County, in 1830. She was blessed with a good hope through grace more than fifty years ago, and joined the Old School Baptist Church called Sugar Creek, at Crawfordsville, Indiana, and was baptized by Elder John Lee. She remained a member of that church until after she removed to Benton County, in the year 1869, when she united by letter with the Old School Baptist Church called Pine Creek, under the pastoral care of Elder J. S. Whitlock, in the year 1878. She continued a member in good standing, much beloved and respected by all to the end of her pilgrimage. Her last sickness was complicated and protracted, being confined to the house about nine months. Toward the last she suffered greatly, but bore it with remarkable christian resignation. She leaves a husband and five children (two sons and three daughters), all of whom are heads of families, and were present at the burial. Having no Baptist minister here, we dispatched to Crawfordsville for one; but on account of ill health and previous engagements, none were able to get here at the appointed time. At the funeral there was scriptural reading and prayer by B. F. Daily, a few songs selected from Beebe's Collection, and a short sketch of her life read, in connection with a few remarks, with the statement that she was a firm believer that there is but one way that God saves his children, and that is by grace alone.

OUR beloved brother, **Bennet Sanford**, departed this life July 12, 1887. Brother Sanford was born in Delaware County, N. Y., May 1, 1821, where he remained until his parents removed to Ogle County, Illinois, in 1834. He was married to Miss Mary Marandy Sweet in 1847, and to them were born six children (four boys and two girls), three boys and two girls are now living. Brother Sanford united with the Buffalo Grove Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, March 11, 1855, and was baptized by Elder C. West. He served the church a number of years as clerk, was a faithful member, and beloved by all that knew him. It can be said of him that he lived peaceable with all men. He leaves a wife, five children, the church and a very large number of friends to mourn their loss; but we do not mourn as those that have no hope.

The writer preached a discourse on the occasion from 1 Corinthians xv. 3, 4, to a very large congregation of sympathizing friends, after which the mortal body was deposited in the tomb, to await the resurrection. May the sustaining grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with the bereaved family, and especially dear old sister Sanford, is our prayer.

BENJAMIN SALLEE.

DIED—At Hartland, W. T., June 11, 1887, of cerebro meningitis, **John Clement Walden Lee**, aged four years and four months; the only son of Martha Lee, and grandson of

Benjamin Walden, deceased. Truly this is the trying hour of our affliction. On the morning of the fourth day previous to his death he called me to him and said, "Mamma, I think I shall die in the morning, and I want you and papa and sister to all go home with me." He did not rest until I assured him we would all go with him. The next day he exacted the same promise from his papa. During the hours of acute suffering he prayed for mercy and seemed to be anxious for the hour to come when he should depart. His noble mind was matured far beyond his years. The fair bud of promise is gone from us; our fond hopes of his useful life are blighted forever; yet we know that in the bright beyond he will live in the glorious completeness of God's love.

"God is love," said the darling,
In the strength of his youth and pride;
And the love of God gave him strength
To brave death's billowy tide.

Dr. James Tyler, whose death occurred at his home in Attica, Wyoming Co., N. Y., June 19, 1887, was born in Rome, Oneida Co., N. Y., August 14, 1815. He was one of six brothers, four of whom were physicians. He came to Genesee County in 1837, where he soon had an extensive practice. He united with the Old School Baptist Church in Darien, and has ever since been a subscriber to the SIGNS, and an interested reader until within a few months, when failure of mental powers forbade. His acquaintances among the Baptists will remember that he was ever ready to contend for the faith he professed, with unusual zeal. His wife, who was a sister of the late J. R. Williams, yet survives, though very feeble. The text used at his funeral was Psalm cxii. 6, "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." The hymns sung were, "Rock of ages," and "Asleep in Jesus." E. S. L.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri has appointed to hold its next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Hope Primitive Baptist Church, at Miami, in Saline Co., Mo., to begin on Friday before the first Saturday in October, and continue three days (Sept. 30th, Oct. 1st and 2d). Elders, brethren and sisters of our faith and order, and all others who may feel an interest in us or a desire to visit us, are cordially invited to attend.

Miami is on the Missouri River, and between the Chicago, Alton & St. Louis, and the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific railroads, about twelve miles from the former and two miles from the latter. Those coming by the former railway from the west will come on the morning train from Kansas City to Norton, on Thursday morning, Sept. 29th, and those from the east will come on the train in the evening of the same day, to the same place, where they will be cared for by brother Wm. Griffith and others. Those coming by the latter named railway will come to Miami Station, from both east and west, on Thursday morning, Thursday evening, or Friday morning; but the Friday morning train from the west will be rather late for the opening services. If any come on a late train to Miami Station, they will take lodgings there till morning, when conveyance will be provided in the town of Miami. Those who find it necessary will, inquire for Mark Whitaker, living two miles southeast of Miami; or T. A. Easton, two miles northeast of Miami; or Mrs. Chriswell or Mr. Cresap, her son-in-law, one-half mile east of Miami; or old mother Watson, living in Miami. R. M. THOMAS.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will meet with the Valley Church, at Waynesville, Warren County, Ohio, on Friday (16th) before the third Sunday in September, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m.

Those coming from the south will come to Cincinnati, and there take the Pittsburg & Cincinnati R. R., at the Little Miami Depot, to Waynesville. Those coming from the west will come to Xenia, and there take the Pittsburg & Cincinnati R. R., to Waynesville. Those coming from the north will

come from Columbus on the Pittsburg, Cincinnati & St. Louis R. R., stopping at Waynesville. Trains arrive from Cincinnati 7.34 a. m., and 3.48 p. m., and from Columbus 9.07 a. m., and 6.15 p. m., Central Standard time. Brethren will be at the trains to care for those coming on Thursday.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and a special invitation to ministering brethren of our faith and order, to visit us at that time. Arrangement has been made for reduced rates of fare on return, as heretofore. Persons must obtain a certificate signed and stamped by ticket agents wherever tickets are purchased, certifying that full fare has been paid. Ask the agents for the certificate, as they are furnished by the company to all agents, and they are bound to fill them up when called for.

Those coming in their own conveyance will call on sister Elizabeth Right, near the Medelle Run Baptist Church, or the undersigned near Clio, Green Co., Ohio.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Particular or Old School Baptists will hold her next session, the Lord willing, with the Drift Run Church, Robertson Co., Ky., beginning on Friday morning, at ten o'clock, before the second Saturday in September, and continue three days.

Brethren, sisters and friends of our faith and order are cordially invited to attend. From Cincinnati cross the river to Covington, take the cars on the Kentucky Central (K. C.) R. R., at 8.05, city time, for Falmouth. Those coming via Lexington will take train on the same road, for same place, at about 7.00 a. m. on same day, where conveyances will be in waiting to carry friends to places of entertainment.

It is desirable for as many of our brethren as can to come in their own conveyances, as it is eighteen miles from the station. Should any come too late for the conveyances, there is a stage line running to the place of meeting daily. Take the Milford and Mt. Olivet line.

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

THE one hundred and twenty-second annual session of the Kehukee Baptist Association is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, October 1st, 2d, and 3d, with the church at Skewarkey, near Williamston, Martin Co., North Carolina. This is the one hundredth year of the constitution of that church. Visitors from the north should come either by the Norfolk & Southern Railroad, or by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad; and those from the south by the Wilmington & Weldon, and the Raleigh & Albemarle Railroads. We hope to have a large attendance of our members, and especially of our ministering brethren at this centennial gathering.

S. HASSELL, Mod.

JOSEPH D. BIGGS, Clerk.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, will be held with the Pleasant Grove Church, one mile east of Pardee, at the house of Russel Higley, in Atchison County, Kansas, commencing on Friday before the last Saturday in September, 1887, and continue three days.

Those coming by railroad will stop at Cummingville, on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Rail Road, where they will be met and conveyed to the place of meeting, two miles and a half north west. We cordially invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Those coming from the east, north and northwest will come to Atchison, and there take the A., T. & S. R. R. to Cummingville. Those from the south and southwest will stop at the same station. All had better come on Thursday, as the trains on Friday are rather late for morning service. Conveyances will be at the station on Friday, and should any be delayed they will find conveyance.

W. F. JONES.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Olive and Hurley, commencing on the 21st day of September, 1887, at ten o'clock a. m., and will continue two days.

Brethren coming from the south by way of the Ulster & Delaware R. R., will be met and

cared for at Olive Branch, at 3.20 and 7.15 p. m., Tuesday, preceding the meeting, which will commence on Wednesday. Those coming from the west will be met at Shokan and Broom's Station, at 4.29 and 4.39 p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren to meet with us.

J. MATTHEWS.

If the Lord wills, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church in Whitefield, Maine, commencing on Friday, the ninth day of September, and continue three days. A hearty welcome will be given to all strangers and pilgrims who may visit us for the worship of the living God at that time. Those coming by rail will be met at Gardiner Station, on the Maine Central R. R., about three o'clock p. m., on the day before the meeting.

H. CAMPBELL.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1887, at Hope, in Lasalle Co., Ill., four miles southwest of Tonic, on the Illinois Central R. R., and about the same from Lstant. Those coming from the north will stop at the former place and those from the south at the latter place, where they will be met by friends to take care of them. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

OUR association (the New Hope) will convene with the church at Union, in Drew Co., Ark., nine miles northeast from Monticello, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October next. We hope the Lord may move the hearts of some of our northern and eastern ministering brethren to visit us at that time.

A. TOMLIN.

THE Salem Association of Regular Baptists will meet, providence permitting, with Smyrna Church, at Bently, Hancock County, Ill., on the third Saturday in September, 1887, at ten o'clock, and continue three days.

This church is on Kehokuk Branch of the Wabash rail road. Our brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to attend.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1887, and continue three days.

This is a very convenient point, accessible by rail or water, and we hope to see a goodly number of our brethren, sisters and friends; and with this desire we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren in the ministry especially. We will endeavor to make you all comfortable.

Those coming by rail will get tickets for Snow Hill, and change cars at Harrington. The steamer Tangier will also leave South Street Warf on Tuesday afternoon and arrive at Snow Hill on Wednesday afternoon.

By order of the church,
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

THE thirty-sixth annual meeting of the Western Association will be held at Dillen, Marshall County, Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887.

I wish to notify all those who come to the Western Association to get a certificate of their tickets where they get on the cars, so they may get the benefit of the reduction in fare, should we get any.

WM. J. REEVES, Clerk.

THE Union Primitive Baptist Association have appointed to hold their next session with the Harmony Church, in Union County, Arkansas, to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887.

THE Juniata Association will be held with the Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in October, and continue over Sunday. A general invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and especially to those in the ministry. Those coming on the Central Pennsylvania will come to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop Road to Three Springs, and there inquire for Mordecai

Chilcote. They will be within three miles of the church. Those coming on the Baltimore & Ohio Road will have to come to Hancock, Md., about forty miles from the church. Those coming on this road must give timely notice by writing to brother Dennis Mellott or Ahimaaz Mellott. Direct to Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., or to brother David Johnson, Hancock, Md. Be sure to be at Hancock on Wednesday, not later than the one o'clock train, where they will be met with conveyances.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Pilgrim's Rest Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Big Blue Church, on Friday before the second Saturday in October, 1887.

The Big Blue Church is situated in Johnson County, Kansas, seven miles northeast of Olathe, the county seat, and five miles south-east of Lenexa, a railroad station on the Fort Scott & Guly Road.

Brethren and friends coming to the association will come to Lenexa on Friday morning, where they will be met and cared for. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

R. FLOURNOY.

THE Oconee Old School Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, on Saturday before the second Sunday in October next, at Mt. Zion, Clark Co., six and one-half miles from Athens, and be in session three days. Brethren and sisters are invited to attend. If coming by rail, write me at Athens, Georgia, and you will be met at whatever depot designated, at Athens, Friday evening. Ministering brethren especially are invited.

F. M. McLERROY, Clerk.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting appointed to be held with the Rock Springs Old School Baptist Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., will commence on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, and continue two days. Meeting to commence at ten o'clock, not two, as published in our Minutes.

Friends coming from Baltimore can leave Calvert Street Station at 1.55 p. m., on Friday. Those from Philadelphia will leave Broad Street Station at 2.10 p. m., and come on the P., W. & B. R. R., to Perryville. Both trains arrive at Perryville in time for the train to Conowingo, Cecil Co., Md., where the friends will be met and cared for. We extend a cordial invitation, and hope to see many of our brethren and friends at that time. Ministering brethren, do not forget us.

GEORGE JENKINS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Columbia will hold a yearly meeting at Kelly's Corners, Jackson Co., Mich., beginning on the first Saturday in October, 1887.

All coming from the east and south will come to Toledo, and then to Napoleon. Those from the north will also come to Napoleon, where all will find friends to take care of them.

WM. S. CARPENTER, Clerk.

OUR yearly meeting will be on Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday in October (12th and 13th), if the Lord will, when and where we hope to meet all that the Lord wills should come. The friends will be met at the depot on Tuesday afternoon and evening and cared for by the brethren.

G. M. FRENCH, Clerk.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

NOTICE is hereby given that a two days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the second church of Old School Baptists of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday (7th and 8th) of September, 1887, to begin at ten o'clock a. m., where we hope to meet those who love the truth and peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Ministers especially are invited. Those coming from the north by rail will stop off at Roxbury, and from the south at Kelly's Corners, where they will be cared for and conveyed to the meeting.

J. D. HUBBELL, Pastor.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Mrs Francis Raybrick 10 50, E W Satterwhite 2 50, F C Dyers 2 50, W T Brantly 2 50, J F Lord 2 50, Judge A E Tarver 2, C I Patterson 2, Mrs Emily Simpson 4, J M Willard 2 50, Miss Elizabeth L Miles 5, Miss N E Peacock 2, A G Kimbro 2, Miss Lizzie Buie 2 50, J W Neal 2 50, Mrs Sallie Whitfield 2, M V Tyson 2 50, David Collins 2, N R Smith 2 25, W W Parker 2, Wm Clore 2, J A Gambill 2.—Total \$59 75.

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

First. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and pay their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us at the same time one new subscriber at full price, we will send one of our small plain one dollar Hymn Books.

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Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

Fourth. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us ten new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar and a half Hymn Book, and one small one dollar and seventy-five cent Hymn Book, and both volumes of the Editorials, and the Church History, or any of our own book publications to the amount of ten dollars.

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Opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper will be observed a date, this date denotes the time at which such subscription expires, and when a remittance is made to renew the subscription the date should be watched to see that it is forwarded to such time as the remittance pays to, and if neglected, by informing us, it will be corrected. By this method each subscriber has his own account, and can see that the proper credits are given for his remittances.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1887.

NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."—Rom. x. 4.

How "the end of the law?" Is it done away? Is it become obsolete? Is it now of no more use or value, or has it still a use and a value? If so, what is it? How is Christ the end? It saith, "for righteousness to every one that believeth." The law demands righteousness. As soon as any one believes in Christ by a living faith, the end of the law is attained in that person. He is then in possession of that righteousness that the law requires. Thus having all the law requires, he has eternal life, to which the law was ordained, which is love to God. It will be observed in the preceding verse that God's righteousness is the theme of the apostle; that is, how God can and doth make man, who is unrighteous, righteous. So then it is God's righteousness for man, whereby man is now just or justified, the law satisfied, and man made conformable to the law; so that he is now not a slave in bondage to the law, but a son, loving all its precepts and establishing it. It has been our school-master unto Christ. The lessons taught are found in Christ. It teaches us things that are proper to be known, lest we go about to establish our own righteousness, and do not submit to the righteousness of God. The Jews were ignorant of God's righteousness, and went about to establish their own, by an observance of the ritual law, and in living an outward moral life. Many expect acceptance by the same. This is man's idea of right; but it is not of God. No man can ignore the first commandment. I ask, How can he love, when in fact he is enmity to God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be? The righteousness of God, which is by faith, brings to view not only the Lamb of God as his sacrifice for sin, but that he also is become our sanctification, by writing his law of love in our hearts by faith, so that it is God's righteousness within us. He leads us by our right hand, and guides us by his counsel. He leads us to living fountains of waters; yes, sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts by faith; yes, makes us all that the law requires. All the redeemed are convinced of sin by Christ, who is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, by showing them the exceeding broadness of the law and its spirituality, bringing them all in guilty before God. Whenever any one has heard by faith the law, it comes to him as the sentence of

death. All hope of acceptance by the deeds of the law has failed, and he is ready to perish. It has stripped him of all his own righteousness, and he is become as poor as Job, and as full of sores, and trembles at God's word. The law has now, by the Spirit, done its work. God said, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." The end of the law is now attained. Christ is the end or object of the law. The law is our school-master unto Christ, when the righteousness of God is revealed by faith. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Isaiah saith, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin;" and again, "hath laid on him the iniquities of us all," and with his stripes we are healed. So we see God's sacrifice for man, God's way of making us righteous, being made the righteousness of God in him. It doth not mean his known or unknown perfections, but his method of making the unrighteous righteous, in contradistinction from man's way of being just with God. He found a ransom. The debt being paid, we need it applied, and need not only an imputed righteousness, but also an imparted. God through the Spirit communicates to us his righteousness, which becomes personal to us in the person of Christ, which in his passion, as our propitiation, satisfieth the righteousness of the law of God, and is in harmony with the requirements of conscience. And by the act of justification he applieth atonement to the believer, whereby he feels to be one with him. He feels that there is now no charge against him, for he not only feels his sins forgiven, but now feels love to God and love to the brethren of like precious faith, love being the fulfilling of the law. Therefore his justification, or paying the debt, and also his sanctification, are through God's righteousness. Man can never make out of it a righteousness of his own. The divine justification becomes the principle of the new life. God's righteousness is revealed in the revelation of Christ, called the gospel, and is, as the apostle saith, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Not the preached word is the power of God, but the revelation of Christ himself in the man; and in having him we have the power of God unto salvation, and that, too, from all ungodliness. This implies a righteousness imparted, as well as imputed, or sanctifying, as well as justifying righteousness; a righteousness in-

herent in God, and manifested in Christ, which by a living union by faith in Christ becomes the personal property and higher nature of the believer. This doth not allow of the thought of the lowering of redemption into a mere method of fulfilling the law, and thus acquitting the guilty, nor of a setting aside of the law. The law must be honored by Christ and by us, fulfilled by him and by us. It is the very righteousness of God himself, which is imputed, and imparted. Christ is now ours by faith, and we are incorporated into him, and now are the righteousness of God in him. The dominion of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the dominion of sin and death. Thus sin shall not have dominion over you; for whom the Son makes free shall be free indeed. God sent his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin (on account of sin) condemned sin in the flesh (or us), that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Sin is condemned in us. "That which I do, I allow not." Sin is not our aim or purpose. John saith that he that is born of God sinneth not, and cannot sin, because he is born of God. This agrees with the passages just quoted from Romans viii. 2. Sin here doth not mean a certain act, but the animus. It means that man cannot be in rebellion, hating God, and loving and serving sin and Satan at the same time. Sin shall not have dominion where the fear of the Lord is. If the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in us, that is all that law can claim. The animus is to love God and to fear coming short of what we should be. We cannot have the fear of sinning, and at the same time be loving sin and running after it; for the dominion of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law (or dominion) of sin and death. John also says that if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Sin is that which troubles us, and because of which we cry unto the Lord, and he sends his word and heals us. Read Psalm cvii. 7-21. "That which I do, I allow not." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," being chosen unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. John also saith, "There is a sin unto death;" that is, arising from the enmity of the natural heart; one who has not the Spirit of Christ, and who is in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of

iniquity, and who fears not God. The saints are passed from this death unto life. The life here named is the life of God in the man; it is the new and eternal life which his Spirit communicates to believers. The believer is possessed of this spiritual life; so we are quickened together with Christ. "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." It is life, and eternal life, already possessed, and the commencement of that glorious life which shall never end, and be enjoyed in heaven. It is the blessing that the Lord commands, even life forevermore. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." How can they sin as a worldling, being thus filled with his love and fear? There is no unrighteousness in the saints of God, who hate sin, and hunger and thirst after righteousness. His sorrow ariseth from love. He doth not commit acts that show he is dead in sin, but there is a coming up out of the wilderness, leaning on the arm of the Beloved. He is still subject to vanity, but not willingly. A man may be coming up a steep street in winter when the street is in a glitter of ice; and he may fall, and even slip back, and fall again; but his face is up street, even if he doth slip and fall. He ariseth again, and after awhile gains the hill. He did not desire his fall nor slips backward. Again, a young girl, after going to meeting, was asked if she could now live without sin. "O no, she said." Where is the difference in you then? She said, "I heretofore ran away from righteousness, and ran after sin; but now I run after righteousness, and run away from sin." If a man has his face Zionward, it is not towards Egypt. He may be weak, but still pursuing, still living a life of faith; for it is written, "The just shall live by faith," or day by day, or from faith to faith. Again, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." How is it that I find myself sinning, if he saves us from our sins? He first gives us repentance; for he, as I said before, is exalted to give repentance to Israel. He first speaks to us through the law. "Love the Lord." He brings it home, not in letter only, but by the Spirit. Whoever feels his sins, doth so by the teaching of the Spirit. The righteousness of the law is revealed by faith, so that he feels to be guilty before God. He finds no hiding-place in the law, and becomes ready to

perish, because of his inability to fulfill it. He knows not that it is Jesus showing him his defilement. Yes, even after we have believed in Jesus, who is the end of the law (or object of the law) for righteousness, we have to look into the looking-glass to behold our defilement. It takes our spiritual David to drive out the Canaanite from the land. Sanctification is a progressive work in us; and because we do not see all done at once, is no reason that the work is not going on. It will take all our days. We find that he is a present help in time of need. He will with the temptations make a way for our escape. He will be with us in the furnace, even though we say that he hath forgotten to be gracious. We shall not be left, like the worldling, to sin for the love of it. No, for his fear is in our hearts, and he said, "They shall not depart from me." He has said that his covenant shall stand, and that he will not depart from them to do them good; but he will put his fear in their hearts, so shall they not depart from him. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." If there is fear of offending, there is no open war or sin unto death. Neither can they sin (as a worldling) if the love of God and the fear of God be in their hearts. They are thus saved from their sins. "For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." This is all the law requires. This they hunger after. The law demands holiness. This is the saints' great desire. The law was our school-master unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. They come to him hungry, to be fed; poor, to be made rich; trembling, to be made strong. Do we make void the law? Nay; but we establish the law. We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, even the righteousness of God by faith. He predestinated that we should be conformed to the image of his son, being kept by the power of God unto salvation, through faith, according to his purpose and choice. Shall it fail? Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory. This is the sanctification of the Scriptures, if not of a denomination. If ye are led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law; for the law is written in you, and there is no hope of acceptance by the deeds of the law, but by the hearing of faith (by the reception of the promise). "That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident: for the just shall live by faith." They have the fruit of the Spirit, and thus have the mind of Christ. Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again, and liveth in his saints; and because he lives, they live and shall never die or be separate from God. He hath given the saints love, this being all that the law requires, and thus has brought in a righteousness that is everlasting; for the same

love to God that is now the fulfilling of the law, will continue and grow more and more forever. It is the great chain that will bind us to the throne of God and the Lamb forever.

I remain in hope your brother,

JOHN THORNE.

709 NORTH CALVERT ST., Baltimore, Md.

GHEAT, Ky., August 12, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In a letter from brother Martin Cox, of Middle Creek, Illinois, addressed to me, he says, "I have belonged to the Baptists for six years. I believe their doctrine, yet I fear that a person might fall so as to lose or miss heaven." And he asks me to write upon that and other subjects for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I regret that the faith in the power and love of our glorious Lord of any of God's dear people is so weak as to cause them to fear or doubt the final and glorious triumph of all the redeemed through his finished work. Our dear brother will remember that the apostle Peter, in addressing those who are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," said to them, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter i. 3-5. May the dear saints remember that the power of him by whom all things were made is pledged to keep them through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, when he will come in power and great glory, and call all his elect, all his chosen people, from the dominion of death and the grave, into the sweet enjoyment of their unfading inheritance amidst the superlative glories that await all the redeemed of our God. To doubt the full triumph of all the elect of our God is to doubt his power to save them from the dominion of Satan, and thus admit that the prince of darkness has more power than the great God of the vast universe. He hath said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." To doubt the final triumph of the saints in grace to glory is to doubt his power to make good that cheering promise that they shall never perish. Ah, dear saint, how sweet that promise is to you amidst the sorrow and gloom of earth, when you seem to be enshrouded in thick darkness and ready to sink, like Peter. O how sweet to you is that voice then saying in clearest accents, "Ye shall never perish." And how much more precious to you are those words coming to you, as you know they do, from one who has all power both in heaven and earth, and from him who has loved you with an everlasting love. But have we not the same right to doubt the resurrection of all the redeemed, that we have to

doubt that our Lord will save with an everlasting salvation all his elect, all that were given to him in the covenant of redemption, ordered in all things and sure? He said, "I am the resurrection and the life;" and he of God is made unto his people wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Then surely while he bears all these wonderful relations to his people, none have a right to doubt for one moment their final and complete triumph over death, hell and the grave. To doubt it is to doubt his word when he said, "I am the resurrection and the life." The apostle, in addressing the saints at Colosse, says, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 2-4. If it were true that Satan could enter the eternal God, and snatch from him the life of one of his saints, then it would be most certainly true that the prince of darkness possessed greater power than the great God of the vast universe. That fearful thought runs into the most loathsome atheism; yea, it is an absolute denial of the existence of him who says, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." But rejoice, O heavens, and be ye glad, O earth; for he has said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."—Rev. i. 18. He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." By that power he laid his life down, and took it again. None in the vast domain of created worlds, except our glorious Lord, had been clothed with the power to lay their lives down and take them up again. Then surely when he was talking to the weeping sisters of Lazarus, and said, "I am the resurrection and the life," he was proclaiming his own wondrous character, and revealing to them that power in the exercise of which he called their brother from the cold embrace of death. But while we hear him saying to the dead Lazarus, "Come forth," and witness that wonderful display of his power in raising the dead, we ask ourselves these questions: If our Lord was able to raise the dead, yea, and able by his own mighty power to raise his own crucified body, and come forth walking in the greatness of his strength, proclaiming to an astonished world, "Mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me;" if he was able to do these wondrous things, surely he was and is able to keep his people through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. To doubt that power in our glorious Lord is to doubt the existence of that God who says, "I am God, and beside me there is none else." O what fearful depths of unbelief into which those are sunken who deny the final triumph of all the redeemed through the finished work of our dear Redeemer! But perhaps some will say that although he may possess in infinitude the wondrous attribute of

omnipotence, that attribute by which he created the vast universe of both animate and inanimate matter, the contemplation of which caused the psalmist to break forth in this language, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" yes, we say that perhaps some, in whose hearts reigns more of infidelity than of that faith which looks away to that God in whom dwells all the attributes of Deity, will say, Man fills too small a space in the vast works of creation to be the object of that love of God which will sustain him amidst the corruptions of a sin-cursed world, give to him spiritual, eternal and immortal life, secure to him a complete and eternal victory over death, hell and the grave, and make him an heir to the unsullied glories of the fairer world on high. This would be to doubt his love, to say that in that glorious attribute he is not infinite, and that he is not immutable, and to charge him who is "Truth" with proclaiming that which is not true when he said by the mouth of the prophet, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." That love is reciprocated in a measure by all the heaven-born heirs of immortal glory. The apostle says, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." He has loved his people with an everlasting love, and the glories he has prepared for them are beyond the power of human thought, beyond the reach of human conception; but by a foretaste of those joys given them in regeneration they are made to love him who first loved them, and gave himself for them. Having given himself for them, by which he redeemed them from all iniquity; having in the new birth given them spiritual, eternal and immortal life; and having by his grace made them heirs of God, and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ, to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; and having pledged himself to keep them through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time; will he fail to bring them off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them and gave himself for them? If he should fail, then the great, glorious and wonderful plan of salvation through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus would be void, his love for his people would cease, and his power, which is pledged to keep them through faith, would become a wreck, and he cease to be that God in whom dwells all the infinitely holy and divine perfections of Deity. Those perfections which are represented by the seven spirits that are sent forth into all the earth, would fail to accomplish the wonderful and glorious purpose for which they are sent into all the earth if any of the redeemed of our God are

finally overcome by the wicked one and lost. John says, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the Elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."—Rev. v. 6. That Lamb was our glorious Lord, and in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; therefore he had the seven spirits, which are his wonderful and glorious attributes, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, holiness, immutability, justice and love. They are sent out into all the earth; and wherever is found one of the little lambs of the fold, those seven spirits are. They are there to protect, uphold and sustain all the children of our God amidst the conflicts of earth. Will they not accomplish the purpose for which they are sent forth into all the earth? They surely will, for they are the spirits of God; yea, they are his own glorious attributes, all of which are infinite, and combined make up his wondrous character. Then surely his name shall be called Wonderful.

Let us here pause for one moment, and in deep adoration contemplate the character of him in whom dwell all those seven spirits which are sent forth into all the earth to complete in glorious triumph the great plan of salvation, by bringing all the redeemed in grace to glory; and let us ask ourselves this question, Will any of the purposes of our God be frustrated and defeated? To answer this question in the affirmative would be to admit that part, if not all, of the children of our God would finally be lost; but that affirmative answer would completely negative this language of an inspired apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—Eph. i. 3-5. Mark you, they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. If any of them were lost, that choice of God which was before the foundation of the world would be defeated, and God would be disappointed, because those that were lost could not appear before him in love. I hope brother Cox does not worship a God that is subject to disappointment.

But brother Cox refers me to the man out of whom the unclean spirit is gone, spoken of by our Lord, and recorded in Luke xi. He will please remember that there is nothing recorded in regard to that man which could possibly indicate that he was a child of God. Of him our Lord said, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house

whence I came out." The unclean spirit had not been cast out of that man; it had *gone* out. He had not found rest in believing in the glorious Son of God, but was seeking rest in his own way. He said, "I will return unto my house." He certainly was what many "Divines" of this day call a "free agent." He had power to return to his house, and he did return, and found it swept and garnished. That house was not the church, for he "taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." The first state of that man was bad enough, for he was seeking rest and finding none. How different is that from the language of the psalmist, who says, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." He also says, "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: because his mercy endureth forever." Here is one who gives thanks unto the Lord, because his mercy endureth forever; but that man out of whom the evil spirit went never even so much as named the name of the Lord. Then surely he was not a christian.

Brother Cox also invites my attention to the sin against the Holy Ghost. He seems to incline to the idea that the regenerated sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty might fall so far as to commit that sin and be lost. I refer brother Cox to what I have heretofore said in this article upon the subject of the power of God to keep his people through faith unto salvation. If he in his wonderful omnipotence keeps his people through faith unto salvation, surely that same power will uphold them and keep them amidst all the corruptions of a sin-cursed world from committing that sin, let it appear in whatever form it may. His power over his people and his love for them are both pledged to secure their final and glorious triumph amidst the joys of the redeemed throughout eternity. But, brother Cox, there is another source of gloomy doubts and fears which daily hovers over me. It is beautifully expressed by the poet:

"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?"

H. COX.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., August 15, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed I send you the last two letters that I received from sister Stimpson. As will be seen by the last letter, she was then in feeble health, and ere very long was called to the crown of righteousness of which she speaks, and for which she so longed. I think the last letter especially will appeal to the experience of many. It is good to remember that for her the darkness has been long past, and for us it will soon pass, and we shall know as we are known. By these letters of fifteen years ago we may learn that God's ways do not change, and christian experience remains the same. Her letters were a help to me then, and

they have been a help to me again as I have read them over. May God make them a blessing to many.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, June 5, 1872.

VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your very kind, interesting letter of March fifth was received in due time with great satisfaction. I cannot thank you enough for spending your time in writing to me. I feel that could you know how much comfort I derive from your words of love and truth, perhaps you would feel a little recompense, although I am so unworthy the favor.

I hoped to write you sooner, but for the past few months I have had many things to occupy my attention. My dear husband has been very sick, first with the measles, and then he took cold and had the lung fever. He is not well now, but goes to his daily work again. I expect you have seen father, mother and Joseph during the past few weeks. I shall be very glad when father and mother return home. I expect they will do so next week.

My dear brother, you say you are much favored in having the privilege of mingling with the brethren and sisters, and conversing upon this all-important subject. Indeed you are. I do not envy you this privilege, but how much I desire their society none can tell. I believe you say truly when you say that you wish for no other thing so much as that your whole life be devoted to the church. O what a blessed privilege to be found worthy a life thus devoted; although I suppose, as you express, you do not feel worthy. Yet our God has so ordered your steps, and I feel you are filling your allotted place. I also feel,

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will,"

if I am what I profess to be. Therefore I would not murmur or repine, although I may be denied the privilege of mingling with those of my Father's family. All is well. Our God reigneth; what ask we more? For the past four months my mind has been very much clouded; but thanks to my God, during the time I stood by the bedside of my husband, as he lay suffering the pains of his disease, and nearly every one feared it would be his last sickness, I was upheld by the almighty arm of Jehovah. I do feel, my dear brother, that it was his arm that upheld me, and enabled me to stand by his side and do for him as his wants required. I want to tell you a little of my experience during that trying time. Thick clouds had been about me. I was very much depressed in mind at first, so much so that I cried aloud, "O, my God, what is there in store for me?" I cannot bear trouble, such as I feared. As I made this cry something seemed to say to me, "Fear not, for I will be with thee." O, my brother, I would that I could tell of the calmness, the feeling of trust, that

came over my soul at those words. I could not tell how the case would turn with my husband, but I felt a perfect quiet, a feeling of trust. I could say from my heart at that time, Dear Lord, do with me and mine as seemeth good in thy sight. O, my brother, I would that I could ever be blessed with just such a trust; but alas! how different it is with me now! how different, I fear, it would have been had he been taken from me. I do feel to praise his name that this one promise was verified to me, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." What a God of mercy is ours. When I think of these things, and then think of my ingratitude, my lukewarmness, my indifference, for such wonderful love and mercy, I am lost in wonder, and can but praise such a Being that dealeth not with us according to our deserts. Although we may be cold and indifferent, and forgetful of him, yet he is ever mindful of us, giving us strength to bear all he sees fit to send us.

You speak my own feelings when you say that could the brethren look at your life they could have no fellowship with you. I do so often feel this. I am assured that I do not live or act as a child of God should; but O, my brother, I long to. I long to be perfect, to live the life of a christian; but I am so helpless, I have no power to become any better, and I much fear that I grow worse. Every day I live, I believe I see more and more of the sin and corruption within, and am so weary, so tired, I long for rest.

"My spirit looks to God alone;
My rock and refuge is his throne;
In all my fears, in all my straits,
My soul on his salvation waits."

There is no other source of comfort, no other place for refuge. My mind is very dark to-day, dear brother. Were you here I feel that I could say many things to you, but I cannot write as I feel. I have not met with the church for a number of months, and have heard no preaching since February last, only what is contained in the SIGNS. I am often made to rejoice as I read the communications therein contained. Dear brother, I feel to thank you for the last two you felt to send us. I was much comforted while reading them. I hope you may often feel to pen such soul-comforting truths for our comfort and instruction. I anticipate attending our next conference in Bowdoinham, which will be on Saturday next. I have a great desire to attend. I saw Elder Campbell yesterday. His family were as well as usual.

HANNAH STIMPSON.

WARWICK, N. Y., Dec. 21, 1872.

VERY DEAR BROTHER:—I see, by again looking at the date of your letter, that it was written in July. It has been a very long time to neglect answering so kind and good a letter. We have had since then a meeting I greatly enjoyed, and yet I could not help a feeling of disappointment, for I did so much wish the opportunity of conversing face to face with you upon the glorious subject we so much write upon; but you already know

my weakness. I cannot freely converse with any when there are a number around; and thus it was at your father's house. I had many things that I wished to say to you, but could not find the opportunity. I thought then that I would very soon write to you. When I returned home I found my husband's health improving. We thought then that we would remain in Maine during this winter at least, but in about one week he was again taken sick. We then concluded to go to New York in October, when Elder Campbell went, and we did so. It gave me much pain and sorrow in parting with the dearly loved friends in Maine. The brethren and sisters there are very dear to my heart. Wherever I find a people who speak the pure language of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I believe I love them; but those dear saints whom I have journeyed with thus far on my pilgrimage in this world of pain and sorrow occupy a very deep place in my heart, and I could not part with them with other feelings than those of sorrow, although I am now situated where I can hear the pure gospel preached every Sunday, and mingle much in the society of the people of God, a privilege I have long wished for, and one that I would I now could feel to thank my God for; but the ingratitude and unthankfulness of my sinful heart frighten me. O why can I not thank my God for so many blessings bestowed? Or why do I find in my heart so much rebellion and unthankfulness, if I am what I have professed to be? Yet, my dear brother, I long to feel as a child of God should. I wish I could love him, I wish I could praise him, and live and feel like an obedient child of a tender, loving Father. When I have the least sense of his tender, watchful care, his wonderful mercies toward such a vile sinner, I am astonished beyond measure, and am led to cry out, "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." How beautifully, dear brother, you have written of the christian's warfare, and how cheering to those who can feel that they have any part or lot in that warfare. It was very encouraging to me when received, and I cannot say that I do not derive some little comfort again to-day, although my mind is so dark and filled with unbelief that I can scarcely see one ray of hope for me. O, my brother, how often have I thought of what you said last fall, that you thought sometimes we indulged in these gloomy doubts with a sort of pride. But O, my dear brother, I cannot agree with you there, as regards myself. Were I to attempt to tell half the awful, gloomy, fearful doubts that will unbidden rush upon me, and crush me with such a weight that I fear to lift my eyes, fear to name the subject of religion to any person, fear to call that pure and holy Being Father, I could not find language to convey half I feel; and believe me, my brother, I do not encourage these feelings. O how gladly, how quickly, would I get rid

of every such feeling, and bask in the sunshine of the sensible presence of my God, were it in my power; but the experience of the past thirteen years has taught me that it is as impossible for me to rid myself of these awful feelings as it is to make myself a child of God, if I am not already one of his chosen ones. Feelings of joy and of sorrow alike come to me unlooked for. I fain would so live as to sing praises to his name, for all praise and honor are due to him. I would never doubt that he has made manifest his grace and sovereign power in showing mercy to such a vile, sinful creature as I am, could I prevent it; and for the past few weeks I am so crushed and burdened with these feelings that I fear I shall never be able to sing again,

"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.
Temptations and trials must come,
Chastisements, afflictions severe;
Yet these shall but hasten me home,
And bid me in glory appear."

DECEMBER 30.

DEAR BROTHER:—More than one week has elapsed since I commenced this letter, but I have been so sick since that I have not been able to finish it; but to-day I think I will try to write a few words more, and send it as it is. I feel it to be a very poor return for so good and interesting a letter as yours to me. I find by reading your letter that I was feeling very differently when I wrote you my last letter from my present feelings. You speak of Paul's language to Timothy, where he speaks of "a crown of righteousness" that is laid up for him. O, my brother, that is what I do long for; it is righteousness. Simply glory or happiness, praise or peace, would not satisfy my longing desires. I would be pure and holy; and this is the cause of my present gloomy feelings. I see such an unlikeness within to what I so much wish for, I am so different from what I would be, so unlike that pure and holy Being who cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance, nor on sinners with any approbation, that I am led to cry out for mercy. Many years ago I learned that I was helpless. I can but cry for mercy. As he has so mercifully heard my cry in times past, I find that I do even now hope to again feel the soothing influence of his smiles upon me, for his name's sake. I feel to use the language of Job, where he says, "Even to-day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" You ask me if the prospect which the child of God has in view is not a cheering one; and you write so cheerily upon this subject. Their prospects are indeed glorious, and in times past I have delighted in them for myself; but now I can and do rejoice that the church of God has such a sure foundation to rest upon, such a God to trust in, such glorious promises made unto her by her great Head and Husband, by our God, who cannot lie. There is a crown of glory

laid up for her, secure in heaven. No power on earth or under the earth can prevent the subjects for whom that crown of glory is prepared from receiving it. I rejoice in this; I delight in it. To-day I love to contrast the true and living God with the god of this world that people love to run after. The God I would worship is a Being of almighty power, self-existent, and changes not. He has ever been and is now carrying on his affairs undisturbed, asking counsel of none; a Being who cannot do wrong, but what he does is right because he does it. What a contrast is this Being to the helpless, changeable being that the world talks so much about. How simple and foolish does their talk seem to me. I rejoice that I was ever made to see this difference. My mouth ought ever to be filled with praises to the name of my God for such wonderful love and power that caused my blind eyes to behold these glorious truths. Let me be what I may, I rejoice in these things.

My dear brother, will you pardon this long, uninteresting and gloomy letter? I really feel ashamed of it; but I fear, were I to try to do better, I might do even worse. I feel very weak in body, although I am much better than I was one week ago.

Dear brother, remember and pray for your little sister,

HANNAH STIMPSON.

BLANCO, Texas, Aug. 31, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I utterly fail to see the coincidence as contained in a certain brother's supposed case, wherein he compares those who hold to unlimited predestination to parties undertaking to sound the depth of the sea; but who, finding their line too short, affirm that it is deeper than the diameter of the earth. But I do see a coincidence in the limited view of predestination, as held by some, with the architect who, in planning and disposing his machinery, would assign every part a place and office except one cog, one wheel, or one piston, which he turns over to the vagary of chance or accident, supposing the undestined part or parts will assume their place when the machinery is put in motion, either accidentally or from some unknown cause to the machinist. And what he further says about mountains obtaining their height by the lowness of the valleys, or that the dryness of the earth is from the falling of rain, the flowings of streams is from the dryness of their banks, and the wickedness of the world was from the fountain of all good, &c., I say this has no more to do with the doctrine of predestination than Adam had in creating the world; and it savors more of satirical invective than of the meekness of Christ. And though such squibs, aimed at the scriptural doctrine of predestination, may tend to cool the brain and moderate the nerves of the puffer, it will not be received by the intelligent and candid christian as demonstrative argument. I never in my life heard anybody say that grace abounded through sin, or that

sin was virtue or virtuous. But the inspired apostle says, "The law entered that the offense might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Again, "God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin." The law first, then sin, and then the abounding of grace to such sinners as Paul thanked God were the servants of it. So I am ready with him to affirm that sin did not hinder; but being first in the order of time, it was in that sense necessary to the abounding of grace. Though the conduct of Joseph's brethren was the fruit of depraved jealousies, yet instead of their conduct having a tendency to defeat God's purpose, or his turning it from its natural course or effect, the whole affair was ordered by him in all its details; for it had its source in him and its every movement from him, as Joseph's language fully attests. "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." So God either originated and ordered the whole train of circumstances, causes and effects, from Joseph's first dream until the landing of himself and Jacob and posterity in Egypt, or a part, or all of the links in the long chain of events, were accidental and brought about by the acts of independent actors, which produced a happy confluence of circumstances to God's hand, and which circumstances he turned to good account by rendering them subservient to his purpose in sending Joseph and Israel into Egypt; than which nothing can be more absurd or blasphemous, as such a view supposes that the great Sovereign of heaven and earth is dependent upon his creatures, who are but dust, for the accomplishment in time of his eternal purposes. If I were to say that Adam, in doing what God forbade him, or in partaking of the forbidden fruit, destroyed the unity of God, I would be understood to mean that God's will was contained in his command to Adam, and that he willed he should stand, the legitimate inference of which would be that the will of our Creator and Sovereign had been defeated by the very creatures he made. And surely, if God is mindful of sparrows and of the hairs of our heads, so that the sparrow cannot fall to the ground, nor the hair from its pore, without him, he would not leave a matter of such vast importance as the fall of man to chance or accident. It does seem to me that such an absurd and shocking cavil against the scriptural doctrine of predestination defeats itself, as being at war with the word and incompatible with the infinite perfections of the just and holy God, viewed in the light of both reason and revelation. If in using the term "wrath" is meant emotional anger arising from a principle of malevolence, as is certainly the case with us creatures, such a view of our adorable Sovereign is highly blasphemous and derogatory to his character; for as he is absolutely perfect, so he is eternal.

ly and invariably blessed and happy. So when the terms "wrath," "indignation" and "displeasure" of God are used, they are to be understood as law terms, and arise from testing or measuring man's actions by the law as a rule; and when the acts do not square with the rule, the aforesaid terms are used. Doubtless many of our embarrassments have arisen from traditional teaching, and from not being enabled to duly consider the infinite perfections of God in his proper Deity. For we are taught, both in his word and by his works, that his own sovereign will is his only rule in governing the world, and that his will is eternal, independent, immutable and sovereign, and is therefore perfect rectitude itself. Then in our inquiries after truth we should not worry ourselves as to whether his word and works in any particular instance are compatible with our view of his holy character; but our prayerful inquiry should be to ascertain whether he has said or done this or that; and if we are assured from such testimony that he has or did, then we should believe it is right, solely, merely, because he said or did it, knowing that perfect rectitude cannot err. I think I know, both from observation and personal experience, that much of the opposition and prejudice against the doctrine of predestination and God's universal supremacy have arisen from traditional teaching; for, from time out of mind, it has been held and taught that it would not do to advance any doctrine that would carry with it the idea of God being the author of sin; and this seems to have been adopted as a maxim by both the learned and unlearned, until it has become almost proverbial. This, I know, has had a pernicious effect with myself; for this has been a potent bearer in deterring me from receiving, believing and loving the scriptural doctrine of predestination; and an eternity of praise and adoring gratitude would be no compensation to the supreme Ruler and Governor of heaven and earth for my emancipation from a thralldom and servitude that held me in suspense, and also delivered me from the dominion of other gods that held me in bondage. In one sense, God cannot be the author of sin, for he never was nor can be under the law, and in his conduct is governed by no rule but his own sovereign will. But as Creator, actuator and preserver, he is author of all things. And as all created things are finite, and God, their Creator, is infinite, all are equally, that is, infinitely inferior to and removed from him, from an angel to the smallest atom of matter. For though he created, formed and gave to all creatures their specific qualities and character, yet he imparted to none of them his essence; so he is not the author of sin by infusing it as his essence; as some seem to think that those who believe in the doctrine of unlimited predestination hold and teach. So sin entered and reigns according to God's eternal counsel and appointment, or else it entered

and reigns by chance or accident; for I challenge the wisdom of the world to strike a middle way between predestination and chance or accident. Farther, to evince and confirm the doctrine of predestination and the unlimited supremacy of God's government over his creatures, I will refer to a few of the many texts of Scripture that teach both. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." And if the acts of the king in time are ordered by the Lord, those very acts were determined and appointed in eternity, unless we suppose a change in God. And if this is so with the king, so it is of every other man or person.—Prov. xxi. 1. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." So God is not only the cause of our outward acts, but also of our inward thoughts.—Prov. xvi. 1. It was an experimental knowledge of this that caused the prophet to exclaim, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "Man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." And this does not mean any particular man, nor class of men in particular, but all men in general. The eternal counsel of the Lord, as the disposer and regulator of the devices of men, stands.—Jer. x. 23; Prov. 9, 19-21. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." And if he created them to that end, he appointed them to that end, as he created all things for his pleasure. "His hand formed the crooked serpent." "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." And if he does these things in time, he determined them in eternity; for there is a perfect coincidence in predestination and divine providence, as providence in time unfolds and makes manifest the counsels of eternity.—Prov. xvi. 4; Job xxv. 13; Isa. xlv. 7. I will here name one out of the many instances recorded in Scripture wherein God so involves his creatures that they unavoidably sin; yet in doing so, though they are used as a means in God's hand in accomplishing his purposes, their responsibility is not thereby removed nor their guilt extenuated. In 2 Samuel xxiv. 1, it is said that the Lord moved David against Israel to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah," for which sin there were three things proposed to David's acceptance as a punishment for his sin; famine, war or pestilence. Though the Lord moved David to do as he did, yet it was punished as a very grievous sin. It seems that this single instance ought to convince the most fastidious that our God does according to his sovereign will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and giveth not account of any of his matters. When the apostle (Col. i. 16, 17) says that God created all things, and by him all things consist, are we at liberty to

restrain or limit the language to what we suppose are good things, and that other things were merely created, and not disposed and ordered to any particular end, but turned over to chance or accident, which terms have only an ideal meaning, as having nothing to rest on? For as God created all things for his pleasure, is it not more compatible with infinite wisdom and omnipotent power, and more honorable to God, to suppose he appointed all things to some certain use, and directed them to some determinate end? And when the prophet Isaiah (xlv. 10) says that the Lord declared the end from the beginning, or in eternity, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," are we to suppose that what we esteem good things only are embraced, or that he declared the end of all things, but did not provide and appoint all the means necessary to the accomplishment of the end? But if he did provide and appoint the means in order to the end, then he appointed all that comes between the beginning and the end; so the transactions of time merely unfold the counsels of eternity; as God says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" neither more nor less. Furthermore, he works all; not some good things, but all things, after the counsel of his own will; and therefore all things, good, bad and indifferent (if there be such), work together for good to them that love God. No wonder then the apostle, whose bosom being inflamed while contemplating the wonderful works of God, should break forth with emotions of praise and thanksgivings in the following strain, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments [or decrees], and his ways [of divine providence to their execution] past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 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: to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 33-36.

JAMES WAGNER.

SANTAFE, Ky., Feb. 14, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I was born in Bracken County, Kentucky, June 22d, 1851. My parents being Methodists, I was reared up in that belief. I was taught that I had to do something before the Lord would do anything for me. I thought that I had to begin that good work, so I joined the Methodist Church when I was but ten years old. I thought that I had begun that good work which is so much talked about. I thought that I was getting along all right, and traveled on in that way for nearly twenty-five years. I thought that I had done my part, and if the Lord did not save me he was unjust. But, brethren, I was in Egyptian darkness. In the summer and fall of 1885 my mind was so troubled that I

hardly knew what I did want. I got my Bible and began to read, and it read so much like a new book to me that I often wondered why I had not seen before. But now I know the reason why I did not see; it was because it had not been revealed unto me. I went to an association, but I found no comfort there. I began to be very much troubled about my condition. In October, 1885, I went to Drift Run, on the third Sunday, and heard brother James H. Wallingford preach. That was the first sermon that I had ever heard. He knew nothing about my feelings, but it seemed that his preaching was all for me. All this while my wife was an Old Baptist in belief. In April, the third Saturday, we went before the church and were received for baptism, and on Sunday were baptized by Elder Wallingford. It was one of the brightest days of my life. I then thought that I would have no more trouble; but I have found that a mistake. Sometimes I find myself very low in spirit, and it seems to me that my hope is almost gone; but before we feel that we are entirely banished from God's presence we are lifted above the waves. If we are his we will not be lost; for he has said that where he "hath begun a good work in you, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." None can hinder, for he hath all power both in heaven and in earth; and if God be for us, who can be against us? It seems to me that it matters not who is against us, if God be for us. He it is that can make our pathway bright, and remove every obstacle that would hinder a free intercourse of his love to flow into our hearts. These sore trials and afflictions that we have are to make us humble, and willing to submit to his will; for we know that if there was not something to bring us under subjection to him, we would become of a boasting spirit. We know from sad experience that the child of grace cannot

" * * Be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
Whilst others fight to win the prize,
And sail through bloody seas."

We are to have many trials and troubles to encounter while in this world of sin. There are those upon the right hand and left hand who are pointing the finger of scorn at the dear children of God as they pass through this unfriendly world. There seem to be a great many friends to the Old Baptists, but they are wolves in sheep's clothing, and are lying in wait to deceive; and if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. I am surrounded by many will-worshippers, who are trying to work their way to heaven. They say the more good you do in this world, the brighter crown you will wear in the world to come. They say it is by works that we are saved. Paul says, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. We know that if God does not give

us sufficient grace to bear us up we are lost; for we know that within ourselves we can do nothing. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."—Rom. viii. 16. Dear brethren, we feel so unworthy sometimes that we fear we have not the Spirit of Christ within us the hope of glory; but hope that is seen is not hope. "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."—Gal. v. 5. I have had some tell me that they knew they were saved to-day, but to-morrow they did not know whether they would be or not. The God that can save me to-day, and to-morrow will let me be lost, is not the God I want, neither is it the God of the Old Baptists; but I trust and hope there is a God that is able to save to-day, to-morrow and forever, and without the help of any. "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 who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?"—Rom. xi. 33, 34. Some say that the plan of salvation is so plain that any and all can be saved who will comply with the terms of the gospel. How can any one comply with something they know nothing about? Until God reveals it unto them they know nothing about it. Paul says, "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."—Gal. i. 12. That is the way it must come. It is not because of any good thing that we have done that we receive salvation. If it were so, it would not be a free gift. O how it makes me fear and tremble when I think of my past life, and see how unthankful I have been for the many favors and blessings that have been bestowed upon me in days that are past and gone. I feel sometimes that if I were dealt justly with I would be forever banished from his presence.

Your brother in hope,

J. N. BRATTON.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon, May 3, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—With your permission, I will again take my pen to talk with the little ones, the saints of the Most High. What a blessed privilege for one to enjoy, to be permitted to talk with the redeemed. It seems a wonderful thing to me that I may commune with them; and much more wonderful that a poor worm like me should be numbered with them. Blessed people, called by God, and saved by his matchless grace; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. O, my people, my brethren and my sisters, what trouble can we not bear, having this hope? Temptations may and do assail; for the enemy is strong, and his power is mighty; but so long as Christ is our strength, the enemy cannot prevail. We have an Advocate with the Father, and our life is hid with Christ in God. But woe is unto us if we forget and forsake our first love, and place our confidence in the puny arm

of man, and depend on the same for strength in the time of need.—Mark xiii. 5, 6. "Take heed lest any man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." The old arch-enemy leaves nothing undone, and traverses every fraction of an inch that God Almighty has decreed that he shall. We are informed that the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Then God has given him power to devour some. No, that will not do. It is too much like the devil supplicating, and God being touched. But not so; that is not like our God, who worketh, and none can hinder; who speaketh, and it is done; who is counseled by none. Jehovah is supreme and immutable. He is like the skillful machinist, who has fashioned and put together every portion of a vast machine. He is present, and knows just what is going on, and every wheel, small or great, every bar and screw, performs the exact purpose for which its Maker intended it. Moreover, "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," before time began. Enough. Then there are some whom God has decreed the devil shall devour. Reader, it may be that you are one; but I feel that it is more likely to be I. If it be I, it is for my good, for the good of Zion, and for the glory of God. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; therefore it is all right, or it would not be so. But my life is hid, and cannot be touched. Then, after all, the devil's power is soon expended, and he can do no more. And God has put the prayer in our hearts, that if it be according to his will he will keep us in the way of truth and light; and if any lack wisdom, let him that lacketh ask of God, and he shall be filled. So we, children of the Most High, are not to look to the world for succor, but to God, who killeth and maketh alive. Jesus says, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Dear kindred in Christ Jesus, who of us has not realized by experience the truthfulness of this language, addressed by the dear Savior to his apostles and our brethren in tribulation? Time upon time have we tried to read and sing and pray, because we felt it to be the christian's duty, when the words uttered by our Savior and recorded by the apostles were without depth and meaningless; the songs we sung were harsh and discordant; the words we uttered in prayer were all form and blasphemous in our ears. How dark and dismal is all around, when light and understanding is shut out. Then our Lord is indeed taken away, and we know not where they have laid him;

our heart is a stone, and we mourn because we cannot mourn enough. But when he abides in us, and we in him, these dark clouds roll away, we flourish in the warmth of his love, and, receiving nourishment from the Vine, we grow in strength and understanding.

But I fear I am tedious, and I wish not to crowd out better matter.

Yours in hope,

MRS. J. K. BOYD.

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga., Aug. 21, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been requested by our pastor, Elder J. G. Eubanks, to write some of my thoughts, or experience; but I can say and realize that it is a great undertaking, for I do not want to write anything unless I think I know it to be true. I wrote a letter last year for publication (provided the editors saw fit), but part of it was providentially lost, and that destroyed the sense of the balance of it, and brother Eubanks asked me to write again. I felt last year that I was impressed to write, and that impression was on my mind nearly all the time until I did write; but I do not think I feel that impression as forcibly now as I did then.

I take the SIGNS, and it does me good to read it, especially the pieces on predestination. William J. Purington, H. B. Jones and others write beautifully on the subject. H. Cox had a splendid letter in the SIGNS for July fifteenth. A. L. Dulin and Mattie S. Derr write good letters. If I could tell my thoughts and express my feelings like others do, I do not think I should hesitate to write. Sometimes I have some bright manifestations, and then at other times it is all doubt and fear. But there is one thing that I believe I can claim, and that is, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I will say here that I was not a member of the church when my sister joined, and I have always loved her; but when she told her experience to the church I felt that there was a new love. She loved what I loved, the church. I did not know there would be any difference with my own sister. At times I think that I am deceived, and have deceived the church; and then again these sweet words will come to me,

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is forever mine."

This is the way my daily experience is, just mixed all along together. Sometimes it is sweet, and at other times it makes the bitter tears come. I have had a dream that I would like to tell. I dreamed it about two months after I joined the church. I dreamed that it had not been long since I joined the church, and I was then joining the second time. I thought that I heard somebody outside say, "She is well pleased—joined the second time already." I thought that there was another girl joined too, and we were to be baptized the next day. When we came to the water I thought that one of my

cousins said mischievously that she was going to help baptize us. She was going to baptize the other girl, but she knew I would not let her baptize me. Then brother Eubanks went into the water to see about where to go, and when he came back he offered to take my cousin and baptize her first. That caused her to back right out, and she went away into the crowd. Then he took me, and when we started into the water I thought I was so light that I could not keep my feet under the water. I would get my feet on the ground, and then I would rise up again. The water was not deep, but I felt like I was swimming along. When I was buried in the water I thought a large rod floated across my face, and I said, "This is the rod that Jesus was smitten with;" and I kissed it as it passed across my face. Then I awoke. I cannot describe how I did feel the next day while I was at school. My mind was not on my books much that day. I cannot understand it all, but I have been comforted some by it. I do not think I will ever forget it. I would be glad if somebody would explain it to me. I am blessed with the privilege of hearing the gospel preached twice a month. I hear a great deal more than I can comprehend and retain; but if any one could hear enough preaching, and keep it fresh in their memory, what would they want to go to meeting for? I attend every meeting, if not providentially hindered. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." That is a sweet promise.

I do not want to make my letter too lengthy, so I will close, with much love to the readers of the SIGNS.

MITTYLENE A. ELLIOTT.

WINCHESTER, Clark Co., Ky., July 5, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The date admonishes me to remit the money for renewing my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It affords most of the preaching I have, as I am too infirm by reason of age to travel far to attend meetings. I shall be eighty-two years old in three more days, which will be the 8th inst. I try to give thanks and feel devoted to God for the comforts of life, with all the blessings which flow from his bounty, yet it seems but formal service. He needs not my poor attempts and praise to sustain his honor or character as God of the universe. He dispenses his blessings according to his will, without asking permission of any power to be, or do what seems good in his sight. One of the greatest wonders that I meet with is that he tolerates the existence of so poor a servant, if I am one indeed. If indeed I am one of his, I know that it is of his sovereign will and power alone. For

"Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill the law's demands."

"If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." There is no life-giving power in the law. It can only accuse and condemn. The more we see of the

perfect holiness of the law, the more we feel our unworthiness. We commend the righteousness of the holy law just in the same measure as we realize how far we come short of that righteous standard. This often causes us to complain and condemn ourselves, crying, "O wretched man that I am!" Is there any one like me? Can I be a child of God, with such a wicked heart, so prone to wander, my faith so weak and my hope almost gone? Yet one thing sustains my fainting hope, and that is, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Whence comes the desire for holiness, if I never knew the way, never tasted his love, never mourned on account of my sins and my rebellious, wandering mind? Then in some favored moment, a sweeter influence, the working of the Spirit, was presented. Then all nature seemed to live; the heart and soul were made to rejoice, not in self (that was all gone), but in the lovely image which I then saw, the blessed countenance that seemed all love as it smiled on me. I beheld the crimson staining his white robe to the hem, and I heard words which I then scarcely knew to be Scripture, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Then I rejoiced with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. It faded not away, but is the earnest of eternal glory and rest at God's right hand forevermore. Notwithstanding all their conflicts, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It is not as our enemies suppose, that God works without any certain purpose. He meant something definite when he said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Then, who shall forbid the gift, or ask of God, What doest thou? The kingdom is sure; and are not they to whom it is given? Yea, verily; for his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.

Dear brethren, if you see anything in this to hurt one of the little ones, or to injure the cause of truth, or if it is not consistent with the truth, or if it will crowd out better matter, cast it aside.

Your still unworthy brother,
E. BAINBRIDGE.

GRAND BLANC, Mich., May 29, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I am writing to pay my dues, I wish to speak a little to the readers of the SIGNS, which comes regularly. Situated as I am, it is real company. I have read it almost from the first issue. The views advanced in it are in general such as agree with my own. I am here in a thick settled country, and yet I am alone as to companionship in religion. They call me an old set crony. Well, how shall I help it? Shall I yield to what the Scriptures do not teach to me? I understand them in their so-called churches to preach to men,

and their doctrine is "Do and live." Now, the law is good, but in it is no life. The law speaks to the natural man, and the sentence of death rests upon all who are under its dominion. In Christ only is life. We read that God is love; so Christ Jesus is the only Son of Love, and those who are born again are born of love and in love. There is life when the Spirit of the Son of God is sent into the heart of the subject of salvation, crying, Abba, Father. He mourns, and nothing of an earthly character can satisfy such a sin-sick soul. Seeing the justice of God in his condemnation, he feels that he is utterly lost, and can only cry, "Thy will be done." When he receives the gift of this Spirit of love he is already a child of love, circumcised in heart and marked as a son of Love. The dress for this child to wear at the "wedding feast" is love; for without love it is impossible to please God. Men may have a zeal of God which is not according to knowledge without love. Such are teachers of the law; but the law of love they do not understand. How can I give up this principle of truth? It does seem to me certain that in youth Infinite Love spoke to me when in deep distress and trouble. Often since that time when in deep trouble the same word of love has cheered me. At one time, when trying to follow the law, when I could not do what was required of me, an impression came with force to my mind, "Lean on me, and make no more promises." Brethren, love followed. I thought, "What a forgiving Jesus!" Then I was young and my mind tender; but in after life, looking back on days gone by, O how true he has been to me! The question often comes to me, Does he love even me, vile and sinful as I am? If so, what a forgiving Jesus!

I have written more than I intended, but feeling lonely, I want to talk to my brethren, who can tell my feelings better than I can. Let them write; it does seem that I understand their language. This is not worth printing; but do with it as you wish. I am seventy-six years old, yet labor for my living. I have a little of this world's goods, but only strangers to lean upon; yet I trust I shall be taken care of. May your pen be guided by wisdom from on high, is the prayer of

Your well-wisher,

IRA PHELPS.

"FOR with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. x. 10.

In the preceding verse the same sentiments are expressed, and therefore the preposition "for" is used, referring to what has gone before; and the apostle says in this same epistle, That he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart in the Spirit, and not in the letter. It is with the heart man believeth. There must be an internal work. The Lord says, "I will give them a heart to know me;" in his covenant with the house of Israel he says, "I will put my law in their in-

ward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." Having quoted sufficient testimony to show that the preparation of the heart in man is of the Lord, we will proceed to notice briefly his belief unto righteousness. We believe because of evidence; and the belief here referred to is more than natural. "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Now righteousness is the fruit or outgrowth of this belief. And your righteousness is of me saith, the Lord. Had we the ability to enlarge on the subject, yet it all centers in Jesus; for he is the author and finisher of our faith. Belief and faith, if not synonymous, are surely near of kin, for those who possess the one have the other also. The righteousness referred to in the text is of faith; and without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Those who believe unto righteousness, also confess the Lord Jesus, and that God raised him from the dead. They are not ashamed to own their Lord; for the Scripture saith, "Whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed." From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. God works in the heart to will and do of his good pleasure; and his believing children are enabled to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every one that confesseth not is not of God.—1 John iv. 3. Therefore, where there is no confession there is not much evidence of belief. Hoping that all God's dear people may be enabled to confess him before men, we submit these hastily written lines for your disposal, wishing you success. We are as ever, yours in love and fellowship,

J. P. CONAWAY.

ARCADIA, Ohio, Aug. 8, 1887.

MT. STERLING, Ill., March 6, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—By your permission, and the guidance of the blessed Redeemer, who guides his children in the way of truth, I will try to give the reason of the hope that I have in Christ, salvation by grace, free, unmerited by fallen man.

I am now in my seventy-fourth year, my flesh full of sin, but in spirit dead to the love of sin. Over fifty-two years ago the Lord found me in a waste, howling wilderness of sin, unstopped my deaf ears to hear the denunciation of his holy law, and opened my eyes to see his justice and my just condemnation. In this condition I went for months, until one evening, fifty-three years ago. I was looking at the sun at that time, and thought it would be the last time I

should see it with these eyes; for it appeared that the justice of God would send me to perdition before the rise of the sun again. I went to bed trying to pray, and all I could say was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor, guilty, helpless sinner." But in a moment of time my burden was gone, love, praise and adoration filled my poor soul, love to God and to everybody. I thought I could show everybody the way, forgetting the dilemma that I had just been delivered from. Before I got my clothes on the next morning something said, "You are deceived." I tried to get my burden back, but have never found it. I wanted to hear the people of God talk and tell of their travel of mind, but did not want them to say a word to me. In this way I went until the first Sunday in September, 1843, when brother Hogan preached, I reckon, the truth as it is in Jesus; but my ear was closed until he closed. The words of David, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," ran through my mind. Love, joy and peace again possessed my poor soul. I went to the church, said a few words, was received, baptized the same evening, and enjoyed the sweets of living with the brethren, talking of the things that belong to the house of God; but it would take a volume to tell of the ups and downs since that time.

Brethren Beebe, I have been a reader of the SIGNS, at times, for over fifty years. I send a postal order for two dollars for the present year. From a poor old sinner, saved by grace,

WM. T. RIGG.

ALBANY, Mo., August 1, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—My health has been for the last six months very poor. I have been troubled with rheumatism and spinal affection. I am now improving, and trust, if it is the Lord's will, to attend to some requests on hand to write. To my many correspondents this information will explain my silence.

We have some cheering intelligence to write of the Lord's presence in Zion. Rock Creek Church (church of my membership) has, since our last association, received eighteen by experience and baptism, six by letter, and restored one. Those received ranged in age from twelve to seventy years; and we trust and hope for others, who ought to walk in Zion's ways. May the dear Lord preserve his people, and clothe them with his own righteousness.

Your brother in hope of life,

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

P. S.—There is a terrible drought prevailing throughout this section of country. What the people are to do is more than I can see. With the exception of a few localities, nearly everything is parched up. The corn crop is burnt up, pastures all burnt up, waters nearly dried up, &c.; and this state of things, reports say, covers ten or eleven States and Territories. How fearful are the judgments of God! But surely all is just, for holy and reverend is his name.

I. J. C.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Tygart's Valley River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, in session with the Valley Church, Randolph County, W. Va., August 26th, 27th and 28th, 1887, to the churches in our fellowship, and to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We hail the day with joy and gratitude to God when we thus can assemble to magnify the riches of his grace, in all humility, and patience, and love, and sweet union, with our minds fixed in the element of christian forbearance and brotherly kindness, far above all earthly considerations; having the mind of Christ to be lowly and lovely, without any bickering or discordant expressions to mar the peace of brethren, nor any disposition to lord it over the churches, or to dictate laws to the people of God. We have one Law-giver, which is Christ. Let us take heed to his instruction, and bow to his precepts with proper dignity and godly honor. Let us say, like one of old, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."—Josh. xxiv. 15. We live in a day of lukewarmness in the churches, and of trials in the world, and of temptations in the flesh, and of such a mighty gathering of the antichristian powers, that it causes us deep anxiety for the welfare of our children. When we see the dark clouds of superstition and idolatry looming up with such a spirit of avarice and of hatred to the truth, with lying wonders and all deceivableness, as is now being made manifest, what may we expect but the fulfillment of the declarations of God's holy truth by his servant Paul, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."—Rom. i. 18. Read the whole chapter. We therefore have abundant evidence from the testimony of God's two faithful and infallible witnesses, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth (Zech. iv. 14; Rev. xi. 4), to propel us on in the highways of heaven, to the glory of God in the highest, in the fertile fields of the new Jerusalem, notwithstanding the thunders may roar, and the lightnings flash, and the winds of desolation may howl through the wilderness of sin, and the surging, foaming waves of the prejudice and wrath of men may rock the church to and fro for a time, like a vessel upon the great waters in time of a storm, because we will not join with them in their social worship, nor bow to their idols, nor reverence their unscriptural institutions and earthly organizations; for God has told us in plain language not to touch them. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. Again, he says, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."—Eph. v. 11. Now, children,

you have all this instruction before you, to tell you what to do; for the Bible abounds with it, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Thus you have a Guide, and the lamp of life, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, in you the hope of glory. He is our life; he is our new man; he is our immortality; for he only hath immortality, dwelling in the light; and life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Paul says, "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."—Gal. ii. 20. Without our Life we can do nothing; but with our Life we can do all things, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and fully and faithfully trust in all his promises, like Abraham of old, who, after he had patiently endured, obtained the promise.—Heb. vi. 15. Peter says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."—2 Peter iii. 9. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh from heaven. "For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven."—Heb. xii. 25. See that ye observe all things whatsoever he has commanded you; and be not alarmed when you have to endure great tribulation. This will but humble you, and refine you, and fit you for the Master's use. Be not discouraged when you are tried as by fire, with divers temptations. The flesh is never changed, never made holy, in this life, but only kept in subjection by the will of him that dwelt in the burning bush. In our flesh dwells no good thing. The sentence of death is in us; therefore the flesh must go down to the dust. This makes the warfare between the Spirit and the flesh, and we groan, being burdened. David says, "I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears."—Psalm vi. 6. Again, he says, "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long." "Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee."—Psalm xxxviii. 6, 9. Read the whole Psalm; it will do you good, in showing you the wonder-workings of the mighty God, to sink you lower and lower in your own estimation, and to raise Christ higher and higher in the glory of the gospel; that we should desire none beside him, and feel that he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. Thus the old man (the flesh) with his deeds will be put off, and the new man put on, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; which in sum and substance is our Savior, Christ, and all that pertains to him, as revealed in the holy Scriptures, to teach us under all

circumstances to be patient unto the coming of the Lord; for the time of our sojourn here is short. This is not our home; we are but strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Why should we desire to have the pre-eminence over our brethren, and sow seeds of discord from the most obnoxious weeds gleaned from Satan's garden, to the detriment of the peace of God's dear people?

What sore things have come upon the church of God because some of the household of faith have been unguarded in some of their expressions, causing wounds, and bruises, and divisions, and great lamentation. How lovely in a brother, when he has gone a little too far in his opinion, and finds that his position is untenable by the Scriptures of truth, to fall back and fortify on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. But when he is heady and self-confident, so as to lead a faction from the truth, and from their beloved home, he is not far from the pitfall of outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, and dismal forebodings, with frightful visions and heart-condemnations. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."—1 John iii. 20. "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. x. 26, 27, 31. How important that we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that we search after our own faults and imperfections, that we pray for the peace of Zion, that we be consolidated against the wiles of the wicked one, that we all be of one heart and of one mind, glorifying God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are God's, without stretching ourselves beyond our comprehension, with ostentation and vain imaginations, nor striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearer.—2 Tim. ii. 14.

There is a visibly organized body or church of Christ somewhere in the world, and has been since Christ said to Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The Primitive Baptists surely are these people. Where will we find such another organization? Look at our history, written in lines of blood, all the way down to the present time, with but little respite, for eighteen hundred years, till a few years past; and now, by the tongue, that unruly member, full of deadly poison, and also the press, hurling anathemas at us for the truth's sake. Our names are cast out as evil, because we believe in the doctrine of election, predestination, and particular redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ; because we stand closely to the rules and regulations of our Master; and because the Lord has given us a new heart and a new spirit. Because he has chosen us out of the world, there-

fore the world hateth us. Because we have gone down into baptism, to follow the Captain of our eternal salvation, and speak of his goodness and talk of his power, with that zeal of God which is according to knowledge, and which will shine in our hearts with undiminished lustre; while the antichristian powers will go down under darkness to the judgment of the great day. O how we yearn after the welfare of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, but who have gone into wrong places, where they cannot be at home; where the bed is shorter than they can stretch themselves upon it, and the covering narrower than they can wrap themselves up in it; where they have been scattered in a dark and cloudy day. We hope that the day is not far distant when God shall break their bands and bring them home to their own land. "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."—Matthew viii. 11. "And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord."—Isaiah lxvi. 20. Dear brethren, we have the waymarks of Zion plainly made manifest in our own body, the church. Where will we find ministers outside of our own denomination making the sacrifices which our preachers make, going more generally under adverse circumstances, often hungry, wearied and weak with the burden of the day, leaving all their family comforts, and all that is near and dear unto them, for the gospel's sake, to feed the hungry (in a grace sense), to strengthen the weak, to comfort the feeble minded, to bind up that which is broken, to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for necessity is laid upon them, and God will show them how great things they must suffer for his name's sake. Truly, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But the reaping time will come, when God's people shall be let into unbounded pleasures of a better world, and receive a crown of life from the chief Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, in the fulfillment of the sweet promises of the gospel, and the ineffable joys which God has prepared for them that love him—for them who are the called according to his purpose.

We have met our brethren in love, in peace, and in the fellowship of the gospel. Our churches are all represented in the association; also our correspondence with sister associations is continued, which gives us much pleasure in the Lord. The coming of their preachers has been as the coming of Titus in days of yore. We still desire their fellowship and their visits. May great grace be upon the church of our God. Amen.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the Leading Creek Church, Randolph Co., W. Va., to begin on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1888, at 11 o'clock a. m., when and where we hope to meet your messengers.

J. S. CORDER, Mod.
J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1887.

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

CALLING AND ELECTION OF SAINTS.

"WHEREFORE the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Peter i. 10, 11.

In considering this, as in every other portion of the record of the revelation which God has given, it is of the utmost importance to observe the connection in which the language is written. Without this it is impossible to arrive at a correct understanding even of the letter of the Scriptures. In their failure to observe this, the wise and prudent teachers of the religion of the world have fallen into the error of giving to the sinner in the death of nature the promises and instructions which are by the Holy Spirit addressed to the living subjects of divine grace. Such misapplication of any mere natural writing would be readily detected, and would not deceive the reader of ordinary intelligence; but such is the perversity of the natural mind that it will misapply and distort the plainest declaration of divine truth in regard to the doctrine of salvation by grace.

In the text the Spirit is not speaking to the world of unbelieving sinners, as if urging them to comply with some terms whereby they might make their calling and election sure, in the sense that the eternal choice of God might be affected by any action of the sinner in time; which is the universal doctrine of will-worshipping opposers of the doctrine of God our Savior. In the opening expressions of this epistle Peter not only asserts his own authority as derived immediately from Jesus Christ, of whom he confesses himself to be a servant and an apostle, but he is very definite in specifying that he was addressing exclusively "them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." To these with himself he declares that the divine power of God hath given all things that pertain to life and godliness; and in addition to this divine favor he speaks of the gift of exceeding great and precious promises which are also given exclusively to the same characters, whom he recognizes as partakers of the divine nature, who have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is to these subjects of salvation that the apostle addresses the exhortation immediately preceding our text; and it is worthy of particular notice that the briefly stated task in simple addition is one which cannot be accomplished by any of the masters of the science and morality of this world.

None of the precious articles enumerated can be obtained in any of the markets of this world. Abundant supplies of counterfeit articles, called by the names here given, are to be found in the religious world, but the genuine articles are not to be found in any earthly storehouse. The faith which is the first treasure named, is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ in them who have obtained it in the manner specified in the first verse, as quoted above. All the additional principles enumerated are heavenly developments of that same Spirit. Evidently therefore the exhortation applies to none but those to whom the epistle is definitely addressed. Of them it is true that if these things be in them and abound, they are thereby made that they be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; but the imitation of these fruits of the Spirit by those who have not the Spirit of Christ no more produces that result in them than the hanging of grapes and figs upon thorns and thistles would change those offensive results of the primal curse and cause them to produce delicious fruits. The blindness of him that lacketh these things, as declared in the verse preceding our text, is not applicable to those who were never purged from their old sins. They are clearly as incapable of forgetting as of remembering that of which they never had any knowledge. Therefore, whatever is meant by this expression, it must apply to those designated in our text as brethren of the apostle. As only such were addressed in this letter, it would be inconsistent to understand anything said to them as belonging to any other characters.

The word "wherefore," in the beginning of this exhortation, presents the foregoing considerations as the ground on which this admonition is based. It can have no reference, therefore, to any sinner who is destitute of "the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" as purging him by his precious blood from all sin.—1 John i. 7. To such as have experienced this purging from their old sins, the direction in our text is presented as that which is preferable for them in their present state of conflict while sojourning here in the flesh. "The rather" can only be understood in comparison of one thing with another; so it here expresses the superiority of the course directed, as compared with that of those who fail to give heed to this admonition. It must be remembered that these "brethren" to whom this letter was written were subject to the same temptations and deceitful allurements as those who now feel the motions of sin working in their members, and to them it was as needful as to us that this exhortation should be spoken. Indeed, it is as directly addressed to the saints in the present day as to those in the primitive age of the gospel church; for in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus time and distance are blotted out, and the saints in this age of natural time

sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus in love and fellowship with Abel, Abraham and David. This sweet fellowship and communion of the whole family has been experienced by every one who has felt the joy of finding the very secret thoughts of his heart better expressed by those inspired saints than in any language which he could himself have selected. None but those who have felt the heavenly emotion of perfect unity in spirit when their own feelings have been thus expressed by another, can know the unspeakable ecstasy of that fellowship in Christ which breaks down all barriers of time, race or station in earthly rank, and takes into the warmest affection that one who can thus read our own most secret thoughts. The fraternal love which unites those who are thus bound together as brethren in the unity of the Spirit of Christ, is something more than a natural bond of agreement. It is only a mockery of this sacred tie which is called by the name of brotherhood among the societies organized by men for the development of their own purposes. The natural brotherhood among these worldly societies can no more approach the holy unity of them in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells than the light of a candle can rival the brilliancy of the noonday sun. Those in whom this real fraternity is revealed are called "holy brethren."—Heb. iii. 1. This is not because they can claim in themselves any perfection, as if they were better than their fellow-men, nor yet because they could claim exclusive sanctity to themselves as devout christians who had attained a state of superiority by their careful observance of certain rules of deportment among men. Upon that principle none could ever attain higher perfection than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, who were "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."—Phil. iii. 6. The holiness of these brethren is all included in their heavenly birth, in which they are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. They are holy, not by reason of their own works of righteousness and legal obedience, but according to the eternal purpose of 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."—Ephesians i. 4, 5. Finite minds can trace this holiness of the saints no further than it is declared by Jude, who says that they are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Certainly there can be no defect in that holiness which is thus declared to be the work of the eternal God. In consideration of this perfect holiness of the chosen people of God, well does Paul challenge the universe, saying, "Who

shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Since God himself has given them holiness in Christ Jesus, it must be the very same holiness which is inseparable from himself in which they are made holy in Christ.

To these, whom he acknowledges as his brethren, Peter addresses this earnest exhortation to give diligence to make their calling and election sure. As it is manifestly absurd to construe this admonition as referring to their securing a place in the eternal love of God, in which all his saints are elect in Christ before time was created, it is plain that this exhortation calls upon the saints to manifest in their walk and conversation their calling and election to the comfort and assurance of their own souls, and to the declarative glory of their redeeming Lord. Here, as in every revelation of the grace of God in salvation, the enmity of the carnal mind is displayed in finding in this sure provision of divine grace for the salvation of sinners an excuse for continuing in sin. And such is the deceitfulness of sin that even the saints themselves are sometimes ensnared by the devices of the adversary, who suggests that since their eternal salvation does not depend upon their actions, there is no occasion for them to obey the commands of the Lord. Doubtless very many subjects of the saving grace of God have been deceived by this and similar sophistry into a practical denial of their allegiance to their Lord. Others may have confessed their hope in following their Savior in the ordinance of baptism, and even in all the external order of the organized church, who yet come short of the fulfillment of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is not enough to yield a sluggish compliance to the order of the church. That saint who counts his privileges in the church as secondary to any other consideration, is as much in reality sowing to the flesh as is he who is overcome by the thirst for stimulating drink. The truth of this appears in the harvest of corruption which is reaped as the result of such sowing. It is only as they "give diligence" that they are found walking in the light of the word and example of inspiration. In the recorded experience of these saints who "shine as the brightness of the firmament," and "as stars forever and ever," there is no account that in any instance they erred by giving more attention to their privileges as saints than what was really profitable to them. Obedience to the law of the King in Zion is no matter of secondary importance; and every saint who so esteems it will certainly eat the bitter fruit of his profane conduct in such unavailing tears as those of Esau.—Hebrews xii. 16. There is no intimation given by the pen of inspiration that there is a possibility of overestimating the privileges and obligations of the saints in the church of Christ. While the Lord taught his disciples, saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his right-

eousness; and all these [needful temporal] things shall be added unto you," and the same direction is enforced by frequent apostolic admonitions and exhortations, there is no caution found in the Scriptures warning the saints against attaching too much importance to the injunctions and examples written in the Scriptures for their learning and guidance. Hence the urgent admonition to "give diligence" in this important matter.

The manner in which the saints are to "make their calling and election sure" is specified in the next clause of the text: "For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." As the reward of obedience is received by the saints in that obedience, so the assurance of the reality of their interest in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus is manifested to themselves in their joyful obedience to his law. The Lord himself presents this test in the direction to his followers, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."—John xiv. 15. That they often fall when failing to do these things, is painfully realized by every saint in that death which results from living after the flesh.—Rom. viii. 13. This fall cannot affect their eternal salvation in Christ, but it does affect their present enjoyment of the comfortable assurance of that salvation. When in the condition of him that lacketh these things, as stated in the verse preceding our text, the saints themselves cannot enter into the "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" in their personal experience of its rest and sweetness. They are then cast into outer darkness, and must feel that bitter grief which is expressed only in weeping and gnashing of teeth.—Matt. xxiv. 51. Those who have never known the anguish of weeping bitterly under the consciousness that Jesus looked upon them in their denial of him, may feel that it is not possible for a real subject of salvation to incur such severe condemnation as is represented in this language; but to such as have been, with Peter, sifted as wheat, there is no room to exaggerate the wretchedness of that condition. None can be subjected to such suffering unless they have received the love of holiness in the revelation of Christ in them the hope of glory.

There can be nothing desirable to the enmity of carnal nature in the hope of dwelling in the unveiled presence of that holy God for whom there is no love in the heart. Hence, to such characters there would be no suffering in being cast out of the presence of God. But to those who know no other perfect joy but to dwell in that presence there can be nothing more terrible than to be banished from it. To them it is the most important question which can arise, "Do I love the Lord?" Upon this depends not only their hope of future happiness, but all their comfort and enjoyment in this present world. To such there is no heaven without the approving smile of that Jesus in whom they see all the perfection of God. It is the all-important point with them

to know of a certainty their calling and election as revealed in Christ Jesus. As long as there is any question on this vitally important point they never can enjoy any assurance of hope; but when this is made sure to their own conscience by the testimony of faith in their heart they find an abundant entrance into that "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," which "is within them" "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."—See Luke xvii. 21; Rom. xiv. 17. Doubts and unbelief arise from the natural mind, and cannot be overcome by reason; but when the testimony of faith is accepted as the unquestionable truth of God, the infidelity of reason is silenced, and the peace of God reigns in the heart of the believer in Jesus. May the grace of God enable his children to hear and obey the admonition of the text.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My father-in-law, brother **Calvin Woodard**, died at his home, six miles east of Wilson, N. C., August 20, 1887. He was born near the same place, Nov. 3, 1827. His parents, William and Elizabeth Woodard, were Old School Baptists, and were remarkable for their extraordinary christian virtues. He received a hope in Christ about 1860, and united with the Old School Baptist Church at White Oak, in Wilson County, N. C., May 25, 1870. He was, soon after baptism, made deacon and clerk of his church, and has, the most of the time since, served in that double capacity, as well as being treasurer a part of the time. His occupation was that of a farmer. He was a most industrious, humble, truthful, honest, temperate, moral, self-controlled, fearless, gentle, kind, and self-denying man, a live and zealous church member, a living epistle of Christ, known and read of all men, adorning the doctrine of God his Savior in all things. He was ready at all times to engage in any kind of useful labor. People outside, as well as inside, the church had the greatest confidence in him. He was a most earnest opponent of the use of alcoholic drinks. I have been astonished at the control which grace had given him of his spirit in the sorest trials. He feared God, and had nothing else to fear. He tenderly sympathized with and generally ministered of his worldly substance to the needy and afflicted, making his house the home of many destitute and suffering ones, and taking care of his aged pastor the last four and a half years of his own life. His Bible and his church, the preaching of the word, the singing of spiritual songs, the company of his brethren, and the name and cause of Christ, were exceedingly precious to him. I think that I have never seen in any other person such burning zeal for the purity of the church of Christ. In this respect he continually reminded me of his eminent namesake, John Calvin. I esteem it a rich and rare privilege to have been intimately acquainted with such a man. Such a christian life is an unanswerable refutation of all the infidelity in the world; and in the solemn contemplation of such true nobility every selfish and sordid spirit should stand abashed. I was blessed to spend the last two months of his life at his house during my summer vacation. I can never forget those happy, golden days. We were together a great deal of the time, at his home, and on the road, and at church meetings, where we went twice a week. His conversation breathed the spirit of heaven. We sang spiritual songs repeatedly together, especially, over and over again, those two beautiful and appropriate hymns, "An alien from God, and a stranger to grace," and "Lord, before we leave thy temple." Little did I suppose that the days of my dear father's and brother's exile from the home of the redeemed had so nearly passed away, and he would so soon be called from the scenes of earth to dwell forever in

the presence of his Savior, to reign in glory, praising God with all his heart, exploring the depths of the divine love, and, in an eternal sabbath, adoring his divine Redeemer. While I was attending the Country Line Association, near Ruffin, N. C., he was stung by a very poisonous spider on Friday, August 19th, and died the next day, about thirty hours afterwards, being in dreadful pain about half an hour, and then unconscious to the end. He could not be induced to take a stimulant in time to do him any good. The appointed period of his departure had come. On August 21st his remains were buried in the town cemetery of Wilson, in the presence of a large gathering of people. He leaves a widow and six children, who, while feeling that their loss is irreparable, are assured that he is at rest. "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.

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., Aug. 31, 1887.

Elder George Y. Stipp was born April 13, 1826, in Warren County, Illinois, and died Oct. 23, 1886, aged sixty years, six months and ten days. He united with the Hopewell Predestinarian Baptist Church in September or October, 1870, and began preaching at the next monthly meeting. His ability being so marked, he very soon took rank among the most able ministers of his day. He held some fourteen public discussions with the different Arminian denominations, Soul Sleepers, Universalists and Christians, and came out of them in a very creditable manner, and to the full satisfaction of his Baptist friends. He wrote a good deal for different publications, and was the author of a pamphlet in defense of his views upon the subject of the Two-seed doctrine, which is considered by many of his friends to be a remarkably clear, lucid and able publication. He was married three times. His last wife survives to mourn his departure; also five sons and two daughters. Brother Stipp was a man much beloved by his Baptist brethren and friends, very retiring and unassuming, esteeming others better than himself. He was rather small in stature, somewhat stooping, and a stranger would not select him from a mixed company of men as one of the ablest ministers in the whole Baptist connection. But when he took his stand in the pulpit his voice, his manner and his burning eloquence commanded the attention and held spell-bound every auditor. I think I am not assuming too much when I say he was one of the ablest advocates the Lord has ever raised up in the west to stand for a defense of the gospel. But he is not, for the good Lord has taken him to himself. May we all be resigned to his will.

ALSO,

DIED—March 23, 1887, at her late home in Oak Hill, of infirmities incident to old age, sister **Mariah Hutchinson**. She was a native of Virginia, came to this vicinity about 1835, being among the earliest to settle in this then new country. She and her husband, the late John Hutchinson, joined the Harmony Church by letter, soon after its constitution, and remained faithful unto death. She had become quite weak, both in mind and body, and had not attended meetings for some years. She was buried March 31, beside her late husband, after a discourse by the writer.

ALSO,

DIED—At his home, the residence of his father, brother **Charles Vandyke**, near Madina, in Stark Co., Ill., April 9, 1887, of typhoid fever, **Harvey J. Vandyke**, youngest son of Charles and Elenor Vandyke, aged twenty-four years, eleven months and four days. He made no public profession of the christian religion, but his friends are satisfied from evidences left by him, dating previous to his last illness, that he was deeply concerned upon the subject, and before his departure they felt that he was made to rejoice in a blessed hope. He was considered a very exemplary young man, and the neighborhood showed their kindly feelings for him and their sympathy for the grief-stricken family by turning out in large numbers to follow his remains to their last

resting place. The writer was sent for and spoke to them upon the solemn occasion. May God, out of his abundant store of mercy, grant the living mourners grace to help in this time of need.

S. KETCHUM.

ELMWOOD, Illinois, Aug. 8, 1887.

I HAVE been called upon to report for publication in the **SIGNS OF THE TIMES** the death of our much beloved sister, **Hannah Fithian**, wife of our late brother Ephraim Fithian, who preceded her in receiving his discharge some nine years. She departed this life at her residence in Anaheim, Los Angeles County, California, January 29, 1887, aged eighty-three years and six months. Our dear old sister was born, raised and married to her late husband, in the state of New Jersey. Soon after marriage they moved to the state of Ohio, and settled near Cincinnati, where they united with the Old School Baptists, and there remained under the preaching of Elder Wilson Thompson and others for about fifteen years, after which she and her husband moved to California and settled in Amador County; lived there a few years, and moved to Sonoma County, and from thence, in 1868, moved down into Los Angeles County, and settled in the town of Anaheim, where each of them remained until the dear Lord called them home. For the last twenty-five years of our dear old sister's life she has been deprived the most of her time of hearing the gospel preached, so that her Bible and the **SIGNS OF THE TIMES** (which she has taken from the first volume) were her chief companions. The fashionable preaching of the day had no place with her, but she was firmly set in the faith of God's elect, and was ever ready to defend the truth when assailed from any quarter. About ten years ago her eyesight failed her, so she was unable to read her Bible or the **SIGNS**, which troubled her for a time. But the dear Lord remembers his afflicted little ones, and put it into the heart of her beloved granddaughter, Mrs. Ida M. Rouques (who had the care of her), to read to her at regular times, which greatly relieved and comforted her. Her last sickness lasted but three days, and was supposed to be but a slight cold which would be relieved soon. She was calm and serene, no doubt fully conscious that the hour of her departure was near at hand, and that her earthy house was crumbling to dust, anxiously desiring to enter her house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. She leaves two sons and a number of grandchildren, with many friends, to mourn their loss; but they mourn not as those without hope.

R. CUMMINS.

TOUCHET, Wash. Ter.

DIED—At her late residence in Kenton, Kent County, Del., Aug. 3, 1887, **Mrs. Susanna Frazier**, in the sixty-fourth year of her age. Sister Frazier was the wife of Deacon Alexander Frazier, of Bryn Zion Church. She was baptized in the fellowship of that church on the first Sunday in December, 1859. She had consequently been a member twenty-eight years and eight months. Seldom if ever does any one come nearer to being what a church member ought to be than sister Frazier did. As a deacon's wife and a mother in Israel, she seemed to fully fill the important stations. There is no need that the highways should be unoccupied, or that travelers should walk through byways, where a church is blessed with such faithful, devoted members. The kindness and hospitality of this family have been shared by many who will now feel to sympathize with the bereaved. The church, as well as her husband and other relatives, has sustained a great loss. Some years ago sister Frazier was thrown from her carriage and seriously hurt, and she has suffered from the effects of that fall at times ever since. Her horse took fright, and backed off the bank into a mill-pond. Her preservation seemed almost miraculous at that time. But it was the good pleasure of him who loved the church to spare her for a few more years. The Lord, who hath given and been gracious in time past, can still provide. But a few days ago our departed sister was waiting

upon a houseful of company at the session of the Delaware Association. The preparation had been going on for months. The first day of our yearly meeting was her funeral.

There is a fitness and propriety in the expression, She has fallen asleep.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

DIED—September 15th, 1887, **George Douglas**, infant son of Harry M. and Lillian J. Hayes, and grandson of B. L. Beebe, of this paper. He was stricken with cholera infantum on Saturday, and died the following Thursday, aged two months and ten days. The funeral was Saturday. Thus in one short week all their bright hopes were turned to mourning. May God enable them to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—By request I send you the obituary of brother **Joseph Cain**, who died Feb. 23, 1887. Brother Cain was born Feb. 21, 1803, and in the fall of 1823 united with the Particular Baptist Church at Old Dry Creek, in Kenton Co., Ky., and was baptized by Elder John Arnold. For sixty-three years he lived a firm, faithful and consistent Baptist, heeding not the lo heres or the lo theres; but through all the divisions and troubles sprung upon the Baptists, he stood firmly fixed in the faith once delivered to the saints. At his own request before his death, I was called by telegram to preach his funeral. The large concourse of neighbors and friends fully attest the high estimate in which he was held. May the God of all grace comfort his bereaved widow in her declining years, and when her heart is overwhelmed, lead her to the Rock that is higher than all the rolling billows of sorrow in this world.

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

P. S.—I received a telegram announcing the death of sister **Virginia Dudley**, whose remains were buried at Lexington yesterday. Circumstances were such that I could not attend. I have not learned the particulars of her last illness and death. She will be remembered by hundreds of Baptists as having spent the prime of her life in an earnest, faithful and devoted care of her uncle, the late Elder Thomas P. Dudley. She has been in bad health almost ever since brother Dudley's death, and tarried not long after his departure; and we believe she is now with him beyond the reach of persecution and the cowering, mercenary, slanderous tongue, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

J. T. M.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., Aug. 17, 1887.

DIED—At his residence in Otisville, Orange Co., N. Y., on the morning of June 8, 1887, **Mr. Amos Ketcham**, aged seventy-six years, nine months and seventeen days.

Mr. Ketcham was attacked with pneumonia just one week before his death, although heart disease is assigned as the cause of his death. He was born in the town of Mount Hope, where he carried on the business of farming and milling until about seven years ago, when he removed to Otisville.

Mr. Ketcham was first married to Miss Sallie Seybolt, Oct. 4, 1834, who died in February, 1871. On November 20, 1879, he was united in marriage to Mrs. Margaret B., widow of the late Lewis A. Seybolt, who survives him. He is also survived by four children by his first wife; one brother and two sisters.

Mr. Ketcham was widely and favorably known, and had a large number of very warm friends, being a pleasant, warm hearted man, and honorable in all his dealings with his fellow-men.

Mr. Ketcham, though not a member of the visible church, was frequently an attendant at Old School Baptist meetings, both of his companions being Old Baptists in sentiment, and both, we believe, enjoying a good hope in the mercy of God.

The funeral was very largely attended on the 10th, at the Methodist meeting house in Otisville, and the services were conducted by Elder Benton Jenkins. The interment was in "The Plains" burying ground, where re-

pose the remains of many of his kindred who had preceded him to "the house appointed for all living."

May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved and sorrowing ones.

DIED—On Sunday morning, Aug. 23, 1887, of heart disease, at the residence of her annt, Mrs. Hephzibah Webb, in Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., **Miss Margaret Hulse**, in the sixty-fifth year of her age.

Sister Hulse was a daughter of Jonas and Cynthia Murray Hulse, deceased, and was born at Mt. Pleasant, Morris Co., N. J. Many years ago she experienced a good hope through grace, and was baptized by the late Elder P. Hartwell, in the fellowship of the First Old School Baptist Church of Hope-well, New Jersey, where her membership remained at the time of her departure from this militant state. For the past ten years she has resided with her annt, attending, as regularly as her health would permit, the meetings of the church at Middletown, where she was beloved by all who knew her. She possessed, to a remarkable degree, a meek and quiet spirit, and a very cheerful disposition, which made her a favorite with her kindred and friends. She had been in feeble health for many years, and at times was a great sufferer; but she was ever patient, and seemed to enjoy much of the light of the countenance of her Savior. For her to live was Christ, and to die was gain.

She is survived by one brother and four sisters. Her remains were taken to the home of her widowed sister, Mrs. John Hance, near Dover, N. J., where the funeral services were held on Wednesday the 31st, conducted by Elder Benton Jenkins, after which the body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Snokasunna, amidst the scenes of her childhood.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep;
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

It is with a sad heart I try to write of the death of our little ones, and grandchildren of Peter and Sarah C. Meredith. On the sixth day of July, 1886, death entered our little family and claimed our only son, **Samuel M. Green**, aged two years and two months. He was a dear little boy, his father's pride and his mother's joy, and a pet for all that came about him. But it pleased God to take him to himself, after suffering five days with congestion of the bowels.

ALSO,

ON August 11, 1887, death entered again, and took our darling babe, **Sallie M. Green**. Her stay on earth was short, being only nine months and two weeks old. She had the malaria and cholera infantum. All that could be done for the relief of the little sufferer could not stay the hand of death.

The Lord, who gave them, took them away. It was hard to give them up, but the Lord knows what is best. O may he give us the strength to be resigned to his holy will. Remember me when it is well with you.

SALLIE R. GREEN.

PETERSBURG, Kent Co., Del.

DIED—At her home in Bourbon Co., Kansas, July 17, 1887, sister **Elizabeth Holeman**, wife of Steven Holeman. She was born Nov. 13, 1834, in Scott Co., Indiana, and was married Jan. 10, 1856. She was baptized by Elder L. N. Vanmeter in 1859 or 1860, moved to Bourbon Co., Kansas, in 1865, where she lived until death was swallowed up in victory. Her sickness lasted fourteen months and fourteen days. Her sufferings were great, and the patience with which she underwent all her sufferings gave great assurance of her resignation to her lot in the end. She died a member of Turkey Creek Church, in good standing. She was the mother of fifteen children, of which ten are still living, three sons and seven daughters, the youngest being nine years old. She leaves a husband and the above mentioned sons and daughters, together with friends, relatives and the church, to mourn her departure. May the God of all grace comfort her husband and children, with all the bereaved.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri has appointed to hold its next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Hope Primitive Baptist Church, at Miami, in Saline Co., Mo., to begin on Friday before the first Saturday in October, and continue three days (Sept. 30th, Oct. 1st and 2d). Elders, brethren and sisters of our faith and order, and all others who may feel an interest in us or a desire to visit us, are cordially invited to attend.

Miami is on the Missouri River, and between the Chicago, Alton & St. Louis, and the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific railroads, about twelve miles from the former and two miles from the latter. Those coming by the former railway from the west will come on the morning train from Kansas City to Norton, on Thursday morning, Sept. 29th, and those from the east will come on the train in the evening of the same day, to the same place, where they will be cared for by brother Wm. Griffith and others. Those coming by the latter named railway will come to Miami Station, from both east and west, on Thursday morning, Thursday evening, or Friday morning; but the Friday morning train from the west will be rather late for the opening services. If any come on a late train to Miami Station, they will take lodgings there till morning, when conveyance will be provided in the town of Miami. Those who find it necessary will, inquire for Mark Whitaker, living two miles southeast of Miami; or T. A. Easton, two miles northeast of Miami; or Mrs. Chriswell or Mr. Cresap, her son-in-law, one-half mile east of Miami; or old mother Watson, living in Miami.

R. M. THOMAS.

THE one hundred and twenty-second annual session of the Kehukee Baptist Association is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, October 1st, 2d, and 3d, with the church at Skewarkey, near Williamston, Martin Co., North Carolina. This is the one hundredth year of the constitution of that church. Visitors from the north should come either by the Norfolk & Southern Railroad, or by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad; and those from the south by the Wilmington & Weldon, and the Raleigh & Albemarle Railroads. We hope to have a large attendance of our members, and especially of our ministering brethren at this centennial gathering.

S. HASSELL, Mod.

JOSEPH D. BIGGS, Clerk.

OUR association (the New Hope) will convene with the church at Union, in Drew Co., Ark., nine miles northeast from Monticello, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October next. We hope the Lord may move the hearts of some of our northern and eastern ministering brethren to visit us at that time.

A. TOMLIN.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1887, and continue three days.

This is a very convenient point, accessible by rail or water, and we hope to see a goodly number of our brethren, sisters and friends; and with this desire we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren in the ministry especially. We will endeavor to make you all comfortable.

Those coming by rail will get tickets for Snow Hill, and change cars at Harrington. The steamer Tangier will also leave South Street Warf on Tuesday afternoon and arrive at Snow Hill on Wednesday afternoon.

By order of the church,
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

THE Juniata Association will be held with the Springfield Church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in October, and continue over Sunday. A general invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and especially to those in the ministry. Those coming on the Central Pennsylvania will come to Mount Union, and there take the East Broadtop Road to Three

Springs, and there inquire for Mordecai Chilcote. They will be within three miles of the church. Those coming on the Baltimore & Ohio Road will have to come to Hancock, Md., about forty miles from the church. Those coming on this road must give timely notice by writing to brother Dennis Mellott or Ahimaaz Mellott. Direct to Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa., or to brother David Johnson, Hancock, Md. Be sure to be at Hancock on Wednesday, not later than the one o'clock train, where they will be met with conveyances.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Pilgrim's Rest Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Big Blue Church, on Friday before the second Saturday in October, 1887.

The Big Blue Church is situated in Johnson County, Kansas, seven miles northeast of Olathe, the county seat, and five miles southeast of Lenexa, a railroad station on the Fort Scott & Guly Road.

Brethren and friends coming to the association will come to Lenexa on Friday morning, where they will be met and cared for. We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

R. FLOURNOY.

THE Oconee Old School Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, on Saturday before the second Sunday in October next, at Mt. Zion, Clark Co., six and one-half miles from Athens, and be in session three days. Brethren and sisters are invited to attend. If coming by rail, write me at Athens, Georgia, and you will be met at whatever depot designated, at Athens, Friday evening. Ministering brethren especially are invited.

F. M. McLERoy, Clerk.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Columbia will hold a yearly meeting at Kelly's Corners, Jackson Co., Mich., beginning on the first Saturday in October, 1887.

All coming from the east and south will come to Toledo, and then to Napoleon. Those from the north will also come to Napoleon, where all will find friends to take care of them.

WM. S. CARPENTER, Clerk.

OUR yearly meeting will be on Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday in October (12th and 13th), if the Lord will, when and where we hope to meet all that the Lord wills should come. The friends will be met at Otego depot on Tuesday after noon and evening and cared for by the brethren.

G. M. FRENCH, Clerk.

OUR yearly meeting is appointed to be held at Welsh Tract, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, to begin at ten o'clock a. m., and continue until noon on Monday following.

Those coming by rail through Philadelphia can leave Broad Street Station on Saturday at 9.00 a. m. or 12.00 m. Both trains will be in time for the meeting at 2.00 p. m.

Those coming through Baltimore should leave there about 9.30 a. m.

Those coming up the Delaware R. R. will connect with Delaware City R. R. at Porters Station at 12.00 m. on Saturday, and get off at Wilson. All the other trains will be met at Newark depot.

We hope that many brethren, sisters and friends, especially brethren in the ministry, will come and see us. It is directly in the way from Baltimore and Philadelphia to the Salisbury Association, appointed to be held in Snow Hill on Wednesday after our meeting.

J. L. STATON.

THERE will be a two days meeting held, if the Lord will, at the meeting house of the Old School Baptists in Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., on the first Saturday and Sunday in October (1st and 2d), 1887, and we invite all lovers of the truth, especially our brethren in the ministry.

Done by order of the church.

WM. P. KIRK, Clerk.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THE Zion Church will hold, providence permitting, a two days meeting at Galilean Hall, on F. Street, between third and fourth streets, S. W. Washington, D. C., to begin Saturday before the third Sunday in October, at 10 a. m., and continue over Sunday. A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to attend.

N. P. REED.

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1887.

NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BLANCO, Texas, August, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I send you this sketch, wherein allusion is made to the wonderful displays of God's power and goodness in his dealings with his people. This was written for my own benefit; but some brethren request me to send it to you, which, if you approve, you can publish.

Of the eternal Son it is said, "Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee." "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." As the salvation of his people, the Lord only makes them to dwell in safety. Though the Lord tries his saints, he compasses them as with a shield, ministers judgment to them, stills the enemy and avenger, ensnares the wicked in his devices against them, and breaks the arm or power of their enemies. Though the Lord in mercy trieth the righteous, yet in judgment upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and an horrible tempest. He delivers the poor and needy from their oppressions, gives them a goodly heritage, maintains their lot, and holds up their goings in his paths, that their footsteps slip not. He keeps them as the apple of his eye, and hides them under the shadow of his wings. Though the wrath of God is comparable to devouring fire going out of his mouth, at which the earth is said to shake and tremble, yet he girds his people with strength and the shield of his salvation. As King and Governor among the nations, he devours all his enemies, converts the soul, and makes wise the simple; for none can deliver his own soul. But "a seed shall serve him: it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." This generation he maketh to lie down in green pastures, and leads them beside the still waters, and in paths of righteousness. Even in the valley and shadow of death his rod and his staff comfort them. Often, under a sense of the divine favor, the saints give vent to their feelings as follows: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; for he hath founded and established it." He is King of glory, strong and mighty; for he guides his people with judgment, shows them his ways, and leads them in his paths, all of which are mercy and truth. He plucks their feet out of the net which the wicked set for them, and he will not let them slide; for he has redeemed and will deliver

Israel out of all his troubles. He hides them in his pavilion, where his honor dwells, and there they behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in his temple. The Lord also sets them upon the Rock, a sure foundation, and strengthens them by showing them his goodness, that they faint not. Thus he is the saving strength of his anointed; for he will save and bless his inheritance, and lift them up forever. When the poor, tried ones are by faith enabled to behold the wonderful displays of God's goodness in their delivery, when sorely tried, their feelings are in accord with the psalmist as he sings, "Give unto the Lord glory and strength;" for his voice is powerful and full of majesty. He breaketh the cedars of Lebanon, divideth the flames of fire, and shaketh the wilderness. In his temple doth every one speak of his glory; for he sitteth King forever, giveth strength to his people, and blesses them with peace. "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Then the Lord maketh their mountain to stand; for he turns their mourning into dancing, or joy, puts off their sackcloth, and girds them with gladness. Though they pass much of their time in sorrow, grief and sighing, and their strength faileth, and owing to their sins they seem forgotten, as a dead man out of mind, or like a broken vessel, yet when they are enabled to realize that both their being and times are in the hands of a faithful and omnipotent God, to him they make supplication. Then he sets their feet in a large room, and makes his face to shine upon them; and being thus exercised they cry, "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear and trust in thee." Therefore we should be of good courage, for he will strengthen the heart of all that hope in his mercy. Though oftentimes the hand of God seems heavy upon us, and presses us sore, and our moisture is turned into the drought of summer, the enlightened saint is with the psalmist enabled to say, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me;" for thou art my hiding place. Thou shalt preserve me from (or in) trouble, compass me about with songs of deliverance, instruct and teach me in the way I shall go, and guide me with thine eye (or counsel); for by thy word the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of thy mouth. Thy glory is above the heavens, or

daind and set in order the moon and stars, gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap. Then let all the earth stand in awe of him; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. He bringeth the counsels of the heathen to naught; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. But the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Therefore the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance, are blessed. Though the Lord does fashion the hearts and consider the works of all the inhabitants of the earth, he delivers only his chosen, or such as are enabled to hope in his mercy, from death, and keeps them alive in famine; and they rejoice in him, because they put their trust in him, and sing, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." His Angel encampeth about them that fear and trust him, and he delivereth them; for he is ever near to them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as are of a broken spirit. Though many are the trials and afflictions of the righteous, yet the Lord delivereth them out of them all. Then they cry, O taste and see that the Lord is gracious; for the earth is full of his goodness; and blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Though the wicked strive and fight against the upright, the Lord will bring his devices to naught, as chaff before the wind; for destruction shall come upon him unawares. But the upright in heart shall rejoice in the Lord, because he is their salvation and deliverer. Then delight in the Lord, commit thy way unto and trust in him, and he will give the desire of thy heart, and bring forth thy righteousness as the light. It should be noted here that the Lord is the cause and author of all holy desires in his people. Then we should wait patiently for and rest in him, and fret not because of the prosperity of the wicked; for he shall be cut off. But the meek and they that wait upon and trust in the Lord shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace; and if the wicked draw the sword and bend the bow to cast down the poor and needy, the sword shall enter his own heart, and his bow shall be broken. For the Lord upholdeth the righteous, and his inheritance shall be forever. In the days of famine he shall be satisfied. His steps being ordered by the Lord, he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall

not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him. David says, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." As the Lord forsaketh not his saints, they shall dwell forevermore; and as his law is in their hearts, none of their steps shall slide. As their salvation is of the Lord, their end shall be peace. When God's children are exercised in afflictions they can see the hand of God in them; for their language is, "Rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me." "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long." "I am feeble and sore broken." "All my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee." In this great extremity the tried ones are ready to say, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." Though every man walketh in a vain show, yet in their best estate they are altogether vanity. Therefore, O Lord, my hope is in thee alone. Deliver me from my transgressions; for I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. I was dumb with silence, because thou didst it; for "when thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth." "O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more." When the Lord's pleasure is accomplished in afflicting or correcting his saints, he enables and inclines them to look to, trust in, and call upon him; and this being his time to deliver and shine upon them, he is the author of the prayer and the bestower of the blessing in their delivery. Thus God inclines them to ask for what it is his good pleasure to give. Then they say with David, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Then how "blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust." "Many, O Lord, are thy wonderful works." As the Lord has been the dwelling place of his people in all generations, and all their springs (or actions) are

in him (Psalms xc. 1; lxxxvii. 7), we are not to suppose the exercises of the Lord's people in their diversified states of suffering and rejoicing, as noted above, are the result of chance or accident, or that such exercises imply a change in God. They result from the determinations of his will, and proceed according to the tenor of his eternal counsels, which are faithfulness and truth. These exercises are disciplinary, and are very salutary in producing humility and trust in the child of God, and are in mercy sent for his good; so that all that befalls his children in time, both of adversity and prosperity, is for their good.

Divine providence is the hand which in time unfolds the counsels of eternity, and distributes to each and every one his lot or cup of sorrow or joy. It also extends to and controls all creatures and their actions, from an angel to the rising and falling of the smallest atom of matter; and in this consists the security and preservation of the Lord's people, both as to time and eternity, and is declarative of his glory and eternal power and Godhead. Then let us join the holy prophet in his anthem of praise and thanksgiving, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

Yours in gospel bonds,
JAMES WAGNER.

LOCKTOWN, N. J., Dec. 14, 1886.

ELDER BUNDY:—As it has been quite strongly impressed on my mind to write some of my experience to you, I will once more make the attempt, trusting you will bear with my weakness. I know very little, and the longer I leave this matter the less I seem to know. I thought I knew very little a year ago, but now I seem to know less. If I had thought I would lack knowledge so much, I do not think I would now have a name and place among you; but I hope the members will bear with me, for I do not feel willing to be separated from them. It has often been a great wonder to me how they could receive me the day they did, as I said so little. There have been some things in my experience that grieve me much to think of, let alone speaking of them.

When I was quite a small child I had great dread of death. It seemed a great terror to me when I would hear of some one dying with whom I was acquainted. Sometimes they would express a willingness to go, which would make me wonder how that could be, as death was such a terror to me; but such is not the case with me now. At times I have not any dread of death. I think I have seen the time when I could say, "welcome death." When I was sick so long, I sometimes felt that it was a just judgment on me for not doing my duty; although I then could see no way; but I have since learned that "To obey is better than sacrifice."

Once when I was at prayer meet-

ing, uncle Wilson read a hymn that seemed to come home to me with great force,

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know," &c.

The whole of that hymn seemed very expressive to me, as I felt I was such a great sinner. I always loved to attend those prayer meetings, for I loved to hear the members talk of the goodness of God and of their joys and sorrows. When they spoke of their troubles I could always bear witness with them; but of their joys I knew nothing, for my experience was all trouble. I wondered how they could ever have any trouble, as they all appeared so happy. When I heard preaching I always felt condemned; and when I read the Bible there was nothing in it for me. Mine seemed to be an outside case. Often have I taken the Bible and gone by myself to see if I could find something to encourage me; but all in vain. When I read the SIGNS, the experiences in particular, I could go with the writers through their troubles, but of their joys I knew nothing. Whenever there would be a baptism I would feel that I was left alone, because I was such a sinner, and that it would not be obedience for one so vile as I. Besides, I did not want to speak of my troubles, for I did not want any one to know how wicked I was; and I thought that none but good people were ever permitted to receive that ordinance.

At one time I was staying at my grandfather's, and Elder Hartwell was there. When he bade us good-by, he took me by the hand, and said, "May the Lord bless you." Before that time I was feeling very much condemned, and was afraid some of the family would ask me what the matter was, for I felt they could all see what great trouble I was in. Grandfather frequently spoke of his poverty, and I was afraid he would say something to me, or that I might say something that would lead him to surmise my trouble. I thought he would be very apt to speak to me about it. I often thought I would tell him how wicked I was, and just how I felt; but the thought would come that perhaps I was trying to deceive him, and that I was too young to think of these things; besides, my walk did not correspond with my impressions. For a long time after his death I regretted that I had not talked more freely to him.

There was a time when, for popularity's sake, I would have gone somewhere else to meeting, but there was no preaching for me elsewhere. I could not bear the thought of going among a people whom I knew to be in error. At one time, when I was at my grandfather's, I had a dream which made a deep impression on my mind, and remains with me yet. I dreamed of being at one of the Saturday meetings, and that Elder Durand was there. A candidate came before the church, and after she had related her experience, one of the members turned and asked me if I was not going forward. I replied that I was so wicked that I could never go

there. I looked around, and all the church were in tears. That awakened me, and I found myself sitting up in bed and weeping. I do not think I can ever forget that dream.

At one time Elder Purington was at our place during a storm, and was talking to my father about his duty, and told him he ought to go forward in baptism. Glad as I would have been for him to do so, I hardly knew how to have it thus, for then I would be left alone in the world. I could not go forward myself, for I was so wicked and ignorant that I did not think the church could receive me. I thought they would begin by asking me questions, and I thought I could not answer them. When I was called to give up my father it was a very great trial to me. I could not wish him back again, but I longed to go with him. As I stood at his grave I felt that I was standing on holy ground, and that there was rest there. I felt that if the earth would only open and swallow me up, I would be willing to give up all; for there was nothing for me to live for, and my health was very poor. I thought that it would have been better for me to have been taken, for he was of some use in the world, while I was of little account. Then I had to come back to my old troubles. Baptism was on my mind the first thing when I awoke, and the last thing before I fell asleep. These words were constantly with me, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" There seemed to be no way of escape for me. I felt it was my duty, and that the Lord would never lead me astray. I was in great trouble, and did not know which way to turn. The Scriptures condemned me, and my sickness and every trouble seemed to be on account of my disobedience. One morning when I awoke, the first thought that entered my mind was, "For I have a baptism to be baptized with." These words were so impressed on my mind that as soon as I could I got the Bible, and almost the first words that I turned to were, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." That seemed to be the point I was trying to get at, How was I to be straitened? There seemed to be but one way. I could not serve God and Mammon at the same time.

One thing I never have had to regret, and that is my being baptized. I have found that "To obey is better than sacrifice." But one thing that I have to regret is, I come so far short both in walk and conversation; yet I hope the brethren and sisters will be willing to bear with me. "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."

Well, I will have to come to a close. There are several circumstances I would like to speak of, but lest I weary your patience I will forbear.

I remain your unworthy sister in Christ,
A. A. S.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Sept. 20, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed I forward you a good letter from sister Eva Sayer, of Warwick, New York. It has been blessed to the comfort of my own soul, and I believe will be equally good to others. I do not think that I ever hear or read a christian experience without feeling like saying, "It is wonderful." "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

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

WARWICK, N. Y., Sept. 16, 1886.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—At your request I will try and write a little, though it will be imperfect, like myself. I feel myself so far from the path that leads to Christ and his righteousness, I sometimes think I have missed the substance and grasped the shadow. If I could write like some of the sisters that I might mention, then it might be to edification. I will have to go away back to childhood days to get started on the subject you wished me to write upon.

I never can remember when I first began to love the children of God. It must have been when very young, as my dear mother used to say that I cried to go to meeting, and would cry nearly all the time while there, so that she got ashamed to take me. When I was twenty months old I had inflammation of the lungs, and she did not think I would recover. One day, while standing over me and weeping, not thinking I could live, she said I asked her what she was crying about. She replied, "I do not think you can live." (I could talk as plainly then as I do now.) I spoke out and told her not to cry, as I was going to get well. She said she could soon see a change for the better. In December, 1866, while away on a visit of worldly pleasure, attending balls, parties, &c., in Middletown, I was arrested in my mad career, and was brought very near to Christ by these beautiful words, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." "The Lord is my Shepherd: I shall not want," &c. Last of all, these words from a hymn in Beebe's Collection,

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

But that, being from a hymn book, did not seem just the thing, and yet it was very good. I was looking for more from the Bible; but no more came, so I was made to feel satisfied.

On January 7th, 1867, I was baptized by Elder Bicknell, and returned home the next day. I went on my way rejoicing for a time. Then, after eight long years, I found that he was out of order when he baptized me, and that my baptism was not valid; so I came before the Warwick Church, and was baptized by Elder J. A. Badger, on the last Sunday in June, 1875, where I have found peace and comfort to my weary soul.

When on an ocean voyage, in the month of March, 1873 (I was returning from a visit to Savannah, Georgia, where I had been spending three months), a very severe storm of rain came upon our vessel, and the captain was somewhat alarmed. He left the dinner table very abruptly and went above. I was sitting at his right hand at the time; but the Lord seemed to be very near me all day, and at night was so near me that I could almost feel his presence, and he spoke these words to me, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want," &c., to the end of the Psalm (xxiii.). At the time I was obliged to take hold of my berth with both hands to hold myself in. I had no fear, for the Lord was nigh me. It was a very comfortable time with me. I had no more fear then than I have now while penning these lines to you. In the year 1876, after my dear mother fell asleep and went to dwell with her dear Redeemer, Elder and sister Badger were to leave for Virginia in three days after he preached her funeral; so, instead of one to leave me, I should lose three near and dear friends, and how to live and feel content I found not, until the words of the twenty-third Psalm came to me. Then I could say, Enough, enough. If I have thee I want no other; thou alone art my all in all. But for a few years past I am cold and barren. O that I could live near him, as in those three instances that I have mentioned. I was then very happy and content. It would be a very comfortable frame to be in at all times; but I find the Lord has ordered it otherwise. We are to have many dark seasons, compared with the bright ones. It is all for a purpose. I suppose we would be lifted up too high above our brethren in the flesh, and would not be fit to dwell here.

Do with these imperfect lines as you think best. May the Lord be with you to comfort and sustain you, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake. From your unworthy sister in hope of life eternal,

M. E. SAYER.

CHENEY, Washington Ter., Feb. 23, 1887.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I sent to you for your paper, and you sent it to me; also I sent for one of your books, and it came; if the Lord will I wish to order the Church History soon. I would now like to ask the question which John sent to the Lord by his two disciples, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" I could once say, like John, "Behold the Lamb of God,

which taketh away the sin of the world." I then seemed to walk in the light of his presence, and could hold sweet communion with him of whom Moses and the prophets did write; but alas! I have left my first love, and Herod has laid hold on me and cast me into prison in my own experience. Now, as I hear through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of the works of Christ, I feel solitary, being so far off literally from those of my own belief. I have found but three of our faith in this country, but we are overrun with those who cry, "Lo here, and lo there." Brethren, can you join me in prayer to the Lord, that he would say, Go and show Rushing again those things which ye do hear and see? Brethren, do the blind receive their sight? and do the lame walk? are the lepers cleansed? and the dead raised up? and O brethren, do the poor have the gospel preached unto them? and are the few old "Hardshells" blessed who are not offended at the good old doctrine of predestination? Brethren, bear with me in my folly, and indeed bear with me. What do I go out to Cheney sometimes for? To see a reed shaken by the wind? or, in other words, a Hardshell shaken by the inventions of men? Yes, brethren, I have been tempted to believe that all the new isms of our coast were good inventions; but that word "If possible," gives me confidence that I have not been deceived, and that I shall be kept from all snares until the end of my sojourn on earth; yet I often fear that I am not one of the elect.

But what do I go out to Cheney for? Sometimes to see a man dressed in fine clothing, with a soft, lily-like hand, take from his hat a written discourse and read it to a fashionable audience. Sometimes, it may be to hear a woman give a temperance lecture; and last summer, it was to hear an old "Hardshell," with a hard, rough hand, and with a strong voice, with the word of the Lord written in his heart, to preach to a few who had collected perhaps from curiosity, to see and hear a man three score and ten years old, who could preach off-hand the good old doctrine of salvation by grace. A few weeks since a woman preached in Cheney that all men can be saved if they will, and that Sunday Schools and Temperance Societies are advantages to christianity. I did not attend, not that I am too good, but there is too much show and pride manifest on such occasions. The name of the gospel preacher referred to is Andrew J. Gregg; he lives twenty miles from me. By your publishing my former scribble I have found the address of Elder Chambers and others. I feel so little that I am sometimes tempted never to call one of the saints by the name of brother; I am so unworthy.

Yours in hope,

WRIGHT RUSHING.

P. S.—I am very much pleased with the second volume of the "Editorials," and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a source of comfort to me, as I have heard only four sermons

preached by Old School Baptists, two by Elder Chambers, and two by Elder Gregg. When Elder Gregg preached in Cheney last summer, it was on Sunday before the great local option election, which was the next day. As soon as we arrived a man said to Elder G., "Well, Elder Gregg, I guess you have come to make us a lecture on Prohibition." The old man said, "No." "What then?" said the inquirer. Elder Gregg said gravely, "That sort of stuff is entirely out of my line of business." His text was, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him."—Isa. xl. 10. Now Cheney is a place of about five hundred inhabitants, most of them religious, and so fanatical that they do not use wine in their sacrament; but they are not so temperate in money matters, for I have seen their deacons' hats passed around before their minister would read his sermon. The hour for Sunday School arrived when Elder G. had been preaching about thirty minutes, and some leaders of that class left the house. There was much dissatisfaction because the preaching was not concluded before the hour for their Sunday School. After preaching, Elder Gregg said to me that it was useless for him ever to preach there again. W. R.

TYRONE, Ky., August 7, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I again take my pen to write a few thoughts for the perusal of the saints. In Luke xiii. 23, 24, we find the following Scripture, "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." This proves clearly to my mind that there were some while Christ was here on earth who believed that there were a few that would be saved, and not all of Adam's race, as some would have it. "A remnant shall be saved, according to the election of grace." Most assuredly a remnant does not mean all. Suppose we go to a merchant and call for a remnant of calico; do you think he would give us a whole bolt? If he did, we would be ready to say that he had lost his mind. Again, Matthew vii. 13, 14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Here we have this same few, or remnant, again. Then why so much caviling among men, and saying that Christ opened up a way that all of Adam's race may be saved if they will only comply with the overtures of mercy? The apostle answers the question and says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Again, "The carnal

mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Then we see why they talk thus, because they know not whereof they say. John xvii. 6: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me." This proves clearly to my mind that Jesus did not come to save the whole world. If he did, why did he not say, I have manifested thy name unto the whole world, and not unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world? He says again, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." He says again, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Most assuredly "out of" does not mean all. In Revelation v. 9 we read that he has chosen them out of every kindred, people, tongue and nation. Now if "out of" means all, why did he not say every kindred, people, tongue and nation, instead of "out of?" If he came to save the whole world, it seems to me that his mission was a failure. How about that rich man that went to torment? Jesus says that of all the Father hath given him he shall lose nothing, but will raise it up again at the last day. Now this rich man was not a gift of the Father to the Son. If he was, he never would have been sent to hell. God's children are just as secure to-day as if they were sitting around the throne of God. They are kept by the power of God, through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Dear brethren Beebe, if you see anything in this poor scribble worth space in our family paper you can publish it; if not, cast it aside, and all will be right.

Your brother, saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. J. WATERFILL.

GRATIS, Ohio, Jan. 25, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—We feel that we cannot do without the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. They come to us laden with the precious truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The rich communications and editorials are truly comforting and cheering to the poor, despondent soul. I sometimes feel to desire, though weak and ignorant, to add my testimony that the Lord is gracious and merciful, and that he is a prayer hearing and a prayer answering God. I think I have been made to realize that unto them who believe he is precious. O, if it were not for this great Friend how could I bear the troubles and trials of this life? But the Lord has promised that "As thy days thy strength shall be." I have felt this promise verified. In him I put my trust. If I could write like the dear brethren and sisters who write for the SIGNS, I would like to write more about the goodness and mercy of our God. I feel so little, weak and unworthy. O that it were with me as

in days that are past and gone, when I trust that the candle of the Lord shone around me. All my delight was to read and meditate on his word, and to sing his praises all the day long, for he had taken me up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and placed my feet upon the rock, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.

Brother Beebe, I would like to have your views on the ten lepers; we read that there were ten cleansed, and only one returned to give glory to God. I will close lest I weary you. I would like to speak a word of comfort to dear sister Mary Parker in her deep affliction; but she seems to have the sweet company of the Lord to comfort and cheer her.

Your sister in Christ, I hope,
MARY HECKMAN.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Through the continued goodness and mercy of our adorable Redeemer we have been spared to see another year. I have been some time thinking of writing a few words for the SIGNS; but I am so poor and unworthy that I tremble at the thought of speaking to the household of faith. I joined the New School Baptists when I was young, and remained with them several years; but it seemed all the while that they required more of poor mortals than they could possibly do. I felt too weak and poor to do one good act. I got a letter of dismission, and after a year or so I joined the Old Baptists. I had never heard three Old Baptist sermons preached; but when I did hear them I thought they were my people. Like Ruth, I felt to say to them, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee." There are so many good letters in the SIGNS, written by the dear brethren and sisters scattered abroad, and all speaking the same things, because they are all taught of the Lord. Sometimes it is all darkness with me and I think there is none like me, that surely I never knew anything about the Savior's love shed abroad in my heart. I saw a piece in the SIGNS not long since which suited me exactly, telling my experience better than I myself could. But one thing I know, I do love the brethren, and delight to hear the gospel preached in its purity. Now, brethren, may the Lord sustain and comfort you in endeavoring to speak comfortably to Jerusalem,

From an unworthy sister, if one at all,
J. A. C.

LEAD HILL, Ark., Sept. 26, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire, by your permission, to say a few words to the saints of God, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I first want to speak of my visit to the Cadran Association of Predestinarian Baptists, which was held with Mount Pleasant Church, in Prairie County, Arkansas, on the second, third and fourth days of September, 1887. I left home on Tuesday, August 30th, and on that night tried to preach at Pilot Point meeting

house, in Searcy County, Arkansas. Then I went on through Searcy, Vanburen, Claiborn, White, and into Pannora County. I heard of but very few Old Baptists on the way. I arrived at the association on Sunday morning, and if I am not greatly deceived I found an association of Old School Baptists who are contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. They are not mixed or mingled with the institutions of men, but are content with the provisions that the Lord has made for his people.

In the forenoon I heard Elder T. B. Little, from the New Hope Association, and Elder Pinkington, from Texas, preach, and I thought that they both preached as able and as sound discourses as I had ever heard. In the afternoon I tried to preach, and was followed by Elder D. Westall, and I think he preached the ablest sermon that I ever heard. I had to travel about one hundred and seventy miles to get to the association, and over a very rough country at that, and by myself; but I do not regret my trip, although I was too late for the meeting on Friday and Saturday.

The association will be held with Hopewell Church, in White County, next year, on the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before.

I returned home on Friday after the association and found my family all well.

On yesterday I had the pleasure of leading a dear brother and sister into the water and baptizing them in the fellowship of Enon Church of Regular Baptists.

May the grace of God lead us all in peace, and save us with an everlasting salvation, is my prayer.

WM. J. CASEY.

77 MILL ST., MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.,
Sept. 4, 1887.

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I feel like writing to you, if you will bear with me, about the way the Lord has led me since my dear husband died. O how I miss his voice in my lonely rooms at night, miss him at my table, miss him when I go to meeting, where his seat is vacant. The last time he was there he led in singing, hymn 357, Beebe's Collection,

"The good old way that leads to God," &c. That was his last song. His harp was tuned and laid aside until his spirit took its flight, to sing anew in that world of glory, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." He told me he would soon be gone, and took my hand in his. I kissed him and said,

"When you get home
Your journey's done,
Then look ye out for me.

For I will run fast as I can,
Along the way I'll steer;
Through Christ, my strength,
I shall at length
Be one among your there."

He wanted to be laid on his right side, and spoke no more. The children then came in, and also Elder

Jenkins and others. He died without a murmur or groan. The next morning brother Hiram Horton came in to see me, and I asked him to help carry my husband to the grave, as he wished his most intimate friends to convey him there. He said that was right. When Stephen was stoned to death, devout men carried him to his grave, and made great lamentation. It was no wonder they lamented his terrible death.

When I returned from the grave to my home then I realized my loneliness, and that I was a widow indeed. My mouth was closed, and I must walk softly all my days. My health failed, my appetite and sleep went from me, and my mind was in the dark, beclouded with trouble and sorrow, for nearly three months. Then my health got better, and one night I awoke with the hymn in my mind,

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah," &c.

I could say amen to those words. The darkness was removed, and I can thank the Lord for his mercies to one who feels very small in his sight. O may I take heed to my steps, that I may walk in that strait and narrow way that the vulture's eye hath not seen, nor the lion's whelp trodden.

Please read hymn 970, Beebe's Collection.

With love to you all, I remain your unworthy sister,

MARY CAREY.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Sept. 13, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please gratify the desires of brethren who have requested me to copy the following little letter for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

The writer is one of those who feel that they are not fully acquainted with themselves, and yet give evidence of great interest in the blessed cause of truth, as advocated by the SIGNS, and we trust has been taught of the Lord. May its publication be of some comfort to others. Dear brethren, please let me say to all who may feel interested to read my poor productions, that I trust I still feel some faint hope of heaven, some sweet peace in believing. My infinite weakness prepares me to trust in God's infinite power. My utter failures in purpose prepare me to trust all events to God's infinite plan. Therefore, while I humbly wait before the august presence of him who rideth upon the heavens in our help, may I ever remember the sweet power of grace by which alone I stand.

Yours to serve,

A. B. BREES.

ZANESFIELD, Ohio, April 3, 1887.

MR. COTTRELL:—This pleasant Sunday evening I will attempt to write a few lines.

Well, Mr. Cottrell, I am still numbered among the living; and hearing that you are very poorly, through much love and respect I will attempt to express a few of my feelings. I would like to see you very much, and would like to hear you preach. Mr.

Cottrell, amongst all the isms of the day, I cannot get away from the "Absolute predestination of all things," whether I have a part or not in the matter. I sometimes compare myself with the psalmist when he says, "My feet had well nigh slipped." The most of my time my heart is very sore, and the outer man condemns it. My heart gets tired, but it is bathed in oil sometimes. The oak that casts its leaves, puts forth its green leaves again. As Paul says, the outer man perishes, yet the inner man is renewed day by day. There is but one thing that buoys us up. Though our transgressions are visited with the rod, and our iniquities with stripes, nevertheless God does not withdraw his loving-kindness, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Though cast down, we are not forsaken. And if this tabernacle shall fall we have a house not made with hands. From your ever-loving friend,

GEORGE D. PETERS.

WATERLOO, Neb., Aug. 21, 1887.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We have been wanting to send your dues for our precious paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but could not until now. We thank you for your patient waiting for that which should have been paid long ago. The SIGNS contains all the preaching we get, except that once a year we have been going about fifty miles to the associations of the Old Baptists, who hold their meetings both east and west of us—in Loveland, Iowa, and in Butler County, Nebraska, each about fifty miles from us here at Waterloo, where there are plenty religionists, but they preach another gospel, or a perversion of the gospel, which is sickening to our hungry souls. O that the good Lord would send some of his faithful ministers this way, that our hungry souls might be fed often with the bread of life. This is a country well enough to live in for the outward man, but the inner man needs renewing day by day with something better than can be found here. This is our experience since we came here, more than three years ago.

Your sister, I humbly hope,

K. R. MYERS.

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G. BEEBE'S SONS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Particular Baptists, now in session with the Drift Run Church, Robertson Co., Ky., to the churches composing her organization, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—For more than half a century the Licking Association has had an organized existence, composed of separate or distinct branches of the one true Vine, or one body, represented in the divine oracle as the church, purchased by the blood of Christ, which is the ground and pillar of the truth. During this series of years it has been your custom to meet in an associate capacity to hear of each other's welfare, and to hear from and greet our brethren of other like branches of the same faith and order, and which is the outgrowth of the same true Vine, bearing the same kind of fruit. It has also been the custom of the association to address a Circular Letter to the churches, calling their solemn attention and most earnest consideration to some of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, as presented in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as given by inspiration of God, to characters who spake and wrote as they were moved by his Spirit, to record the only authorized and infallible rule for the faith and practice of the saints in all ages of the world; and whenever it is the will of the Head of the church, that this comforting and soul-invigorating doctrine shall be set forth in harmony with the general tenor of the divine oracle, and as evinced in the lives and experiences of the saints, our meeting and Circular Address are not in vain. There is nothing so well calculated to stir the highest emotions of gratitude and admiration to God, or to excite the praises of his saints, as to point out their true character to their own understanding; and for this purpose we have selected a portion of the record as testified to by the apostle John, in which the heirs of immortal glory are represented as spotless, righteous and holy as God himself, and from which we desire to offer a few thoughts for your prayerful consideration.

It is found in 1 John iii. 9, and reads as follows: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." If this Scripture stood disconnected, with other portions of testimony left upon record by the Holy Ghost, how hopeless would be the condition of every son and daughter of Adam, for the great apostle to the Gentiles declares that he has proved that both Jew and Gentile are all under sin. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Another inspired writer says, "If we say that

we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." Again, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Now, brethren, can any of us, as the sons or daughters of Adam, say that we have no sin, and say of a truth that we cannot sin? If so, we (as the children of Adam) are born of God; otherwise (as the children of Adam) we are not, but are yet in the likeness of our fallen and depraved father, against whom the irrevocable sentence of death has passed, and which sentence must and is being administered to every one of Adam's posterity. And were it not for the coming of the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit, we would be without hope, for it is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; for all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever. It is by this ever-enduring word that the children of God are born of an incorruptible seed, over which the power of darkness has no control to contaminate or adulterate; for it is a seed in itself, bearing fruit of its kind, as figuratively set forth in the creation. And though tares be sown in the same field, and suffered to grow up together, as represented in the parable, the husbandman knows exactly how to manage, that the wheat be not destroyed. For he whose fan is in his hand "will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." No sooner is this seed sown and quickened into life, than its effects are seen, felt and realized. There is a holy principle brought in contact with that which is unholy, and now is manifest the complex character of the chosen one of God, black, but comely; black, because all over sin-defiled; comely, because born of God; and he doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. It was in view of this that David declared in Psalm cxix. 50, "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." We here approach a tender point: "But to the law and to the testimony." Could David claim that it was his flesh, or anything that was born of Adam, that had been quickened? No; for the same Spirit that brought this word as a comfort in his afflictions, declared on another occasion, by the mouth of him that spake as never man spake, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." Hence an apostle has said, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening Spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." But be it said for your comfort, brethren, that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." For "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus

raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." We here get a glimpse of that mystery that the apostle shows, that everything that is mortal or natural is not changed or quickened till death is swallowed up of victory. Now we know, brethren, that flesh and blood, with everything that pertains to the first or natural man, is corrupt, else it could not die. We know also that it is declared that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

We would here inquire, What is it that has made us and keeps us corrupt, and subjects us to the wages of sin, which is death? Another pertinent question, If any thing or any part of this natural man, of which the apostle here speaks, were already quickened or born of God, would it be corrupt? could it sin? or could he die? For "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." And Jesus said, "Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die." Does this natural man live, and believe in Jesus? If he does, he can never die. But, blessed be God, Christians are "taught of God" that in them, that is, in their flesh, dwelleth no good thing, and they groan to be delivered, waiting for the adoption of this corruptible, when it shall be changed, fashioned, and made like unto him whose image they shall yet bear. Then, and not till then, will they be satisfied with themselves. David expresses the language of their hearts when he says, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." This discriminating doctrine leads us to designate the one that is born of God as the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; the other, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, having a carnal mind that is (not was) enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be; the very man that made David cry out in his distress, "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue." "My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace." Here is a conflict of opposing elements; the distressed saint, groaning to be delivered from the body of death, cries out to God in plaintive song,

"Encompassed with clouds of distress,
And tempted all hope to resign,
I pant for the light of thy face,
That I in thy beauty may shine.

"Disheartened with waiting so long,
I sink at thy feet with my load;
All plaintive I pour out my song,
And stretch forth my hands unto God.

"Shine, Lord, and my terror shall cease;
The blood of atonement apply,
And lead me to Jesus for peace—
The Rock that is higher than I.

"Speak, Savior, for sweet is thy voice,
Thy presence is fair to behold;
I thirst for thy Spirit, with cries
And groanings that cannot be told."

The conflict thus wages, but makes evident the fact that such a character is called of God; for in their own experience they trace the trials and

conflicts of the saints in other ages, and take home with comfort and consolation that "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." But where would be our hope if it were true, as some contend, that it is the natural man, the first man, or the old man, that is already regenerated, quickened, born again, or born of God? for we yet find him in the flesh, yet in the image of his father, yet mortal, yet corrupt, and the subject of corruption. Hence the idea that regeneration, quickening, or the new birth (neither of which terms are synonymous), is a reproduction of our earthly nature (experienced in this life), destroys all hope, for we yet can and do sin. But blessed be God the Father, we have not so learned Christ; but have hope that we have learned that to be quickened and born of God is to have developed in us the power of immortality and eternal life, that was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world. This we believe to be a birth of the Spirit, and is spirit, not natural, the Spirit of Christ, and that mystery which is Christ in you the hope of glory; and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. "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." For by the power of that endless or eternal life of the Head, shall every member of his body, the church, triumph over death, which is the wages of sin. This mortal shall then put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. These vile, natural, sinning and sinful bodies, that are born of the flesh, shall be changed, and fashioned like unto his own glorious body. Brethren, it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when we see him we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Then round the great white throne, robed in spotless white,

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

J. T. MOORE, Mod.

J. W. ROYSTER, Clerk.

J. W. WALLINGFORD, Ass't Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Whitefield, September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1887, to the churches of which she is composed, and to the meetings with which she corresponds, sends greeting in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—If any warrant be needed for complying again with our annual custom of addressing you by letter, we can appeal to the language of our beloved brother Peter, who has in his second epistle twice declared that he wrote thus because he desired and thought it suitable to stir up the pure minds of

his brethren by way of remembrance of the things which they had been taught in the Scriptures, and which it would be for their profit to remember.

There are some things which it would be well for us to forget, even if we were once pleased to know them; but here are things which an inspired apostle thought it needful to speak of again and again, that his brethren might at all times have them in mind. The things of this world, whether we speak of its sinful follies or of its legal religion, are to be forgotten, as things which are behind us; but the things that belong to the everlasting kingdom are precious and enduring, and are for our good forever. As natural men, we are glad to remember things that have done us good, and that have ministered to our enjoyment, rather than the sorrowful things; and yet even in our natural life it is often the case that the most precious events, events that have done us the most good, have been sorrowful, trying, and hard to bear. Thus Israel remembered all the way in which the Lord their God had led them, though much of the way had been a hard and disciplinary one, full of crosses and trials and chastisements, which they did well never to forget. So we hear Moses first, and then Joshua, and in after generations the prophets, continually reminding Israel of their ingratitude, unbelief and transgressions; and on the other hand of the patience, long-suffering, forgiveness and tender care of their God. In like manner the "mourning prophet" said, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." Since therefore we have such worthy examples, we also think it meet in this letter to remind you of what you have long known and rejoiced in; and this is needful because we are so prone to forget the things. Our hearts are full of worldliness and legality; and if left to ourselves we always shall remember the follies and sinful wanderings that tempt us, rather than the ways of the Lord.

It is good to speak often of how we are fallen from the high estate in which we were made by reason of sin and transgression, and of our present depravity, which is total, embracing every power and faculty of our being, and of our just condemnation before God and his righteous law. This we have learned both from Bible testimony and by the revelation of the Spirit of holiness in our hearts. Remembering these things will tend to keep us humble and ashamed before God, and so we shall learn not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, and not to boast ourselves over others. It is good also to remember our present weakness and ignorance, and that we cannot guard or guide our steps over the vicissitudes of even a day, and that we do not know what we should pray

for as we ought, and that the Spirit must help our infirmities when we pray, and that we must be kept by the power of God through faith unto the end. We would also remind you that when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. How complete and efficacious was that wonderful work that was wrought out for us upon Calvary, when the Son of God hung between heaven and earth, a spectacle to angels and to men. We hear our blessed Lord cry, "It is finished!" And these words include all the mystery of redemption, all the fulfillment of the law, and the blotting out of the old ordinances, which were nailed to the cross with him, and which all had been against us.

"Jesus paid the debt,
All the debt we owe;
And nothing either great or small
Remains for us to do."

We would stir you up to remember that this is and must ever be our hope while we suffer below, and our song in a vast eternity. By experience have you learned that salvation is of the Lord; and continued experience but confirms you in this glorious truth. Now as sinners who are saved by this grace you also have learned, brethren, that all your repentance, faith and love are not of yourselves, but of God. These things, as well as every heavenly grace, must be maintained by the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Without him ye can do nothing. Now, since our God has done such great things for us, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? We desire to put you in remembrance that every one who believes in Jesus should be careful to maintain good works. It is a good thing to be reminded of our faults, to be continually warned against them, and to be exhorted to follow the word of the Lord.

Paul tells us that they which have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. Only by our whole conversation can we show how good the gospel is, and the power there is in it to save them that believe; and so we think it meet to remind you of your obligations to God and to each other. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." "Speak often one to another of heavenly things." "Be gentle, be pitiful, be courteous." "See that none render evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing." "Be not fault-finders, nor slanderers, nor tale-bearers, nor busy-bodies in other men's matters." Be helpful to each other, and march forward in the way as an army with locked shields. Remember to bear constant and faithful witness to the truth. You have received it in the love of Jesus. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another." Let the Scriptures always be your guide, praying for the guidance of the Spirit at all times. May you remember every precept of the Lord, and be guided by the Spirit in all

things; and may the peace of God rule in your hearts. "Live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

We cannot perhaps close this letter more appropriately than by quoting from the letter sent by the church in Bowdoinham to this association. They say, "The passing seasons remind us of departing time, and also of our duties and obligations to each other. Just one hundred years ago to-day our brethren in Christ assembled themselves together in church capacity, to take into consideration the propriety of christian counsel and association, and we behold to-day the result of that meeting a century in the past. Harken, dear brethren, and we will tell you what written tradition says. This association was organized in 1787, of only three churches, viz., Bowdoinham, Thomastown and Harpswell. It took its name from that of the town where it was formed, Bowdoinham, which is situated on the Kennebec River, one hundred and seventy miles northeast from Boston. The above was taken from among the files of this church in 1821, and recorded in the record of the Second Baptist Church of Bowdoinham, by Uriah Huntington, Church Clerk. The name has since been changed to Maine Old School Baptist Association. As a people we have continued in Primitive Baptist faith, and have not been led about by the cunning craftiness of men; nor have we been suffered to follow the devices of human skill, nor to forsake the fountain of living waters. Although this mother church would have been glad to have had the children at home on this our centennial birthday as an association, yet we patiently submit to the order of divine providence, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. We desire to have the Association meet with us (Bowdoinham) on its one hundred and first year."

The letter of this church further says, "As a church, we were constituted on May 24th, 1734, by Elder Simon Lack, and continued a distinct body until 1821, when, by mutual consent and counsel from sister churches, twenty-seven of our members formed a Second Baptist Church in Bowdoinham; since which time our records have been destroyed by fire, and therefore lost to us, lest we might seem to have whereof to glory. For just one hundred and fifty years our little church was without a house of worship (save that house not made with hands), meeting in private dwellings, school-houses and barns, as the providence of God might lead them, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy; and yet it has pleased the Lord, notwithstanding death and apostasy have made their inroads, to continue us unto this day, the Lord adding to us daily such as love the truth in Jesus."

We desire also to add that the church in Whitefield, with which we are in session, came into the association about two years after it was organized, and is composed of a loving band of steadfast brethren and sisters. Three years ago the Bowdoinham Church, after being without a house of worship for just a century and a half, completed a neat, commodious house, which is free from debt.

We have been glad to receive your messengers and Minutes. All have come to us laden with the gospel of the Son of God. The preaching has been all of a piece, and there has not been heard the sound of a hammer or other tool of iron among us. Love and union have been the theme. We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the Bowdoinham Church, commencing on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1888, when and where we hope to see and hear from you again.

H. CAMPBELL, Mod.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, to the several churches of which it is composed, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through the goodness of our God we have the privilege to meet once more in an associated capacity, and it is a custom of long standing to address you by way of a Circular Letter; not to tell you things you do not know, but to stir up your pure (not fleshly) minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful (not forgetful) of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the apostles of the Lord and Savior.—2 Peter iii. 1, 2.

The apostle declares to his Roman brethren that whatsoever things were written or spoken aforetime (not before time), are for our learning, that we (the children of God) through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. xv. 4. And we find this written under the new covenant, or gospel dispensation, for our learning, patience and comfort, to observe all things whatsoever our Savior has commanded us, and to reject all unrighteousness; for the apostle tells us that all unrighteousness is sin.—1 John v. 17. Now we find by reading Psalm cxix., something of David's desire, saying, "My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word, for all thy commandments are righteousness." "I have chosen thy precepts, and thy law is my delight."

Now, dear brethren, to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, we will call your attention to the epistle to the Hebrews, ii. 1-3. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression

and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? The "we" spoken of here is the Lord's portion, which is his people, and is the "us" spoken of in the first chapter and second verse, which reads, "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son," &c. And the "our" in the third verse is the same people, as it reads, "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." This "Majesty on high" is the one Isaiah spoke of when he said, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Now all the rules, laws and precepts that were given to national Israel by the Lord, through Moses, were read by Moses to the people. We read in Deuteronomy xvii. 2-6, "If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his covenant, and hath gone and served other gods, and worshiped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; and it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and inquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death." Then, brethren, how necessary it is for us to give the more earnest heed, to obey the rules and laws that are given us under the new covenant, or gospel dispensation. For if the word that was spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect to give heed to the things that have been spoken by the Lord unto the prophets and apostles, and confirmed unto us by them that heard him? If the punishment was so severe under the first covenant, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God (rules and laws of Zion), and counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?—Heb. x. 29. Thus the people of God are to take heed, and try by the Spirit those things that spring up among them. John tells us, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."—1 John iv. 1. So, brethren, is it not true that if we give heed to the false prophets we shall follow the spirit of antichrist? And of this

spirit Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, writes for the benefit of the saints, saying, "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." Paul writes, in his first letter to Timothy, iv. 1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith [not giving heed to the Savior's rules], giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." And in his letter to Titus he tells him not to give heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth.—Titus i. 14. Then, dear brethren, do we not find it true that ye are endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, ye who wish to take the word of God for the rule to live and walk by? The apostle wrote in his second letter to Timothy, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." And still hear the apostle declare, "But continue thou [to remain, to stay, to persevere] in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."—2 Tim. iii. 12, 14. "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue [not depart] in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."—1 Tim. iv. 16. Dear brethren and Elders that stand on the walls of Zion, you unto whom a dispensation of the gospel has been committed, obey the Savior's words, "Teaching them to observe [not set at naught] all things whatsoever I [not men] have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 20. May you be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and walk in the rule and order of the gospel, to please him that hath chosen you to be a soldier.—2 Tim. ii. 1-4. Be as firm in the doctrine as were the brethren on the day of Pentecost. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."—Acts ii. 42. May we ever be mindful of what the apostle told his brethren, the Elders of Ephesus. When he sent for them they came, and he told them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."—Acts xx. 28-30. The apostle wrote

to the brethren, the strangers that were scattered abroad, for their comfort and consolation, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."—1 Peter iv. 12-15.

Now, dear brethren, may the Lord give us that mind to prove all things, to ever hold fast that which is good, to abstain from every appearance of evil, and as far as in us lies adhere to the rule and order of the gospel, and walk according to the rule. The apostle declares to the Galatian brethren, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."—Gal. vi. 16. "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—Phil. iii. 16. May we remember at all times what the Savior said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."—John xiv. 21. We read in the revelation given to John who are the blessed, saying, "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. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."—Rev. xxii. 14, 15. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."—1 Cor. xv. 58.

"It shall be well, let Zion know,
With those who know the Lord;
His saints have always found it so,
When resting on his word."

DAVID EARL, Mod.

JAMES MILLER, Clerk.

R. W. SANFORD, Ass't. Clerk.

The Redstone Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Meadow Run Church, Greene Co., Pa., Sept. 2d, 3d and 4th, 1887, to the churches composing the same.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—We have been gathered in this our annual meeting again, by the hand of a kind providence, from the few of many churches that once composed this association. We, a remnant, are left to bear witness to the same truth that was maintained and contended for by our association more than a century ago; and as we take a general view, within the bounds of this association, we mourn because so few are left who love the doctrine of God our Savior, and more so because we see no visible signs of increase in the churches. Hence we feel sad when we think of the removal by death of some who in

their lives were identified with us, and whose christian society was a pleasure to us, and a source of strength, as it were, against the enemies of truth. We are sometimes fearful of Satan and his emissaries, lest we be tempted, as a body, and fall a prey to the devouring elements of the world. We know that no power but that of God is able to keep us unspotted from the world, and to stablish us perfectly in the doctrine and order of the Lord's house.

Dear brethren, allow us to call your attention to some things connected with our walk as followers of Jesus. First, let each of us try self-examination. Have we at all times endeavored to adorn that doctrine? Has our love been impulsive, so that our zeal for the cause of truth has caused us to sacrifice worldly interests for the benefit of the church or brethren? Have we censured any brother or sister because of some supposed injury, or because of reports, and allowed our minds to be biased against him or her, and been indifferent about receiving evidence that would convince us of our error? In any misunderstanding or difficulty between brethren, have we been influenced by selfishness to take an improper stand against right? Let every one of us ask himself these questions, and remember what the apostle said, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." As long as we are enabled to see our own imperfections, we will feel like making due allowance for the imperfections of brethren. If we willfully transgress the law of Zion, we may expect spiritual reverses. It is very evident that faithfulness is amply rewarded, as it is testified to by the apostle. Not that faithfulness which the Arminian speaks of, which his eternal destiny is dependent upon, but that faithfulness which is enjoined upon all true believers, and which is an offspring of the Spirit. Then how important that we heed the many admonitions of Jesus and the apostles, as we desire the sweet fellowship of the saints, the consoling influence of the proclaimed gospel, the perfect order of God's house, the holy influence of the ordinances, and the conscientious satisfaction of all things pertaining to God's spiritual sanctuary. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." This is compared to holy oil, such as none were allowed to have, only those that were sanctified as priests of God, and was typical of the holy oil, or anointing of the Head of the church, when all the members were blessed in him, and begotten again unto a lively hope by the power of his rising, to an inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away; which is reserved in heaven by the same mighty power for the subjects of his grace, who are also kept by the same power through faith, and ready to be revealed at the last time. Realizing that we have such a glorious hope, this itself should be an incentive to good works, as a result of God's victorious work within, which reveals to the child of God

the things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the natural heart or mind of man, but are absolutely made known by revelation. The genuine minister of God is powerless in this respect, namely, to show to dead sinners experimentally, so they can comprehend this great mystery of godliness. Much more powerless are those teachers having itching ears, to convert the world to God. Then how vain is the help of man, and how blasphemous the scheme of Satan, through the instrumentality of man, to delude and deceive, and, if it were possible, deceive the very elect. These blind leaders lead the blind by a light of their own kindling. They make fire to fall from heaven in the sight of men only. These are broken cisterns, that will hold no water, and are as false to the religion of Jesus, which they profess to love so well, as Satan himself. Seeing these things, brethren, how imperatively necessary it is for us to be armed with all the royal armor of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. May we stand, having our loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. This is a time that tries the faith of God's people, because Arminianism is so prevalent and so popular, and the doctrine of free and sovereign grace so much despised. Hence we need not expect to travel on our pilgrimage without discouragements, disappointments, oppositions and contentions. May we ever pray for grace to help us in this our time of need. Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run our race with patience, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who hath endured more than we, and for our sakes bore the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and makes intercession for poor sinners that come unto God by him. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate."—1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

Finally, brethren, be of one mind, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, pray without ceasing; and may the great Head of the church bless you and all the saints, now and forevermore. Amen.

J. BEEMAN, Mod.
GEORGE HAZEN, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Particular Baptists, now in session with the Drift Run Church, in Robertson Co., Ky., to the several associations with which she corresponds, sendeth christian love and salutation.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—We are made glad by the coming of your messengers and the receipt of your epistles of love, all bearing to us the strongest assurances of your love and fellowship for us and the dear saints. It is that love which strengthens the hopes of God's dear people, and enables them to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, who has said to us, "By this ye shall know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren." Love being the fulfillment of the law, and Christ Jesus having met in his own glorious person all the demands of that law, and having risen from the tomb a mighty conqueror, proclaiming in glorious triumph, "Mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me," all his redeemed have secured to them all the inheritance of the saints, for they are made heirs of God, and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. A part of their inheritance is that love which is from everlasting to everlasting, and binds the redeemed together while clothed with mortality, and will attune their sainted voices around the eternal throne throughout the never-ending cycles of eternity in praise and sweet adoration to him who hath redeemed them, and made them kings and priests unto God, to whose wonderful name be all the glory.

Some few of our churches are rejoicing in the glorious sunlight of the gospel, by which they have been enabled to behold the working of God's free, sovereign and unfrustrable grace in bringing some of his little ones into his banqueting house, where his banner over them is love. But we are all made to mourn with the dear brethren and sisters of other churches on account of the coldness that seems now to overshadow them; but we admonish them to remember that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Your messengers have come among us bearing to us the glorious news of the gospel, proclaiming to us in the power and demonstration of the Spirit the unsearchable riches of Christ. Our next association will, the Lord willing, be held with our sister church at Georgetown, Scott Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1888, when we hope again to receive your messages of love and welcome among us your messengers.

J. T. MOORE, Mod.
J. W. ROYSTER, Clerk.
J. W. WALLINGFORD, Ass't Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church of Olive & Hurley, N. Y., Sept. 21 and 22, 1887, to the associations and other meetings with which we correspond, sends greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Through the

riches of God's grace and mercy we have been privileged with another annual interview, and have realized the presence of the God of our salvation. Truly the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage. As usual, the time we have been together has been spent in the worship of God, which has been no uncertain sound, and we have been comforted and strengthened; and we hope for a continuance of the same. We refer you to our Minutes for information respecting the business that has been transacted. We desire a continuance of correspondence, and hope we shall receive a goodly number of your messengers at our next session, which is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, with the Second Roxbury Church, on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1888.

DAVID EARL, Mod.

JAMES MILLER, Clerk.

R. W. SANFORD, Ass't Clerk.

The Redstone Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Meadow Run Church, Greene Co., Pa., to the associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the mercy of our heavenly Father we have been spared to meet again in an association, and we feel grateful to our heavenly Father for his mercy in keeping us through another year to testify of his truth; and may we ever live to his name's honor and glory. We feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that we are able to testify to the glorious doctrine of salvation by the grace of our Lord. We still desire your brotherly love and correspondence, and may the Lord bless and save us all, for Jesus' sake.

Our next session will be held with the Maple Creek Church, Washington Co., Pa., to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1888, at 11 o'clock a. m.

J. BEEMAN, Mod.

GEORGE HAZEN, Clerk.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER Robert Speirs having changed his post-office address from Ioka Station, Iowa, to Martinsburg, Keokuk Co., Iowa, desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

"THE EDITORIALS."

FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1887.

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

JUDGMENT BEGUN AT THE HOUSE OF GOD.

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."—1 Peter iv. 17-19.

Although this subject has been repeatedly discussed in the past, both in the editorial columns and by able correspondents of the SIGNS, it can never be exhausted, nor can its contemplation cease to be profitable to the saints while they are subject to the temptations and trials which attend their sojourn here on earth. Therefore, in presenting this text as the subject for our consideration in this article we are sure that it cannot fail to be for our learning, if the Spirit which moved the apostle to write the solemn truth here recorded shall take and show it unto us in its application to the individual experience of them who are led by that Spirit.

The first important point which appears in the text in connection with the judgment here presented is the declaration that there is a definite time for that judgment to begin. In this fact is necessarily implied the determinate predestination of that judgment, as well as its beginning and ending. In the immutable wisdom of God this predestination is "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." As this was not a temporal purpose, it must date from before time was brought into existence; for if it were purposed since time was created it would not be an eternal purpose, there having been a time when that purpose did not exist. This would represent a change in the purpose of God, and thus destroy the very foundation on which rests the hope of every saint, as declared by the eternal God himself in the Scriptures, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. Since his first sermon in the garden of Eden it has ever been the object of all the devices of the enemy of all righteousness to overthrow this vitally essential truth, which God has revealed for the comfort and assurance of his afflicted and poor people. Well may David ask, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"—Psalm xi. 3. Without this divine truth there could be no comfort for the conscious sinner in any promise which is written in the Scriptures. If he could believe that one act of wickedness was not included in the eternal purpose of God, it would consign him to despair, since he sees himself so vile that he is the one sinner who must be guilty of that act, for which no pro-

vision of grace could have been made, since it was not the purpose of God that such a sin should be committed. And the same conviction would destroy the hope of every true child of God. In the rich provision of grace, however, there is no room for this dreadful doctrine of chance and uncertainty. Not only are the saints chosen of God "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," but they are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Here is a secure resting place for all them who trust in the living God for salvation both in time and in eternity. With perfect confidence may they be commanded, "Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."—Isa. xxvi. 4.

The order and wisdom of God are gloriously revealed in the appointment of "a time to every purpose under the heaven."—Ecc. iii. 1. The settlement of this fact forbids that anything should occur which was not included in that appointment. "The time that judgment must begin at the house of God" could not be manifested until the house of God was itself established. This was not until the old dispensation of legal requirements and ceremonial observances had been fulfilled and taken away. Until the handwriting of ordinances was nailed to the cross in the crucifixion of our dear Redeemer, even he himself was subject to that law, and then and there he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. But when he arose from the dead in that newness of life which he brought to light in his glorious triumph over death, and led captivity captive, he ascended far above all principalities and powers; not simply the powers of this world, but those of the world to come. It was not until after his resurrection from the dead that he declared his possession of all power in heaven and in earth. Then he was seated "upon the throne of his glory." From that time was fulfilled the declaration of the prophet, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."—Isa. xxxii. 1. It is in this kingdom that this declaration in our text is manifestly revealed. In this kingdom judgment begins not merely in the sense that it is first displayed here, as it may ultimately be displayed in other houses or kingdoms; but it begins at the house of God, as being displayed here in that perfection which is pre-eminent and above all other exhibitions of this attribute of the infinitely holy God. For this divine judgment is inseparable from the justice of God. As it is written, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face."—Psalm lxxxix. 14.

From the preceding context it is clear that this declaration of the judgment which must begin at the house of God is not made as if it were the announcement of something to be regarded by the saints with terror, but as an assurance that the right-

eous Judge takes knowledge of all the sufferings of his persecuted and distressed people, and will deliver them in every trial, and cause even their afflictions to result in good to them. They are not encouraged by the assurances of the gospel to live according to the sinful lusts of the flesh; but while they are comforted by the truth that the grace of God brings to them full salvation in the blood of Jesus, which cleanses them from all sin, they are continually obliged to mourn because of their own vileness and the law in their members bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. This is a peculiar mark identifying those in whom the Spirit of Christ has manifested the love of righteousness and the consequent hatred of sin. While they groan under their burden of sin, they are not moved by the Spirit of Christ to "charge God foolishly" (or, as it is rendered in the margin, *attribute folly to God*—Job i. 22), but rather, confessing their own sin and folly, they ascribe unto God holiness and perfection in all his ways. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect;" "a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."—Deut. xxxii. 4. There is no more decisive test by which to try the spirits which claim the confidence of the saints, than the effect of the doctrine of divine sovereignty upon those who are led by them. While the Spirit of Christ is always desirous that the will of God shall be done, even though it be the destruction of all the desires of the saint in whom that Spirit dwells, all other spirits seek to dictate to God what seems most desirable to finite reason, and demand that their own will shall supersede the eternal purpose of God.

Under the former dispensation there was no judgment or discrimination between those who were led by the Spirit of Christ, and those who saw no more in that covenant than the natural advantages secured in it to the fleshly children of Abraham. Now, the time is come when the Lord God says, "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. *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 xxviii. 16, 17. No longer shall it suffice to claim the favor of God on the ground of that circumcision which was outward in the flesh, for that hiding place is buried under the mighty waters of this divine judgment. Under that shadowy dispensation, "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" That typical display of the things in the gospel heavens did not represent anything more than the reality. So, the solemn admonition is left for the warning of the saints

in all ages, "We know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. x. 30, 31. While those who have long been walking in the light of this gospel day have by experience learned the truth of this declaration, they can also bear witness that there is comfort in the very rod of chastening when they can feel that it is in his gracious hand. For in the enduring of chastening they have the evidence that God recognizes them as children of his love. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." In this is shown that discriminating judgment which separates between those who are led by the Spirit and those who are still in the death of carnal enmity against God. This judgment begins at the house of God, in that it takes cognizance of the secret thoughts of those who are called by grace to bear the name of children of God in his organized church. Even the apostles of our Lord, although they had the gift of the Spirit in the greatest measure ever bestowed upon men, were yet included in this judgment which must begin at the house of God. Peter includes himself with those in the house at whom this judgment begins.

"And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" Since even those who have followed the footsteps of the Lord in obedience to his commandments are yet held to a strict accountability, even their secret thoughts being arraigned at the judgment seat of Christ, what must be the case with those who have never confessed their allegiance to the Lord by following in the first act of obedience to his word? We cannot understand this question to refer to such sinners as are still in the night of death in sin, since the commandments of our Lord in the gospel are not addressed to them. He limits them to those who have the fruit of the Spirit, when he says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." To such as do not love him the gospel has given no commandment; and consequently they cannot be characterized as disobedient to the gospel of God. They who have received the love of God in the revelation of Christ Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness to them, are exclusively the only characters to whom his commandments in the gospel are addressed. In obedience to his word they have the answer of a good conscience toward God, which is not enjoyed by the disobedient child. In impressing the importance of obeying the precepts and examples of the inspired apostles of our Lord, Peter by inspiration uses the strong expression of our text. The salvation referred to is not the redemption of the saints from under the curse of the law by the blood of Jesus; for that salvation is full and abundant to every one who is made righteous in the perfect holiness of God in Christ. There is nothing like scarcity in that

complete work of the Redeemer by which he saves his people from their sins. In their individual experience of their heritage of tribulation in the world it often appears to them that they are indeed *scarcely saved* from the trials and conflicts which they encounter in their warfare against the combined enmity of the world, the flesh and the devil. Even they who walk in obedience to the gospel rule are not exempted from this conflict; for it is still true that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In this suffering they frequently feel that they are scarcely saved from falling into condemnation under the power of the strong temptations and severe trials through which they must pass. So David felt as he said, "There is but a step between me and death."—1 Samuel xx. 3. Yet all the power of the Almighty was his defense even then. This truth did not prevent his salvation from the hand of Saul appearing to be so "scarcely" that he suffered continual fears on account of the threatening danger. God had revealed that Joseph should be ruler over his brethren, but he was scarcely saved from their envy and malice. So it is even now with the afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord. Even though they "fear the Lord and obey the voice of his Servant," they walk in darkness, and have no light, often crying to God in their trouble, and feeling that their prayer is not heard; it seems that they are indeed scarcely saved out of their afflictions. But if this be the case with those who are righteous in yielding obedience to the directions of the law of Christ, the question may well be suggested, with regard to such as live in total disregard of the command of the Lord in the gospel, What shall their end be? This certainly refers to the same end from which the righteous are said to be scarcely saved. In their disobedience to the gospel of God these characters evidently are following the direction of their own natural mind; and in so doing they are included in the declaration of Paul, that "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die."—Romans viii. 13. This was said to living saints; and it is as true now as it was when written to the saints at Rome. The approving smile of their Savior is the support of those who suffer in the path of obedience; but where shall consolation be found for such as are walking contrary to the injunctions of the King in Zion? Truly this is a very serious question when brought home by the power of that Spirit which searcheth the hearts of those who love and fear the Lord. As they have no confidence in the flesh, they cannot trust in their own wisdom; and as they do not obey the gospel of God in their practical deportment, they have shut themselves out from the comfort found in obedience to that blessed rule. While this would be most dreadful to those who have the love of holiness in their hearts, it would be no more grief to them who still love sin than is it grief to the flesh to remain in the

water, or to the bird to soar among the clouds. Hence, even the distress felt in disobedience is an evidence that the troubled one is a subject of the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus; and if any can treat the commandments of the Lord with contempt without suffering the severe chastening of conscious sin, the evidence is that such are not recognized by the Lord as children of his love.

"And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" In this question the righteous are clearly presented in contrast with the ungodly and the sinner; and as before stated, we understand that no others are referred to in this text but those who are subjects of salvation from sin by the blood of Jesus. Since it is true that even they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, so that they shall realize that they are indeed scarcely saved from their afflictions and trials, where shall the one who will not live godly appear? Understanding the text in this way, the exhortation in the last verse is the legitimate deduction from the facts stated.

"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." To the true child of God there is no sweeter experience in this vale of tribulation than the suffering of grief wrongfully, with the consciousness that it is not the just desert of his own evil deeds. In this he experiences the fellowship of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, and the presence of the Redeemer makes all his affliction sweet. Thus, James says, "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience [that is, the suffering] of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." To natural reason the affliction of Job seems to be very unjust, since in the first verse of the book it is recorded that he was "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." But faith sees in the record given just what James says is seen in it, the pity and tender mercy of the Lord. Natural reason says that it is vain to obey the commandments of the Lord, since they who follow Jesus must be partakers of his sufferings; but faith enables the saints to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in the Egypt of this earthly house of bondage. Hence arises the unceasing warfare between the flesh and the Spirit of Christ in the saints. Faith clearly sees what God has hidden from reason; and it is therefore impossible for their testimony to agree. Then, they who are led by the Spirit which inspired this exhortation will find in it the highest incentive to obedience to every direction of the law of Christ; not from the fear of future punishment, but from that filial fear which is itself the hatred of evil. The pride of the carnal mind may find in the grace of God encouragement to "presumptuous sins." But the love of righteous-

ness, which is the fruit of the Spirit in the saints, produces that longing for conformity to the perfect holiness of God revealed in Christ Jesus, which forbids that they should live in sin. It is to such their greatest desire to be delivered from the power of sin, and conformed to the holy perfection of righteousness which is in Jesus. This desire is never felt by any others except the true subjects of that salvation which is finished in our Lord Jesus. To all who hunger and thirst after righteousness belongs the blessing of the gracious Redeemer. They may therefore confidently commit the keeping of their souls to such a faithful Creator, and so have every encouragement to continual perseverance in well doing. May grace be given to enable all who love God to hear and obey the exhortation of our text; and to the God of all grace be thanksgiving and glory evermore from all the redeemed in Christ Jesus.

MARRIAGES.

At the residence of the bride's parents, in Otisville, N. Y., on Sept. 28, 1887, by Elder Benton Jenkins, Mr. G. Harvey Tears and Miss R. Irena, daughter of Mr. Joel D. Northrup.

On September 28, 1887, by Elder William J. Purington, at his residence, Mr. Moses S. Hogeland, of Hopewell, and Miss V. Williamson, of Ewing, both of N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has become my painful lot to send to you for publication the death of my darling husband, **James N. Henderson**, who died at his home in Towson, Md., Sept. 2, 1887, after a short illness of that terrible disease, typhoid fever. His remains were buried at the Harford Baptist Church, his church home. He had not been in very good health for several months, was real poorly the fore part of August, but got better, and took a trip to Manassas, to attend the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, held with the Bethlehem Church. He spoke, after his return, of how exceedingly kind the dear brethren and sisters were down there. He had a very pleasant trip, considering his ill health. He returned at half-past twelve o'clock Friday night, feeling tolerably well, but very tired. On Saturday he went out from home to attend to some business, returned in the evening, suffering very much with his head, went to bed that night, and never was able to get up again. In less than two weeks he died. The next day after he went to bed he saw a most beautiful vision. I asked him to tell me about it. I listened with a great deal of interest, but with a very heavy heart, for I felt then that no one could ever view such lovely, heavenly things until near their journey's end. Of course it was terrible to think of giving up so good, kind and true a companion. The vision was this: he said, "O Mollie, if you could only see what I have seen! I saw Jesus sitting on the white throne, and saw so many people there. I recognized no one, but every body looked lovely. There were many seats occupied, and many vacant; and Jesus pointed to a seat, and said that was for me. I told him I was too unworthy to take it. He said, It is for you, and no other can ever get it. And when all these seats are filled, then that will be the end of time"—confirming predestination. He said he saw a seat for me, my father and mother, sister Wilson, and the dear old Elder (Elder Grafton). It was sweet to hear him talk so, yet very sad. He had many awful spasms that no human tongue could ever describe, and no two alike. In some of them he would take a text and preach very interesting sermons, and have prayers, and sometimes composed and sung most lovely hymns. One

hymn, quite lengthy, he composed on that white throne that he saw. Elder Grafton visited him once during his sickness, and heard him preach and sing. Elder Grafton talked some with him, and soon as he spoke to him of spiritual things he seemed to be carried almost from earth to heaven. He was very bright, and looked at him so sweetly, and remarked, over and over, "That's the sweetest thing I have heard since I have been sick. Keep on talking; it does not excite me one bit." He seemed to rejoice during his spasms. He said he knew everything that was going on, and heard all that was said, but could not speak one word to us, during some of his spells. I asked him if he could sing another nice hymn, and he said, "I can't sing until the Lord gives me the words." During that spell he could answer when spoken to, but took no farther notice of anything. His spells were very different. On Sunday evening before he died he lay over five hours in one spell; but when death came (on Friday morning following), it came as sweetly, apparently, as one going to sleep. It is our great loss, but his eternal gain. Almost all his talk during his sickness was of that kingdom above, and during the last years of his life it seemed to be uppermost in his mind all the time, and it was his greatest delight to talk of heaven and heavenly things.

Death's cruel dart has pierced our hearts
And bowed us down with grief;
And now beneath the silent sod
My darling husband sleeps.

My dearest husband can it be
Thy look of love I'll no more see?
Those dark blue eyes are closed in death;
I'll think of thee with my last breath.

O father! must we give thee up,
You whom we loved so well?
How can we drain this bitter cup,
And say a long and last farewell?

MOLLIE L. HENDERSON.

TOWSON, Baltimore Co., Md.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Feeling the desire, I will add a few lines to what sister Henderson has written in regard to the death of our dear departed brother Henderson. Brother Henderson came to us from the Methodists, with whom he was a very zealous member. His eyes being opened to see things that he could not before, he could not stay away from those he now so dearly loved. His zeal died out in the cause of works, and increased more and more until the day of his death in the cause of grace by faith. From the time of his baptism until his death he continued to grow in the estimation of his brethren, and was a brother beloved by all who became acquainted with him. His zeal sometimes outstripped his judgment, but he always was found "at the feet of Jesus," and was an example for, not only his brethren, in his orderly walk and godly conversation, but for all others with whom he came in contact; and the church at Harford realizes her great loss of one who so dearly loved the assemblies of the saints. But we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God. May the God of all grace be with the widow and fatherless.

MILTON DANCE.

LONG GREEN, Md., Oct. 2, 1887.

Lydia Dillon Welchance, wife of Andrew Welchance, was born Oct. 13, 1834, married December 19, 1854, departed this life July 4, 1887. About one year before her marriage she became interested in religious matters and united with the New School Baptists. She lived for about three years in fellowship with them. About this time there was a New School Baptist Association within reach, and being present she became troubled when she heard them preach, and said she had been deceived, and wondered why she could not have seen that before, for salvation is of the Lord. But they preached it of works and money. She told them to drop her name from their church book, but that they would not do for some time, trying to convince her that she was not seeing the matter correctly, and that their doctrine was sound. But in her reply we hear her answer, "Blessed be the God of heaven, for he hath taken

my feet from the mire and the clay, and placed them on the Rock of eternal ages; and if I am ever saved in that happy kingdom, it will be by the atoning blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For behold, he bringeth the blind by a way that they know not. O that blessed hope that he has given me, not of my works, for salvation is of the Lord, and blessed be his name. All power in heaven and in earth is with him, and he will do all his will." During the balance of her life here she visited the Old School Baptist churches as often as circumstances would admit, but never publicly united with them, the reason probably being on account of her health, for the last fourteen years of her life not being able to travel. But she had preaching sometimes at her house, and had often talked of the mercy of God, and of this verse;

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

Her last words were, "Lord, have mercy on me. O Lord, Lord, have mercy on me."

Elder George Cottrell, at her request, preached a very comforting discourse from this text, "If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come."—Job xiv. 14.

The above was handed me at our association, with the request that I fill out and send it for publication, which I do with but little change, as I could not improve the matter. My own acquaintance with the deceased has been always marked with evidences of christian faith, patience in affliction, warmth of greeting at her home, as an ever-hospitable place of entertainment for Old School Baptists, and I have always wondered why she did not follow her Lord in the ordinances of his house; for she always claimed, as far as I can learn, that her New School baptism was of no value to her since she saw their difference of faith and order from the Old School. She leaves her sufferings here, as well as a large circle of relatives, friends, and especially Baptist mourners in Ohio, who will ever cherish her in hallowed remembrance. She died of cancer in the breast.

A. B. BRES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Sept. 3, 1887.

DEPARTED this life, July 18, 1887, **Anna F. White**, wife of Joseph White, and daughter of Robert Duke, of West Virginia, aged about thirty-five years. She and her husband were united by baptism with the New Valley Old School Baptist Church in 1886. She was remarkable for strength of mind, purity of character, and devotion to her convictions. In the church she was beloved by all and esteemed a true follower of the humble Jesus. Her feeble health often prevented her presence with us at our meetings, but all knew that the trial was greatest to her. The church feels the loss of a precious jewel, and her husband, our beloved brother, a truly devoted wife. We deeply sympathize with him and his two little motherless children, and commend them to the protection of the Almighty, who alone is able to comfort them. On the occasion, the writer tried to speak of the comfortable word of the Lord to Jerusalem.

ALSO,

AUGUST 6, **Mrs. John Hixson** was called from this life, in the seventy-first year of her age. For some cause known only to God, I was made dear to her and she to me, so that we had many pleasant conversations. I think I knew her well, and I can certainly say, she loved the Lord Jesus with a truly sincere heart. Any departure from the doctrine met her unreserved but loving rebuke. In the exercise of a spiritual mind she lived about forty years, yet she never joined the church. Truly, the way of the Lord is in the sea, and too deep for finite beings to comprehend. His judgments are past finding out. She was all these years devoted to the Baptist Church, and when too feeble to attend, she would weep bitterly for the privilege which was lost to her. Did not God love her? Yea, she had the evidence; she loved God; and surely she has gone home in the image of her loving Redeemer, a dew drop that glistened for a while but to drop in the

great ocean of eternal love. She leaves an aged husband and several children, with all who knew her well, to mourn our loss. May we rest in the assurance that it is her eternal gain.

ALSO,

AUGUST 31, **B. Franklin White** died, aged sixty-one years, on the first of that month. He was not a member of the church, but a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone, and was a regular attendant at Broad Run Church, Maryland, of which state he was a native. He was one of the noblest of Adam's race, a man of sterling worth, of strong convictions, to which he adhered conscientiously, a devoted husband, a kind father, a good neighbor, loved and respected by all who knew him. He leaves a wife and three children, though well provided for in this world, to sorrow over an irreparable loss. We beseech the blessings of a kind Providence in their behalf, and if it be his holy will, may he lead them into the love of that truth to which their noble father was so devoted.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., Sept. 9, 1887.

DIED—At her home in Washington, D. C., July 4, 1887, sister **Mary Spillman**, in the eighty-first year of her age. The deceased was born in Prince William Co., Va. She was the oldest sister of my mother, a firm, uncompromising Primitive Baptist. She experienced a hope in early life, but it was not until a few years past that she was baptized in the fellowship of the church in Alexandria, Virginia, by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington. She was punctual in her attendance upon the meetings of the church, and delighted in a clear, faithful, discriminating proclamation of truth. The world and its vanities had no charms for her, but the glory of the eternal kingdom was with her a theme of continued delight. To attend the meetings of the saints, to visit them and converse upon the things of the kingdom, seemed to be her only object in life. I conversed with her a few days before she died; and found her calmly waiting the summons from on high. She talked freely of her death, and cheerfully expressed her desire to depart and be with Jesus. Death was to her a welcome deliverance from earthly suffering. We shall miss her much in our solemn feasts, her fervent love and earnest hope; but we must bow before him who doeth all things well. She leaves two sisters, besides other relatives, to mourn our loss. May the gracious arm of our God sustain us.

ALSO,

DIED—In Washington, D. C., Aug. 6, 1887, sister **Catharine Cromwell**, in the ninety-fifth year of her age. Sister Cromwell was another of the little band of faithful ones in this vain city. She was truly a Baptist of the old order. It did not do to suggest the idea of compromising the truth of our God to her. She had been a member of the church for over half a century, and will be remembered by many brethren in various churches. She was born in Maryland, and was a member of the Patapsco Church, Baltimore County, at the time of her death.

Thus have passed from the sorrowing scenes of earth two more of the Lord's precious ones. How fast they are leaving us. A new generation has come upon the field of conflict, to experience the trials and give testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. They are following in the path of the dear ones who have gone before.

"They are happy now, and we
Soon their happiness shall see."

May we experience the guiding and sustaining hand of him who alone can keep us in wisdom's narrow path.

Yours in gospel fellowship,

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCOQUAN, Va., August, 1887.

It becomes my sad duty to send for publication in the SIGNS the obituary of my beloved father, **James L. McGinty**, who departed this life March 14, 1887, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. His disease was cancer of the hand and side, which ate through him and soon ended his life. For more than three years he suffered severely. He was born

in Macon County, Georgia, July 22, 1820, and joined the church of Primitive faith in his nineteenth year. He moved to Alabama and began preaching in his twenty-third year. He was married to Mary A. Boken on March 20, 1845, who still survives. The family consisted of nine children, two of which have died. His family, many grandchildren, neighbors and friends, with the church of which he was a faithful member until his death, mourn their loss. Often in his sufferings he preached of Job and his afflictions. Truly he bore his sufferings with much patience, and without murmuring. He died triumphant in the faith, being well established in the truth as it is in Jesus. It grieves us sorely to see those we love put away from our sight forever; but, when we have the assurance that they are at rest, why should we wish them back again in this world of suffering? May God comfort and sustain us through life, and may we be a united family in that world where no sorrow ever comes, is our prayer.

At the time of his death there was no minister of his order present, and a Methodist minister officiated, attended by a large company of friends. The hymn, "How firm a foundation," &c., was sung, after which his body was laid to rest in a burying ground near his dwelling, to await the trumpet's sound, when the saints shall arise in Christ's likeness.

ALSO,

It becomes my painful duty to announce the death of my beloved sister, **Ella J. Liles**, who departed this life May 20, 1884, in the twenty-ninth year of her age. She was born in Winn Parish, La., Oct. 9, 1858, was married to J. W. Liles in December, 1879, and joined the Missionary Baptists, where she remained a member up to the time of her death. Her disease was brain fever, which attacked her with such force as to baffle aid. Words fail to express our sadness of heart when we were made to realize that we must give her up. She was a kind, indulgent mother, and an affectionate wife. Her disposition was kind and generous, and she was loved by many friends. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of election and predestination, salvation by grace to glory. She leaves her husband, one son eight years old, her mother, sisters and brothers with the church, to mourn; but we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

Her funeral took place on the 21st, attended by a number of friends, and the hymn, "And am I born to die?" &c., was sung, after which her body was laid to rest in the silent tomb, where there are no farewells, no sighs, no tears.

A. P. MCGINTY.

ALPHA, Natchitoches Par., La.

By request I send for publication in the SIGNS the obituary of **Ralph C. Purnell**, son of Mr. J. Purnell, of Snow Hill, Md. The circumstances attending his death were most unexpected and the saddest imaginable. With a number of other young men of the town he left on Tuesday, July 26, for Scott's Beach, expecting to spend two days. A short time after arriving at the place they made ready for bathing. Ralph seemed to be very thoughtful for the others, advising them to be careful. They seemed to have been in the water but a short time when Ralph was heard to cry for help. A young man named Thomas Collins, being the only swimmer in the company, immediately went to his assistance, but all to no avail. After making the second trial, and becoming almost exhausted himself, he was compelled to give him up, when he soon went down, to be seen no more in life. His body was soon found and taken back to his heart-broken mother.

How mysterious are the ways of God! Ralph was like a flower just beginning to bloom. He was a young man of distinguished character. He had just graduated and received the degree of D. D. S., in March, 1886, and in March, 1887, received his diploma as M. D. The young doctor was bidding fair for usefulness to his fellow-men, honor to himself, and the joy of a fond mother's heart.

Notwithstanding the depth of the affliction, sister Purnell has reason to thank God, not only for the many excellent traits of

character which endeared him to the people, old and young, but she has some reason to hope that he had a name that is better than great riches. I noticed him at our last meeting that he was so very attentive. He told his mother that he knew he was a sinner, but he did hope that he should be a Christian some time. This must be one of the all things that work together for good to them that love God. But says our sister, "How can this work for my good?" It will come in a way that you are not looking for it, for God is faithful to his word. Sister Purnell and all the family have our heartfelt sympathy. He leaves his mother, six brothers, two sisters, besides many other relatives and friends to mourn. He was twenty-one years old the fourth day of last March.

T. M. POULSON.

NEW CHURCH, Accomac Co., Va.

OUR sister, **Deborah Bevier**, departed this life in the latter part of April, 1887, at the residence of her son, at Clear Lake, Minn., of heart disease, aged sixty-six years, nine months and twenty-six days. She died in her rocking chair. Her funeral took place at Clear Lake, where much kindness was manifested during her sickness, by kind neighbors, one of which was Mr. Bowington, who took her remains in charge. The funeral was conducted by Mr. Smith. Her remains were followed to their resting place in Clear Lake Cemetery by her son Charles and his wife, one brother and one sister, and a goodly number of neighbors and friends. Her funeral has since been preached at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., May 15, by Elder I. Hewitt, from 1 Thess. iv. 15, and was attended by her four children and other relatives, with the church, of which she was a member.

The subject of this notice was born in the town of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., June 28, 1820, and was baptized by Elder Jacob Winchel, in fellowship with the Olive Old School Baptist Church, in May, 1857, where her membership remained until she died. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. She is gone to reap the reward which we trust was reserved for her in heaven, with all the blood-bought throng, to sing anthems of praise to God and the Lamb forever, to whom be ascribed all glory, honor, dominion, majesty, might and blessing, now and forever. Amen.

"Asleep in Jesus! Blessed sleep!"

Your brother in hope,

C. S. LOCKWOOD.

STAR PRAIRIE, Wis., July 17, 1887.

By request I write the obituary of my dear sister, **Mary Campbell**, who departed this life in February, 1887, in the eightieth year of her age. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church about forty-five years ago, by Elder Gitchel, and remained a constant member and faithful witness of the truth as it is in Jesus, until her warfare was ended; and like a sheaf of wheat that was ripe for the harvest, she entered her eternal home. Sister Mary was one of the meek of the earth, always kind to the poor, and a good nurse among the sick. In her experience from nature's darkness to grace, she was tried in every way with sin and temptation, until these words of the poet came to her mind,

"O thou that hidest in the Rock,
Thy heart almost with sorrow broke,
Look up and see that I am he
Who bore thy sins upon the tree."

This gave her a sweet peace of mind for some time. To hear her tell the exercises of her mind, you would see that all her trust was in the Lord alone. She had no confidence in the flesh. She believed all things were ordained by God before the world was made, and that a sparrow could not fall to the ground without him. In her last moments, in the anguish of her soul, I heard her say, "My Father, have mercy on me." That brought to my mind the prayer of Jesus, when he said, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, thy will be done." My dear sister was patient in her sickness, and glad when the time was up for her to go and leave this body of death. We believe that our sister is

at rest in the realms of eternal felicity, where she can behold the great King and worship him in the beauty of holiness forever. May the Lord give us grace to be reconciled, knowing that he doeth all things well.

RHODA MILLER.

CAMMAL, Lycoming Co., Pa.

My little son, **Harry Allen Everts**, departed this life July 26, 1887, aged six years, one month and nineteen days. His disease was principally inflammation of the brain. He bore his sufferings with great fortitude, never once complaining of anything he had to endure. He kissed me good by, and looked up at me, as if to say, All is well. And I trust it is, and that he is in a better world, where sickness and sorrow are no more.

LAURA EVERTS.

MOVILLE, Iowa.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1887, and continue three days.

This is a very convenient point, accessible by rail or water, and we hope to see a goodly number of our brethren, sisters and friends; and with this desire we extend a cordial invitation to our brethren in the ministry especially. We will endeavor to make you all comfortable.

Those coming by rail will get tickets for Snow Hill, and change cars at Harrington. The steamer Tangier will also leave South Street Warf on Tuesday afternoon and arrive at Snow Hill on Wednesday afternoon.

By order of the church,
JOHN H. TRUITT, Clerk.

OUR association (the New Hope) will convene with the church at Union, in Drew Co., Ark., nine miles northeast from Monticello, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October next. We hope the Lord may move the hearts of some of our northern and eastern ministering brethren to visit us at that time.

A. TOMLIN.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

OUR yearly meeting will be on Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday in October (12th and 13th), if the Lord will, when and where we hope to meet all that the Lord wills should come. The friends will be met at Otego depot on Tuesday afternoon and evening and cared for by the brethren.

G. M. FRENCH, Clerk.

OUR yearly meeting is appointed to be held at Welsh Tract, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, to begin at ten o'clock a. m., and continue until noon on Monday following.

Those coming by rail through Philadelphia can leave Broad Street Station on Saturday at 9.00 a. m. or 12.00 m. Both trains will be in time for the meeting at 2.00 p. m.

Those coming through Baltimore should leave there about 9.30 a. m.

Those coming up the Delaware R. R. will connect with Delaware City R. R. at Porters Station at 12.00 m. on Saturday, and get off at Wilson. All the other trains will be met at Newark depot.

We hope that many brethren, sisters and friends, especially brethren in the ministry, will come and see us. It is directly in the way from Baltimore and Philadelphia to the Salisbury Association, appointed to be held in Snow Hill on Wednesday after our meeting.

J. L. STATON.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., will hold their yearly meeting, if the Lord will, on Wednesday and Thursday after the fourth Sunday in October, at their meeting house on Schoharie Hill, at 10 a. m., each day.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming by rail will be met at Howe's Cave on the day before the meeting.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THE Zion Church will hold, providence permitting, a two days meeting at Galilean Hall, on F. Street, between third and fourth streets, S. W. Washington, D. C., to begin Saturday before the third Sunday in October, at 10 a. m., and continue over Sunday. A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to attend.

N. P. REED.

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

GHEENT, Ky., August 27, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother George W. Pace, of Conchatta, Mississippi, dated August 15th, 1887, in which he asks me to give in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES my views of what is recorded in Luke xvii. 17, 18, which reads as follows: "And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger."

It will be remembered that the above quotation is part of that which was recorded in giving that wonderful miracle wrought by our Lord when he healed the ten lepers. The record of that miracle is as follows: "And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan." Then comes the text to which brother Pace calls my attention.

This whole narrative presents to God's dear people great and wonderful things, which, when properly understood, afford them comfort and strengthen their faith in the glorious Son of God. It presents him in his wonderful power to heal one of the most loathsome diseases with which mortals were ever afflicted. Leprosy is regarded as a fit and appropriate type of sin. The prophet, in declaring the rebellion and sins of Israel, uses a figure which aptly describes that loathsome disease, and applies it to that people. He says, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."—Isa. i. 5, 6. Regarding leprosy as a figure of sin, the healing by our Lord of those ten lepers demonstrates his power over sin. They were sorely afflicted with that disease, for they stood afar off, and cried out in prayer and supplication to our Lord; yes, they lifted up their voices and said,

"Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." No prayer was ever uttered without faith. The world may call loud and eloquent appeals to God, uttered by men who expect to be heard for their much speaking, prayers; but they are not. We must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Surely when those poor and afflicted lepers cried out, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us," they believed in the glorious Son of God; yes, and believed in his wondrous power to heal that fearful and loathsome disease which excluded them from the congregation of the Lord, and made them outcasts in the world. They stood afar off, because they did not dare to go near those who were clean. Sin, my dear brother Pace, put you and the feeble writer of these thoughts far off from the congregation of the saints; but not so far, if we are the children of God, as to prevent us from lifting up our voices in prayer, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." There is a time with all the dear saints when they feel that they are aliens from God and outcasts from the congregation of the saints; and they then realize and know that the leprosy of sin has so polluted them that they are unfit to appear in the house of the Lord, and join in songs of praise and sweet adoration to his great and glorious name. But O what joy pervades their hearts when they, like those lepers, have an assurance that their prayer is heard. Jesus saw those lepers. He knows what is in the hearts of men. His ears are open to the cries of his poor and afflicted ones. He spoke to those lepers and said, "Go show yourselves unto the priests." How full of meaning are these precious words of our Lord. By thus speaking to them he showed that their prayers were heard, and that they now had a right to approach the priests. Under the law all who were afflicted with leprosy were required to go to the priest. When the Jew had symptoms of that disease he did not dare fail to appear before the priest; and when he had hopes of recovery he must go to the priest and be examined twice or thrice before he was allowed to go into the congregation of the Lord. After all this he must offer the offering commanded by Moses for his cleansing.—See Ex. xiv. But in making those offerings there was shedding of blood; and without the shedding of blood there is no remission. But mark you, in all things pertaining to the cure of leprosy there was a great first cause,

and all things that were done must be in strict accord with the law. Here were ten lepers, and nine of them were Jews; the other was a Samaritan, a stranger. The Jews must comply with all things required by the law. Those nine had faith in the Son of God, which is evidenced by their prayer. They, like the Samaritan woman, worshiped him. In that worship she said, "Lord, help me." And they worshiped him when they said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." The uttering of those wonderful names, "Jesus, Master," is conclusive proof of their faith in him. Without faith it is impossible to please God. He entered into that certain village. There he met, he saw, he healed, those poor and afflicted lepers. Ah, brother Pace, do you not recollect when the Lord found you in a desert land, in a waste, howling wilderness, when he led you about and instructed you, as he did Jacob of old? It was then that you, like those lepers, saw that you were healed, and rejoiced in the power, goodness and mercy of your adorable Lord. Then you were made a Jew inwardly, and made willing to offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. The Jew under the Mosaic law was required to pay strict obedience to all its demands; and when those nine lepers, who were Jews, were told by our Lord to "Go show yourselves unto the priests," they fully comprehended what he said to them, and by their obedience in going they declared their faith in him. If they had failed to go, they would have shown that they were without faith in him; but it is written, "As they went, they were cleansed." Obedience follows faith. These lepers were obedient to the command of our Lord, in whose power to cleanse them of that fearful disease they had faith; but being Jews, they must, as soon as they saw that they were cleansed, go to the priest and offer the offerings commanded by the law for their cleansing. A Jew did not dare to disobey the law; and in so great a matter as being cured of leprosy disobedience would have worked ruin. Faith in our glorious Lord, and love toward him, are made manifest by the dear saints in their obedience to his commands. He says, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Those nine lepers, who were Jews, obeyed our Lord in going to show themselves to the priests; and no doubt they obeyed

the law in making the offering for their cleansing. But in making that offering they did not give evidence of their lack of faith in him who had cleansed them, nor did they show the absence of the love of God in their hearts; but upon the contrary, they showed both faith and love dwelling in them.

But it is written, "And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan." The Jews and Samaritans had no dealings, so this Samaritan could not have regarded himself as being bound by the law of Moses, as were the other nine lepers, who were Jews; hence he turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God. All this occurred under the legal dispensation; but the law not standing between that Samaritan and his glorious Lord, he could and did glorify him. He immediately offered praise and thanksgiving, without reference to any of the requirements of the law. Our Lord had not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it; and he being the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, that Samaritan came to him, filled with praise and adoration to his wondrous name, without any incumbrance created by the law. Not so with the nine Jews; they were still under the law, but were standing near the end of that dispensation, and at the dawning of the glorious gospel day. They were blessed with the high privilege of beholding the Son of God, "which taketh away the sin of the world;" and beholding him in his wondrous power to heal, they were obedient to his command. Prayer is worship; and none ever worshiped the true and living God but those to whom the spirit of adoration was given. The nine lepers said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." In the use of that language they certainly did pray in spirit and in truth. None dare doubt it when they remember that their prayer was answered; that the thing for which they prayed was granted. It was verily a wonderful display of the mercy of God toward them. They had been separated from fathers, mothers, wives, children and friends, and suffering from that loathsome disease; and when they saw, as did the Samaritan, that they were healed, O what joy and rejoicing must have pervaded their whole beings, and O how ready must they have been to go to the priests, in obedience to the command of him who had done such wonderful things for them, and healed

them. Ah, brother Pace, when the dear saints receive a manifestation of their cleansing from the leprosy of sin, a desire to obey comes welling up in their hearts. "Arise, and be baptized," sounds most sweetly in their ears, and in heavenly accents they most sweetly sing,

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

The leper, when he was cleansed, and had passed the examination of the priest, could go without let or hindrance into the congregation of the Lord, and had the high privilege of mingling with his dear kindred. So with the dear saints; when they have gone to the church, and told what the Lord had done for them, by which the church was convinced that they had been healed of the leprosy of sin, they then are taken into the congregation of the Lord, and have the sweet privilege of meeting and mingling with their kindred in Christ. Then they have the privilege of waiting with their dear brethren and sisters upon the Lord in all his appointed ways. Those nine lepers waited on the Lord when they obeyed him by going to the priests after they were healed. Their law required it of them, and their Lord commanded them to go to the priests, because he had not come to destroy, but to fulfill the law. You, dear saint, wait upon the Lord when you tell to your dear kindred in Christ the wonderful things that the Lord hath done for you in healing you of the leprosy of sin. It is then you see a beauty in the ordinance of baptism, because you see in it a glorious pictorial representation of the burial and resurrection of your glorious Lord. He says, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, amen."

You in baptism put on Christ, and say, like your glorious Lord, in emblem, "I once was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore." You once were dead in sin. The leprosy of sin excluded you from the congregation of the Lord; but now, your Lord having healed you of that fearful leprosy, you are alive forevermore, and are fitted for the congregation of the saints, in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a contrast in the condition of those nine lepers before they were healed and after! But that contrast was not equal to that in the condition of the saints when they were in the gall of bitterness, and when they were raised from that condition, and permitted to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn wisdom from his hallowed lips.

But our Lord said, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." This language is construed by some to convey the idea that those nine were truly ungrateful; but such an idea is certainly foreign to the whole teachings of our Lord here presented. He clearly presents the condition of him who returned to give thanks. He was a Samaritan and a stranger; but our Lord made no difference between him and the other nine in healing them.

In the gospel dispensation all distinctions as to nationalities are obliterated. It is written, "But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." That Samaritan worked righteousness. He fell down on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Those nine worked righteousness in their obedience to the command of our Lord, and in rendering strict obedience to the law which made it imperative on them, when they were healed of the leprosy, to go to the priests and render obedience to their directions. They both worked righteousness when they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." That was a prayer, and prayer is worship; and none can worship the true and living God but they who worship him in spirit and in truth. They must have the Spirit of the Lord Almighty dwelling in them, otherwise they cannot worship him in spirit and in truth. But our Lord says, "There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." The nine could not return without violating the law, without disobedience to its commands; for they were then under the law dispensation. But they did work righteousness in their prayers, in their obedience to the command of their Lord, and in their obedience to the law. Then surely they were accepted with him. Being accepted with him, they surely were children of God, and heirs to all the ineffable glories of the kingdom of God's dear Son; to whose wondrous name

"Let angels prostrate fall,
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

H. COX.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Sept. 25, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—To get rid of some things that have been lingering on my mind for some time, I feel like submitting some thoughts to the readers of the SIGNS upon the subject of faith. I have recently had some of the sweetest meditations on that subject, and feel that I have been led by the Spirit deeper into the mystery and sweetness of faith than ever before. While I do not expect to be able to portray to others the beauties and grandeur of the subject as I trust I have been enabled to realize it in my own heart, I trust I shall be enabled by the Holy Spirit to present the subject in such a light as to be of some comfort to those of "like precious faith."

The apostle Paul defines faith to be "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—Heb. xi. 1. It is also described, both by Paul and Jesus Christ, to be "the gift of God." "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."—Ephesians ii. 8. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."—Matthew xvi. 17. It is of the heart. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God

bath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Romans x. 9, 10. It is of different degrees, as evidenced by the following Scriptures: "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—John xx. 29. Also, Jesus said in one place, "I have not seen so great faith, no, not in Israel." Again, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed," &c. On one occasion the disciples said, "Lord, increase our faith." We find also the expressions, "Weak in the faith," "O ye of little faith," &c. I therefore conclude that there is such a thing as little faith and great faith, weak faith and strong faith. Paul says Abraham was "strong in faith, giving glory to God," &c. Faith is the work of God. "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."—John vi. 29. It is accompanied by love. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," &c.—Eph. iii. 17-19.

Now I want to speak a little of Abraham's faith. As I have already quoted, Paul says, "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform."—Rom. iv. 19-21. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, 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 of thee a great nation," &c.—Gen. xii. 1, 2. From the foregoing we can see that the Lord called Abram when in Ur of the Chaldees, and gave to him his commandment; and it is said that Abram "departed as the Lord had spoken unto him." The Lord made a covenant with him, and changed his name from Abram to Abraham, and promised him that he would make of him a great nation, and that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed. He changed the name of Abraham's wife from Sarai to Sarah, and told him that he would bless her, and give him a son of her, and that Sarah should be a mother of nations. "Kings of people shall be of her." These are some of the promises that the Lord made to Abraham; and it is written that "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." In the covenant that God made with Abraham he promised him a seed of Sarah; that he would make of him a great nation, as the

stars of heaven for multitude; that his seed should also be a stranger in a strange land for four hundred years, &c. Now let us consider how improbable, from a human standpoint, all this was. Abraham ninety-nine years old, Sarah ninety, and no child; and yet God said, "I will make of thee a great nation." Depraved carnal nature never could have grasped this seemingly uncertain promise; but the Lord had called Abraham, and had revealed himself to him, and had delivered to him his commandment; and "his commandment is life everlasting." Abraham was in possession of that faith which is the gift of God, and of which Jesus Christ is the author and finisher; therefore he believed God. Now, according to God's promise, Sarah brought forth her first-born son, Isaac; but after this God did tempt Abraham, and test his faith. "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Let us consider how Abraham's faith was here brought to the test. Could human nature ever originate such faith as was here necessary to enable Abraham to endure this trying ordeal through which God had now called him to pass? O! it seems that Abraham's heart must have sank within him, and all his former hopes and prospects have withered, at the bare thought of sacrificing his only son upon the altar. But Paul says, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." By faith, when he was tried, he offered up his only son, "of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." Here was faith, strong faith, unshaken faith, unwavering faith, that believed that what "God had promised, he was able also to perform." Therefore, in obedience to the commandment of that God whom he loved and worshiped, he went forth. From all this may we not rightly conclude that Abraham's faith consisted in his unbounded, unshaken and unwavering confidence in the promises of God? He believed that God was able, and that he would perform his word and promise which he had previously made to him. No matter how gloomy the present prospects might seem, no matter how mysterious and how uncertain such a thing might seem; God had said, "It shall be," and he believed it.

I believe that all God's people have faith; but Paul speaks in one place of the "gift of the measure of faith." All have not strong faith. Strong faith, faith that overcomes the world, is that which hopes against hope, when there is no earthly prospect of our hope being realized. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is not the substance of things already

realized. It is not the evidence of things that we see. This would not be faith. This is fruition. Faith looks for and confidently expects the full realization of all the promises of God; and we need this faith mostly when all earthly prospects vanish out of sight.

In conclusion, let us notice some of the achievements of faith. The apostle, in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, winding up the subject of faith, says, "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." Here are some of the things that faith has accomplished in the ages past; and what a great consolation should these evidences of the great achievements of faith afford to those who are of the household of faith. "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, 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; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised." "God is faithful; by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ." There is therefore no reason why the saints should fear. "Hath he said, and will he not do it?" "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." No matter how gloomy the prospects; we may be reduced to penury and want; friends, relatives and brethren may forsake us; health and prosperity may all flee; our churches may be reduced to two or three; false christs, false prophets and apostles, deceivers, and Satan with all his enraged host, may encamp against the saints; infidels may crowd the streets, and the blood-thirsty dupes of antichrist may wreak their vengeance in the blood of the saints; but faith will conquer at last. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." O that God would give us that faith, that unwavering, unshaken faith, that would enable us to hope for all things, and endure all things; that faith that would comfort, console and strengthen us in the darkest hours, and that would enable us at all times to say with confidence, "My Lord and my God;" and that would enable us at all times to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

H. J. REDD.

CURFEW, Pa., Sept. 25, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It occurs to my mind to-day to speak of my early experience, if I really have a christian experience. I am often led to wonder at the great mercy of God in sparing my unprofitable life, and delivering me from many temptations, and supporting me through many fiery trials, and making me to depend upon his great arm for deliverance, and to love the doctrine of salvation by grace, which is everywhere spoken against. I think there are none able to look to the Lord with feelings of gratitude, and who wish for high and noble language to express to him what they feel within, only those who have been tried in the great purifying furnace of affliction, and who by his grace given have endured the great heat, and who are then qualified to realize where their help must come from. I am sometimes constrained to say within, when looking back over my mortal journey of life, Surely God's goodness and mercy have attended my pathway all the days of my life. Although I have been a great sinner, unworthy of his care, yet he is the same unchanging God in all things. Now, after many years, in looking back to my youth, and thinking about the first early impressions that I ever had of a knowledge of sin, I can see many things which occurred to my mind then which in my ignorance I could not account for, but now seem to be explained to my satisfaction.

My early life was spent among Arminians, prominent among whom were the Free Will Baptists. While listening to them in their zeal for God I was led to wonder, in looking at some of them, their preachers in particular; and the thought came to my mind, Now they say you must be good and holy to get to heaven; and you can be if you will resolve to do so just now. Then the questions arose in my mind, Are these people so holy as not to commit sin? Is this preacher good enough by his own works to get to heaven? The answer to these queries in my mind was of the same doubtful kind, and I felt confused in regard to the way of salvation. The point which I could not comprehend, according to this theory, was how to begin this work; notwithstanding I was told that we must begin by giving our hearts to God. This appeared to me impossible, as I could not get at my heart; therefore I had not the power to give it. Also, I could see that it was full of evil imaginations, and could not appear in holy light as worthy or meritorious. Also, it was a stranger to the King of heaven. I do not think that I was so wicked a boy as some that I knew, so far as outward acts go; but about this time I seemed to get worse. I was at this time, as well as I can remember, in my twelfth year. For a short time Satan seemed to possess me. I would get angry at my brother without cause, and dispute when I knew that I was wrong. There seemed to be an impulse that led me on to do evil, when a faint whisper away back in the furthest

corner of my heart said, "You are wrong." But heed this faint whisper I did not. I remember well of telling my older brother, when in the field together, that all books were false, and the Bible was a lie. I felt that I said this more to provoke him than because of its being really a conviction of conscience; but I must say, to do justice to my thoughts, that I could not tell, from what evidence I then had, in regard to the authenticity of the Bible. My mind was active, but vain, and confused by false teaching. When my brother went to the house he told father what I had said about the Bible. Father rebuked me severely, and I felt greatly ashamed of what I had said. My father was an Old School Baptist, and took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I could read as often as I liked; but I, like all the children of nature, did not care for such reading. My father's place of meeting was several miles from home, so I did not get there very often. I had heard him speak of Arminians teaching their religion, and of his belief that the Lord would teach all his children in due time, and that they all shall be willing in the day of his power.

My days of boasting and pride were destined to be few. The next winter after the above described events, I think it was in the year 1857, while attending school, a great calamity occurred to the strong man of nature. I was in my class reading. I heard not the sound of my voice, neither knew what I read. I lost the real sense of life. I could not realize whether I was living or not. Suddenly I looked about me to see some evidence that I lived. I could see, but could not realize what I saw. In my bewilderment and desperation I pinched my flesh to see if I still possessed the sense of feeling. Immediately great fear fell on me. I thought how soon I might fall into eternity, without a moment's warning, and then where would I awake? I knew that I was an absolute stranger to the "far beyond." O how I wished to be relieved from the oppression that seemed to bear me down! I thought of the many persons on earth, their individuality, the identity of life, and my personality; is it the same as another's? Can each think for himself, and not for another? These questions ordinarily are easily answered; but to me they were of the gravest kind, and led me to reflect upon the great creative power, and the great number of God's creatures, yet distinct persons, who have not the innate power to convert themselves into something else, or change themselves to some other person, or like some other person. This self I was thinking about, which I cannot describe, which is always *I, myself*, wherever I am. I in this world, or I in the next. The great extent of my wonderment in reflecting upon my frailty and upon the power of God I shall never be able to tell, because language fails to express it. There appeared a great secret to my soul which none but God knew; and my friends were not likely to find out

from me, because I was so ashamed and mortified that I dared not tell any one, it seemed so foolish to the carnal mind, and then I thought of being laughed at. I secretly thought that I was so different from other boys, I wished to be more like others. I soon found that there was a something about me that I could not understand nor comprehend. Great fear had fallen upon me, and amid the events of the day I never lost sight of this silent fear; it was with me continually. I made efforts to get rid of it, but could not. I became a great coward in the dark, but dared not let any one know the cause. It was a secret that I guarded closely. I was afraid to go to sleep at night in a dark room, and often lay awake a long time, as if to watch myself while I slept, I was so fearful that I would fall into eternity while sleeping. I often fancied that some vital part of my body was giving way, and that I had only a few minutes to live. This excited me greatly, so that my breath would be difficult to get, my heart would beat unnaturally, and I would feel all the torments that a guilty sinner would feel who knows that his doom is sealed and the time of punishment at hand. I looked for death at any time, but dreaded it greatly; though at the time I speak of, physically I was as well as ever. During the summer following I did not allow these things to trouble me any more than I could help, vainly trying to get rid of my fears, till fall came again, when I seemed to get worse in sinning, and every little thing that appeared wrong in my sight seemed to provoke and annoy me, so that I had no earthly comfort, and made those around me feel disagreeable. I remember one day, late in the fall, I had been very peevish all day, and when evening came I discovered that I had caught a severe cold. I retired feeling bad in body and in mind; grieved in mind because I could not have my own way in everything. Some time during the night I awakened myself by calling for my father. I thought I was going to die, and called for him, thinking he could do something to save me from dying. I did not so much as think to call upon the Lord, but upon an earthly friend, as that seemed more natural for me to do. A very strange feeling came over me, which did not leave me for months. A great fear came over me, different from that which I had felt before. My father came to my room with some medicine, which he said would help me. I readily accepted it, glad to have him think that I was sick; but I well knew that that was not the medicine I needed to cure me. For several weeks I appeared sick, so they called in a physician. He examined me, and left medicine; but it did no good. After a few days he left a different kind, but it did no better. Again he changed medicine, but with the same result. I knew all the time that earthly medicine was of no avail. I was not really sick, but was satisfied for the family and friends to think so; and as time wore

on, the great fright that I had received grew older. I saw that I was not going to die right away. I took more interest in daily events around me, so my friends thought I was getting well. I often thought, How sadly mistaken are my friends. But here was a secret I could not tell any one. I had looked forward to the enjoyment of myself in many ways. Air castles I had built, many promises had I made to myself; but now to think that all the promised happiness is blighted, what to do I knew not. Life seemed to be miserable.

This state of mind, with some variation, lasted for more than a year, and caused me to examine myself in many ways. I gradually got to reading in the Bible more than ever before. I wanted to be by myself while reading, for I did not want any one to see me reading the book that I had spoken so disrespectfully of. Curiosity at first seemed to be my motive in reading it.

Brethren Beebe, if you see proper to publish this, I may in the future write more.

In fellowship,

J. BEEMAN.

[THE following extracts are taken, by permission of the writer, from private letters, in which she was giving an account of the wonderful way in which the Lord led her from a life of frivolity and sin, and after delivering her from the power of darkness, translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son. Until August last she knew little of the Old School Baptist Church, never having heard more than perhaps a dozen sermons of that profession. Formerly she was a member of a fashionable church, but had held a letter from them for about five years, during which time she was devoted to the social pleasures which attract the multitude in the great city of New York. In August she was called to resign her youngest child and only daughter, to which her affection was more than ordinarily devoted. At her request Elder Beebe at the burial preached from Matthew xix. 14. The mother then seeming deeply exercised in her mind, made some earnest inquiries relative to the doctrine of the gospel, which led to her promise to write the first of these letters to him, then almost a stranger. On Saturday evening before the third Sunday in September she told him of her earnest desire to submit her case to the Ebenezer Church, in New York City, which she did, and was received at a called church meeting on Sunday; and on Monday she was baptized at Rockaway Beach in the presence of about fifteen members, who felt it a great privilege to witness the beautifully solemn scene. The fact that she had never been familiar with even the letter of the Scriptures shows but the more clearly that the Lord alone did lead her, and there was no strange god with him in the work of displaying in her salvation his own almighty arm made bare. Since she followed her Redeemer in baptism she has so wonderfully realized the fulfillment of the promised rest in

obedience that her infinite joy cannot be hid from those who meet her. May the grace of God ever keep her in his love; and if in accordance with his sovereign will, may he reveal the riches of his grace in leading her kind husband and two surviving sons to rejoice in the same truth which comforts her so abundantly.—ED.]

NEW YORK, Sept. 12, 1887.

ELDER BEEBE—MY FRIEND:—I have wanted to write to you for a good many days, but something has held me back; but now I must do it. I want to tell you just how I am, but have not words to fitly tell you the joy that is in me, and the strong hope and faith which have been given to me; and it seems so strange to me that God could choose one so downright wicked as I have been, that I have tried to reason myself out of it, and could not, for I do not want to deceive myself nor others. I will tell you all about it.

I am satisfied that a change took place in me on the day I left the place where I had been staying through the summer. As I went to say good-by to my dead baby, I realized for the first time that she was not dead, and that we were not to bury her. From that moment I tried to find a way to her, for she was still my best love. Yet I cannot say that the weight of my sins lay on me so heavily; not so heavily as I deserved. Perhaps God thought I had all I could bear just then; but just how strongly he sustained me at that time he only knows. Just before we came to the church house a voice spoke in my whole heart, saying, "In my Father's house are many mansions;" "I go to prepare a place for you." Then the words you spoke while in the church house came to me with such comfort and meaning. That night I went up stairs alone, and prayed with all my heart and strength for light and forgiveness; and I felt that I had received a little light. But when we began our journey homeward the thought came, Now if I go back to New York, and among all the old associations, I shall grow cold and neglectful; and the sins which I now revolted so against would become welcome again, and I would be overcome and lost. When we came to the depot it was so ordered that we lost the train, and were obliged to wait four hours. I went (very unwillingly) to the house of Mr. Finn to wait, and picking up his Bible the very first words I read were, "And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin." I took the words of the promise to myself, and felt so joyful that there was no room for sorrow in my heart at all. For three days I felt as if I were walking up higher than any one around me, and as though I were fenced in by an invisible wall, and no hurt could come to me. Then a doubt came, that I might be mistaken; because it did not seem possible that the good news could be true for me, although I firmly believed that Jesus had called me, and upheld

and comforted me through the sorrows I had received. I felt so badly that I spent nearly the whole day in reading my Bible and praying for light to come. Then I read where it says that "hope that is seen is not hope," and to have patience. The next morning (I think it was the next day after I was feeling so badly) I awoke with these words ringing in my ears, and saying them with my lips, "Every good and perfect gift cometh from above;" and doubts have not troubled me since. I cannot help feeling lonely, and grieving for the company of my babe; but still I see more and more how kind it was in Jesus to take her—kind to me as well as to her; for I have the knowledge that she is safe, that she is saved, and cannot be harmed at all.

I have a great desire to become a member of the Thirty-sixth Street Church. Not because I can do any good to them, but because I read this morning that we are to "put on the whole armor of God;" so my duty lies plainly before me. But I am afraid they may think me not worthy such an honor. If it is possible, I would like to talk with you, as I know you are expected here next Sunday. Do not hesitate to deal with me in the way you may think right; for if there is any error in me I want to know it, and I do not think I ask of the wrong one when I come to you for advice. Do not deceive me through kindness, for it would not be kindness then.

Hopefully,

ALICE T. HORTON.

NEW YORK, Sept. 20, 1887.

ELDER BEEBE—DEAR FRIEND:—I felt quite lonely after leaving all of you yesterday, but not forsaken. I would have been so glad to have been right with you last evening, but there was no way provided; and I think I felt not a little envy that sister Horton and perhaps others were with you, for all you say is just what I love to hear. But this morning seems to open like a new day, or rather a continuance of yesterday. * * * I feel to-day that praise is all there is in me; and it is not me that praises, but his words that are in me. And that peace! How true it is that it passeth all human understanding. You see I am on top of the mountain still; but if I do get down into the valley the foundation will be under my feet there just the same.

I have written to you because I could not help writing, to tell you just how I am this morning.

ALICE T. HORTON.

NEW YORK, Sept. 22, 1887.

ELDER BEEBE:—I am so impressed to write to you that, although it is about three o'clock in the morning, here I am; for something tells me to "work while it is still light." I wished so much last evening that you could be here, so I could try to tell you of all I had been reading, and the wonderful clearness of my mental sight. Surely growth in a spiritual sense is a fact. I sat down with my Bible about three o'clock yesterday afternoon, and I must truthfully say

that even you could not have told me the things I saw and heard; and as dearly as I love to listen to you, it was far more precious and comforting to read as I was permitted to then. To use an expression that I have heard, it was "the writing between the lines" that I could read. I wish I could tell you of all the beautiful things I saw. The twenty-third Psalm is a favorite with me, and I came to it without looking. Its beauty came to me so strong and clear; and every sentence became a sermon that I could follow, and did. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Surely the pastures wherein I am are so green and fresh that there can be no fading. "He leadeth me beside the still waters." Is not that this great peace which possesses me? "He restoreth my soul." My only interpretation of that is, that blessed doctrine of election. I had no soul until he restored it to me, and with it the knowledge of his wonderful love and power. The sweet thought in connection with that restoration is that the Lord created and decreed all of me, and for me; and my life was hid with Christ in him before the foundation of this world, not to be revealed until the new birth, when he restored it to me. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." O how precious to know and feel that we are led—not left to walk alone. Our perfect helplessness is more and more clear, and I would not wish it otherwise; for as he is leading us, we so surely cannot go astray. The table he has spread for me is literally in the presence of my enemy, as well as in all spiritual sense, for me. "My cup runneth over." Indeed no cup could contain the measure that has been measured out to me. The promise that all this should be added unto me is well come to me. "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." Now the valley, though low, is firm; and the shadow of death is but a shadow to us. A shadow has no substance. We walk through it; we do not linger by the way; there is no stopping in the valley. "And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." That, to me, is the complete and perfect heaven; also meaning the heaven we live in here, the substance of all things we hope for. I cannot express to you my sense of its beauty, for it cannot be described in words; and I am glad that words do fall short, for the words of this world will perish with it, and nothing but what is of an everlasting nature can or will be there.

My dear friend, I could not keep from telling you just how far in the light our Savior has led me; and the light is so wonderfully clear and bright and new to me that I have to tell you. So many passages which I read became full of a new meaning, which I was unable to see or understand the day before. I was in harmony with the truth, and it with me. I hope I have not wearied you. You will be able to sift my own words from

those which are given to me, if they have been given, and I trust there is no "if" in the matter; I know there is not. Is not a thing which is made manifest to our spiritual eyes stronger and more lasting than a vision that could come to our eyes of flesh? My prayer for sight and understanding is very fully answered.

I could write all night and not fail for words. I must tell you that I did not get up of myself to write, but was called up by one of the boys having the croup; and as I had to stay awake, my opportunity came. I could scarcely bear to go to sleep without first telling you this, but did not wish to disturb the rest by remaining up. Good-by for a little while, for I believe I shall talk to you often. Yours in the faith,

Alice T. Horton.

NEW YORK, Sept. 25, 1887.

ELDER WM. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER—And I say it from my heart. I know you have not laid it up against me that I did not call you by your name before this, for it was an omission of the hand, and not of the heart; for of all my new and dearly loved brethren and sisters, I feel my heart go out to one more than to any other, and I cannot feel that it is wrong. I only know that it is so. You will rejoice with me when I tell you that I am still in the heavenly place, and my light is not dimmed in the least. I can say this, that the more I see and feel the love of our Savior, the more I see the depth of sin in which I was; and all the love of my heart and soul goes up to him who has led me out into a safe place, before my eyes were opened to see fully the horrible brink on which I stood. I can truly say "horrible," and that my body was worthy of it. I have been so very happy, and with such a great feeling of contentment, that I have not been able to pray; for I have nothing to pray for, as all the things which I desired have been added to me. You know how I longed for a visible manifestation. It has come, even though I had become perfectly satisfied without it, and thought I received greater enjoyment from the light I found in the Scriptures. O, my brother, to me I have received a foretaste of the manner of my death, and of the reception of my soul by my Redeemer.

I began this letter in the afternoon, and now it is after midnight. I was interrupted by callers; and then sister Hobbs and Aunt Sarah came to see me in the evening, and I had a good visit with them. I could talk as easily as I can write, and the more I talked the clearer became the subject. I went to the meeting this morning, and enjoyed what I heard very much. It was something new to me, for you know that I was not familiar with the Bible. I am so very happy that I wonder if this is I, myself. Elder Housel extended the fellowship of the church to me to-day. You ask the liberty of using a portion of my letters. If you can see that any part is written by the Spirit, you are welcome to do just whatever

your judgment directs, for I write it as a testimony of what I have heard and seen. If it will bring comfort to any one, such as I received in reading the SIGNS, then use it. I am afraid I will weary you with such long letters; but there is no stopping place, it is such a pleasure to write to you. If you see that I am believing anything contrary to the doctrine of our Savior, will you tell me? I want to be right.

My love I send to my sister Beebe also. I am strong in the faith and hope.

Alice T. Horton.

HUSTON, Ontario, March 17, 1887.

TO FRED. W. KEENE—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—It is with feelings of inability that I now commence to give you an account of the way that the mysterious hand of God has led me. In my second letter I told you that I could not answer your query, as to do so would necessitate giving you an account of my life, so to speak. To do so, even in as brief a way as possible, must take me back a number of years.

I was born October 19th, 1860, being the oldest of a family of six boys. My parents are both Baptists, though to specify of what kind of the same I cannot. They can hardly be called "Missionary," yet their ideas are in substance the same, though they differ very much in some things; and they are not of the Primitive Baptists, of that I am sure, though there are a great many points of such that they believe. In fact, in short, they are simply moral people, the same as other so-called christians; but they instructed and educated their family in all morality, as much as they possibly could. I have been a monstrous sinner, and a justly damnable wretch in the sight of God, all my life. When I look back, and behold my filthiness, I wonder that a just God had not cut me down in the midst of my sin; but he has spared me for some purpose, though for what I cannot see, as I am of no use in my present state of deformity in body; yea, I am a marvel of divine grace. Still I always feared God from my earliest recollection. I very often received severe (they seemed so to me) rebukes from my fellow-mortals for some of my misdoings, and each time promised faithfully to myself to do better in the future. Often and often have I besought my God to have mercy upon me, and strengthen me to keep from the evil. Thus did I go along for a number of years, and, as I thought, getting to be a better christian all the time. Still my best doings never seemed to give me peace or real satisfaction; and there were some people at that time, whom I dared not dispute were real christians (though I dispute it now), who would do some things which I did not think a christian could do. Thus I went on from year to year, getting better, as I thought, but still never satisfied. During this time I had subscribed for and was taking the *Canadian Baptist*, of Toronto (which I presume you know), about five or six years ago.

I took the paper for two or three years, and thought at the time that there was no paper like it; in fact, that it was perfect as to the instruction it taught. Now I would not read it if it was given to me, because I can find no spiritual food in it; and why? Simply because they cannot give what they have not got.

It was some time in the spring of 1884 that it pleased my God to give me that peace and rest of soul which I (by the will of him) long had yearned for. I was one day at my uncle's (who is of the same belief as my parents), and we were arguing quietly on some points of the Scriptures. The passage that particularly engaged our attention was, "He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." I seemed to behold my Savior and my God writhing in untold suffering on the cross; and I thought, Was this for such as me, my God, my God, for such as me? O how my heart went out in powers of tenderest love for my Lord and my God. Better far to let me die eternal death, never to return, than that the innocent Lord God of all should suffer for such a wretch as I! O what love, what heavenly joy, filled my soul! I know my uncle must have wondered what had come over me, as he seemed awed into silence and graveness by my words, as I seemed to be filled with words to speak, and speak I did on the above passage and works thereof. While on my way across the fields homeward everything seemed to be shining with a splendor exceeding the sun, and smiling with God's glory. I have never dared to tell this to any human being, knowing that I would be laughed at and made light of. You are the first and only one that I have told this to. After this, at times, I would be filled with the desire to proclaim the glorious news of my God. I would sometimes say somethings among ourselves at home, but the passage would be brought vividly to my mind, Do not cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. Often and often was this done to me. They would rend and tear me to pieces. Often at such times my heart would almost die within me. Again and again have I besought my God to direct and guide me; if I was wrong, to direct me right; and if I was right, to give me strength. I thought, Can it be that I am alone in the world? for I did not know of any one personally of the same belief, neither had I read of any one living of the same belief. I did sometimes think that either the majority of mankind are saved and I am lost (that is, those I knew and read of), or the majority are lost and I am saved. I thought, Surely there are some in the world that believe as I do. Just here let me say that I had read a work called the "Reign of Grace" (which perhaps you have seen), by Abraham Booth, who lived in the seventeenth century, which was exactly, in every particular, to my mind. O how I longed to find or meet some of such belief. Time passed on until a little over a year

ago, when I had occasion to purchase "N. W. Ayers' Sons' Newspaper Annual;" and in looking over the list of papers in it, published in each state and in Canada, my attention was drawn to some papers called Primitive Baptist, and the word "Primitive" seemed to please me. I thought, If there are any of God's people in the world, it will be those by that name. I therefore concluded to write for a copy of two or three of them. I got a copy in which were a couple of articles on predestination and election. O did not I rejoice, and thank God with all the powers of my being, that he had directed me to those whom I could call brethren in Christ Jesus. To God be all the praise.

Wretched man that I am! When I would do good, then I cannot, for the evil that is present with me. Sometimes I think it is mockery and presumption in me to address you, or any others of God, as brother, or for you to address me as such, I am such a deformed, decrepit, detestable, sinful wretch of mankind. Sometimes I am lowered to (by a deep conviction of awful sin), as it were, the borders of hell, and did my God consign me to such it would be but justice meted out; and at other times I am elevated, as it were, to the suburbs of heaven. But it is the mercy of God that he thus keeps me from being exalted, lest I be soon humbled. Sometimes I am filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory, when I know that I am not alone after all. How I long and sigh to be enabled to go and see you and the other brethren in Christ, that we could talk upon the glorious works of God. I am here, as it were, in a den of wolves. True, they are morally righteous, but spiritually dead. I have to keep my mouth closed, for if I say anything it is criticised and torn to pieces. The two copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES which you sent me were criticised and torn to pieces, especially your letters in the same. That is one reason why I returned them to you so soon, as it grieved me sorely to thus see the works of God made light of. You are truly, dear brother, a mighty one in the hand of God. I read your letters in the SIGNS with more than ordinary pleasure.

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

How wondrous are thy works, O God! O that my God would make me whole in my body, and enable me to go among you for a season; or if not, that he would free me from this mortal body, that I might have peace in death, resting in the arms of my Savior and my God. Often and often I find myself wondering for what purpose I was created—of no use to my fellow-mortals, and no comfort in this deformed body. My God, my God! suffer me not so to live, pressed on all sides, pressed on all hands. Where shall I find relief but in thee?

Dear brother, remember me, a sorely afflicted one, at the throne of grace. Please excuse this poor scribbling. I might have written better, but my pen was moved in response to my thoughts, instead of care in shaping

the letters and words. I do not know whether you will be able to decipher all the letter or not.

May the grace of our Lord God be with you and yours, is the earnest petition of that bodily-afflicted one who sighs for freedom.

W. C. MEDILL.

SILVER CLIFF, Colorado, June 10, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I can bear with the unregenerate world in their contempt and hatred of the doctrine advocated by the editors and writers of the SIGNS, for they are more to be pitied than blamed; but when I hear those who claim to be Baptists denouncing the doctrine contained in the SIGNS as heresy, I can hardly hold my peace. Although I have not been a continual subscriber to the SIGNS, yet with the exception of a few years I have had access to read it from my boyhood; and I must say that since I trust the eyes of my understanding have been enlightened I have never seen anything set forth in the editorials but what I could receive as being the truth. When I was but a boy I used to read from the SIGNS for my dear old grandmother; and I remember asking her what would become of the SIGNS when Elder G. Beebe should be removed from earth. Her answer would be, "The Lord will raise up some one to fill his place." The prediction surely has been fulfilled; for I am not able to discern any deviation from the "ancient landmarks" contended for and so ably defended by the first editor of the SIGNS, Elder Gilbert Beebe. Because he would not accept anything as truth that he could not find "Thus saith the Lord" for, he was assailed as an heretic; yet he earnestly contended for the Bible truth. Then, dear brethren Beebe, no marvel if you are likewise assailed. The charge of Paul to Timothy is as much a charge to us in this day as it was to Timothy; and it is a solemn charge, too. "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." Is not that time already come? I think it has, and is even now; for when we look around among the Baptists we find a great many contending for new theories, which are but theories of men; and whenever any reject their theories, and are found contending for the truth as it is in Jesus, they are charged, as was Paul, with stirring up strife and sedition. Satan rejoices when contentions exist among the saints, and is never better pleased than when he succeeds in captivating one of the lambs of the fold, so as to make him believe a lie; for all false doctrine is but a lie, and the devil is the father of it. In order to deceive our mother Eve, Satan told her a great deal of truth. "Ye shall not surely die." But a falsehood was covered up in it. So it is to this day. Satan, in order

to beguile the saints to believe a falsehood, will cover it up with some truth. I think I can see more and more the formalities of the world creeping in among the Baptists.

I believe that the true worshipers of God will be provided with a place wherein to worship God. The first Baptist preacher that I have any account of had one of the most magnificent temples to preach and worship God in that ever was erected, and it was richly carpeted with the green grass and the flowers of earth, and its covering was the cloudy canopy of heaven. The great God of heaven and earth was its builder. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea." I do not wish to be understood to object to brethren or a church building a suitable place in which to meet, where God has blessed them with earthly possessions so as to enable them to do so; but I do object to publicly soliciting aid from abroad for such purpose, especially so while there are many of the saints in very destitute circumstances, needing the actual necessities of life. Would it not be more charitable to solicit the brethren to send, according to their ability, relief to the poor and needy saints? This the apostles did in their day. It is a duty incumbent upon us to relieve the distressed, and especially those of the household of faith.

Brethren Beebe, I have not written the foregoing in a spirit of fault-finding, but I feel that it is needful that our pure minds be stirred up by way of remembrance of these things. What I have written is submitted to your better judgment. Publish, if proper; if not, cast it among the rubbish. May God enable you to continue to boldly contend for the truth as it is in Jesus, not being possessed of a man-fearing or a man-pleasing spirit, but having an eye single to the glory of God, is my prayer.

J. H. YEOMAN.

WESTON, Mich., July 9, 1887.

ELDER BIGGS—DEAR BROTHER:—Ever since I have been acquainted with you I have indeed believed that you are one of those that may be deemed a father in the Israel of our God; one that has been tried in the furnace of affliction, that you may know what is the order of God's house, and also to administer comfort and consolation to the weary pilgrims from Egypt to the promised land; one that has been in the crucible of God's furnace of fire, that you may admonish the church of God to be ware of the concision and evil workers. Yes, like all the servants of God, you have been called to go down into deep waters of darkness, that they may learn to do work in deep waters; that the great God may be honored and his name glorified; that his saints may be comforted and built up in their most holy faith; and that they may be edified in the things of God. He has ascended on high, and received gifts for men, for the rebellious also. Who are the rebellious? Surely, dear brother, it is you and I, together with all the true servants of

God. O how good is the Lord to remember mercy to such rebellious, wicked and sinful mortals! What a blessed truth, that our God changes not, but is of long-suffering and of tender mercy. Sore trials and deep afflictions are not joyous, but grievous, but they keep us from going astray; for when our souls are in deep trouble we are made to cry unto the Lord, like Peter, "Lord, save, I perish." The Lord thus far has delivered us from the jaws of the bear and the lion. How many times on our return we have found honey in the carcass of the lion. Our dear Lord can make bitter things sweet, yea, make us to rejoice even in affliction. May it be remembered by all the household of faith that they are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and that all their doubts and sore trials are for their good. It is for the trial of their faith, which is more precious than gold.

Dear brother, the visit that I enjoyed at your place with the dear brethren and sisters I remember with pleasure. I shall never forget their kindness, hospitality and brotherly love to one so sinful and unworthy as I, who am less than the least of all, the weakest of the saints, if one at all. Can it be that I have been "made to hear his voice?" I do feel that I can say of a truth that the dear brethren at Pleasant Hill are deep in my affections, because of their love for the blessed truth and doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. From your place I went to Mount Sterling, where I met Elder Bavis. I found him to be a champion for the truth—one with whom there is no compromise with error. "This is the way; walk ye in it." I went in company with brother Bavis to their place of worship, and tried to preach with the ability that the Lord gave. When I was done, Elder Martin, of Pleasant Hill, followed with another discourse; also the next day, which was Sunday, I again tried to preach. I there formed a very pleasant and pleasing acquaintance with quite a number of the dear people of God. I there met with sister Yeoman, whose name has been occasionally seen in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Truly I can say that I had a pleasant season with those dear saints of God. From Mount Sterling I journeyed south until I reached Cincinnati. From there I crossed the Ohio River and landed in the hill country of Ludlow, Kentucky, where I met with Elder Peter Sawin and wife, sister Sawin. From the time I met with brother and sister Sawin until I parted with them our whole conversation was of and concerning the doctrine, and the dealings of God with his dear children. I have faith to believe that brother Sawin has drank deeply of the cup of affliction, and that he also has been in the furnace that separates the dross from the pure metal, that he may come forth as gold that is tried in the fire. In affliction we learn obedience. On Sunday evening, after returning from meeting with brother Sawin, at Ludlow, at brother Helms's, where there was an appointment for me to preach, I met with Elder George

Weaver; and after trying to preach a short discourse I had the privilege of listening to that dear old servant of God proclaim the riches of God's grace with power, to the comfort of God's people, and praise to the name of our exalted Head, giving all the glory to our dear Lord, King and Priest, which made my poor soul rejoice and take courage; for it seemed that he entered into my feelings, and told my experience and travel of mind much better than I could have told it myself. Truly it was a season of rejoicing, a feast of fat things to me. Indeed, there is nothing in all the realm of nature that is to be compared with the real spiritual enjoyment of the presence of our blessed Master.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In the believer's ear;
It calms his fears, it heals his wounds,
It drives away his care."

There is nothing more comforting to a poor, sinful mortal than when he can comfort and solace himself in the glorious doctrine of his adorable Redeemer. When we can truly feel that the blood of the everlasting covenant has been applied as a healing balm to our poor souls, then ecstasy of joy and love is poured forth from the hearts of God's little children, because of his great love to such poor, sinful, vile and polluted mortals as they feel and know that they are.

"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?"

Dear child of God, the reason you feel and know that you are a sinner is because the light of God's holy Spirit has shined in your heart, for it is light that makes manifest; and when they discover their wicked and depraved heart they are made to cry, Unclean! unclean! They now see that their heart is as a cage of unclean birds, that there is nothing good in the flesh, and that if ever saved it must be in and through the blood and righteousness of their dear Redeemer. O, says the dear, trembling child, if I could only feel as I believe that God's people feel, when they talk and tell of the glorious things of the kingdom of my blessed Lord, how it would cheer my poor, feeble mind; for it seems as though when they talk and tell of the good things of my blessed Savior, it comes from the heart. But O, poor me; do I know in deed and in truth these blessed truths? Why this dull and lifeless frame? Can one be worse who has never heard his name? The dear child often concludes that his case is an outside one, and that it cannot be possible there is any one so sinful and so vile as he. O that I could walk more humbly—that I could be more like my blessed Master. When, dear child, you have the greatest desire to be like your Master, then you feel to be furthest from it.

Now, dear brother, in conclusion I feel to adopt the language of the poet:

"Why should I complain of want or distress,
Temptation or pain? he told me no less;
The heirs of salvation, I know from his word,
Through much tribulation must follow their Lord."

"Since all that I meet shall work for my good,
The bitter is sweet, the medicine food;
Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long,
And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song."

THOMAS J. WYMAN.

P. S.—Brethren Beebe, you will see that this letter was written to brother Biggs; but by request I send it direct to you (feeling it will be all right with brother Biggs) for publication, if you feel it worthy a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I submit it to your judgment.

T. J. W.

PANOLA, ILL., Aug. 18, 1887.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has passed, which reminds me that my remittance is due and past. I will now send you two dollars for another year, and it may be the last I ever will send you, for I am now in my eighty-third year, and the time of my departure must be near at hand; but as good old Job said, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." I am a poor, old sinner, but I hope to be saved through the merits of that dear Redeemer who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself on the cross of Calvary, when he bowed his head and said, "It is finished," for all them that were given him by the Father in the everlasting covenant of redemption before the world was, ordered in all things and sure to that seed that shall serve him, that shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." He found Jacob in a desert land, in a waste, howling wilderness. He led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. There is where the Lord finds all his people. I joined the Old, Primitive Baptists over fifty years ago, and the reason I joined them was because I loved them. They preached that salvation is of the Lord, and that suited me, for I had been working under the law nearly three years, till I gave up all hope, and verily thought I must eternally perish. In my extremity the Lord spoke peace to my troubled soul. From that day to this I have believed that salvation is of the Lord. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." We are not redeemed by such corruptible things as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ. He came under the law, in the room of his people, and fulfilled it in all its jots and tittles. He was able to fulfill all its requirements; for he came down from heaven, and was found in fashion as a man, made like unto his brethren, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem his people. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the mighty God. He has all power, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, in heaven above and in the earth beneath.

S. R. PATTON.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Regular Old School Baptist Association called Mt. Pleasant, in session with the Regular Old School Baptist Church at Beech Creek, Shelby Co., Ky., on Friday, September 2d, 1887, and two succeeding days, to the brethren and churches of like precious faith with us composing our body, Greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the abundant mercy of our ever-adorable King and Savior we have again been permitted to gather ourselves together in an associate capacity, notwithstanding the many obstacles which seemed to be in our way to hedge us in and prevent us from meeting; but thanks be unto his exalted name, we have through him been enabled to overcome them all, and are now reminded of this our ancient custom of addressing you our annual Circular. Forasmuch as some have taken it upon themselves to denounce us as an unsound and disorderly body, we therefore desire to call your attention while we shall endeavor to set forth in order a declaration of a few of the vital, fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, which principles we hold most sacred.

First, we believe that we, as we stand in relation to Adam the first, are sinners by nature, totally depraved; and are not only enemies to God by wicked works, but we are in these carnal minds of ours enmity to God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. Therefore, as such, we are sinners by nature, sinners of Adam's race. Second, that God, as the sovereign, eternal, great I Am, did choose us, his people (notwithstanding we were foreseen and foreknown as sinners of Adam's race), in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, &c. Third, that he predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and that according to the good pleasure of his will (Eph. i. 4, 5), and to be conformed to the image of Jesus.—Romans viii. 29. Fourth, that all things work together for good to this same chosen, predestinated people, who are the called according to his purpose.—Rom. viii. 28. Dear brethren, we feel to take courage here from these blessed declarations on these fundamental points, from the fact that if we have a good hope that we are included in the number of the chosen, predestinated and called, we are herein assured that Christ Jesus, our elect head and representative, came into the world to save just such poor, lost, helpless sinners of Adam's race as we know ourselves to be. Inasmuch as we were foreknown of the Father as his chosen people, though now wearing the image of the first Adam, which by reason of sin is all marred and contaminated, and though by reason of the same the grave shall claim our bodies as its prey, yet we are assured that because of God's foreknowledge in predestinating us to be conformed to the image of his Son, and unto the adoption, these

vile bodies of ours shall at the consummation of the adoption come forth fashioned like unto the glorious body of the blessed Jesus, wearing the perfect image of our Lord and Savior. Fifth, we not only hold the above principles sacred, but we hold and believe most surely that we have our standing in Adam the first, our earthly head or representative, and that we had our seminal or seed existence in him even before the tempter met our mother Eve in the garden of Eden, coming here to do that which God commanded Adam he should not do, causing Adam, her husband, our natural progenitor, to follow her into disobedience, thus bringing sin and death into the world, and upon us, his seed. We also hold and believe that as we stand related to the second Adam, to wit, the Lord from heaven, we as a spiritual seed had our existence in our second Adam, or the Lord Jesus, from all eternity; and hence the doctrine of the vital unity or oneness of Christ and his people. Please read Romans v. 14-20, and Psalm cxxxix. Also, let us quote the language of the Master himself, "That they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." "I and my Father are one." "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." Yes, dear, trembling ones, we were one with him, with the Father, ere he left the eternal glory he had with the Father before the earth was; one with him when he came to earth; one with him when he went into death, and triumphed over our cruel foes; one with him when he ascended up to glory, and was seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high; one with him throughout the endless ages of eternity itself. In view of this glorious oneness, dear brethren, ought we not to rejoice and take courage, because God chose us in him, and did not leave the choice to such sinners as we are? for had not God chosen us we never would have chosen him. Yea, Jesus has said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Again, let us, dear, trembling ones, take courage, and rejoice that God has or did predestinate us to be conformed to the image of his Son, and unto the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies; knowing that we have neither the foreknowledge nor the power to accomplish so great, so glorious a thing. Let us rejoice, too, that all things, even the things that seem to be against us, are for us, working together for our good.

These, brethren, are a few of the many precious things we might write in reference to the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior; but we have not space in a Circular like this to enlarge upon them. Let the foregoing suffice for the present. Now, dear brethren, suffer a word of exhortation. Forasmuch as there are brethren who once walked with us, and with whom we have often taken sweet counsel together, but who are now estranged from us, and who are trying to make it appear that we are unsound, and a disorderly body, let us, after having

set forth the principles most surely believed by us, and which we hold most sacred, and having, according to God's goodness and mercy, been permitted to meet together at the time and place appointed by the last session of this body, showing no disorder in our business transactions, nor unsoundness either in faith or practice, let us, we repeat, hold fast to our faith without wavering. Let it, dear brethren, be sound, both in theory and practice; thus manifesting that power which is wrought within us by God's electing grace and love, in that he gave his only begotten Son, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself, his peculiar people, zealous of good works. May the great I Am enable each and every one of us to manifest that spirit of meekness, forbearance and forgiveness that was in our Savior Jesus Christ. May our greatest desire be to show to those who would seek to misrepresent us, that we are so peculiar that instead of rendering railing for railing, we are blessing. Dear brethren, let us in all things, in word, in action, and in our walk, ever endeavor to show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light; so that brethren at home, and brethren from afar, and those around us, may see that our face is turned heavenward, and our back upon the world; and O that we may be as a city set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid. Amen.

N. A. HUMSTON, Mod.

E. F. RANDELL, Clerk.

The Elders and messengers composing the Oconee Primitive Baptist Association, to the churches represented by us, send greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—According to our custom we present you with our annual epistle, calling your attention to the first clause of the thirty-first verse of the eighth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, which reads thus, "What shall we then say to these things?"

In order that we may understand this important question, and be prepared to give a true answer to the same, it will be necessary to go back and examine the things spoken of; and in doing so let it be borne in mind that God has revealed unto us by his Spirit and in his word all that is for our good and his glory in time, and it is our desire to be content therewith, without undertaking to pry into those deep and secret things which God in his word tells us belong to him. To begin with, let us say that we are poor, blind, ignorant creatures, so ignorant that the apostle tells us in the twenty-sixth verse of this chapter that we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but while this is true, we have the blessed assurance that the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.—Verse 27. God's love to us is

such that, though we are weak and ignorant, he has given us a rich, almighty Friend that knows the will of God, and therefore makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God; and being according to his will it is heard and answered. Hence the apostle tells us that "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."—Verses 28 and 29. Here we have by the Spirit of inspiration the blessed truth set forth that God is a God of foreknowledge. By foreknowledge we understand that he knew what would take place as well before it did take place as he did or does afterward. In confirmation of this definition he tells us in his word that he comprehended the end with the beginning; and the prophet tells us that "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."—Isaiah liii. 11. Being a God of such knowledge, he saw us in our ruined and lost condition when as yet the world was not made, and there was none of us in actual existence; and then and there, before the world began, he purposed in himself, or predestinated, that we should be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. In conformity to this divine purpose the apostle proceeds to teach us, and we see in the course of ordinary generation as the children are developed in the world, that the blessed God by his grace calls them with an holy calling, and translates them out of darkness into light, and by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes them free from the law of sin and death. So the apostle tells us, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Verse 1. But, blessed be God, he does not stop here; for whom he calls he also justifies. "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!"—Rom. xi. 33. He died for our offenses, and rose again for our justification. As our blessed Husband and Surety, the law required his death; and having agreed to die for us, he asked, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke xxiv. 26. So when he died the law was satisfied, and could demand no more; but that blessed love which commends itself to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, brought him up from the dead, that we might be justified and raised above the law, having met all its demands in our blessed Husband, who is rich and mighty to save. Hence we stand as completely justified in the sight of God as if we never had committed a sin. But the apostle tells us that whom he justified, them he also glorified. O that blessed

hope that we have, which holds us, as an anchor to the soul, embracing that glorified state; and as he is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, when we in the blessed morn of the resurrection are conformed to the image or likeness of Christ we shall be like him, and be satisfied. There is another sense in which we are to be conformed to his image in this world, in that we are to suffer with him.

But for fear of making this letter too long, we will come to a close by saying that these are some of the things embraced in the language at the head of this letter. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Let us therefore take courage, and discharge our duty, and in nothing be terrified by our adversaries, and "be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."—Phil. iv. 6.

W. D. CHANDLER, Mod.

F. M. McLEROY, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, convened with the church at North Berwick, Maine, September 2d, 3d and 4th, 1887, to the churches and associations with whom she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—By the mercy of our all-wise and all-powerful God we have the high privilege once more to meet with our messages of love, relying upon him who has all power on earth and in heaven, and whose love never fails; and by the exercise of that faith which works by love, and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world, we are made confident that all things work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose.

In sending this our annual epistle we have chosen for our subject the eternal, electing and unchangeable love of God to his people. Jeremiah says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Dear brethren, before the sun mounted his dazzling throne, or the foundation of the mighty deep was laid, or dust was fashioned into man, this wondrous love existed. 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." Time and space cannot come between the infinite Jehovah and his people, for his love is everlasting, and with loving-kindness does he draw them; and being King of kings and Lord of lords, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, his power is above all powers. His omniscient eye saw the end, and Christ glorified, before time had its beginning, or his chosen bride had a natural existence; for he was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Hence the redemption of his people was secure before the breath of life animated Adam's dust. All alike, from Abel to the end of time, are saved by (and in no other

way) the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. It was said to Jacob, "I have redeemed thee; thou art mine." The waters cannot overflow thee, the fire cannot burn thee; for the everlasting arms of the Redeemer are underneath thee. The panoply of his love is above thee, and no weapon formed against thee shall prosper. Christ says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Blessed words, "Greater than all!" No jewel from the royal diadem can ever be lost; for if God, who is "greater than all," be for us, who can be against us? "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Our Father, who is "greater than all," has made us more than conquerors over all these things through him who has 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."—Romans viii.

"Hail, sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace! how sweet the song!
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!"

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
And seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." And not only called the sons of God, but "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ," their elder Brother. How sweet the thought that a bond of sovereign grace exists between Christ and his chosen people which can never be broken. He their Head and they his body; and where he is, there they are; and as sure as he lives, they shall live also. The kingdom of God is theirs; and what he has declared is as firm as his throne. Then shout, saints of God, for on Christ the solid Rock you stand, and he has bid you cast aside your fears, and rely upon him for wisdom, power and safety until the warfare shall end; and then around the throne shall your ransomed souls have everlasting rest.

Our meeting has been well attended, and the weather was as pleasant as we could wish for. Elders Purington, Chick and Campbell were with us through the meeting; but it was evident that there was but one preacher among us, and that he did speak through them all to the comfort and edification of all that had an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto

the churches. It was evident that their conversation was in the gospel heavens, so that we were made to sit together in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus our Lord. On Sunday, the last day of the meeting, it was thought that seven hundred people were there. We still wish to continue correspondence with you.

WM. QUINT, Mod.
LEWIS BUTLER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Oconee Baptist Association of the Primitive faith and order, to her sister associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—We have again been permitted, through the amazing mercy of our God, to hold another session of our body, in which all but one of our churches were represented by letters and messengers, in some of which are brought glad tidings of peace and great joy; and some of them report additions by baptism, to the praise of God's great and holy name. We were much comforted, encouraged and edified by the coming of your messengers and letters, which abundantly assure us that the great Jehovah still remembers his Zion; for we were almost if not quite ready to adopt the language of one of old, "Surely the Lord hath forgotten to be gracious." We can truly adopt the saying of Zion, "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." While Babylon seems to be boasting of her powers, saying, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow," how vast the contrast in the two nations. The former feel their dependence and keeping upon the Lord, and cry, "Come, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul;" whereas the latter expresses self-sufficiency, and boasts of what she is doing for the Lord. It seems that she is now saying, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"—Matt. vii. 22. Among these wonderful works the following no doubt is as prominent as any, namely, she is converting sinners by numbers, and sweeping sin, as they say, out of the country by counties at a time. We still love, cherish, and earnestly contend for the doctrine of grace, of the predestination of all things, and the resurrection of the dead, as is abundantly taught in the volume of holy writ. While we highly appreciate your visits in the past, we earnestly desire a more copious visitation from our sister associations in the future. We have appointed correspondence to you, as will be seen in the body of our Minutes.

The next session of our body will be held, God willing, with the church at Gravely Creek, Jackson County, Georgia, one mile east of Maysville, on the N. E. R. R., beginning on Saturday before the second Sunday in

October, 1888, and continuing three days, when and where we hope again to receive your correspondence.

W. D. CHANDLER, Mod.
F. M. McLEROY, Clerk.

The Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the church at Beech Creek, Shelby Co., Ky., September 2d, 3d and 4th, 1887, to the associations with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting.

It is through the providence of the all-wise God that we have been again permitted to meet in an associated capacity. The letters from the different churches of this body report peace among the majority, yet some show marks of discord among them. Beloved brethren, we have been made glad by the coming of your messengers and messages of love. The ministers sent to us from the Holy One bring to us tidings of great joy, and are determined to know nothing among this people save Jesus Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth, and the life. Dear brethren, we still desire a continuance of your christian correspondence, and we send you this our message of love.

Our next session is appointed to be held with our sister church at Providence, Trimble County, Kentucky, commencing on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1888. May the God of love guard and guide you through life, and to a final reward in heaven, is our prayer, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

N. A. HUMSTON, Mod.
E. F. RANDELL, Clerk.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1887.

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

HEALING OF THE TEN LEPERS.

"AND it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole."—Luke xvii. 11-19.

In compliance with several requests we submit the following reflections in connection with the miraculous display of divine power recorded in the text as above quoted. Of the literal fact that this wonderful work was done by the power of Jesus, there is no room for doubt; and that nothing short of divine authority could have secured the obedience of diseases and of death itself, is equally evident. It is not of the literal fact of the physical healing in this case that we would speak, therefore, in this article; but by the guidance of the Holy Spirit we would consider the subject as it is an example of the infinite grace of God in cleansing guilty sinners from their sins, and making them holy as their Redeemer is holy in his own spotless righteousness, which cannot be polluted by their unworthiness.

In presenting the subject in this experimental application to the present dealing of the Lord with his people, it should be remembered that this circumstance occurred while the typical dispensation still remained, and even our Lord himself recognized its claims upon all the children of Israel. He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill its holy requirements in every jot and tittle; for until all this obedience was rendered that law could not pass away.—Matt. v. 17-19. Under that law special treatment was enjoined for this disease of leprosy when it was found that an Israelite was affected by it. Every specification of that law was strictly representative of that substance in the spiritual kingdom of Christ of which all the legal dispensation but set forth the shadow. The first account given of this terrible affliction is in the calling of Moses to speak the word of the Lord to the children of Israel, when they were soon to be delivered from their bondage in Egypt. Then Moses, desiring a sign, received the same sign which is given to every sinner when God shows him his sinful state and makes him see the justice of his condemnation. When at the command of the Lord Moses put his hand into his bosom, it

was leprous as snow. In this is shown how both the heart and hand of the sinner are alike blasted by the deadly power of sin. The restoration of his hand at the command of the Lord is significant also of the life-giving power of the word spoken by the Lord.—See Ex. iv. 6. The law of leprosy is recorded in Leviticus thirteenth and fourteenth chapters. A careful observation of the specific directions there given will clearly show to those who have felt the plague of sin that there is no other disease so clearly representing the fearful character of sin. But there is one peculiarly important point in the direction there given to the priest in judging as to the case of the afflicted one. While but one spot of leprosy was sufficient to render the subject unclean, so that he must be separated from the camp of Israel, when the leprosy spread so as that it covered the whole body "from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh; then the priest shall consider; and, behold, if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: it is all turned white: HE IS CLEAN."—Lev. xiii. 12, 13. As this law applied to none but Israelites literally, so in its antitypical fulfillment in the new heavens of the gospel dispensation none can experience the just discrimination of true judgment in their own case, except such as are made to realize that there is nothing but pollution in themselves. This experience is peculiar to the seed of Abraham, who are in Christ Jesus heirs of God according to the promise. All others claim some degree of righteousness in themselves. Without the light of life it is impossible for any sinner to see himself as dead in sin. Nature always claims some merit either already attained or to be secured by future good works. None ever see the exceeding sinfulness of sin in themselves until it is revealed in the infinite light of the perfect holiness of the justice of God. To all who are thus taught of the Lord the dreadful disease of leprosy is a most striking symbol of the fatal poison of sin as experienced in their own hearts. Like the leper, they find themselves hopelessly under the power of their dreadful malady the first they are made aware of their condition. Every effort they make to secure relief but seems to aggravate their distress. This continues with them until they realize that their very prayers for mercy but add to the burden of their condemnation. Then they see the last lingering claim to merit in themselves, the very last healthy spot in their whole body, overspread by the loathsome malady of sin. With this view of their utter vileness comes the confession of the justice of their condemnation. At this point in their death to all hope in themselves it is the pleasure of the Lord to reveal the sweet assurance that they are perfectly clean through the righteousness of the holy Redeemer. Thus their leprosy is healed.

In the case under consideration, as in other instances of miraculous heal-

ing of lepers by our Lord Jesus, we may see the manner in which justly condemned sinners are made holy by the cleansing power of the word of the Lord. These ten helpless sufferers were not represented as going in search of Jesus, as if they had voluntarily chosen to entrust the treatment of their cases to him; but it was when Jesus was going to Jerusalem, "that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." As Jesus was not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, these afflicted ones had no reason to expect that they were to meet him there in that land of strangers with whom the Jews had no dealings. So, the conscious sinner has no expectation of seeing the holy Redeemer in the land of sin and pollution wherein he is made to feel that he is bound in fetters of guilt and ruin. As these ten sufferers were forbidden by their pollution to come near to their fellow-men, so the sinner, when he sees his guilt, is by that very sight forbidden to come near to any one less vile than himself. Even when they evidently recognized in the Lord the power to relieve them, these lepers stood afar off, conscious that they had no right to approach their gracious deliverer, although they could hope for relief from no other source. In like manner, the sensible sinner feels that he must not come near to the holy presence of God to ask for mercy; but from his guilty distance, and not daring so much as to look up, the prayer of the publican goes up from his inmost heart, saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." None ever felt the power of this prayer without the Spirit of God leading them into the light. All such are certainly the sons of God, and their sins are all washed away by the precious blood of Christ. In their cry for mercy these helpless lepers fully confessed their faith in Jesus as being not only their Lord and Master, but they recognized in him that omnipotence by which they could be healed. In their prayer they worshiped him, just as did the woman of Canaan, mentioned in Matthew xv. 22-28. To the natural mind there is no worship but in the direct ascription of praises to the name of the Lord; but in the sight of Infinite Wisdom the cry of the destitute and perishing sinner is the most acceptable worship ever presented before the eternal throne. In the prayer of the despairing sinner God is glorified as having power to save to the uttermost all who are led by the Spirit to call upon him for relief from their burden of sin and condemnation. There is this clearly marked difference between that prayer which originates in the carnal mind and that which is inspired by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, that while the prayer of the natural mind rests upon the ground that God will save *if he can*, the Spirit of Christ always feels the assurance that *if the Lord will* he can make the vilest sinner clean. But for this unreserved confidence in the infinite power of God to do all his sacred

will, there could be no comfort in any promise recorded in the Scriptures.

When Jesus saw the suppliant lepers he did not at once grant them the mercy which they asked; but first sent them, according to the law of Moses, to show themselves unto the priests. Being still under the law with all that people to whom he was sent in his incarnation, he magnified that law in fulfilling its every jot and tittle. Thus also, in the experience of the saints even among the Gentiles, they are not delivered from the burden of sin until they first learn by the law the knowledge of sin in themselves working death to all their hopes of justification by any works of their own. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." As they went in obedience to his word, the lepers were healed. No clearer manifestation of divine power could be given than that displayed in this miracle; yet the darkness of the natural mind could not see it as such. So it is also in the experience of the saints when the cleansing power of the word of Jesus is felt and known by faith, to the natural mind of the saint thus cleansed the hand of the Lord is not revealed. This is the occasion of the perpetual warfare in the subject of salvation between the flesh and the Spirit. The things which God has revealed to the faith of the saint are by his express will hidden from the eye of reason; hence, that which is clearly seen by faith is not seen at all by reason. The manner of their cleansing was entirely hidden from the lepers, but the fact that they were cleansed was indisputable. This also corresponds with the teaching of the Spirit by faith in the individual saints. None can tell how the change was wrought in them, but they have abiding testimony that the change has been wrought, so that they love the things which they once hated, and hate the sin which they formerly loved.

In the record of the conduct of the one leper who returned and gave glory to God, falling down and worshipping Jesus, it is stated that he was a Samaritan. "Whether any or all the others were Jews we are not told; but it is clearly implied in the record that less was expected of a Samaritan than of a Jew. It may be seen in this case that the principle is illustrated which was stated by Jesus in the reproof to Simon, as recorded Luke vii. 36-50. In the cleansing of the ten lepers there is no account that there was any difference. The ten were alike cleansed; but only this stranger returned to give glory to God. There is deeper significance in this account than what appears in the simple record. Shall we presume to say that the proportion of these lepers who returned to give glory to God when they were cleansed, was less than that of those who are cleansed of the deeper leprosy of sin, who yet live in disobedience to the law of Christ? No account is given of what was the case of the nine, further than that they were cleansed; but it is clear that the one who returned to give glory to God was alone

in that act. As this is included in the Scripture which is written for our learning, it must have an application in the present experience of the people of God; and it seems very forcibly to represent the case of such as live after the direction of their own carnal reason after they have received a hope in the salvation of God, instead of rendering implicit obedience to the command of Christ, and meekly following him in the way in which he declared that it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. It is only in keeping the commandments of the Lord that his saints can give glory to him. Whatever they may do or suffer without his direction is not honoring him. He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" and again, "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."—John xiv. 15; xv. 10.

The manner of expressing saving faith in the Lord Jesus is in this case, as in other instances when the Lord declared its saving power, just the reverse of what reason would understand to be the declaration of faith in the infinite mercy and goodness of God. Instead of being moved by this true faith to presumptuous boldness in approaching the Lord, its effect is always to humble the sinner in whom it is revealed; and while it gives a trembling assurance in the ability of God to grant the relief for which it prays, a felt sense of personal unworthiness forbids anything like the vain confidence of presumption. The subject of divine grace is as unconscious of the fact that it is living faith which moves him to cry out of the depths unto the Lord, as he is ignorant of the time when he has seen the Lord hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick, or in prison, and ministered unto him.—Matt. xxv. 31-46. It is as impossible for the saints to command the faith by which to pray acceptably, as it is to command the glowing sunshine to illuminate the darkness of midnight. But when directed by living faith to ask anything, that very faith is the present evidence that we are led by the Spirit to ask in accordance with the will of God; so that it is indeed true that we are saved by our faith, which is the fruit of the indwelling Spirit of Christ in us, the hope of glory. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."—1 John v. 14, 15. It is evident from this Scripture that the prayer of faith is always in harmony with the will of God, and no other prayer is ever answered by the unchangeable God. Hence, the folly is manifest in the natural idea of using prayer as a sort of engine whereby to induce the eternal God to substitute the will of mortals in the place of his own will, in the administration of his government. That is not the faith of the Son of

God which would prompt the prayer that anything be done contrary to the will of God. When the saints are led by the Spirit of God in prayer they will always pray as did their great Redeemer, asking only in submission to the will of God. When his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death, he prayed, saying, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done." This is an infallible mark of distinction between the prayer of faith and that which originates in the natural mind of the sinner. While the natural mind would have the will of God changed to suit its own selfish desires, the prayer of faith always asks that the will of God be done. This is that faith which saves all who are directed by it; not that their eternal salvation is dependent upon the exercise of even this living faith in themselves, but they are saved by it from sinking into despair, as these helpless lepers were by the faith given to them saved from their wretched and miserable condition, and this stranger was saved from the ingratitude and forgetfulness of the others who were lost in their own selfishness. The importance of the admonition to the saints calling them to watch and pray that they enter not into temptation, and warning them that if they live after the flesh they shall die, is deeply impressed upon them by the experience of their own weakness, and the bondage of corruption under which they are made to groan in this earthly house of their tabernacle. From this bondage they are saved by the power of that living faith, which, dwelling in them, is properly called *their faith*; not because it originates in them, but because it abides in them as the fruit of that Spirit whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption. As that Holy Spirit is given unto them, and is the earnest or assurance of their inheritance, which is secured in Christ Jesus, and unto which all of them are kept by the power of God, so every fruit of that Spirit is theirs as being included in that unspeakable gift. True faith is enumerated by the apostle among the manifest fruit of the Spirit, as contrasted with the works of the flesh.—See Gal. v. 19-23. It is absurd to understand any expression of Scripture, therefore, as implying that the sinner dead in sin can produce this fruit of the Spirit of God.

The closing verse of the paragraph under consideration expresses just what the law of Christ says to every one who is enabled by divine grace to hope in the blood of Jesus for salvation from sin. Jesus by his Spirit calls every saved sinner to "Arise." Under a felt sense of just condemnation the convicted soul falls prostrate before the face of eternal Justice; and when the voice of sovereign grace announces that his sins are all blotted out by the blood of Jesus, which cleanseth us from all sin, he is still unable to rise to the full comprehension of the wonderful grace bestowed upon him until raised up by the liv-

ing word of the Lord. He receives power in that word to become a son of God by walking in fellowship with the saints in the light of the countenance of his redeeming Lord. By the grace of God which is given him in the life implanted by the Spirit of Christ, the subject of salvation is made to hunger and thirst after that perfection of righteousness which is revealed in Christ Jesus, and he is thus prepared to be a willing follower of his Redeemer in the way of life. No room is left the saved sinner for boasting in himself; for he is made to know that all his own righteousness is as filthy rags before he can see the righteousness of Christ, in which he is complete in the sight of divine justice. Therefore every saved sinner must ascribe all the praise of his salvation to the amazing riches of that grace which was given him in "Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i. 9, 10. Since by faith he has received in Christ the fullness of justifying righteousness, he is now led by that faith to desire above all things to dwell forever in the enjoyment of that blessing which is found only in walking in the footsteps of his loved Redeemer. This is to him the path of life; therefore it is his chosen way. Jesus commands every one who loves him to walk in this way. In obedience they find the answer of a good conscience toward God. This is that great reward which is declared by David to be found in keeping the statutes of the Lord.—Psa. xix. 8-11. The carnal mind may be gratified by the expectation of a reward for obedience, but the saints find in following their Lord more substantial joy than all that ever entered into the dreams of those who look to their own righteousness to commend them to the favor of God. In following Jesus the true children of God always freely go their way, for by his grace they are made to choose to walk in that way. This is to them the path of life.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MONTICELLO, Ark., Sept. 7, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I wish to make a request through the SIGNS to brother S. H. Durand, for him to have the series of letters which he has written for the SIGNS on the text in Hebrews published in pamphlet form. I will willingly assist in spreading them. I think that many lovers of the truth would gladly take such a pamphlet at such price as would amply pay for the printing.

A. TOMLIN.

CHESTER, Pa., July 13, 1887.

I WISH Elder Wm. J. Purington would write through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on the word "permission." If everything is ordered (and I know it is), we should be careful how we use the word permission.

A. B. STILWELL.

MARRIAGES.

In North Berwick, Maine, October 15th, 1887, by Elder William Quint, Mr. Frank G. Tibbetts, of Sanford, Maine, and Miss Sarah Sanborn, of North Conway, N. H.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER **Sophia Nellie Biggs** died at the home of her son, Henry E. Biggs, in Williamston, N. C., Sept. 10th, 1887. She was born in Gloucester, Mass., Nov. 17th, 1835, and was the daughter of Elder Daniel E. Jewett, the editor of *The Christian Doctrinal Advocate and Monitor*, and his wife, Martha Maria, whose maiden name was Worcester, and who, after the death of Elder Jewett, married my father, Elder C. B. Hassell, after the death of his first wife, who was my mother. After a period of distress for sin, sister Sophia experienced a hope in Christ, in her sixteenth year, while reciting in her class as a pupil of the Williamston Female Academy; and the change in her countenance was so great and bright that all her classmates noticed it. She united with the church at Skewarkey, and was baptized by father in Ronoke River, May 11th, 1851. She married William G. Biggs, August 7th, 1853, and lived at Scotland Neck, N. C., and afterward at Norfolk, Va. Four children, Emma, Nellie, Willie and Henry, were the fruits of this union. Nellie died of scarlet fever, July 7th, 1859, at the age of about two years; and Emma the next day, of the same disease, at the age of four and a half years. Henry was born June 18th, 1862, and still survives. His father, who never saw him, died August 31st, 1862, of a wound received at the second battle of Manassas. Willie died of a throat affection, November 19th, 1863, at the age of about three years. The war deprived sister Biggs not only of her husband, but also of her property. After its close she lived with father in Williamston, and taught school some years. She and her son Henry lived with me in the Collegiate Institute at Wilson, N. C., from 1872 to 1879, and she rendered me very efficient assistance there in teaching. She then returned to Williamston, in order for Henry to assist his uncle, Mr. John Dawson Biggs, in his mercantile business. In March, 1880, she had a severe stroke of paralysis, rendering her unconscious for weeks, and depriving her of the use of her left side. Father, in a house in whose yard she was living, died the next month. In December, 1883, a great fire destroyed nearly all the stores in Williamston, and the house in which sister Biggs was living. She then moved into the main dwelling with her mother. In 1884 Henry built a comfortable house for his mother, and they removed to it in December. To myself and to many others that house has for nearly three years seemed a heavenly place, preeminently blessed with the presence of the Spirit of Jesus. A life, full of changes, and chastened and enriched with divine sorrow, was nearing its earthly close. The long dark clouds that had shrouded its meridian, and with vivid flashes and deep thunders had discharged their softening and fertilizing showers upon the thirsty plains, were now nearly all rolled away. In the gentle and mellow evening the skies were transfigured and glorified with the rays of the setting sun, and a heavenly radiance rested on all the landscape. The wise and loving hand of the divine Father was seen by our dear sister in everything; and at the blessed discovery her soul was melted down in raptures of adoration and humility and thanksgiving and patience and resignation and trust and love and peace—the peace of God which passeth all human understanding, and which the world can neither give nor take away when given. “What a blessing,” said she to her mother a few days before her departure, “to be cut entirely loose from the world before one is called upon to leave it!” In her last interview with me she dwelt with emphatic tenderness upon the genuine and eternal blessedness of true poverty; though the world, she said, uses all its exertions to escape such a condition. Such were the dying thoughts of one who was truly poor in spirit, and one of the most lovely and Christ-like persons that I ever knew. Jesus and his precious salvation came to be more and more

her one delightful theme. On the night of September 8th, 1887, just after retiring, she had a second stroke of paralysis; and quickly saying, “Send for Henry”—“O Lord!” she passed into unconsciousness, with these two dearest names on her dying lips, and fell asleep in Jesus early on the morning of the 10th. On the afternoon of the 11th her remains were interred, in the presence of a large concourse of friends, in the cemetery at Skewarkey.

“Asleep in Jesus—blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep.”
SYLVESTER HASSELL.
WILLIAMSTON, N. C., Oct. 8, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It becomes my painful duty to announce for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the death of my dearly beloved wife and companion in tribulation, with whom I have lived forty-one years, one month and seventeen days. My wife was born in Tioga Co., N. Y., July 15th, 1806, and died August 22d, 1887; consequently she was eighty-one years, one month and seven days of age at the time of her death. Her disease was cholera morbus. Her maiden name was Lucretia Ellis. She was joined in marriage with the late Elder Benjamin G. Avery about the year 1830, then of the State of New York, where they lived about six or seven years, when they removed to the State of Pennsylvania, and lived there till the year 1840, when they removed to the State of Illinois, where I first became acquainted with my wife. In the summer of 1844 Elder Avery, while on a visit to the associations of Illinois, was taken sick and died, two hundred miles from his home. My former wife died December 23d, 1845; and July 5th, 1846, the subject of this obituary and I were joined in wedlock. On the 28th day of April, 1848, she and I left the civilized world, crossed the Missouri River, with eight small children, each having four children, and took our journey two thousand miles through a desert land of barren plains and rocky mountains, uninhabited save by buffaloes, antelopes, wolves, and savage Indians. We all arrived safely in the Willamette Valley, Oregon, the place of our destination, on the 13th day of September following. My wife made a profession of her faith in Christ while young, I think in the fifteenth or sixteenth year of her age, and was baptized by Elder Ovet; and when the New School Baptists were separated from the Old School or Primitive Baptists she remained firm on the side of the Original Baptists. She had more than an ordinary knowledge of the Scriptures, was very benevolent, was always ready and willing to entertain strangers, and took great delight in entertaining Old School Baptists, thus making our home their home. Many brethren and sisters can bear testimony to her great hospitality, even beyond her strength and ability; and nothing delighted her so much as to converse with the brethren and sisters of the things pertaining to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. She was always anxious to have me go and preach, and even when sick she would urge me to go and fill my appointments; and she would see that my clothing was ready for me to go at all times.

I will now say something concerning the state of her mind in her last moments on earth. Sunday morning at nine o'clock she called me to her bed and took hold of my hand, saying, “The time has come for us to part. I must leave you. I am dying. Good-by, my dear husband.” Said I, “How do you feel? Is your hope firmly fixed upon the finished work of Jesus? Do you feel that he is your salvation?” “O yes,” she said, with a nod of her head. “Long ago,” continued she, “I put my trust in him, and he will not forsake me now. Praise his dear name!” These were the last words she spoke on earth, and I believe that her happy spirit at that time left its cumbersome body of clay and was gone to dwell with Jesus; for she sank down into a stupor, as if asleep, and lay motionless, but continued to breathe the breath of natural life, such as God breathed into Adam's nostrils, until the next day at ten minutes after two o'clock p. m., when she ceased to breathe. The next day her remains were conveyed by railroad to the Old

School Baptist cemetery, where Elder Daniel Bridges preached a very comforting discourse to a large assembly of mourners. She was very much respected by every one. She is, I trust, gone home to be with Jesus, and I am left here awhile to mourn; but it cannot be long till I too shall be called to lay aside my earthly tabernacle and go to a world unknown. God grant that it may be where Jesus dwells. I feel that I am very fast nearing my grave. This may be the last scribble you will receive from my hand.

JOHN STIPP.
SCIO, Linn Co., Oregon, Sept. 29, 1887.

Beall Kalley, wife of J. H. Kalley, died at her home in Sullivan, Indiana, March 15th, 1887. A short time before her death she commenced a letter to her mother, which indicates the state of her mind. It reads as follows: “To my sorrow, I have nothing good to tell you on the subject you ask of. I feel that it is a matter of eternal life, or death with me; so I am very willing to talk to you or any one on the subject. I have felt for years the need of a God; and have earnestly, as I hope, tried to pray him to show me some token by which I might know that I am a child of his love, as I know myself to be a child of sorrow.” She was a daughter of sister Anna Thomas. She requested that I should visit her during her last sickness, which I did, and found her in the state of mind indicated by the above letter. I spent about four hours in her room, during all of which time she was much interested in the subject of religion. I labored to show that the gospel is unconditional, that it describes its subjects, and unconditionally declares them “blessed.” I simply presented to her the doctrine of grace, without works, to which she listened with profound interest and apparently with much pleasure. She seemed to rejoice in the doctrine of grace alone. She said at one time during our talk, “What must I do?” I said, “Nothing. Christ has done enough, and you may simply depend upon him.” My visit with her was a very pleasant one to me. I feel glad to think of her many words which showed that all her hope was in Christ. She seemed patient and submissive to God's will until her death, and was pleasant herself, and made others feel so.

She was born December 28th, 1852. Mr. Kalley, her husband, did all he could for her, but in the end was compelled to give her up. He felt his loss keenly; but how pleasant it must be to him to feel sure that the Savior has taken her to himself, and that she is now at rest. O how precious is the Christian's hope! May the Lord bless him in his bereavement, and all the dear relatives. May each and all of us by this be reminded of the infinite worth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Please give this a place in your paper.
J. H. OLIPHANT.

By request I send for publication a notice of the death of our dear sister, **Casander Chilton**, wife of brother James Chilton, and daughter of our aged and much esteemed brother, W. C. Sams. Sister Chilton died the twenty-second day of March last, of consumption, in the thirty-seventh year of her age, leaving a husband, six children, and numerous friends, with the church of Providence, of which she was a devoted member since November, 1860, to mourn our loss, which we trust is her gain.

By request the writer tried to preach on the second Sunday in May in memory of this dear departed one, trying to preach the truth as it is in Jesus, to a large and solemn congregation. May God reconcile the bereaved ones to this sad dispensation, and preserve and protect them, and, if it is his holy will, finally save them in his everlasting kingdom.

ALSO,

By request I send a notice of the death of our beloved sister, **Sarah E. McAllister**, wife of brother Daniel McAllister, of Pryor Hill, Trimble Co., Ky.

Our sister's maiden name was Wilson, she being the daughter of Mr. John Wilson, of said county. Our sister joined the church at Providence in October, 1878, and was baptized by the writer the following month. She was one of the constituent members of Pryor Hill Church, which was constituted in

June, 1884, living an exemplary member till her death, which occurred on the sixteenth day of May last. Our sister leaves a husband, father, brothers, sisters, and many friends, with the church, to mourn our loss, which we trust is her eternal gain. Our sister was in her thirty-second year, having been married a little over twelve years.

The writer tried to preach what is known as a funeral sermon at the regular meeting on the fourth Sunday in June last, to a large and attentive congregation. One more seat is vacant. Let us remember that we too must soon go. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. May we be enabled to say, Blessed be the name of the Lord.

J. M. DEMAREE.

DEFOE, Ky.

DIED—At his residence near Graefenberg, Shelby Co., Ky., Sept. 12th, 1887, **Thomas A. Bass**, aged 57 years, 8 months and 19 days.

The subject of this sketch was born in Shelby Co., Ky., Dec. 22d, 1829. His disease was thought to be gravel, attended with diarrhea, from which he suffered the most untold and excruciating misery, until God released him from his sufferings by death. He never made a public profession of faith in Jesus by coming to the church and following his Savior in baptism, but we feel confident that he belonged to the church triumphant, and that his emancipated spirit is now basking in the effulgent glory of God and the Lamb. The writer feels in this that he knows whereof he speaks, having long known him, and often communed with him on the subject of the salvation of our God, finding him firmly fixed in the doctrine of salvation by grace, the election and predestination of God's people, their preservation through grace, and their final resurrection. In fact, leaving out his not having connected himself with the church, I think it might be said that his was a life that any subject of grace would desire to live. When approached on the subject of joining the church he would plead his unworthiness. He was, as will appear by consulting your subscription record, a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, which he read diligently, and seemed to feast upon the great and glorious truth as set forth therein. He was neighborly to a fault, and the most kind and indulgent father and loving husband. He was married first to Miss Alecy Ann Shedrick, by whom he had one son. She died some time in the year 1865; after which he was married to Miss Susan Gudgel, of Anderson Co., Ky., who survives him. His remains were followed by sorrowing friends and weeping relatives to Pigeon Fork, where the humble writer tried to address them on the mystery of the resurrection, as presented in First Corinthians xv. 51, 52; after which we consigned his body to the cold and silent tomb, to await the last trump of God, when the great mystery shall be unfolded. May the Lord sustain and comfort the surviving relatives and friends in this their sad and sore bereavement, is the ardent desire of a poor pilgrim.

W. T. RITTER.

SOUTHVILLE, Ky., Sept. 18, 1887.

DIED—September 20th, 1887, at the family residence near Parsonsburg, Md., **Mrs. Hetty Hastings**, aged 74 years and 22 days.

Sister Hastings was the wife of brother Elisha Hastings, Deacon of Forest Grove Church. She was baptized by Elder Warner Staton, September 24th, 1843; so it will be seen that she has had a standing in the fellowship of the churches forty-four years, lacking four days. Brother Hastings took a leading part in the building of a place of worship and the organization of a church in his neighborhood. This is the second serious inroad that death has made in this interesting little church. Sister Hastings was stricken with paralysis about fourteen months before her departure, after which time she was quite helpless, having no use of the paralyzed side. She has fulfilled a blessed mission, and been gathered home as the grain of the ripened harvest. She leaves an aged husband, four sons, three daughters, twenty-five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren, to share this afflictive dispensation. She evidently possessed that hope whose anchorage is both sure and steadfast, and we all have that hope for her. They had been united in a happy marriage nearly fifty-two years. Her children have risen up to call her blessed.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a two days meeting held, the Lord willing, at the meeting-house of the Old School Baptists at Caroline, Tompkins Co., N. Y., on the 9th and 10th days of November, 1887 (Wednesday and Thursday), and we invite all lovers of the truth to attend.

Done by order of the church.

F. E. STEVENS, Clerk.

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THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

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ON

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1887. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MEDITATIONS ON THE LAST DAYS OF MOSES.

NUMBER ONE.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Since I heard Elder Purington, at the Licking Association in 1884, preach upon the last four verses of the thirty-third chapter of Deuteronomy, I have had many sweet meditations upon the closing scenes in the life of Moses, and the great truth he recorded under the direction of the Almighty. The precious truth as presented by brother Purington in that sermon at May's Lick, Ky., laid the foundation for these meditations, which in my feeble way I offer to you and your readers.

When that prophet of the Lord and leader of Israel was approaching very closely upon the close of his earthly career, he said, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God."—Deut. xxxii. 1-3.

Let it be remembered that the word heavens appears in the plural number. Then the legitimate inference to be drawn from that language, "Give ear, O ye heavens," is that he was addressing the people of more than one heaven. In the twenty-sixth verse of the next chapter of this book he says, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." When he used this language he had just closed his blessings upon the twelve tribes of Israel, represented by the twelve sons of Jacob, Jeshurun. To give those twelve tribes a full assurance of the matchless greatness of that God who had led them out of bondage, and that he would perform all things that he had promised them, he said, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun." Then they are assured that he rideth upon the heaven in their help—in the help of those twelve tribes. Then surely the heaven here mentioned is none other than the legal heaven, or dispensation. In that dispensation he rode in the help of Israel. When these words were spoken Israel was on the wilderness side of Jordan. They had not then crossed that river of judgment. But as the God of Israel he was riding in their help and fulfilling the promise that he made to their father Abra-

ham, saying, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." The seed of Abraham was now about to be put into possession of that land. Here was literally fulfilled that language of Moses, "Who rideth upon the heaven in thy help." It was harvest time, and the Jordan was overflowing its banks. But he who was riding in the help of Israel, by his mighty power stayed that swift flowing current, and opened a way through the waters for his chosen people to pass into the promised land dry shod. O what a wonderful display did he then make of his power in securing to them the possession of that which in ages and centuries past he had promised to their father. Ah, dear saint, let us here pause for a moment and meditate upon this wonderful display of the power of our God, and the immutability of all his purposes. Israel had sinned, grievously sinned, while in the wilderness. Yet their God, in his unalterable purpose, was still riding upon the heaven in their help, and making his power and glory known. So you and I, dear, little ones, day by day find our every act and all we do blotted by sin and corruption, which permeates this old man, this corrupt nature of ours; but glory be to the exalted name of Israel's God, he never leaves nor forsakes his people, his redeemed. He redeemed Israel from Egyptian bondage, and led them into the earthly Canaan. So, dear saints, if we are part of his spiritual family, part of spiritual Israel, he has redeemed us by his own precious blood, and led us into spiritual Canaan, the church of the true and living God. Remember that natural Israel was led into natural Canaan in harvest time, in time of great plenty. They had been wandering for many long, dreary and tiresome years in the wilderness. Hungry, faint and footsore they had trod their weary way. But now that long journey was ended, and all the sores caused by the briars, thorns and thistles of the wilderness were cured. So you, dear saints, have wandered long in the wilderness of sin, long under the law, finding no place of rest, no abiding city. Often when faint, weary and tired of sin, you cried for help, saying, in the language of the Canaanitish woman, "Lord, help me." But when you were enabled by faith to behold the waters of the river of judgment stayed and thrown back by the power of your God, and you were led into spiritual Canaan, the home of the redeemed, it was then surely harvest time to you. You were then

in a land of plenty; yea, in the great and glorious banqueting house of your Lord, where the Sun of righteousness had arisen with healing in his wings, and had healed all the wounds that sin had made. Then in joy and gladness you could cry out, in the language of the bride, "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey, I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." But while it is sweet to meditate upon the wonderful goodness and mercy of our God in leading his redeemed from the wilderness of sin, under the law, into a land of freedom and of rest, yet it may be profitable to turn back to the language of Moses.

The word heavens being in the plural number, surely conveys the idea of the existence of the legal and the gospel heavens, to both of which we have referred. In that legal heaven the natural children of the twelve sons of Jacob had all the wonderful things contained in the law of Moses given to them. But they, being natural, did not understand and receive the great spiritual truths prefigured by the offerings made under the law. They did not know that those offerings did not make the comers thereunto perfect. They labored to follow strictly the letter of the law, not knowing that the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. The law in its unbending power holds the sinner in its prison-house, saying; "The soul that sinneth it shall die." There must be an offering adequate to all the demands of that law, otherwise all must sink under the fearful penalty, which is death. But under that law dispensation our Lord in his mercy gave to Moses the law of offerings. By the offerings made under that law the spiritual Israelite had his mind turned to the great offering to be made by our Lord at the opening of the gospel heaven. He saw in figure the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Peter, when speaking of that salvation which was in Christ, says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently; who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Under the legal dispensation, the old heaven, the Spirit that was in the prophets testified of the sufferings of Christ, and the offerings made under the law pointed to those sufferings. Under their law a

Jew was not required to believe any fact unless it was proved by two or more witnesses. Our glorious Lord under that dispensation gave all his spiritually minded children the two witnesses to establish the wonderful truth of the sufferings of Christ in the redemption of his people, and the glory that should follow. He gave them the law and the prophets, and those two witnesses continued with them until John the Baptist. Then came the unfolding of the new heaven. John said, "And I saw a new heaven [in the singular] and a new earth; for the first heaven [singular] and the first earth were passed away."—Rev. xxi. 1. Mark you, he said, "And I saw a new heaven." That new heaven was established before John was sent to the isle of Patmos. Hence while on that lone isle he saw it in all its glory and grandeur. And he says, "The first heaven and the first earth were passed away." That language was not prophecy, but he was telling the things that were, and the things that had been, and in the next verse he told some of the wonderful and glorious things that must shortly come to pass. In that verse he says, "And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." That New Jerusalem was coming down. That was in the new, the gospel dispensation. Then all things were ready. In the days of John she was coming down, and in these days she is still coming down, and will continue to come down, till time shall be no more. But in all ages she will come prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. "To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." It was with that righteousness that she was prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, which means the gospel dispensation. Some may conclude that none of the saints were so adorned except those who have and will live in this dispensation. Not so, my brother, my sister. That robe of righteousness with which all the dear saints are adorned was secured to them by the offering made by our Lord; for he was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and that great sacrifice was accepted for all that were chosen in Christ, all the redeemed, ere time began. Moses had spoken by the offerings and sacrifices made under the law, and spiritual Israel had heard the words of his mouth. Not only had spiritual Israel heard the words of his mouth,

but he says, "Hear, O earth, the words of my mouth." He had addressed the spiritually minded both in the legal and gospel dispensations. And then he addressed another people, saying, "Hear, O earth." That people were of the earth, earthy, and hence understood none of the great spiritual truths taught by the offerings under the law; but they did understand that great rule of right taught by the law of Moses. Hence it is truthfully said by those who are learned in the law, that law and government are of divine origin. Mankind has never been blessed with a purer code of laws nor a wiser judicial system than that which was given by Moses. He said to the judges, "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great: ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it."—Deut. i. 17. These words were spoken by Moses, yet he was controlled by the spirit of infinite, eternal and unchangeable wisdom and justice; and the world, in all just, wise and proper governments, hears, accepts and adopts those words of his mouth contained in that verse; yea, and all things spoken by him upon that great subject.

It is a great and wonderful truth, that when the Almighty speaks by his servants he speaks the words of wisdom, to which all would do well to take heed.

But Moses said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." The word doctrine, when applied to spiritual things, means the great truth taught in the sacred volume upon the subject which the Almighty was having recorded by his inspired servants, particular parts of which are found in different parts of the Bible. To illustrate, the doctrine of the resurrection is recorded by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians xv. If I were to apply what is taught in that chapter to some other subject, certainly none could in the least degree enjoy what I had written. Were I to apply it to the law of offerings, certainly many would say that I had made a great mistake. When Moses said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain," he certainly refers to the great spiritual truth taught in the law. It was but one doctrine, it was but one truth, and Christ was the great polar star (if I might use those words which are not found in the Bible) to which that truth points. The great truth taught in the decalogue, as well as the things prefigured by the law of offerings, all looked and pointed away to Jesus. Hence an apostle could appropriately say, "The law is holy." It was sanctified, it was holy, because it in all things pointed to Jesus, who was and is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Then we reach this conclusion, that when Moses said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain," he was declaring Jesus

as the Redeemer of his people; declaring him as the great offering for sin, prefigured by the law of offerings; declaring him to be the rest of his people, set forth in the law of the Sabbath contained in the decalogue. The apostle, treating upon this subject, says, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Jesus is the rest of his people, and when they by faith behold him as the end of the law under which they had been toiling and working, they enter into rest, and cease from their own works, which were their works under the law.

H. COX.

GHENT, Ky., August 15, 1887.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Oct. 27, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Some time ago sister M. J. Worsley, of Tarboro, North Carolina, expressed a wish that I should write something for the SIGNS upon predestination. "I have had it in mind to comply with her wish ever since, and to-day I feel like beginning to pen down a few thoughts upon that subject.

At the beginning my mind goes back to the years of my early experience in my childhood. Among all the doubts and questions of that time, and they were many and about many things, I believe that this one principle of doctrine never was overshadowed by a single doubt. It seemed to me then so entirely in keeping with the very fact of the existence of God, that to deny it would be to deny that there was a God at all. My parents were Old School Baptists, and the SIGNS has been a family paper ever since I was a child; and I knew that predestination was their faith, and the faith of the SIGNS. I never saw any question raised concerning the truth of this doctrine, except among Arminians, in all my early years. I grew up supposing that this doctrine was precious to all Old School Baptists, and that wherever I found one who bore this name I should find a firm believer in this one thing, as one of the essentials of their faith; and in all the years of my life, and in all my association among our people, I never heard any question raised as to its truth until four or five years ago, either in the pulpit or out of it. Whatever might not be settled among us, I thought the truth that God had, before the world was made, predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass, was settled as one of our distinguishing marks. It seems needless to say that when I found that any Old School Baptist questioned the truth of this doctrine, it was a great surprise to me. I had heard brethren reverently say, "There are things in this doctrine that I cannot understand;" and to this I could then and can yet say "Amen." But yet, in this no question was implied as to the doctrine being true; and, so far as this is concerned, I know of no principle of doctrine whatever among

all that are dear to me, and that I rest my hope of salvation upon, concerning which I can understand all things. Concerning them all a child might ask me questions that I could not answer; and yet I believe and rest upon them. I believe, for instance, in the omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence of God, but yet I do not at all comprehend them. A child might ask questions concerning them all that Paul could not answer; and yet they are all most precious stones laid in the foundation of my hope of salvation. And so of the doctrine of the predestination of all things.

One thing more I recall in connection with my recollections concerning this doctrine, and that is that so far as I know all our churches that have been organized among us for fifty years past have incorporated this in their Articles of Faith. It was one of the things insisted upon when the division was formulated at Black Rock fifty-five years ago. It was in the old Philadelphia Confession of Faith, which most of our earlier churches and associations patterned after; and it was in the old London Confession of Faith.—See Hassell's Church History. I do not of course speak of this as a proof of the truth of the doctrine, but rather to show that our fathers loved it and were willing to suffer for it, and that those who would oppose it are opposing well-settled and well-defined Baptist faith.

But I feel like proceeding to give some of the reasons why I have felt constrained to believe that God did from eternity predestinate every event that comes to pass. First, because it is in harmony with every other attribute of Deity to believe so. The Scriptures abundantly declare the foreknowledge of God, and that this foreknowledge takes in every possible thing that ever has or ever shall have existence in the universe. Perhaps it is hardly needful to dwell at length upon this truth, for I do not know that any one is sufficiently presumptuous to deny that the end is known unto God from the beginning; and it seems to me a self-evident truth that if anything is known, it must be an accomplished fact; and that if anything is foreknown, that thing must be at some future period an accomplished fact. This is predestination. If then our God embraces in his mind a knowledge of any future event, that event must be. Either blind fate or an all-wise God has so ordained it beforehand; and my Bible says nothing of "fate," but much of a God of purpose, wisdom and love. God knows that I shall die at a certain period of time. Can I then die before or after that time? If either could take place, of what account is the foreknowledge of God? Predestination then is in strict harmony with foreknowledge. Prove that any event is outside of the pre-appointment of God, or of some other being (but there is no other God), and I will show that it was also out-

side of his pre-knowledge. In the Bible we have it again and again declared that certain wicked events shall take place, and that certain most blessed results shall take place in consequence of these same wicked acts. To repeat the argument, if God foreknew and declared beforehand these wicked acts of men, then they must be. It cannot be that men should fail to do those wicked acts. This is predestination. I will simply allude to some Bible proofs of the foreknowledge of God. Every distinct prophecy is a proof. He announced Cyrus by name long before his parents were born; and foretold his war against Babylon, and by what means he should obtain possession of the city. The same is true of the good king Josiah. He described beforehand the rise and fall of the four ancient monarchies, and the character and achievements of Alexander the Great, so particularly and truthfully that one of the bitterest enemies that christianity ever had in its infancy claimed that the prophecies of Daniel must have been written after the events took place. I need not allude to all the prophecies concerning the life and death of our Savior, in which the minutest particulars are given. Surely the foreknowledge of God is proved beyond question to embrace all events, righteous or sinful. If so, then his predestination of them is proved. The foreknowledge of God is independent. It is not obtained through the medium of his creatures, but is founded upon his own will. Nothing can be considered certain in the future except upon the ground of efficient and sufficient cause; and the cause of all things that shall ever exist is the purpose of God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

Again, I believe in the predestination of all things because it is a doctrine in harmony with the immutability or unchangeability of God. I suppose no one who believes in God at all would argue in so many words that he is a mutable being. The Scriptures testify as follows: "I am Jehovah, I change not."—Mal. iii. 6. "But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end."—Psalm cii. 27. He is the "Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."—James i. 17. To present the matter in a simple way, every change in anything must be for the better or the worse. If there ever takes place any change in Deity, we must say one of two things; either that he has been imperfect, and now an improvement has taken place, or else that he has fallen from his former perfection. From such a conclusion we start back with horror. But if immutable in one of his attributes, he must be in all. Immutable in knowledge as well as in purpose and power and holiness. The chain of reasoning is this. If predestination be denied, we deny his foreknowledge, as shown in the preceding paragraph; and if we deny his foreknowledge of all events we deny his

immutability, unless indeed we say that he forever remains in ignorance of them; for if he knows to-day what he did not know yesterday, to that extent he has changed, and therefore is not unchangeable.

Again, I believe in the predestination of all things because it is in harmony with the doctrine of his eternal purpose which he purposed with himself ere time was. That he is immutable in his decrees is a necessary inference from the immutability of his knowledge. Men change their designs because of receiving additional light or knowledge, or what they suppose to be such; but no new views can present themselves to the mind of God as a reason why his decrees should be changed. If then he has a decree in anything, and if that decree or purpose is an eternal one, it seems to me incontrovertible that everything in all his vast creation must be made subservient to the accomplishment of that end or purpose; and moreover, that all his creation must have been made to and for that end. This is predestination of all things whatsoever come to pass. All who admit his omniscience and supreme dominion believe that he has a settled plan for the government of the world. In this plan no alteration is ever made. What an idea does it give us of Jehovah, who made the universe, and upon whom the whole creation is dependent, to represent him as determining one thing to-day and another to-morrow! God predetermined the number of which the human race should consist, the time of each one's birth and death, his lot in life, and his state in eternity. He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. Not one can deviate a single step from the path marked out. The mightiest of all his creatures cannot lift a hand or move his tongue so as to interfere with his purpose. If this be admitted, then predestination of all things must also be admitted.

Again, I am led to believe this doctrine because of the terrible consequences of denying it. As already shown, if we deny this doctrine we are driven at once necessarily into a denial of the foreknowledge of God, and of his eternal purpose and immutability. In addition to this, we should be driven to deny his entire sovereignty over all worlds and beings. Human sovereignty is at best but partial, and often powerless to enforce its decrees; and this is so just because men cannot foresee and predetermine just what shall come to pass. All things are not in their hand, and they do not know all things. In proportion to the degree of their wisdom and power can they exercise sovereignty; and a man is not fit to rule unless he predestinates his end or object, and all the means to that end. Because his foreknowledge and predestination are bounded by very narrow limits, man is but a partial sovereign. If the predestination and foreknowledge of God be but partial, then to an equal extent

must his divine sovereignty be partial. Deny his predestination, and it cannot be surely proved that he has perfect sovereignty over anything. Admit, on the other hand, that he exercises complete rule over anything in the universe, and that it shall surely work out his purpose, and straightway I must believe that all possible things are equally under his control and working out his purpose; and purpose with him is immutable, and therefore eternal. This is predestination.

Again, another consequence in my mind of denying the predestination of all things is that it would necessarily lead to a denial of the doctrine of election; that is, that "God hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation;" that we are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God;" that he "chose us in Christ before the world began." I speak here to those who believe the doctrine of election. That doctrine is that before time was, before anything was made, before anything existed save eternal and self-existent Deity, God did choose a portion of mankind to salvation, and decreed not to choose and to pass by a portion of mankind on the other hand. It is all nonsense to say that God could not choose and decree to save people before they were created; for that would be to deny his eternal purpose, and it would prove the eternal existence of the non-elect as well as of the elect. To say that there is an elect man or elect men, is to say also that there are non-elect men. I suppose all Old School Baptists believe in this doctrine of personal, unconditional election. If any one does not believe it he is not an Old School Baptist in reality. Now to deny predestination is to deny this precious doctrine of the election of grace. If Paul and Peter and William L. Beebe and F. A. Chick were chosen in Christ before the world was, certainly Jehovah must have decreed that such men should come to exist; and this involves the decree of a thousand circumstances immediately connected with our birth and our preservation in this world. In the line of the human ancestry of our Savior, and necessary to complete the chain of events leading to his birth in Bethlehem, we find wicked men and wicked actions; and so some of the elect of God owed their birth into this world to sin committed by their parents or forefathers generations in the past. All things leading to our existence as men must have been predestinated, or else it could not have been certainly known that such men should ever exist, and consequently there could have been no definite choice or election of them. Election therefore involves predestination; and to deny the one is to deny the other. Therefore, as I believe in the one, I must believe in the other. I find as a rule that among men generally those who deny predestination also deny election, and then take the additional step of denying that Christ was set up before the world began, and claim

that the offering of Christ, the just for the unjust, was an after purpose with God; thus denying his foreknowledge, and his immutability also.

I have heard but two arguments used against this doctrine. One is that it makes God the author of sin; and the other that if any act of man is predestinated, that act cannot be sinful in him, and he cannot in justice be condemned for it. I have no doubt that these objections are honest objections with very many, and deserve kind and respectful answers. I frankly confess that these two objections have had great weight at different times in my own mind, but never have led me to deny, or even to doubt, the truth of the doctrine. I also frankly confess that I do not profess to be able to reason out the harmony between predestination and the just accountability of man to God; and furthermore, it has never seemed to me at all needful to do so. God has given us glimpses of his ways in the word and in his providence, but our finite minds cannot see the divine oneness or harmony of his ways. I cannot reason out how there are three that bear record in heaven, and yet these three are one; yet I believe both. I cannot see how the "Word" could be God, and yet be "with God;" and yet I believe both. I do not understand how the Word could be made flesh, and yet be in heaven at the same time; and yet I believe it. Many objections have been alleged against these truths which have never been answered, so as to make them plain to poor finite minds; therefore we need not think it strange if we cannot solve every hard question concerning the subject of which we are treating now.

Our God himself does not seek to explain the harmony between apparently conflicting statements concerning this doctrine in his own word. Let us remember that we are considering the wickedness or the rightness of an act in itself, irrespective of what may result from it. Furthermore, if we can find one or more evil actions of men anywhere which God had predestinated to be done, and yet men were counted sinners in performing the act, we have good ground to stand upon with reference to the predestination of every wicked act, and have a right to contend that though predestinated, yet man is held accountable in the doing of that act. Now, four distinct passages of Scripture are in my mind bearing upon this matter. First, Joseph said to his brethren, "Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good." Let us pause a moment. Had God predestinated and purposed and meant that Joseph's brethren should hate him and sell him into Egypt? So he here declares; and yet he holds them guilty of sin. "Ye meant it for evil." Here is one sinful act predestinated, and yet it was sinful. Does any one ask how? I answer, Is it not enough that God says so?

Another expression is, "And in every deed for this cause have I raised

thee up, for to show in thee my power."—See Ex. ix. 14, in connection with Ex. xiv. 17 and Romans ix. 17. The last two verses are a commentary upon the first; and as all I suppose know, they were the testimony of God himself concerning Pharaoh, when he would not let the children of Israel go out of their bondage. Now let it be remembered that because of his rebellion Pharaoh was cursed, and perished at the Red Sea. Here is disobedience and sin, and yet that very sin was purposed of God. Even for this same purpose had God raised him up. Suppose Paul had lived then, and had preached this doctrine to Pharaoh, and the wicked king had turned and said, "Well, then I am not to blame. Why doth God yet find fault with me? Why must I be cut off?" What, think we, would have been the reply of Paul to him? "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Let us, brethren, bow with reverent spirit, and be content to stand upon Paul's ground—content to know that we must not question God. He is righteous even when he raises up Pharaoh to do a wicked act which God condemns.

Another text is found in Acts ii. 23. It is the language of Peter. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." See also chapter iii. 18. See also the united testimony of the whole company of disciples in Acts iv. 27, 28. For of a truth against Jesus they "were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Now let us remember that it is the sin we are considering in connection with the predestination of God. The first text says that this was done by God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge; and yet the people were counted wicked in doing it. The second text says that the rulers, priests and people gathered themselves against Jesus, to do just what God had before determined to be done. Suppose I should say of any other act, "Men have wickedly done just what God had predestinated to be done." Should I be saying any more than these two texts say? If my faith that God had predestinated this wicked act could be overthrown by the objection that if so the act could not be sinful, and the doer of it could not be justly condemned, then I must also by the same reasoning deny that our God predestinated that Jesus should be crucified, or else deny that there was any sin in the act of those who did it. Those who deny the predestination of any sinful act on the ground that thus its sinfulness would be destroyed, are practically denying all four of the texts here named.

Furthermore, I would say, if to predestinate a sinful act destroys its sinfulness, then it follows that to predestinate a good act destroys its

goodness. If men cannot be blamed for doing predestinated sinful acts, neither can they be commended for predestinated good acts; and so we should be driven to deny the predestination of any moral actions whatever. What proves too much proves nothing. In short, it seems to me that every objection to this doctrine on the grounds above named is overruled (not explained) by these Scriptures.

It is also objected that to believe in the predestination of all things shuts out all prayer and all exhortation. I would say in reply that to believe in God's foreknowledge and immutability might be said to do the same thing with an equal appearance of just reason. On the other hand, it has always seemed to me that upon these great lines of revealed truth I could base a confidence in prayer and in exhortation that I could find nowhere else.

In the conclusion of this already lengthy letter I feel like adding a few words in another direction. It seems to me that in the ups and downs of this pilgrim state there is nothing quite so good to believe in as the predestination and sovereignty of an all-wise and loving God and Father. In fulfillment of his purposes of love and mercy to his people he works all things for good to them. We may not, we do not, often at least, see how our crosses, trials, losses, sorrows, pains and tears can work for our good; but we are not required to see how it is. Faith and love believe it and rest in it as a fact realized to all those who love God. If our steps are all chosen for us, and they lie in the furnace, yet our Father has appointed them, and he weeps with us in our weeping, and suffers with us in our suffering. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." He does not lead us as a hireling guides a stranger, but as a mother guides her child. I trust that the dear sister at whose request this has been written, and her dear friends in all their affliction, may find comfort in the truth that all has been as appointed, and that all was appointed in love. "The Son of man goeth as it was appointed of the Father;" and as was he in the world, so are all his children.

I have thus written of the faith that has been mine from my childhood; brokenly, it is true, but yet I trust humbly and lovingly. May God bless and confirm his word, and seal it to our hearts.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life eternal,

F. A. CHICK.

BLANCO, Texas, October, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having heretofore written briefly on predestination and effectual calling, with reference to the chain of blessings enumerated by the apostle Paul in Romans viii., I will now attempt to redeem my long delayed promise of writing on the subject of justification. But owing to the amplitude and importance with which the subject is fraught, it is with much diffi-

dence and mistrust that I undertake the task; for its importance is such that it is connected with and runs through the whole system of salvation as revealed in the Scriptures and realized in the hearts of believers.

Justification is the gracious act of God, wherein he pronounces a sinner righteous according to law. In view of the fallen and corrupt state of sinners, their justification must be free. The apostle, after enumerating the long catalogue of vices as proceeding from the corrupt and depraved nature of sinners, very logically infers the free justification of such as are made partakers of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. And this free justification is a fruit of the unity of Christ, as the head, and his covenant children, as members of his body.

Here I wish to canvas a fallacious theory, as I think, which was advanced by Andrew Fuller, as quoted by Rushton; that is, that the sin of Adam was not imputed to his race, but the effects of it were; consequently not the righteousness, but the effects of Christ's righteousness, are imputed to believers. In the first place, we understand this to mean that Adam's race have the guilt, and all the evils resulting from his sin, but did not inherit his sinful and depraved nature. And if the effects of Christ's righteousness only are imputed to believers, this would tend to pardon, but not to justify; would remove their obligation to suffer punishment, but their guilt would remain. But as God, in the economy of salvation, made his Son to be sin for his people, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him, he does not only pardon, by a free forgiveness of sin, but utterly obliterates and removes guilt, sin's demerit, and pronounces the sinner righteous according to law.

From the above we see, when abstractly considered, there is a difference between pardon and justification; but in the divine economy they are united. For whom God pardons, he justifies; and whom he justifies, he pardons.

Another argument in favor of free justification arises from hence. The apostle, in the text alluded to above, says sinners are justified by grace; and as grace in its very nature, and as it is displayed in its sovereign and rich donations, is absolutely free, so none of its favors are bestowed on account of the worthiness of its objects. If so, it would be neither free nor sovereign. Where Paul, in Romans iv., says, "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 is counted for righteousness;" we learn, first, that if any of the blessings that accompany salvation, or salvation itself, could be received by working for them or it, the worker would receive it as a just debt, and it would flow and be received, not upon the principle of grace, but upon the principle of equity alone. In the second place, he presents in striking

and beautiful contrast the works of the law and the righteousness of faith; the merits of Christ and the filthy rags of a mere creature. Grace and works being antagonistic, they never exchange places; neither do they unite in the same cause, nor conduce to the same end; but they continually and perpetually antagonize each other, so that as long as we have confidence in our works we cannot have faith in the perfect and finished redemption of Christ. And when faith is in lively exercise, all our best endeavors are esteemed as filthy rags. And from this point it is that we can behold our King in his glorious character and the wonderful displays of his goodness and mercy.

From the same text we learn that ungodly sinners are the subjects of justification. Then all whom God justifies in time by faith, or the imputation of Christ's righteousness, he determined their justification and provided all the means necessary to it in eternity, and gave his Son to be head over all things to them, in whom was given for them eternal life, with all its accompanying blessings; and he (Christ) being their law fulfiller and covenant head, and by whose obedience his church is reconciled to God, their justification in this view of it may be considered. As justification is a pure act of God, and conditioned upon no cause out of himself, but passed upon ungodly sinners, we cannot suppose that the after conduct of such sinners could be sufficient grounds for their Justifier to reverse the sentence, as the apostle says, "If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life." Though the apostle says, in Romans v., "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God," he does not teach that it is for faith as a condition of justification; for that view of it would put the apostle against himself; for in the context where this verse stands (verse nine), he says we are justified by Christ's blood. We account for this supposed discrepancy of the apostle's teaching by stating that in the first text quoted he had reference to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to such as God has given faith to receive, embrace and rejoice in it; for such as do embrace it have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ's righteousness then is the reconciling expedient, and faith, which is the gift of God, is the hand that takes in this righteousness. And this view of it is in perfect harmony with all the apostle's teaching upon the subject of justification.

As some seem to think that the apostles James and Paul conflict in their teaching on this subject, I will just observe that this is only in appearance; for whereas James is teaching of those good fruits that result from and are evidences of genuine faith, he refers to Abraham being justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac upon the altar, although Abraham was in a justified

state before Isaac was born. James then, doubtless, was treating of a justification before men and in the sight of the world; while Paul was treating of justification before God and in the court of conscience. As Paul says, "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory [before men]; but not before God." When the apostle says we are not justified by works, I understand that all duties, works, performances, by whatever rule performed, are excluded from our justification. To set this subject in as clear a light as possible, I will refer to Romans v., where the apostle seems to be treating particularly on the subject of justification; wherein he presents as federal and representative heads Adam and our Savior. By the first, he says, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned. Thus his act becomes theirs by imputation, for which the two fold relation sustained between Adam and his posterity, their natural relation to him and his federal relation to them, was a sufficient foundation. The apostle also says that Adam is the figure of him that was to come. Therefore as by his act all his race were made sinners, so by the obedience of the one man, Christ Jesus, many (that is, all that were given him, and for whom he obeyed) were made righteous, or justified. And as it was one offense that brought death and misery on all of Adam's race, so it is by the one righteousness of our heavenly surety that justifies all his spiritual family. Accordingly the apostle says, "As by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men [that is, the elect, or spiritual family] unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many [that is, all of Adam's race] were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many [that is, all the covenant children] be made righteous," or justified. This is certainly the meaning of the apostle. For if we take the ground that the word all in the first of the eighteenth verse embraces as many as the latter part, and the word many in the nineteenth verse embraces the same, it would prove too much and carry us too far, as that view of the subject not only involves the idea of universal justification, but by necessary implication universal salvation also, which would be in conflict with the whole tenor of the inspired word. In the very way that Adam's sin was made ours to condemnation, Christ's righteousness was made ours to justification of life. If that was by imputation, so was this. And as it was not on account of any evil qualities infused, nor criminal conduct of the holy Jesus, that he was made sin for us, so it was not for any holiness wrought in us nor works performed by us that we are made righteous. And as our Redeemer could not come under the charge of guilt and liability to punishment, otherwise than by having the sins of others imputed to him, so

they that are in themselves sinners, and in a state of condemnation, can be made righteous in him only by having his obedience imputed to them. And as it was necessary that a federal union should exist between Adam, as head, and his natural offspring, in order that he legally represent them in their fall and condemnation, so it was absolutely necessary that an eternal covenant union should subsist between Christ, as covenant head, and the elect family of God, in order that he legally represent them in his vicarious obedience to God's holy law, unto their justification. And this unity or oneness between these federal persons and their respective families is such that in the first instance justice requires that Adam's sin be imputed to us, and that the benefits of Christ's obedience be imputed to all his covenant children. Then the justification of which the Scriptures treat, and by which believers enjoy peace, is free, as it is gratuitously bestowed upon ungodly sinners. It is full, as all sins, both of commission and omission, sins of ignorance and sins against light and knowledge, were all blotted out by the redemption of Christ. It is everlasting, as the sins of the objects of justification are never to be remembered against them, as God says, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honor before all the nations of the earth." "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxi. 34; xxxii. 40; xxxiii. 8, 9. Though in their relation to Adam their sins are compared to scarlet and crimson, when washed in the blood of the Lamb they shall be as white as snow and as wool.—Isa. i. 18. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath God removed the transgressions of the subjects of justification from them. Then, until east and west meet at one point, the sentence will not be reversed.—Psalm ciii. 12. Though the objects of justification in their fallen state were weary of the Lord, contemned his counsels, and wearied him with their sins and iniquities, yet for his own sake he blotted out their transgressions, and will not remember their sins. Again he says, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins." Then may all the happy subjects of justification join in the pleasing chorus, "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."—Isa. xlv. 22, 23. The apostle Paul, ever jealous of the honor of his Redeemer, re-

garded with holy horror the defection of his Galatian brethren, who seemed to lose sight of the free and full redemption of Christ, and were seeking justification by the deeds of the law. But Jesus having been set forth before them as the only way of justification and acceptance with their Sovereign, with holy indignation the apostle calls them foolish, having been bewitched by law teachers. In this connection the noble Paul withstood Peter, and among other things 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, and not by the works of the law. I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain." The apostle's teaching here is conclusive, and needs no comment from me. Again, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." In Romans x. 4, the apostle says, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Thus the law is the channel through which the Holy Spirit leads or conducts the subjects of justification to Christ, their Justifier. For as many as are of the works of the law, or seeking justification by it, are under the curse. And as the just, or those who are justified, live by faith, and the law is not of faith, it is a self-evident fact that no man can be justified by the deeds of the law. But Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Neither is the law against the promises of God; but by its promulgation God hath concluded all (the seed of Adam) under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given them that believe in him as their Justifier. So great was the holy apostle's solicitude for the well being of his brethren, and for the honor of God, that he terms them little children, of whom he travailed in pain again until Christ be formed in them; desiring to be present with them, and to change his voice, as he stood in doubt of them; telling them that Christ is become of no effect unto such of them as are justified, or seek justification, by the law.—Gal. ii. iii. iv. In Philippians iii. the apostle relates some of his experience, in which he refers to his early life, his Jewish privileges, his unprecedented attainments in Jewish economy, having been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught in all the perfect manner of their law; from which he inferred that if any other man had whereof he might trust in the flesh, he more. But in view of the perfect obedience of Christ, he utterly contemned all his excellencies arising from his attainments in the Jews' religion, and counted them loss for Christ. He continues, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win

Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." From this it is evident that the apostle includes in what he calls his own righteousness both the principle of spiritual life within him and his obedience to the law as a rule of action. Thus taught and believed this wonderful man of God, the way of a sinner's acceptance with his Creator. Surely then in the Lord only we have righteousness; and in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." As the chain of blessings, like Jacob's ladder alluded to, was let down from heaven, and we are upon the earth, we have to begin at the bottom. Then, if we feel assured that we have been called by grace, have repented of our sins, and have faith in Christ, justified by his obedience, we may from thence infer our election and predestination of God. Then we look back to our election, and forward to our final glorification in heaven; and upon the last I expect to write in my next.

For the great blessing of justification may our hearts ever glow with gratitude to God, that we poor sinners were the favored objects of his eternal love, and have been shown the only way of acceptance with him. I have merely touched upon the subject, but with all its imperfections I send it to you for your inspection and disposal.

Yours in gospel bonds,
JAMES WAGNER.

STATE ROAD, Del., October, 1887.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I recollect reading a poem many years ago which was called "The Believer's Paradox." I did not know much about the paradox then, but I have since come in contact with it, and have for years been engaged in trying to find a solution of it. That a person should be rightly characterized as a *believer*, and yet be harrassed with doubts about the very things that are embraced in his faith; that he should be said to be *illuminated* to that extent as to be called a *child of light*, and yet be described as walking in darkness and having no light; these things so contradictory, and yet both true, are calculated to involve the subject of them in more or less perplexity in regard to his most cherished interests. It is said, "They shall not hunger nor thirst," and yet they go hungering and thirsting. It is said, "We which have believed do enter into rest;" yet they go on laboring and heavily burdened. If they should think that they were *standing firm*, they would then be in danger of falling. If they say, "We see," it would prove them blind. Yet the Redeemer gives both sight and hearing to his people. And the blind man, when restored, did not err in saying, "Whereas I was once blind, now I see." These apparent paradoxes, as they appear in Scripture, I

did not design now to discuss; but where they come up to perplex and worry some of those who are inquiring the way, I would like to find some solution of them. In all temptations it seems to me desirable to find a way of escape. It is always something perplexing to a christian that he should be left to doubt. Why should he not know to a certainty? "How long dost thou make us to doubt?" says some one. "Tell us plainly." Though the story has so often been told that we stand by faith and walk by faith, yet each one for himself, when led by the Spirit, not only is led in a way that he knows not, that he would not have chosen, but that seems crooked and wrong to him. He sometimes, after a time of alternate fear and hope, hears a voice behind him saying that this is the way in which he should have been led. That is, in the experience of the past he sees that pathway in which are found the footsteps of all the flock. Doubts and misgivings are among our evidences; and there are no evidences more reliable or certain than these. They belong to the life that the christian lives, as much as do the joys and comforts. He that believeth is not condemned, but is passed from death unto life. The believer then enters upon a new life, of which before he was destitute. From henceforth he lives that life. It may perhaps be safely assumed that there will be no aspiring to natural life or appreciation of its blessings in those who are destitute of it. Neither can there be aspiring to spiritual blessings, nor doubts and fears concerning them, known or felt by those who are destitute of spiritual life. They would be just as incapable of the one as the other. The sense of darkness and doubt as a cause of sorrow and distress is as certain an evidence of a knowledge and love of the light, as the enjoyment of light can be. If we will grow in grace and in knowledge, it must be so. We must be little and weak and doubting, so that we may be profited by the word, and that we shall need its ministrations and grow thereby. We hunger and thirst literally. We could not feed and drink if we did not. We sorrow, or we could not rejoice. We weary, or we could not rest. And the sorrowing and laboring is no less an indication of life and good health than the joy and rest that follow. So the believer is at one time in darkness, and at another time in the light. He is familiar with both. He rejoices in the one and feels the oppression of the other. He hungers, and again he feeds. He wearies, and again he rests. But the blessings are all his, and he is exercised in the very way to bring him to them. "Bread shall be given him: his water shall be sure." So it is said, "He shall not hunger or thirst." That is, relief shall come. But it will not cease to be a blessed thing to mourn on account of sin, and to hunger and thirst after righteousness. The living plant needs nourishment; it aspires to growth and greater strength. The rain and the dew are required, not to give it life, nor to

keep it alive, but to a more full development of the life that it already has. And the more it grows, the more it requires. The large tree requires and really needs more and much more nourishment than did the little plant. Still the strong, full grown tree can endure longer and much longer without. The plant or tree that is pretty well matured, although desiring and feeling the need of nourishment, yet it will not be likely to be blown about by the wind, nor to wilt and wither in the sunshine, as in its earlier life. After all the many causes of questionings and doubt as to whether we love the Lord or no, whether we are his or whether we are not, are investigated and ferreted out, it still will be a perplexing question why doubts and fears should so far prevail. The sensations and emotions of spiritual life are so clearly and repeatedly set forth in the Scriptures, and are so distinctly marked in the christian's experience, that we might suppose one would no sooner begin to live than there would be a perfect consciousness of it. Entering into relationship with the saints, the bond of endearment is felt. Love to Christ shows itself in an intense interest in his cause, and joy in the prosperity and well-being of his people. They were once blind; now they see. They once had no interest in the preached word; now their ears hear it as a joyful, charming sound. Once they were satisfied with a hope in what they could do for themselves; now their only hope is in what the Lord does for them. They feel a deep interest in the experience of the Lord's people, and a love to them, and a longing desire to be with them, and to be worthy of them. The spirit of obedience to the word and will of the Lord begins to assert itself as a characteristic of a child whom the Lord has blessed. Still, after all that we can say, the paradox remains. The sensations are those of life, and appertain only to the living. But while the earth remaineth there will continue to be alternate summer and winter, and the changing seasons of seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, day and night, will not cease. It is right to distrust ourselves, and to submit ourselves to the heart-searching word. As the work is the Lord's, we are dependent on him for it, and we are also dependent upon him for evidences of it. All divine teaching tends to the same point. Our own peculiar and varied exercises probably depend somewhat upon our condition at the time. Saul of Tarsus, like the young man in the gospel, went away sorrowful from his interview with the Savior, for he had great possessions. His sorrow was afterward turned into joy, but his law-righteousness was all turned to wormwood. His soul had the bitterness of that hour ever after in remembrance. It was a feature in his writings and in all his after life. Lydia had no riches of this kind, that we know of, to be consumed; yet she found a response in her heart to the things that were spoken by Paul. She had come to know and believe

the truth of all his preaching, but she could not tell, as he could, how and when she had learned these lessons. John loved with that intensity that it seemed to be the ruling and controlling passion with him; but he does not tell us how he came to love, nor when he began to love; but no one can doubt that the love of God was shed abroad in his heart. It pervaded all his writings and all his labors. The fact of its existence was to him the best evidence of his acceptance. Its promptings were sufficient qualifications for all the labors and responsibilities of the apostleship. Paul would lay stress upon *faith*, James upon *works*, while John would go to the vital principle which did underlie all these, as effects produced, and was really the life and spirit of them all. It was sufficient for John, in regard to all doubting, perplexed inquirers, if they loved the brethren, the people of God; if they loved the truth and walked in it; if they loved the commandments and found them not grievous. The conclusion of the whole matter with him, who saw the Son of man in his glory, seems to be that an experience that brings people to such knowledge of Christ as to love him, such understanding of his word as to love it, and such discernment of the subjects of his grace as to love them, may be relied upon. They have passed from death unto life. And he insists upon it that his faith in Christ, or supreme love to him, is that which gives the victory over the world. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things."

E. RITTENHOUSE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Sept. 20, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the inclosed narrative of christian experience from a dear sister whom it was my privilege to baptize in Salisbury, Maryland, last June. I think its humble tone of self-distrust and fear will commend it to many, and show that the writer is born of God. She alludes, near the end, to great comfort derived from a text in the afternoon before she was baptized. I will add by way of explanation that she had been received after the supper on Sunday morning. The baptism was appointed just before sunset. While at home during the afternoon she was greatly tempted, fearing she was deceived in all her hope; but in the midst of her trouble a text was given her from the Lord, and in her baptism she felt perfect confidence and joy. The whole church rejoiced with her. It is good when candidates come in such a way that there is full confidence and love at once.

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

SALISBURY, Md., July 20, 1887.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I will try to write you a few lines in answer to your welcome letter that I received. I was thankful to know that you felt enough interest in me to write to me; it helped me up so much. You wished me to write and let you know how I am getting along. Indeed I can say that I have found rest

in obeying my Lord's command, such as I never experienced before, for it has been on my mind for years; but I still have my doubts and fears whether I am one of his children. You wish me to write you my experience. This I find a very hard task; for I am not well educated, and am a poor writer and speller. If you will have patience with me I will try; and I trust the Lord will guide my pen not to write anything that will be offensive.

I cannot remember when I did not have some thought of Christ, and wished him to make me one of his children. When twelve years of age I attended a protracted meeting, and went forward, and tried to pray my sins away. I worked hard to get satisfied. The rest of my young company would soon get all right, but I could not, for I knew that I was a sinner, and felt as if I was forever lost; and I stopped going to their meetings, except very seldom, only to be in company. I thought that after I got older I would try again. When sixteen years old there came a christian Baptist preacher into our neighborhood. I was anxious to find the way to be a christian. I went forward and was baptized. May the Lord forgive me for this. I believe he has, for he knows the heart of all. After this I became very much dissatisfied; for, try to live the best I could, I could not live without sin. I read the Bible, and tried to pray the Lord to show me the right way. I felt miserable, and as if I had mocked my God in trying to be something when I was nothing. I went to their meetings for some time, and kept my trouble to myself. One day, after I had been to their meeting, I was on my way home, feeling very downhearted, when there seemed to shine a light around me, and everything seemed to say, "Praise the Lord for his goodness." I was very happy for a few minutes. If I could always feel as I did then I should never doubt again. I went home, thinking I would tell my aunt what I had experienced; but I could not say anything about it, and did not for some time. I kept on going to their meetings; but the better I tried to live the worse I got, and more dissatisfied. I knew I was a sinner, and that was not what they preached, and I was not one of them, and could not stay; so I stopped going to their church, and commenced going to the Old School Baptist Church, as they are called here. I found a people that could tell me my trouble, and where I was standing; and I prayed the Lord to give me the right understanding, that I might not deceive this people, and to show me the right way. My mind would go back to the day I have mentioned, and I would have beautiful dreams, and wake up singing, "Jesus, lover of my soul."

Four years ago I lost my father. This was a great trouble, more than I thought I could bear. My worst trouble was, if I should be taken as suddenly as he was, what would become of my soul? In this way I was led on, hoping I might find rest, and

again almost giving up for lost. In the following spring I came over to Salisbury, and went with my aunt to meeting, and you preached that night. I do not remember the chapter nor the verse, but your text was something like this, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," &c. Never will I forget those words as long as memory lasts. It seemed they were meant for me. I felt as if I could not stay away much longer, but kept putting it off from time to time, thinking I would feel better; but instead of feeling better I felt worse, and found no peace anywhere. It was on my mind wherever I went. I kept thinking I would tell some one of my trouble, but did not say much about it. I loved all the brethren and sisters, which was a comfort to me; for it is written, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." On Friday before the day I was baptized, which was the third Sunday in June, I was busy about my work, not thinking so much about my trouble as I had at other times, when the thought came to me, They that know their Father's will, and do it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. Still I thought, I will wait, for I am not fit to belong to the church. I knew we were expecting you to come, and went on making preparations to go to meeting on Sunday; and I went. Thank God, I did, for I could not stay away any longer. How good the Lord was to give me those words on Sunday afternoon. Indeed, my dear brother, I can say that I have found rest in obeying my Lord's command, and trust that he will give me grace to overcome all temptation. I cannot help believing, without any doubt, that the Lord has had some dealings with me. I desire the prayers of all the brethren and sisters to be kept in the straight and narrow path that leads to life everlasting.

I will close. I have written you a part of my experience, but fear I have already written too much. Please excuse mistakes, for I have a poor chance to write. I thought to have answered your letter before now, but I have had sickness in my family. I will be thankful to hear from you again. Your letters are so encouraging to me, and help me on my way. I am weak, and depend upon nothing I can do of myself. I hope I am willing to wait for the Lord at all times. Read this and throw it aside, or do with it as you think best.

Yours in hope,

LOUCINDIA E. RECORDS.

SIoux FALLS, Dakota Territory.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel that I cannot do without the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in these days of awful blasphemy. Pray for poor, unworthy me, who am such a sinner, loving the applause of men. I do exceedingly fear and tremble sometimes, lest I be caught in the meshes of that vile harlot who exalts herself above all that is called God; an arrogant queen, she goes forth to deceive the world. My only hope and support is the everlasting God of Israel.

A. K. ENGLISH.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1887.

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

A BRUISED REED AND SMOKING FLAX.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I have been a subscriber for nineteen years, and have never asked your views, I will now request you to write in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES upon the text in Matthew xii. 20, and oblige one who feels to be the least of the people of God, if one at all.
D. O.

SMITH CO., Texas, Sept. 5, 1887.

REPLY.

"A BRUISED reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory."—Matt. xii. 20.

While we highly appreciate the kindness and forbearance of our brother in continuing his patronage of the SIGNS through so many years, we have never required any such plea to prompt us to give to any inquirer such views as we have upon any portion of the revelation of the doctrine of Christ. Very many requests for our views remain unanswered for want of time to write on the subjects proposed; and upon many others we have refrained from writing because we felt that nothing we could say concerning them would be profitable to our readers, since we are painfully conscious of the very limited degree to which we have been enabled to understand the great mystery of godliness. Yet, as far as it is the pleasure of the Lord to show his truth in our experience, we desire ever to be ready and willing, with such ability as God giveth, to give to every one that asketh, with the same freedom with which we have received, the testimony of his own eternal truth, to the declarative glory of our God. When it is the will of our Master to give us the privilege of speaking a word of comfort to the afflicted little ones who hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, it is the highest pleasure ever experienced by us thus to obey his direction in speaking comfortably to the Jerusalem of our God. In all that we speak or write we wish it ever to be distinctly understood that our desire is that every word shall be tried by the inspired standard, and that no one should accept anything from us which is not in harmony with that perfect word.

As the text submitted by our inquiring brother is a portion of the quotation given by the Holy Spirit from Isaiah, it is clear that its true meaning is connected with that of the other portion of that passage. It was that this Scripture might be fulfilled that Jesus charged them who were healed by his word that they should not make him known. The Spirit of Christ in Isaiah moved him to write this testimony of Jesus more than seven hundred years before it was fulfilled in the coming of Christ in the end of that legal world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Yet so accurately was every incident

of his work and suffering determined before of God that even this peculiarity was recorded, that he should not seek notoriety, nor ask the praise of men, but that his mercy and goodness, like his doctrine, should come down upon the subjects of his favor without the noisy parade which would seem desirable to the natural mind. So he told the inquiring Pharisees, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." While Jesus was in this prophecy recognized as the servant of God, it was also specified that he was upheld by the omnipotence of the same God whose will he came to do. This was abundantly manifest in the whole work done by him in the days of his humiliation under the law which he came to fulfill. Not even the natural mind of man can deny the divine power which sustained him and gave him the victory over death itself. But to the faith of those who are led by the Spirit of God there is a nearer and infinitely more precious significance in this sure declaration of our God. The promise is secure to every member of the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all, as it was to him in his own person. He is afflicted in all the affliction of every one who bears the mark of his Spirit in loving him; and in this application of the truth the power of God upholds them in all their times of trial, temptation and conflict. Thus they are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." It never has yet failed in the experience of any tried saint, that in the last time of their extreme need the presence of the Lord was revealed to them as their present salvation from the evils which threatened to destroy their comfort in believing the gospel of the grace of God in their deliverance from sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. In the experience of this truth is manifested to every one who follows him in the fellowship of his sufferings the assurance that they are included in the unity of the one body of Christ; and as certainly as they know the fellowship of his sufferings, so certainly they shall reign with him, not only in the ultimate glory of his eternal throne, but even in their present conflict they shall receive the victory which he has already secured, and which he will certainly give to all them that love his appearing. But it must be remembered that it is only with him that they thus reign; for it is still the truth which Jesus speaks to all his disciples, "Without me, ye can do nothing." In themselves the saints are all as helpless as the dead Lazarus; but quickened by the living word of Jesus they are able to triumph over all opposers, and reign gloriously over all their enemies. Thus they are all compelled joyfully to ascribe all the glory of their salvation, temporal as well as eternal, to the name of the Lord. As this grace of God is not dependent upon the conditions of the covenant of circumcision given exclusively to the Jews, it contains the same wonderful favor

for the Gentiles as for the natural seed of Israel. Thus the gracious Redeemer shows judgment to the Gentiles.

"He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets." As all his works declare the praise of the Lord, so they are all essentially different from the works of any created being. Without the efforts here specified no great work of mortals could be expected to succeed; hence in all their systems of salvation, from the building of the tower in the plain of Shinar to the latest invention of modern antichristian zeal, with one voice they call aloud for the aid of the world to accomplish their project of securing the salvation of all who will comply with their imagined conditions for saving sinners from the punishment due to their sins. No such appeal is heard from our omnipotent Redeemer. He is mighty to save. His own almighty arm brings salvation to himself; and the same power which saves Christ as the head is ample for the salvation of every member of his body. This includes every one for whom he gave himself a ransom; and they are not simply saved from suffering the penalty of their sins, but the sacred blood of Jesus Christ cleanses them from all sin, so that they are made holy and without blame before God in love.—1 John i. 7; Eph. i. 4. The solemn silence of this divinely gracious work is known only to those in whom the Holy Ghost has revealed it. Whether in the stillness of midnight darkness, or where the raging tempest howls in wildest fury, when Jesus speaks it is in that still, small voice which came to Elijah in Horeb, and it is always addressed expressly to the sinner to whom the word is sent. As the lightning does the will of him who sends it forth without an effort, so this word of the Lord accomplishes that which he pleases, and prospers in the thing whereto he sends it. The most intimate associate of the subject of this irresistible calling cannot hear the word which is spoken with such power to him, for it is spoken in his heart. So David sings of the testimony of day unto day, and of night unto night: "No speech nor language; their voice is not heard."—Psalm xix. 2, omitting the words supplied by the translators. To this the experience of every saint bears witness. Whatever tumult and confusion may be raging in their own distracted minds, the voice of their Savior is always heard in their hearts as a still, small voice, bringing a great calm; and when it is heard there is no room for strife or discussion. The victory is already secured over sin, death and hell, when this word of the Lord is heard; and it is only the proclamation of that victory in the case of the individual in whose heart the sound is heard not as a mere natural sound, but as the voice of the Almighty, which accomplishes his sovereign will. As when the voice of God called into existence the material universe no aid of creatures was invoked; so in the revelation of the creation of his saints in Christ Jesus

no appeal to creatures was necessary. His own omnipotence is the only power engaged in the infinite display of his grace in the salvation of his people from their sins. He neither asks nor receives assistance from mortals.

"A bruised reed shall he not break." This figurative language may well be understood as full of assurance to the trembling soul, who sees in the frail reed, as bruised and ready to fall, a most appropriately chosen emblem of his own wretched state as justly condemned and ready to perish. To the natural mind it would seem that the frailty of man as at his best state altogether vanity, would forbid the hope that he should be the subject of the salvation which could come only from the just God against whom man had sinned. Bruised as a reed crushed under an overwhelming weight, the sinner might well expect that the appearing of the righteous Servant of God would be the visitation of divine vengeance upon his guilty head; and as he felt himself trembling upon the borders of despair, the revelation of the Holy One would sever the last slender thread of hope for him, and consign him to that death which he feels to be the just desert of his sin. To such a despairing sinner the sweet comfort of this prophetic declaration comes as the refreshing water of life to his fainting soul. This gracious Messenger of the covenant comes not to destroy men's lives, but to save.—Luke ix. 56. All the blessings of the gospel come upon these poor and needy characters, who are convinced of their utter helplessness. None but such have any part in the consolations of the glorious gospel of Christ. Under a heartfelt consciousness of their just condemnation they are indeed like the bruised reed, without strength to render any service to God, and unable even to lift their eyes to him for deliverance. They are not only helpless as reeds, but to illustrate their case even the fragile reed must be bruised. To every one in this condition the word of the Lord in this text comes in all the fullness of the blessed comfort of the gospel of their salvation. The dear Savior has never denied his salvation to one of these bruised reeds; and none have ever cried to him out of the depth of conscious despair but that can bear witness to the truth that he did deliver them from their sins, and give them grace to hope in his salvation. Their faith may be sorely tried by dark and gloomy clouds of doubt and unbelief, but they never can be driven to despair; for their strong Redeemer will never allow any power to break that bruised reed which he has declared that he himself will not break. Under their sore trials they may be brought so low as to think they are about to sink in despair; but even when they are unable to see any way out of the wilderness of their perplexities, and when their own reason suggests that they are altogether deceived, yet they cannot divest themselves of that hope which is in them, and by which they are saved

from despair. Helpless and weak from continual bruising, every such suffering one is a witness of the truth of the promise in the text.

"And smoking flax shall he not quench." In this expression there is strong consolation for the same trembling little ones who are described in the first clause of the text, for the application will not fit any other characters. In these words, however, the illustration is of that hope which is the light within the saints by which they are saved from despair. It is often the case with them that their hope is so faint to their view that it is well compared to the flickering light of an expiring wick when the candle is burned out; but this smoking flax he shall not quench. When there is no more oil in the lamp, or the candle affords no more support for the flame, it seems impossible that the light can be continued in such a smoking flax; for in the time when this prophecy was written the wick used for illumination was made of flax. After it is reduced so that it ceases to give light from its flame, and the smoldering remnant of the wick only sends forth smoke, it becomes offensive instead of being serviceable; hence it is necessary to the comfort of those in the house that the expiring flax should be quenched. So to the perplexed and trembling saint, when he can find no ground on which to rest his hope in the salvation of God, the coming of this Servant of the Holy One seems but the destruction of his little remnant of trust in the salvation which is provided for sinners. But instead of coming clothed with terror to execute vengeance upon the guilty sinner, this wonderful Servant of God brings his own perfect righteousness, by which he freely justifies the subjects of his grace, and his precious blood cleanses them from all sin. Thus he does the will of his Father in saving his people from their sins, and vindicates his right to the name sent from the eternal world, and expressly assigned to him by the angel who announced to Joseph the birth of the Savior. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. Before him every claim of pride and self-righteousness is abased. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. He extinguishes every flame of self-dependence which aspires to claim acceptance in the sight of God by reason of merit found in the sinner; but with divine mercy and compassion he comes to every humble and contrite one, "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isa. lvii. 15. Doubts often arise within the mind of these humble and contrite ones, suggesting that they are too sinful and too worthless to be the subjects of such exceeding great and precious promises; but it is exclusively to such as are conscious of their sinfulness that every promise of the gospel applies. Those who rely upon their own works for justification

must look to that law in which they trust; and all such are shut up in hopeless condemnation. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; as it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10. To such as feel that they are fitly characterized as the hopeless and expiring flax, whose dying smoke cannot be rekindled to a light-giving flame, the gracious promise of this text comes with sweet and comforting assurance. However dark may be the prospect when they look upon the things which are seen, by faith these trembling characters hear the sure word of this promise; and as they individually experience its truth in the deliverance of their own soul out of all their distresses, each of them is qualified to bear witness with the inspired psalmist, that "The Lord preserveth the simple; I was brought low, and he helped me."—Psalm cxvi. 6. In this truth there is rest for all who have experienced it. While this sovereign display of divine grace must ever stain the pride of all glorying in the flesh, it is full of consolation to all who have been led by the Spirit to see themselves justly condemned in their own works. To such it opens the heaven of divine love and peace, even in the very gloom of their own despair. Although there be no more prospect for their hope to be fulfilled than for the dying fire of the smoking flax to be revived, yet this righteous Servant of the Lord shall not quench the smoking flax of that expiring hope.

"Till he send forth judgment unto victory." Here, as in every declaration of the determinate counsel of our God, the positive certainty of the language used forbids the possibility of the failure of any point in all the events foretold. It is not only settled beyond all doubt that he shall send forth judgment, but that judgment shall be unto victory. When this final judgment shall be sent forth there will be no further occasion for the redeemed people of our God to cherish the smoking flax of their hope in the grace and mercy of the Lord; for then faith will be lost in perfect knowledge, and hope will give place to full enjoyment of the infinite reality of eternal blessedness with their Lord in that glory which was his before the world was. Then that will which he expressed in humble prayer, when in the form of a servant he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, will be revealed in all the omnipotence of his own eternal power and Godhead. In that triumphant declaration of his mighty power all enemies shall be manifestly put under his feet; and even death itself shall appear as a conquered enemy, having no power to harm the feeblest subject of almighty grace. When on the cross he cried, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, the salvation from sin of all his people was complete; but it is only made manifest to them as in the fullness of time they are

brought to see their just condemnation as sinners before God, and then the Holy Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, shall take of the things of Jesus and show them unto those who love the truth of our Lord Jesus. It is also important to observe that the victory here declared is by the judgment of this Servant whom God upholds, and not by the works of the law. All the righteousness of the saints in the works of their own hands is but as filthy rags. No victory can be attained through such a polluted medium as this. Only that Strong Redeemer who has conquered sin and death is able to send forth judgment unto victory. No other judgment is ever sent forth by him.

"And in his name shall the Gentiles trust." With all the advantages enjoyed by the Jews as the peculiar nation whom God chose as his own, in their natural mind there was no knowledge of that God who had so highly favored them. Such of them as were made to know the Lord received that knowledge only as it was and still is received by the Gentiles who are made to know him in his gracious character as the Savior of sinners from their sins. In this glorious name of the Lord shall the nations of the earth be made to trust, without distinction between Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, bond and free. Unto all alike there is salvation in no other name but that of Jesus; and in that name alone shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. This seed is the same of which Paul says, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 29. None ever trust in his name until cut off from all confidence in their own names, whether Jew or Gentile. All who are thus made to trust in his name are subjects of his salvation.

MISCELLANEOUS.

WATER VALLEY, Miss., Oct. 18, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have received from brother Jasper Thomas one dollar, from sister Clark two dollars, and from sister English two dollars, to aid us in paying for our house, all of which has been handed over to one of the purchasing committee.

This leaves myself and family about as usual.

Yours in hope,

E. A. MEADERS, SR.

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMNIANS.

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

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Snow Hill, Md., Oct. 19th, 20th and 21st, 1887, to the churches of which she is composed, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE FAITH OF GOD'S ELECT:—We trust we are not so thoughtless and ignorant as to forget the goodness of our blessed Lord and Master, who has been better to us than we could possibly ask or expect to receive; but still his ways are known to himself, and in accordance therewith we are permitted to again address you and give vent to our feelings of love and fellowship. And in order to make this a matter of common interest, it has long been deemed proper to call attention to some portion of the written word, and a proper elucidation of the same, as it contains matter of common interest to all God's people. Therefore we will cite you to the language of the inspired writer to the Hebrews, ii. 2, 3: "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?"

Whatsoever was written aforetime was written for the learning and the profit of the people of God, for all Scripture is given to that end, and must necessarily effect that for which it was given. The apostle begins his epistle to the Hebrews by saying, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." The fathers here brought to view were no less than national Israel, or the church in her legal order; and this word spoken to them was not designed to make them the Israel of God, but as a rule of life by which they might enjoy the blessings promised in that word, saying, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse," &c. Refuse what? to be brought into the land? No; but refuse to take heed to the word spoken by the angels or prophets. Why was this word steadfast? Because it was the word of God, being his law, which could not be repealed, for his mouth had spoken it. Therefore for their disobedience they should be devoured by the sword.—Isaiah i. 19, 20. And Moses delivered the word to Israel, saying, "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: and a curse, if ye will not obey."—Deut. xi. 26-28. But none of these things were designed to make the fathers the Israel of God, but because they were already; for God had already said, "I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people, and am come down to deliver them."

Then he said to them, "If ye transgress, I will scatter you."—Neh. i. 8. Again, the Lord hath said, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore [that is, by reason of this] will I punish you for your iniquities." Not that God was ignorant of the existence of any nation, but he only knew them in his choice and favor, from which sprang their deliverance from bondage and their establishment in the land of plenty. And he sent amongst them his angels or prophets, with his unalterable word, accompanied with the penalty and reward. How important then it was that they should hold fast and not let the things slip that were so faithfully spoken to them for their comfort in the land whither they had been brought; for every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward. Now all this was by reason of neglecting to heed the instruction and warning with reference to that time or literal salvation; and the apostle calls this up to enable the believer in Jesus to contrast the two; the superiority and greatness of one over the other: one a salvation from sin and death forever, the other only from literal bondage. And if the justice of God required obedience to his word upon the part of the fathers, how shall we escape if we neglect the requirements of so great salvation as that which was secured and made manifest by the death and resurrection of Jesus, our Lord? Not that, because the law is satisfied, the spiritual Israel of God is free from all law; for there never has been a time when the people of God were not under some law. Not that they are under a law that lays burdens upon them that are grievous, but in keeping his commandments there is great reward. It points to the paths and ways of wisdom, whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. So in giving earnest heed to the things that we have heard, as a part of the message of the gospel of peace, we are able to test the truth of these things. It is very true that a knowledge of this salvation which is so great is effected by the Spirit of God, and the sinner is made to hope in his mercy; and this is the ground upon which the gospel injunctions are based, simply a conformity in our lives and conversation to the law of Christ as written in the believer's heart. Is it so that the saints of God can let the precious things that have been spoken to them slip? We think so. If not, this exhortation would have no place. We also have it from the apostle Peter, 2 Peter i. 10: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." What from? Why, from their steadfastness, and from a comfortable assurance of hope for ourselves and those for whom we have publicly professed fellowship. By a public exhibition of the life we have received from the dead, it chases away the remorse of a condemned conscience, and effects a permanency in the fel-

lowship of the saints, which is much to our comfort. God has said by the mouth of inspiration, that if Zion's children forsake his law, he will visit their transgressions with the rod and their iniquities with stripes. And we know, as says an apostle, that no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but rather grievous. And now, brethren, let us hold fast; that is, keep in remembrance the word by the apostle to the church at Corinth, "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 a one no not to eat."—1 Cor. v. 11. The meaning of it is that the subjects of so great salvation should not be indulgers in any of these things; if so, judgment is set at their own expense. We fear there are some who think that all there is in the christian life is to have their name on the church book. But this is not all. No; for the apostle Peter says, after presenting the grand principles of the knowledge of God by his almighty power, "Besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Brethren, we are in a world of temptations and snares and besetments on every hand. Therefore there is a needs be for watching unto prayer. The angels of the wicked one are busily engaged in saying, This is no harm, and, That is no harm; saying it is no harm to make frequent visits to bar-rooms, to backbite and speak evil of one another, for every little cause to retain malice, or stay away from meetings, allowing those things which should be first to be second. All these things is letting slip that which we have heard, and is neglecting that great salvation, and is to our own loss. We cannot enjoy life and dwell with the dead. If there ever was a time when the gospel rule should be observed more than another, it is now. And not only the individual members are herein admonished, but also churches. If the law of Christ, which is the only discipline of the church, is neglected, and leads to a falling away, the Lord has said, "I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Wherefore, brethren, we receiving a kingdom, the grand principles of which cannot be moved, may God give us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire. This covers the whole ground. This is the grand reason why we should not let slip the things that we have heard.

In conclusion, may our lives be a pattern of our profession, and may love, joy and peace reign throughout the inhabitants of Jerusalem, is our prayer, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., September 30th, October 1st and 2d, 1887, to the churches composing the same.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Again God in his providence has seen fit to permit us to assemble in an associate capacity, to greet one another, and to comfort one another out of the law of the Lord, which is perfect; and as you will look for some words of encouragement from this part of God's heritage, we will call your attention to the words recorded in Revelation i. 3: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

It appears evident from the writings of John that he was one of the twelve apostles chosen by our Lord to bear witness of those things which he had taught, and to transmit them to those who were to follow after in ages to come. John is spoken of as "that disciple whom Jesus loved," and the only one that we have record of as being with our blessed Savior in his dying hour. For his fidelity to his Lord and Master, as he says himself, he was in the isle of Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. Believing the Bible to be true, the word of John to be true, and the testimony of Jesus concerning him to be true, we have a basis so broad and complete that the least of the saints should take courage. The Master's language is, "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."—Luke xi. 28. The import of his words is the same as that which we have quoted from John, who gave expression to no other language while on that lonely island but what was most encouraging and of the greatest value to him that readeth the words of his prophecy, and keepeth them. John must have been perfectly happy amidst the surging waves of the sea, where he could commune with God. He understood the way of salvation when he esteemed Christ as the faithful witness, the first begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. It appears that he never forgot, while in banishment there, his duty toward his Master. He says that he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." This makes his writings grand and dear to every imprisoned child of God. He also says that he heard behind him a great voice as of a trumpet; and what he saw he was to write in a book, and send it to the seven churches of Asia. As he turned to see the voice that spake with him, he saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst was one like unto the Son of man, whose head and hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and whose eyes were like a flame of fire. It will doubtless appear to every child of God that the intent of this spirit of prophecy was to comfort the churches, by presenting the will of the Lord. The prophecy is

wonderfully set forth; and in recording the blessings of each church the inmates are caused to shout hosannas to the Lamb of God, who was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty. What is said concerning the churches as a whole, is said of every individual member. The blessings are the same as when first uttered. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." John presents this clearly to every child of God, that they who overcome the wicked one shall partake of spiritual fruit; and the same apostle says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." His idea of eating conveys in a clear and concise manner infinite duration; that of living forever in the city, the new Jerusalem, which he saw coming down from God out of heaven. He states briefly that he that doeth good is of God; but he that doeth evil hath not seen God. Both classes of the human family are brought forward in this prophecy; the one reserved for the day of judgment, and the other kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; for "he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." "I will give him to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." What a glorious heritage is in reserve for the servants of the living God! What a crown of immortality is promised to all who believe on him whom the Father hath sent! They who overcome, and keep his works unto the end, to them, and to them only, will he give power over the nations; but them that believe not are reserved unto the wrath of God, of the last great and dreadful day.

But some child of God may say, How can I read and understand, and keep the things written in this prophecy? The answer is, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."—James i. 5. He has never sent empty away one inquiring soul. John, by the Spirit, says that all who overcome iniquity in all its forms, and keep "the word of my patience," "will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." Yea, more: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Now, brethren in tribulation, what more would you ask? Are you not content to sit beside your Father in his throne? Is not the christian's life worth living? Read your Bible; it is a sure guide; especially you who have the oversight of the churches.

THOMAS ROSE, Mod.

J. M. CUTSHALL, Clerk.

The First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, in session with Pleasant Grove Church, in Atchison Co., Kansas, on the 23d, 24th and 25th days of September, 1887, to the brethren and sisters of the several churches composing our body, and to all in every place who call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We are informed that in the olden time they that feared God spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and it is the duty of the same characters at the present time to speak often one to another for edification, but not for strife. As the saints at the present time are so scattered that they can seldom meet to speak face to face, it seems good that they can write one to another of the goodness of God to them, and thus each can see, as it were, his own reflection as in a mirror. Under this view of the case, we offer a few thoughts on the christian experience.

Every one knows, by the reading of the inspired word, that all mankind are sinners by nature. "For by one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." But so totally depraved are men by nature that they cannot comprehend the depth of their own depravity, but in the vanity of their minds imagine that they can, by taking heed to their course of conduct, and guarding against all outward immoral practices, so bring themselves into favor with God that he will forgive all their past offenses, and save them for the good that they intend to do. But when it pleases God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, to shine in their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that light reveals to them the corruption of their nature. Their Babel-building is prostrated, and they now go to work, still believing that they can do something; but every effort seems to be adding sin to sin. They go to the law to learn its demands, in order to comply therewith, and they find it written there, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Cease from sin they cannot, for when they would do good, evil is present with them. Sin has now become exceeding sinful, and every thought of the heart is corrupt. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and a corrupt fountain cannot send forth pure water. They are made to cry to God for mercy, but their prayer seems but sin and blasphemy. Thus the poor soul is led along, until it has wasted all its living (its rich store of good works that it thought it had power to do), and is brought prostrate in the dust, completely worked out, and can only say, "Lord, save, I perish!" When brought to this point, unexpectedly Jesus reveals himself as the Savior of sinners, and the individual is enabled to view him as a sin-bearer, and to behold how God can be just and save the ungodly. Now, being made free from sin, joy springs up in

the soul, and they feel to say, like David, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." But perhaps before you have the opportunity to tell it the old adversary comes along and says, "You are deceived; this is no christian experience." You begin to look back and examine your case. It is not as clear as you thought it was, and you keep it concealed, hoping to get a brighter evidence; but you wait in vain. Perhaps years roll by, and you keep your light hid under a bushel, because it is not as bright as you desire it to be. You find that you cannot live that pure and holy life that you think the children of God live. You examine your experience; you cannot entirely throw it away, and yet it is too little to depend upon. You will not tell it to any one, for fear you may deceive them. You examine your old nature, and find it still corrupt, and as prone to sin as ever; therefore you become convinced that your hopes are all vain, and you wish for your burden of sorrow again.

Dear brethren, we believe that these are in part the feelings of every one that is born of the Spirit. We find no perfection in the flesh, but our carnal desires are to some extent crucified, or brought under subjection to the spirit of holiness which we receive in the new birth, and are thereby restrained from breaking forth as formerly; yet the struggle is often severe. The apostle Paul says, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 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." This is a warfare from which there is no release until we are called to lay our armor by and receive the crown prepared for us.

"The soul that would to Jesus press
Must fix this firm and sure,
That tribulation, more or less,
They must and shall endure.

"From this there can be none exempt;
'Tis God's own wise decree;
Satan the weakest saint will tempt,
Nor is the strongest free.

"The world opposes from without,
And unbelief within;
We fear, we faint, we grieve, we doubt,
And feel the load of sin."

Brethren, while you remain here in the flesh you must expect to suffer the reproaches and scoffs of the world. But rejoice therein, because they reproached your Master before they reproached you; and you can boldly say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man shall do unto me." And, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" His promises are sure and steadfast. With him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. If the Lord had not been on our side, our enemies would have swallowed us up quickly.

Dear brethren, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with

the yoke of bondage; for if the Son has made you free, then are you free indeed.

W. F. JONES, Mod.
T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.
IRA HUFFMAN, Ass't Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Baptist Association, in session with the church at Snow Hill, to the several associations with whom we correspond, sends assurance of continued fellowship in the truth.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Our annual session has come in the course of human events, and will soon be past. It has been characterized by an unusually large attendance from the several churches and congregations, and also from a distance. It has indeed been a solemn assembly, and a solemn and sincere interest has been manifest throughout in the preached word. A goodly number of ministers from abroad have been with us, and the utmost harmony has prevailed in the preaching and in all the correspondence and business of the session. The word has come down upon thirsty plants, as the rain and like the distillings of the dew, to the refreshing of the weary and the comforting of the hearts of mourners in and about Zion. Not a jarring note or word of discord has been heard. Many hearts have been ready to say, "Good is the word of the Lord that thou hast spoken." And, "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord." We have all felt that it was good for us to be here.

Our next session is appointed with our sister church at Church Creek, Dorchester County, Md., on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1888, when and where we hope to meet again in that sweet fellowship which is in the Spirit and in the truth.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

The First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, in session with Pleasant Grove Church, Atchison Co., Kansas, to the several Associations with which she corresponds, Greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the tender mercies of our covenant-keeping God we have been caused to hold and enjoy another of our annual meetings, in which peace has prevailed, and comfort and satisfaction have greatly abounded. The communications from the churches, while there may be a complaint of coldness and barrenness, and not a report of great increase of numbers, yet they indicate steadfastness in the faith, and a great desire to know and love the truth, and give evidence of the sustaining grace of our God. We were made glad by the coming of your messengers and the reception of your messages of love, and we desire that such be repeated, and that brotherly love may continue.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the West Union Church, near Topeka, Shawnee Co., Kansas, to begin on Friday before

the last Saturday in September, 1888, and to continue three days, when and where we hope to receive and enjoy the benefits of your cherished correspondence. May the grace of our God richly abound unto you all. Amen.

W. F. JONES, Mod.
T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.
IRA HUFFMAN, Ass't Clerk.

The Juniata Regular Baptist Association, in session with the Springfield Church, in Springfield Township, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Sept. 30th, Oct. 1st and 2d, 1887, to the several associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—It is by the goodness and mercy of a covenant-keeping God that we are permitted to meet together, and to mingle our voices together in praise and honor to his great name. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore." Dear brethren, we desire a continuance of your correspondence, and may love and christian fellowship continue.

Our next Association is appointed to be held with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., to commence on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, when and where we hope to meet you again.

THOMAS ROSE, Mod.
J. M. CUTSHALL, Clerk.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please give notice through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I have changed my residence and also my post-office address from New Market, Platte Co., Mo., to No. 2002 Francis Street, St. Joseph, Mo., and that I wish all my correspondents to address me at the latter place; and any and all who may find it convenient to visit me here are cordially invited to do so.

R. M. THOMAS.
2002 Francis St., St. Joseph, Mo., Oct., 1887.

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MARRIAGES.

At the residence of the bride, in Juniata County, Pa., Oct. 24, 1887, by Elder A. B. Francis, Miss Kate Arnold and Mr. Isaac Longacre, both of Juniata County, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Andrew W. Simmons was born in Warren County, Kentucky, Sept. 2, 1816, and departed this life near the village of Greenbush, Warren County, Ill., Sept. 12, 1887, aged seventy-one years and ten days.

While but an infant, in October of the same year, his parents emigrated to the territory of Illinois, and located in Madison County. In 1833 the family removed to Warren County, wherein the deceased has resided for over half a century. In 1842 he was united in marriage with Miss Mary Ann Hedge, who died in 1847. On March 2, 1848, he married Miss Acenath Brooks, who survives him. The fruit of the two marriages was twelve children, seven of whom survive their honored father, all of them the children of the surviving and bereaved widow. In the spring of 1868 our beloved brother united with the New Hope Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, and continued in her fellowship, loved and held in very high esteem by the brethren far and near till he was called from earth to a better world. In 1873 he was ordained to the office of deacon, which he faithfully fulfilled up to the time of his last sickness.

I do not know that I could overestimate the character or worth of our dear departed brother. Having been the pastor of the church for about thirty years, and known him intimately during that time, I can truly say that among the people of God with whom I have been acquainted few have been his equals in all the relations of life, both civil and religious. Unassuming and humble, firm and unshaken, but not stubborn; faithful to duty, honest in his convictions, sound in the faith, loving and forbearing. The hospitality of this brother and his estimable wife has been partaken of by hundreds far and near, and twice our association met on his premises, and on one occasion he gave dinner to over three hundred people on Sunday at noon, in his spacious dining-room. Besides the religious relations he sustained and formed among the Lord's people, he enjoyed the utmost confidence of his countrymen, having been elected to the office of Supervisor for seventeen years, Justice of the Peace sixteen years, Collector eleven years, and other minor offices about twenty-five years.

Our beloved brother was prostrated for nearly seven weeks with paralysis of the brain, which slowly but surely impaired his reason and wasted his strength. He was rational only by spells, at which times his words were often, "Let me go home." An almost constant stream of anxious visitors thronged the house for several weeks to learn his condition. His brother, Eld. R. M. Simmons, of Maryville, Missouri, sat by and nursed the afflicted one for more than four weeks, but three days before his brother's decease the Elder was summoned home to witness the burial of his youngest son.

The funeral was arranged for the 14th, and was the most numerously attended of any I ever witnessed except one. I spoke briefly on the occasion from Eccl. vii. 1, followed briefly with remarks by Elders B. Bradbury and C. Humphrey. His remains were then followed to the cemetery near the village, to rest till God shall raise it up a spiritual body. He leaves a heartbroken widow, our dearly beloved sister, in unutterable grief, while six sons and one daughter, brothers and sisters, many relatives and friends, with the church, sadly feel their loss. But God is righteous, and may he bind up the broken hearts.

Your brother,

I. N. VANMETER.
MACOMB, Ill., Sept. 20, 1887.

IN MEMORIAM.

WHEREAS, Our heavenly Father, in the exercise of his sovereign will, has seen proper to remove by death our highly esteemed and dearly beloved brother, Deacon Andrew W. Simmons, which occurred on Sept. 12, 1887,

he being seventy-one years and ten days old; and

WHEREAS, He has been a member of our body since April, 1868, and a deacon since November, 1873; therefore,

Resolved, That in his death we, as a church, have lost a brother dear to us all, as a faithful, devoted and much beloved member and deacon; and although we deeply and sadly feel our loss of so dear a brother, yet,

Resolved, That it becomes us to bow in humble submission to the divine will, and to be still, and know that he is God.

Resolved, That we tender our dear bereaved sister and the family our profound sympathy, and that this tribute of respect be recorded in our church book, and also that it be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication, in connection with an obituary notice.

Done and signed by order of the church, on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1887.

I. N. VANMETER, Mod.

A. W. SIMMONS, Clerk.

DEPARTED this life on Sunday morning, Sept. 11, 1887, at Alexandria, Va., **Mrs. Catharine M. Rearden**, beloved wife of Wm. M. Rearden, Esq., in the forty-seventh year of her age. Mrs. Rearden was the last living daughter of the late brother Joseph Grimes, an Old School Baptist well known by all who visited Alexandria years ago, for his general hospitality and kindness in administering to their wants and bidding them a hearty welcome to the comforts of his home. His daughter Kate, then a young girl, was ever found a willing handmaid to wait upon the Old Baptists, which she seemed to enjoy, and from her hand many a wayfaring Old Baptist has received a cup of cold water and a refreshing morsel as they passed to and from the associations and meetings in Virginia. But alas! she who so cheerfully and willingly administered to those who have long since laid their armor by and passed from earth to their reward in heaven, which is reserved for all those that love Jesus, has also been called to her reward, there to receive the welcome plaudit, Well done, good and faithful handmaid; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Mrs. Rearden made no public profession of religion. She was a constant attendant at the meetings held by the Old Baptists, and was a firm believer in the doctrine preached and held by them. Her own unworthiness seemed to be the great barrier that kept her from openly manifesting the desire of her heart unto the people she loved. The doctrine preached never seemed too hard for her. She loved the truth preached in its purity, salvation by grace, through the atoning blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Elder E. V. White attended her funeral and preached an interesting discourse from Rom. viii. 11, to an attentive congregation, thereby, so far as mortal man can do, paying the last tribute of respect in this vale of tears, this world of sickness, sorrow and death. May God, of his abounding mercy, of whom the apostle writes that he is rich in, temper the trying stroke that has lately fallen upon her disconsolate husband and her two remaining children, and with the balm of his grace enable them to kiss the rod that has smitten them so sorely, and to say, Not our will, but thine be done, is the prayer of a friend and fellow-traveler in tribulation.

Affectionately,

JOSEPH BRODERS.

By request of the sorrowing children of our dear old brother, **Daniel Cummins**, I will try to write an account of his long and eventful life. He was the son of Ephraim and Elizabeth Cummins, was born in Hardin County, Ky., Feb. 26, 1806, and (as well as we can learn) emigrated to Indiana with his parents when he was about twelve years old. At the age of twenty-one he was married to Mary McKim, who died in 1842, leaving him with six children, the fruit of their union. In 1843 he married Ruth Vandover, who survives him. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in Perry County, Ind., in the year 1820, and in 1848 emigrated with his family to Iowa, and joined the church at Moravia, Appanoose County. In 1864 he went with his family to California, and in 1877 re-

moved to Oregon, where he cast his lot with the Primitive Baptist Church, Mizpah, in Umatilla County, where he remained in love and fellowship with all the dear saints who knew him. I was personally acquainted with him and knew him to be consistent and sound in the faith of the Son of God, believing in salvation by grace, and for about sixty years enjoyed a good hope through grace. His disease was paralysis, from which he suffered more than two years, becoming very helpless. His sons, Robert and John, felt a desire and thought it their duty to take him to his son, Dr. Robert Cummins, where he could and did receive all the comforts that the faithful sons and daughters-in-law could bestow upon him. The dear old brother patiently suffered until it pleased the good Lord to release him and take him home to that heavenly peace and joy that knows no end. Thus on the 20th day of August, 1887, he ended his long pilgrimage, to receive the crown of life. He was the father of twenty children, six by his first wife and fourteen by the last. He leaves seventeen children and a sorrowing widow, together with the church, to mourn his absence; but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May it please the good Lord to reconcile us all to this sad but righteous dispensation of his will. The dear old brother, a year before he died, requested that at his death the writer should preach a funeral discourse, which I tried to comply with, on the third Sunday in September, to the children, grandchildren and sorrowing friends, using 1 Cor. xv. 17-20, from which I tried to comfort the sorrowing ones, especially those who have a hope of eternal life.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. A. BULLACK.

GOLDENDALE, W. T., Sept. 21, 1887.

DIED—Sept. 23, 1887, **Deacon James N. Harding**, of Waverly, N. Y. Brother Harding was born in Sullivan County, N. Y., on April 10, 1810, and was married to Susan Tenny in 1828, who died two or three years ago. He moved to Waverly, or near here, in 1834, where he lived until his death, with the exception of the few years he has lived in the village of Waverly.

As I have not the church record, I cannot say how many years he has been a member of the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, but I think about forty years. He was thoroughly established in the doctrine of sovereign grace, and had very clear views of the Scriptures, and could express his mind very easily. His experience was very clear, and he told it quite frequently at our covenant meetings. I have had many excellent visits with him, conversing upon the glorious subject of salvation by grace. He had been a deacon of the church for many years, and filled the position well; although, like all of Adam's posterity, he was fallible, showing that he was earthy. For two or three years he was not able to get out to meeting, being afflicted very badly with stomach difficulty, which he had for a great many years. He finally had paralysis, the third stroke ending his life. For two years or more he had lived with his children, most of the time with his son Charles, but for a number of months past had been with his daughter, Mrs. Mullock, in Athens, Pa., where he died. He was well cared for by his children, and all that could be done was done to make him comfortable. As he lost his mind some time before he died, he was a great care. But the dear Lord has taken him home, and there he longed to be. Many times I have heard him say, "I cannot see why the Lord keeps me here. I am no comfort to myself, nor to any body else. But the Lord's ways are not our ways."

He has left three sons and one daughter, with many friends. May the dear Lord enable them all to bow in humble submission to his will and say, Thy will be done.

The writer spoke to a large and attentive congregation at the funeral, which was held in the Old School Baptist meeting house in Waverly, on Sept. 25th.

Your brother in tribulation,

M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, N. Y.

DIED—Sept. 8, 1887, at his father's residence, near Leesburg, Va., **Robert L. Powell**, the eldest son of brother Charles Powell, in the twenty-fifth year of his age. This is the second time that death's cruel hand has been laid upon this dear family within a few months. Robert, the subject of this notice, was a young man of promise, and highly esteemed in the community where he was known. To uprightness of character, which was without reproach, he added an amiable disposition, which endeared him to family and friends; and what is of inestimable value in the character of the young, his mother was the object of his tenderest care, devotion and respect. Above all, he received a good hope through grace some time before his death, which occurred after a lingering illness of several weeks duration. Grace lightened his pathway to the grave and strengthened him to meet the last enemy, death, with cheerful resignation and without fear. The loss of this son falls heavily upon the family of brother Powell. May the grace of God sustain them and enable them to bow in humble submission to the divine will.

Affectionately yours,

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Loudoun Co., Va., Sept. 29, 1887.

DIED—At her residence, in Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., on Friday evening, October 7, 1887, **Mrs. Hannah M. Bell**, widow of the late George W. Bell, in the seventy-fifth year of her age.

Sister Bell had been a great sufferer for many years, and for the last months of her life was confined to her room and bed with Bright's disease and other distressing complaints. Although she endured with more than ordinary patience her extreme sufferings, and expressed her willingness to wait the Lord's time, yet she longed for the time of her departure, when she should be absent from the body and present with him whom her soul loved, and in whose salvation alone she had trusted for about half a century. She was one of the oldest members of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe about forty-six years ago, where her membership ever after remained. She was a spiritually minded sister, and was truly an ornament to the church. She died in the triumph of faith, and in the full fellowship of her kindred in Christ.

Sister Bell was a daughter of the late Salmon Wheat, who was the originator of the cemetery at Howell's Depot, where her mortal remains were laid to rest, by the side of her husband and children, who all had preceded her to "the house appointed for all living." She is survived by one sister, with other relatives and friends, who mourn the departure of one they dearly loved.

The funeral took place at her late residence, on Tuesday, October 11th, when a discourse was preached by her pastor, Elder Benton Jenkins, in the presence of a large company of sorrowing relatives and friends.

It is my painful duty to record the death of **Charles Powell, Jr.**, son of brother Charles Powell. He was born Oct. 6, 1867, and died March 31, 1887. In the bloom of manhood he was stricken down, and without a murmur, I am told, he bore the stroke that separated him from a darling wife and child, a mother and father, brothers and sisters, who loved him dearly. This was but the beginning of a series of afflictions which have borne our beloved brother Powell down to the ground, and conveyed his companion (according to appearances) near the grave. We trust that God will raise them up, stronger in their dependence upon him, and more assured of their acceptance in him. I tried to preach on the occasion from Rom. xi. 32.

Your brother, I hope,

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., Sept. 20, 1887.

DIED—In Otisville, N. Y., Oct. 10th, 1887, **Schuyler D. Fraser, Jr.**, son of Schuyler D. and Nellie Fraser, and grandchild of James and Elizabeth Easton, aged one year, eight months and seven days.

"Tis God that lifts our comforts high,
Or sinks them in the grave;
He gives, and (blessed be his name)
He takes but what he gave."

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THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MEDITATIONS ON THE LAST DAYS OF MOSES.

NUMBER TWO.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The conclusion of Meditations Number One on the last days of Moses present that man of God declaring to the people of whom he was the leader his doctrine, saying, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Let us remember that he uses the words, "My doctrine." John says, "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." When Moses said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain," he was declaring the great and wonderful things contained in the law, which he had given under the direct control of him who is Wisdom. The wisdom of that law is surely beyond the reach of human thought; for its doctrine dropped as the rain. It came from above. It was a good gift; it was a perfect gift. James says, "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." The law was one of those good and perfect gifts; and it is declared that the law is holy. Then, dear saint, how sweet your meditations are when you are enabled to look into that fountain of infinite wisdom, and behold in it the glorious doctrine of the immutability of that God in whom you trust. Then you realize that you are fitly compared to "the tender herb." The tender herb is made to grow when the small rain falls upon it. So you grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth when you are given a glimpse of that wonderful attribute of our God. Realizing, as you daily do, his wonderful power and unchanging purpose in keeping you and all his dear people amidst the sorrows and afflictions of a sin-cursed world, your meditations then are most sweet. Then, in the language of the psalmist, you cry out, "O how love I thy law: it is my meditation all the day." You love that law because you see in it a transcript of the divine perfections of our God. Step by step, as the dear saint advances in his earthly pilgrimage, he realizes more and more his need of the protecting care of him whose eye is upon the righteous, and whose ear is open to their cry. Then O how his joy is increased in his sweet meditations upon the law, and how he rises in holy triumph, when he be-

holds in that law the immutability of his glorious Lord declared, who hath said to him, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Then surely his doctrine will drop as the small rain upon the tender herb. The doctrine of the immutability of our God has been in all ages of the world, and will continue to be till time shall be no more, a source of the purest comfort and joy to the redeemed. Ah, dear little one, how often do you think and say, If it were not for the unchanging love and purpose of our dear Redeemer, surely his love would cease when he beholds in me that deep-seated corruption which causes me in sorrow to say, "When I would do good, evil is present with me."

But while Moses was a leader, he was not a Savior; and there was nothing in his law to secure the salvation of any of the fallen sons and daughters of men. Hence the apostle says, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Then it is the great rule of right, and every deviation from its precepts is sin. It will be remembered that law and mercy are not companions. When the law says, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," there is no intimation in that language that there is mercy in store for the sinner. Then how dreadful are the thunderings of Sinai to him who is looking to the law for justification! No wonder that the mount shook to its very granite base by reason of the awful presence of him, the habitation of whose throne is justice and judgment. Surely he cannot look upon sin nor behold iniquity. Justice and judgment being the habitation of his throne, surely he who violates his law cannot escape its penalty till justice is satisfied. Mercy can never enter the high court of heaven to plead for the sinner, except in close association and inseparable union with justice. Moses could not enter the land promised to Abraham and his seed, but must go to Pisgah's heights, and there with eyes undimmed by age behold far off from him and from those heights the land that flowed with milk and honey, and there die and be buried. Neither can the legalist, or he who trusts in his own works for salvation, enter the true gospel church, and there enjoy that rest that remaineth to the people of God—that rest which was foreshadowed by the rest enjoyed by Israel after they had crossed Jordan and driven out the usurping tribes. The legalist cannot enjoy peace and rest in spiritual Canaan, because justice stands with drawn sword to guard the way of the

tree of life; but just here, dear saint, comes borne on angels' wings to us a sweet, a glorious, a precious truth, and that is, that sword has found a victim which meets all the demands of law and justice. The dear saints in every land and in every clime have with joy and rejoicing heard from heaven's lofty heights this irrevocable command, "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 mine hand upon the little ones." Here we have the promise of mercy ("I will turn mine hand upon the little ones"), and that alone through the smiting of the shepherd, who came in his own strength, proclaiming, "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Here we have the contrast between Moses, the leader of Israel in the wilderness, and the good Shepherd. The former governs national Israel by the unbending rule of law, and executes its fearful judgments upon the offender; while the latter meets in his own glorious person all the demands of that law in the room and stead of his spiritual Israel. It is thus the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But glory to his great and exalted name, he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. This great truth stood out boldly in the house of Moses, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Day by day and year after year was this great truth foreshadowed by the shedding of blood in the temple service. Neither the slain beast, nor the high priest who made the offering in the temple, could restore the slain lamb to life again; but our great High Priest, who was both the Priest and the Offering, says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it up again." When coming from the darkness and gloom of the garden, and from the agonies of the cross, yes, and from the tomb, he could in holy triumph proclaim to his redeemed, "Mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me." When he came from that tomb he was saved from the sting of death and from the victory of the grave; and his people being one with him, had secured to them by that great offering which he made, and by his glorious and triumphant resurrection, that eternal life which was hid with Christ in God ere time began. Moses could not cross the Jordan, but our Joshua could and did cross that river of judgment. Yes, Jesus, by passing through that judgment, delivered

spiritual Israel from the wilderness under the law, and brought them into a land of peace, rest and joy in the Holy Ghost. Then O what a contrast we find between the leader of national Israel and our spiritual Joshua! Moses died in the land of Moab, and the Lord buried him in a valley in that land; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day. The Jew, in all his devotion to the law, and the great and wonderful things taught in it, and his admiration of the character of Moses, could never offer oblations to his memory at his sepulchre, nor adorn his tomb with the lovely and fragrant flowers found on the shores of the sea of Galilee. O no! That tomb was hidden from mortal vision, to teach you and me, dear saint, that we can neither go to Moses nor to his sepulchre for any of the great and glorious things secured to the redeemed by the great Leader of spiritual Israel. Then to his great and wonderful name belongs all the glory. He says, "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." While vain mortals are looking to the law, or to their own works in any form, for justification, they are attempting to remove the glory that is due to that great and wondrous name, and to give that glory to another.

But when Moses was on Pisgah's heights, and viewing the promised land to the great river, the river Euphrates, the Lord said to him, "I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither." He was one hundred and twenty years old, and his eye was not dim. He could look all over that land, a figure of the gospel dispensation, and could say, "Give ear, O ye heavens [both the legal and gospel heavens], and I will speak." "My doctrine shall drop as the rain." As the rain fell in all the lands, so his doctrine dropped in both the legal and gospel heavens. He could not enter Canaan, but he could behold its fertile fields and verdant valleys. So his doctrine, all the wonderful things taught in the law, looked into the gospel dispensation; and by the types, shadows and figures of the law the spiritual Israelite in this dispensation has the witness that testifies most clearly to him of the coming of our Lord to earth, fitted and prepared by divine wisdom and power for the great work whereunto he had come, the redemption of his people from under the curse of the law. The prophet says, "His work is before him, and his reward is with him." When he had suffered on Calvary, been laid

in the tomb; and had risen from that tomb, he talked to the two mourning disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus, and said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." This was after his resurrection, when the glorious gospel day had fully dawned upon a dark and benighted world. By the light of that day, and by what he then taught, should every gospel minister be governed. He should preach Jesus. These two mourning disciples knew of his wonderful teachings, knew of his sufferings and death on the cross, knew of his burial, and had heard of his resurrection. All these things were the fulfillment of prophecy, and in strict accord with that which was taught by the types and shadows of the law; for "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Then surely when Moses said, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain," he had reference to the same glorious things declared by our Lord when he expounded to those two disciples in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. They were the Old Testament Scriptures; and he presented to them from those Scriptures the things concerning himself. Then what a wonderful sermon was that to which those two disciples listened. Some modern preachers refuse to preach except to crowded houses, while our Lord preached perhaps the greatest sermon that ever was preached on earth to only two; and they not of the rich, great and noble of earth, nor of the *literati* of the world, but perhaps were fishermen called from the shores of Galilee, and qualified not in the schools of men, but by the power of their ever-glorious Lord, to preach the doctrine of Moses, which declared the wonderful work of our Lord, and his more than wonderful fullness as the Redeemer of his people. Then when standing and proclaiming, from the standpoint of the law, the things concerning Jesus, they could turn and declare, by the things they had seen and the great truths they had heard falling from his lips, the complete fulfillment of all things prefigured by the law. It was thus they could present by two infallible witnesses the wonderful and glorious truth of the everlasting gospel of God our Savior. It is thus that the minister of the gospel is prepared to preach Jesus in all his glorious fullness, without which the gospel never has been preached and never will be preached. He who labors in his ministry to present Jesus, and to know nothing among God's people save Jesus Christ and him crucified, has no time to talk about himself, nor about the errors and corruptions of others. But when he is proclaiming that dear name, which is a strong tower, into which the righteous flee and are safe, the dear little ones are comforted, built up, strengthened, and enabled to press toward the mark for the prize

of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. H. COX.

GHEAT, Ky., Sept. 5, 1887.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, Oct. 14, 1887.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—

Doubtless very many dear ones who have kindly sent me letters of comfort and love during the past summer wonder at my silence, and think perhaps I do not appreciate their letters; but O, dear friends, do not think so. Your letters have come to me as food to the hungry, as cold water to the thirsty, or as beauty and fragrance in the midst of a parched and desert land. I have been silent because it was utterly impossible for me to write. During the extremely hot weather, when the air itself seemed as if it came through a heated furnace, with heart and lungs oppressed and surrounded with water, it seemed as though it were impossible to live, much less to write; and day after day, night after night, death seemed to be hanging over me. Many times I had no perceptible pulse, and again it would beat so rapidly that the doctor could not count it; while the violent throbbing of the heart was painful beyond all description. Yet it has pleased the great Father of all mercies to still spare my life; and now that autumn has come, with all the beauty of autumnal tints, of glad, golden sunshine, the mild, balmy air, the sweet, hush-like quiet pervading all nature, so grateful to us all after the hot, scorching days of the past midsummer, I have seemed to catch as it were a new lease of life. My terrible sense of suffocation is much less; and though yet very weak, and so nervous that the least mental or physical emotion or exertion will cause the face to flush, the whole body to tremble, and the heart to throb, still I feel more like living. I can at times receive my friends and converse a little; and what is more, I can sometimes meditate upon the wondrous goodness of God, and think of his dear followers, and see beauty in the world which he has made, and in many things about me. O, is not even this world (though in it dwells so much of the darkness and blackness of sin) very beautiful, and should we not enjoy its beauties, its fruits, its flowers? because all are the handiwork of God—our God, whom we have such cause to love and adore. I often think how much I used to enjoy an autumn sunset. Often, after a cloudy day, when the sky had been enshrouded in dark clouds, the sun would go down in a flood of light and a sea of gold. How pleasing and strikingly beautiful was the contrast, and what lovely thoughts and glad emotions would the beautiful scene awaken within me. How emblematic it all seemed of the christian life. How grateful was the light of the Sun of righteousness to the doubting child of God after a day of clouds and thick darkness; and how beautiful if the declining life could go out, down to the gates of death, in a sea of golden light, reflected from the

dear countenance of Jesus, from God's dear Son. O the blending of light and shade, of clouds and sunlight, of doubts and hope, of faith and distrust! Yet as in nature, so in the christian life in the great journey to that better land; the dark shades are just as needful as are the light ones. The seasons of sorrow, of awful darkness and gloom, will finally blend into the one great flood of heavenly joy, and the glad hosannahs to God and the Lamb will blend with the song of the redeemed, who, veiling their faces with their wings, cry, "Holy, holy is the Lamb." Can it be that my sad journey of life can have an ending so glorious as this? There seem to be so many dark clouds along my pathway, and I seem as one peculiarly tried; yet there have been many golden tints even in my life, gifts from the Father's hand. When it is all finished will it be a picture perfectly beautiful, that the dear Artist and Father of all mercies will approve? Will it be a workmanship that he needeth not to be ashamed of? When he has tried me shall I come forth as gold? O the glad, glad thought. Yet the sadness, the despair, the awful agony, if all be as stubble, to be cast into the lake that burneth with fire! How glad I am that God himself saves us by "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" else such poor, weak worms as myself should indeed despair, and fear even to hope. How comforting are the words, "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." "The gift of God." If this precious gift of eternal life be given to us by God himself, how presumptuous for us to claim that we helped purchase it. Most certainly if I helped buy an article, I could not claim that it was presented or given to me. Yet men do claim to have a part in the work of salvation, and call themselves co-workers with God. Each day, as my unprofitable life goes on, I see more of my frail human weakness, and more and more of God's great wisdom, his love, his mercy and his goodness to the human family. I wonder not that even David, though a great ruler of men and king of a great earthly kingdom, compared himself to a flea; for when I catch the faintest glimpse of the wisdom and power of the great Jehovah I sink into very insignificance. I seem almost a nonentity; and it is a wonder of wonders that God can be mindful of me. Yet incomprehensible as the unity and the trinity are to my finite mind, and wonderful beyond all conception, it is when thinking of him as one who took upon him the nature of men, who became lowly, pitiful, merciful, full of compassion and love, and who so sweetly says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," it is then, and then only, that I dare fall at his feet, that I feel drawn to him, and that he seems to hide me under the shadow of his sheltering wing. Here is a great mys-

tery, a more beautiful blending, a more wonderful gliding of three into one, than the blending of darkness into light before described—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the three in one. Who can comprehend the least of its depths? Who can describe it? We must answer, None; and exclaim with Paul, "Great is the mystery of godliness." And, "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!" At no time in my spiritual journey have I so thirsted after spiritual knowledge, or so desired to hear of Jesus, and sit at his dear feet to learn of him, as during the past few months. Deprived of the society of friends, not able even to allow my brother in my room long at a time, even the name of Jesus spoken by other lips sounded sweeter than all else. Is this loving the dear Savior? Is it a hungering and thirsting after righteousness? "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." How I would love to ask some of God's dear ministers if they thought so. If the gift of utterance were given me, and strength, what a comfort it would be to tell some of the dear kindred the experience of mind through which I have passed during the past several months. Though at times I have felt such a nearness to Jesus, such an assurance in prayer, such an evidence that I was heard and my petitions answered, and my sick room has become a sweet Bethel of praise and glad thanksgiving, yet there were times when such dense, awful darkness engulfed my soul as no tongue can describe. Hardness of heart and fearful unbelief seemed to hold me like a vise. I knew that Jesus was the same; I knew that he could save; I knew that heaven and God existed now and forevermore; yet it all seemed so far from me that it had as well not exist at all. Did any of my readers ever feel that they were two distinct persons in one, and that the two distinct somethings were pulling you their several ways, and those ways were directly opposite? Such seemed the state of my mind, and all the while death seemed to be hanging over me; and while the one voice seemed to say, "Jesus will be with you when you really come to the river of death," yet the other filled me with fear, caused me to dread the coming of the last scene, and filled me with such fears as I fear a christian ought not to have. One sweet comfort came to me, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Strength or faith to meet death will not be given until death really comes; and that the strength of our dear Redeemer shall be made perfect in our weakness, should be a comfort at all times. It has also been a comfort to me to think of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. In the contemplation of the terrible suffering before him his human nature shrank, and with agony he cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass." I sometimes think

that his followers, if they walk closely in his footsteps, must at some time or another pass through the same agony, though we know that the sting of death is taken away. David calls it the "valley of the shadow of death." We know that there is no substance in a shadow; therefore there is no real suffering in this death. I sometimes think that the word "shadow" here is equivalent to or may mean the same as fear. David says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The blessed Savior, knowing the weakness of the human flesh, and that it was through this channel that all must pass over to the fair city of God, to be forever with him, has wisely and in the sacrifice of his own blood made provision for it. It is a precious time to him. He will be present with the trembling soul, his dear love will soothe it, his rod and his staff shall comfort it, and with his own dear hand he will wipe all tears from the eyes. O the sweetness, the goodness and the surety of God's blessed promises! How soothingly they flow into the weary, sick-soul. What a beacon of light and strength they are to the christian amid all the sorrows, the trials and the darkness through which they are called to pass. How sweet it is to trust in Jesus. Very often I seem too weak, too ill, to even form words in prayer. I can only lean on my pillow and cry, "Father, I am weary; I am so weary." There is rest even in the breathing of this one brief cry, to feel one's self enfolded in his love, and that underneath are the everlasting arms. Is it not sweet, is it not restful, beyond all we can tell? But O! there are times that we cannot feel this trust, that we cannot feel his love. Then how sad, how deplorable our case. How often I am made to mourn my lack of faith, and my inability to trust and to lay hold of the promises left for us in his dear word. How great is my longing then to hear the preached word. How intensely do I long for the companionship of the saints, and to hear the dear watchmen proclaim the goodness of great tidings to the poor. Would it be asking too much to request some brother in the ministry to write specially to me some word of comfort? I know well that the Bible ever holds sweet promises, but I want to hear them through another; and I feel it would do me good even to hear the Scriptures read by some one other than myself. I wish to thank the dear ministers in the east and south who have at times honored me with their letters. I appreciated them beyond what I can express, and would dearly love to respond to them all had I the physical strength or the spiritual and intellectual capacity. I desire also to render my heartfelt thanks to the members composing the Sandusky Association for their kindly and generous remembrance of me. May the blessed Lord reward each of you, and may his sweet presence and the light of his dear counte-

nance rest and abide with you now and forevermore. I send my very warmest love to one and all who have written me letters of cheer. The dear little messengers of love come to me in my sick room like the sweet cooings of the dove, and are among my very choicest blessings.

I beg all who may read this poor letter to kindly overlook its many imperfections, for it has been written amid many pauses and all sorts of interruptions. I desire very much the prayers of the dear editors of the SIGNS, and of all its readers and lovers. Upon my bed of pain I have you all warmly, very warmly, in my heart; and when any one alludes to my worthless name through our dear household paper, it is such a comfort. Dear sister Bessie Durand, sister Clarke and daughter, you are often in my mind.

Dear brethren Beebe, if my presuming to again address the household of faith through your much prized paper is a trespass, please pardon me this once; I may never crave the favor again. Once more begging to be remembered by all the readers of the SIGNS in your prayers, and hoping that you all may follow closely in the footsteps of the dear Redeemer, that you may be kept unspotted from the world, from all its allurements and sinful devices, and that the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, may be presented to him as a chaste virgin, holy, without spot, before her glorious Head and King, I am truly and affectionately your unworthy sister in deep affliction,

MARY PARKER.

STATE ROAD, Del., Nov., 1887.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—On one occasion that an apostle wrote to his brethren, he said it was needful for him to write. It must be agreeable to have such an assurance when we make an attempt with the pen; and still more so to feel assured, as another apostle expressed, that our labor will not be in vain. Such assurances it was the prerogative of apostles to feel for themselves, and also to give to others. I do not now call to mind anything of late years having been published on the subject of preaching at funeral occasions. As I have heard much talk on the subject among ministering brethren, and noticed a difference in judgment among them, not only as to the discourse that was appropriate, but as to the propriety of preaching on such occasions at all, I propose to offer some reflections to the consideration of all those who may feel interested and are disposed to consider them. I may also indulge in some suggestions in regard to the arrangements on such occasions; having in view the proprieties that are becoming the most solemn and impressive occasions that ever call men and women together.

I think we may regard the scene at Bethany as a guide and model, not only in reference to the exercises that are called for and proper on such occasions, but also the design of

them. "Many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother." What they said to them we are not told; but we may believe that whatever they said was calculated as it was designed to console and to soothe their wounded feelings, and not, as some in this day seem to aim, to tear open the wounds afresh, and add to and intensify to the utmost the already overwhelming grief. The Lord Jesus, with his disciples, hastens to the house of death. He came to do and did do what they (the Jews) only could aim at. He did comfort Martha and Mary concerning their brother. Jesus still is the resurrection and the life; so that the source of comfort that was effectual in that case is still accessible. We talk about going wherever providence opens the way; and an apostle has admonished to be "instant in season, out of season," or in other words, at all seasons. When people call upon us in their affliction, and ask to have the word preached, I know of no reason why a gospel minister should refuse. The Spirit on one occasion said, "Go with the men, nothing doubting, for I have sent them." The same Spirit that has prompted me in all my public labors, I trust says the same in substance to me. As to the theme appropriate to such occasions, we might say there is but one theme for gospel preachers on any occasion; but that theme is a very comprehensive one, and embraces a great variety. It was gospel truth that Jesus spoke on this occasion, but it was every way appropriate to the occasion, and was what the afflictive event might seem to suggest. It was in this respect different from his discourses on other occasions.

There were no times when Jesus or his apostles delivered more interesting and instructive discourses than where they came in contact with sorrow and affliction. The peculiar design and blessedness of the word shone forth conspicuously at such times. It has undoubtedly been because of the way funeral services are sometimes conducted that objections have presented themselves to the minds of some against having services at all; but this of itself is not a sufficient objection. We are not responsible for the wrong doing of others. Those who think they can accomplish good by stirring the passions of people and exciting their fears, very naturally seize upon occasions of death, if they have the opportunity, to tear open the wounds afresh, and add bitter anguish to the bleeding hearts of the sorrow-stricken mourners; but that is no reason why those to whom a dispensation of the blessed gospel has been committed should hold their peace. The consoling, soothing efficacy of divine truth will appear to all the better advantage by contrast. Where the famine prevails is an appropriate place to "Deal thy bread to the hungry." If some suppose that a funeral is not a place to preach Christ as the way of salvation, but merely to extol

the virtues of the deceased, we need not fall into their mistake. While we know that it is by the grace of God that the best of the people are what they are, though they had been the excellent of the earth, in whom we had taken great delight, we should not, in contemplating what grace has wrought, lose sight of him to whom all the prophets bore witness. Where the fruits of the Spirit have abounded in the life and death of the deceased, and they have been enabled to overcome the world, it may be very proper to call attention thereto, but we should never forget to trace the fruit to its source. There is no better way of preaching Christ than exhibiting the fruits of his Spirit. While thus speaking favorably of the custom of preaching the word at funerals, I do not mean to suggest the least objection to attending to the last sad rites in quiet, and without funeral services where the relatives feel so disposed. I do not think it implies the least disrespect to the deceased to consign them to their last resting place amid weeping relatives indulging in quiet grief. There should be some higher and more important object had in view in calling for preaching than merely honoring or showing respect to the deceased. It is well for those who want preaching to know why they want it, and then they will be apt to have a choice as to what it shall be.

Arbitrary fashions and customs should not have much place at funerals. It will hardly be thought necessary to make a suggestion like this; and indeed it would seem like the last place where oppressive and unreasonable customs would assert themselves and obtain control. But customs have no mercy—no pity. They make no allowances for circumstances. If they are allowed their sway they may lead in the direction of unbecoming and inappropriate parade and display, and almost entirely absorb the time and the minds of those that are already sorely oppressed. Those whose business it is to provide in the fulfillment of these last rites are apt to betray at such times their lack of conscience; and exactions and extortions follow that would not be tolerated at all at other times. The world must be expected to rule its own, even if its sway is despotic and cruel; but the children of wisdom will profit by heeding her admonitions. The Lord reproved the Pharisees and Scribes of his day for building and garnishing the sepulchres of those that they had utterly neglected during their life. We make but poor amends for past neglects by lavishing attentions upon the funeral or upon the sepulchre; and while the demands of custom in this direction are in many cases oppressive, there can be little doubt that they are on the increase. The lessons that wisdom teaches contrast the house of mourning with the house of feasting, as another and an entirely different place. The custom that would impose upon the survivors in the house of death the task of providing and preparing a feast for the mixed com-

pany that may be called together on the occasion, is as arbitrary and unreasonable as it is ill-timed and oppressive.

I submit these reflections with some misgivings and diffidence. It is not on my own account, or that I would have aught to say with regard to the arrangements when I am called upon to officiate. It is mine to serve, and not to dictate. I wish always to consult the wishes of the afflicted family, and conform entirely thereto. It is one of the ways in which to comfort them. These suggestions are entirely for their sakes, and not my own. If oppressive customs are allowed at other times to have sway over us, we ought at least to be free from their claims in the presence of death. One thing more I will venture to suggest. While we will suppose it admitted that preaching, and good preaching, is admissible on funeral occasions, and that it is called mainly for the benefit of the bereaved, it certainly will be admitted that they ought to have opportunity to hear. They should be first provided for in this respect. A custom that would consign the mourners to some private apartment in the upper part of the house, out of sight and hearing of him who has been called to serve them, and keep them thus absent from the entire services, should be discarded. There is no propriety in sacrificing comfort to the unreasonable demands of custom. Most of these reflections have suggested themselves to my own mind when called to share with the afflicted in the deepest of all sorrows.

Your companion in tribulation,
E. RITTENHOUSE.

FAIRFAX COUNTY, Va.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since it was first published, and I cannot feel willing to give it up as long as it affords me so much comfort. Many of the experiences of the brethren and sisters, which are published, tell my own travel better than I can express it. But I will try, in my feeble way, to tell you how I have been led in my mind. My parents were Baptists from my earliest remembrance, and I was raised within one mile of a Baptist meeting house, where I attended meeting. The members of the church often met at my father's house evenings to talk; and although I could not understand them, yet I loved to hear them. They seemed to enjoy themselves so much that I thought they were the happiest people in the world. Years passed and I became grown up. There was an association held at that place. My father always had a great deal of company on such occasions. The meeting commenced on Thursday, and on Friday night there was preaching in the neighborhood, and some of the company went; but after they were gone, an old sister asked a young brother if he could not preach for her. He said he was no preacher, but he would do the best he could. So he read in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, the parable of the ten vir-

gins, and went on to make some remarks on the subject. Before he got through it appeared very plainly to me that I was one of the foolish ones which were not ready, and I was seized with a tremor, so that I could not hold myself still. My tears flowed so freely that I thought all in the house would see me. After he had closed his remarks he prayed, and as soon as he got through I went out and walked some distance from the house, and knelt down, with my face to the ground, to try to pray; but all I could say was, "Lord, have mercy upon me!" I felt myself to be the most miserable creature on earth. How long I remained there I cannot say; but fearing that I might be missed, as it was nearly bedtime, I returned to the house, but could not stay there. I continued my walk about as far the other side of the house, and again knelt down, but could only repeat, "Lord, have mercy on me!" The next morning I tried to hide my feelings as well as I could. The meeting broke up on Sunday, but left me a poor, miserable creature. I could scarcely eat or work. The next Sunday was the monthly meeting, and very warm weather. My father said I looked so weak that if I went he feared I would be sick. When the family returned from the meeting my brother and some of the family went that evening to a camp-meeting in the neighborhood, and when they returned they told me of many persons being converted there, and I felt a desire to go the next day with some young company. I went, but when I got there I did not feel as I expected to. There were a great many persons at the altar, screaming, and wringing their hands, and calling upon the Lord for help; but, dear brother, it looked more to me like a place of torment than like a place to get religion. I had no desire to go in, nor could I shed a tear while standing there. I then went to a tent alone, and then my tears flowed freely. We did not stay long, but returned home, no better than when I went. I then commenced reading the Bible. Although I had been in the habit of reading it from a child, now I read it in hope to find something to relieve my troubled mind. Sometimes, when I thought I should not be missed from the house, I would take the Testament under my apron and walk out and read and try to pray. But all I could say was, "Lord, have mercy on me!" and often I could not utter a word. Day after day I could find no rest for two months. Then I went to meeting; and when the preacher took his text and commenced preaching, before I was aware the tears came streaming down my face. I could neither tell why, nor stop them. I tried to conceal them, but could not from my mother, who sat next to me; but she never mentioned it to me afterwards. When I returned home my mind was calm and quiet, and my burden was gone; but I did not know how, or why I could not have the same trouble which I had before. O how I tried to get it back, but could not. As time

passed on, I would go to meetings, but often felt myself such a poor, miserable sinner that it seemed to me that I had no business to be there. Sometimes when I have seen the members partake of the Lord's Supper, I could not restrain the warm tears from stealing down my cheeks. I continued in this way for about two years, then married, and moved away from that neighborhood, but would come back there to meetings whenever I could. But instead of getting better, I grew worse and worse, until I thought I was the poorest and most miserable sinner on earth. When I would try to pray, I could not say one word, and it seemed to be sinful for me to kneel down to pray. Sometimes groans and tears were all the relief I could find. At other times I could not even shed a tear. One night I was sitting up with one of my children that was sick, and we did not think it would live until morning. At about daybreak I was impressed that if I would go by myself and pray to the Lord to restore him to me, the Lord would do it. I went, and in the course of the day there was a favorable change, and he got well. A great many passages of Scripture would at times come into my mind with force, but I would conclude that it was only because I had read them; for I could not refrain from reading the Bible. And when at meeting, the preaching would seem to me to suit others, and I would divide it out to them, but could not take any of it to myself. And when the hymns were given out, although fond of singing, I could not sing one word; and the inquiry would be suggested, You poor, miserable wretch, why have you come here? But I could not stay away.

I have tried to tell you a few things which transpired with me in the course of eighteen years. About this time something of a very unpleasant nature occurred, which caused me a great deal of trouble, and I felt as though I had not a friend in the world. I tried to hide my feelings from the family, but when my youngest three children would come around me I would feel the tears starting in my eyes, and could not account for it. For two months I had no rest. If I attempted to do anything about the house, I would forget what it was, and have to sit down. My strength failed, and I was confined to my bed. At this time my children, excepting the youngest one, were attending school; and on Friday night after they returned, the eldest of the three I have mentioned, said she was not well, and on the next morning she had a high fever, which the doctor pronounced scarlet fever. On the following Sunday evening she died. Soon after she died the youngest child came to my bed and told me she was sick. I took her in, and on Monday evening she died. On Tuesday night my little son of three years was taken, and on Friday morning he also died. Thus, in less than one week, the three children which had been so much on my mind were taken from me, and not me from them, as I

had apprehended. And, strange to say, I lay in the bed and saw them carried out of the room, one after another, and was only suffered to shed a few tears; for it appeared so plainly to be the work of the Lord that I could not grieve after them. The four older children were very low, but all of them recovered. And I also recovered, so as to be able to walk about the house; but in two weeks I was confined to my bed again, from which I never expected to rise. Then I expressed a wish to see brother Trott, which he soon heard of, and came to see me. When he commenced talking with me I had little thought of saying as much as I did to him. He prayed with me and left. I then felt I had done right in talking to him, as I never expected to see him again, or to have another opportunity of talking with any who could understand me. I continued to grow weaker for two or three days, and those around me said one to another that I could not live until night. I felt calm and easy; I had no fear of death, no trouble about leaving my family, for my every breath was, Thy will, O Lord, be done; for I could not move hand nor foot, nor speak a word. What passed through the night I was not conscious of, as though asleep. Those around my bed thought I was dying. But the first returning consciousness was in the morning. I felt as though I had awoken from sleep, and feeling perfectly easy; and a few minutes afterwards I opened my eyes, and there appeared to be such a light in the room as though the sun was shining in full splendor. Then I felt that the Lord had spared me for some purpose, I could not tell what. I then made an effort to speak, and spoke loud enough to be heard, and some of the company came to the bed, and seemed surprised. I continued to mend for a week or two, when brother Trott came to see me again. I was not able to sit up when he came. He asked me if I did not think I would go and talk to the church as soon as I should become able. The thought struck me that I had told him something when he was there before that had deceived him; for I could not believe I was fit to be with the church, although my mind could not rest anywhere else. I told him some of the troubles I had about it, and he advised me to leave it all in the hands of the Lord. After he left me I felt as though I had commenced something that I could not get through with. As I could not sleep, during the night I turned over on my face, and tried to beg of the Lord that my mind might be relieved; and it was; for I was not troubled any more about that. When I got well these words came to my mind, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," not only once, but several times. I then thought that as soon as I became able I would go to the church. Some time during the week, before the church meeting, I asked my husband if I could go. He said I could have the horses, but on Saturday morning he went from the house and

did not return until it was too late for me to go; he said he had forgotten it. I felt very much disappointed. On Sunday morning I was miserable; it seemed to me that I should not live to go to another church meeting. I tried to read and to pray; but I found no relief. In the evening I found myself going where my little children were buried. I was looking to see if there was room between the youngest two for me to be buried. And while standing I heard a voice as plainly as if some person had spoken to me, saying, "What nearer are the younger two children than the older one?" I looked around, but could see no one near me, and I do not think I shall ever go again to look for a place to be buried. Nearly two years passed before I could go to the church, although I was not satisfied to remain where I was; and when I did go, it was with fear and trembling; for I felt that I was such a poor, weak creature; but it seemed that I must go. The day arrived, and I went. When the preacher came into the house I wanted to commence talking with him; but as he began to preach, I thought his whole sermon was preached to me; and when he got through, I tried to tell the church some of the many trials I had passed through, for the last twenty years preceding that time. I was received, and the next day was baptized, although the weather was cold, and I a poor, sickly creature. But I took no cold and my health has been better since than it was before, and I felt a peace that I had not felt before for nearly three months. My mind and body were both at rest. About that time these words came to me, "What evidence have you that you are a christian? You have heard and read of others having trials and temptations, but how is it with you?" The answer was, "The Lord is able to keep me from them." But a few days afterwards I had a severe trial. Satan came in a way that I was not suspecting; and it appeared I was left entirely alone, a poor, miserable being. For two days and nights I could not rest. When I went to the table I could not eat, and to my bed, but could not sleep nor shed a tear; and then the same words came to me again, "What evidence have you that you are a christian?" O what a change! The tears flowed freely, and I could see and feel the hand of the Lord in it all, and I could go to him then.

But I must stop. I am writing more than I intended when I commenced. I have had many ups and downs since that time, many trials to pass through, and some so severe that I was almost ready to give up. But at other times I feel that I am in the Lord's hands, and therefore perfectly safe. May I be enabled at all times to look to him, is the prayer of a poor, weak worm.

SARAH J. SPINDLE.

MACOMB, Ill., October, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As it is time for me to send my remittance for the SIGNS, I feel like I wanted to

write a few lines to the dear household of faith. This desire has been with me for some time; but I have put off writing, thinking perhaps it was only a fleshly desire, and would be of no comfort to any one; and my writing, as well as my whole every day life, seem so void of grace that I think I surely cannot or should not attempt to write on the subject of religion. But the impression remains, and I cannot ease my mind in any other way, sometimes, than by writing, whether it benefits any one or not.

I have thought often lately of this Scripture, "And he, bearing his cross, went forth," which has reference to the crucifixion of Christ and the cross he bore to Calvary; and I think it has a deeper meaning than the mere reading of the words seem to imply. Jesus had been betrayed, had gone through a mock trial, had been scourged, spit on and buffeted by an angry populace, had worn a cruel crown of thorns, and, in short, had received all the indignities that an angry mob could inflict; and at last he was delivered over to their hands to be crucified, to die the most agonizing, shameful death that could be inflicted or endured. And "he, bearing his cross, went forth" into a place called the place of the skull (where the bones of those crucified were left to bleach in the sun), and was crucified. He went forth. What for? To die, the just for the unjust; to bleed, to suffer and die for his people. I believe he bore a literal cross of wood, and suffered all the agonies that any natural man could; yet I think this expression has deeper meaning. Were not the sins and iniquities of his people resting on him, and pressing him down? I think this is the spiritual significance of this Scripture. This was why he shed great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane. This bitter cup, which was placed to his lips, and of which he prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," was the cup of his afflictions, the cross he went forth to bear. This cup could not pass from him: he must drink it. He came to save his people, his church, his bride, who was ten thousand talents in debt, and nothing to pay. His life must be paid as a ransom to set the captives free. Jesus must redeem his chosen people. He alone could do this. He alone did do this. Yes, he drank the cup to the bitter dregs. He went forth bearing this cross, which was infinitely heavier than the literal cross of wood on which he was crucified; where, after suffering for three long hours the mockings of the rabble, and all nature, and even God himself, seemed to have forsaken him, he cried, "It is finished." He had drank the cup, he had finished his work, he paid the debt, he bore all the sins of his people on the tree of the cross. Henceforth his church is relieved of the obligation resting upon her, and which she could never have paid; and so each one of his children is justified. They received a free pardon of all their sins. Yes, it is free,

unmerited, sovereign grace, that saves a sinner whose whole life has been full of sin, and whose very thoughts are evil continually. These very sins of his children constitute the cross the Savior bore to Calvary, and pressed him down as a cart beneath many sheaves. May not each one of us ask ourselves,

"Was it for crimes that I had done,
He groaned upon the tree?"

When he cried, "It is finished," was my salvation accomplished? Was it for me he groaned, and bled, and died? And when he arose a victorious conqueror over death, did he bestow on me the hope of a blessed resurrection? Surely this is enough for us, if we know this. I often ask myself, Why cannot I go forth bearing the cross laid upon me with more meekness, humility and submission? Why cannot I go forward in the discharge of my every day duties, without murmurings, knowing that "he doeth all things well," and will not place a heavier cross on any of his children than they are able to bear? Yet with all this I find myself murmuring at the ways of providence, complaining about this, and grieving over something else, till it seems not one holy desire, not one pure thought, pervades me, till these words, "Peace, be still," come, and then my troubled soul experiences a calm. This is my greatest cross, this want of faith, this unbelief. Why cannot I at all times put my trust in God and rely upon his promises? Could we do this, the cross would seem lighter to us, and we could run with patience the race set before us. Each one of the saints has his own peculiar trials, his own cross to bear, his own temptations and afflictions to encounter; and were it not for divine grace, they would often sink beneath the load. But thanks be to his great name, he does enable his children under the most severe trials to kiss the chastening rod, and say, as did the Savior, "Thy will be done;" and, like him, to bear with submission the trials allotted them. May each one of us be enabled by divine grace to go forward, bearing the cross, looking unto Jesus, whence cometh all our help; trusting in him, who will help us in every trial of this life, and will bring us at last to the time when we shall exchange the cross for that crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give us at that great day.

Dear brethren and sisters, I have only written a few scattering thoughts on this subject, and it does not satisfy me. I see nothing good in it; but I would love for any one else, who may feel disposed, to write on the subject, for I believe there is much comfort and consolation in this expression of "bearing the cross," could some one with ability write upon it. I wish to say to the contributors of the SIGNS, Write on. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem. Yes, speak words of cheer to the poor, afflicted people of God; for many of them are far removed from the sound of the gospel, and, like myself, very seldom have the sweet privilege of

meeting with the saints; and to such the SIGNS is a welcome visitor. It comes each time filled with good things. I often think, could I write as others do, or could I give comfort even to one, as they do to me, I would be more than paid for the cross of writing; for I think this is a cross, sometimes, and I think it must be to those who write often.

I was permitted to attend our annual association this fall, and heard much good preaching. Elder Vail, of New York, and Elder Weaver, of Indiana, were present; and though coming from a long distance, their preaching was the same (Jesus and him crucified) as the saints in this country love and trust in nothing else. Several other preachers were present, and all came filled with the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and all went home greatly comforted. I also was at the last meeting where my membership is, the second time in two years, and I do not expect to meet with them again this winter, as the distance is so great that I can go but seldom.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, I must quit, for I have written more than I intended. This is full of imperfections, as is the writer, and I leave it with the brethren Beebe to do with as they think best, and all will be right. May they be upheld by divine grace, to still continue the SIGNS, and may God guide and direct us all. With much love to the household of faith, I subscribe myself, yours unworthily,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

SILVER CLIFF, Colorado, Oct. 16, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It has been impressed upon my mind for some time to write some of my thoughts for the consideration of the saints of the household of God; and as I cannot rid my mind of the impression, I have taken up my pen. If I thought that this prompting to write was by other than a good spirit, I should lay my pen aside. Whenever I see or hear anything advocated, especially among the Baptists, that I do not believe is in accordance with the word of truth, or anything advocated that robs God of any praise, glory, knowledge or power that belongs unto him, I feel constrained to lift up my voice in defense of the truth. And I will say that any one who has been taught to know the truth as it is in Jesus, who will not do so, is, to say the least, an unfaithful servant.

I notice in the SIGNS of late, several letters commending Elder Hassell's Church History. I feel free to confess that I have received much instruction, as well as comfort, in reading it. That it took much time, research and patient labor, the book shows for itself. On page 652 of the Church History, I find this declaration, in speaking of the fall of Adam, "That he [God] gave Adam power to abstain from eating the forbidden fruit, had he made use of it, so that he could have stood if he would." This is a quotation from John Gill, who, he says, was "the soundest, the

most learned, and the most able, Baptist theologian since the death of the apostle John." It may be great presumption in me, who am at least but a poor, ignorant creature, having little of this world's wisdom in the way of education, to comment upon the views of Mr. Gill or Elder Hassell. Elder Hassell being a highly educated man, and an Elder among the Baptists, his history goes before the world as containing the views or doctrine of the Baptists of the present day. But I must say that I do not believe the declaration, "That he [God] gave Adam power to abstain from eating the forbidden fruit, had he made use of it, so that he could have stood if he would," is in accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures of divine truth. I have had a name and standing among the Regular, Predestinarian, Old School Baptists for twenty-seven years, and I have never met with one of this class of professors who ever expressed their belief otherwise than that God had, prior to making man, yea, from the foundation of the world, provided a Savior for the salvation of his people. I believe it. Peter says, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."—1 Peter i. 18, 19. If the declaration that God "gave Adam power to abstain from eating the forbidden fruit, had he made use of it, so that he could have stood if he would," be true, then it is also true that there was a possibility that he would not have eaten the forbidden fruit, and have stood in the "very good" state which the Lord God pronounced on "every thing that he had made." I conclude that man in that state would have no need of a Redeemer. Would this not have placed the great Jehovah in a woeful dilemma indeed? In this quotation from Mr. Gill, he, in speaking of the fall of Adam, says, "God decreed it." I believe it. The prophet Isaiah says, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word [decree] be that goeth 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."—Isa. lv. 10, 11. If God decreed that Adam should fall, that sin should enter into the world, where is the testimony justifying any one to say otherwise, or to assert that Adam had the power, so that he could have stood if he would? The theory of this wonderful power of man is but the foundation of all Arminianism in the world. When we talk of the decrees of God, they are ready to cry out and say, O! that will not do to say, that God decreed thus and so, as "that would make God the author of sin." They want it modified a

little, and say, God *permitted* thus and so. I confess that it is a great mystery to me how God so controls the wicked acts of men and devils, so as to accomplish his purposes, praise and glory, and yet leave them sinners, and accountable to him. But because I cannot comprehend it, am I justified in saying that it is not so? O no. When I am led to meditate upon the mysterious works of God, I try to remember that revealed things belong unto us, but hidden things belong unto God. I believe God is just, holy and good, and "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity." And he, having all wisdom, knowledge and power, I have no fears but that he is able and will shield his holy character from being "the author of sin." I do not believe that when men do evil, or commit sin, God tempts them to sin. "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin."—James i. 13-15. If this declaration which James has made be true, we need not have any fears of God being "the author of sin." And yet, with this testimony before us, there are men possessed of talent and much learning who will attempt to modify the decrees of God, so as to clear his holy character of being "the author of sin." Either all things are decreed of God, or else they are not. Which will you have? If all things are decreed by a just, holy, all-wise, all-powerful, eternal God, then all things are fixed and sure. If they are not, and even a part is left to a power in man, there is nothing sure. I shall desist writing more. If the brethren Beebe see fit to publish what I have written, I want it distinctly understood that they are not responsible for anything adduced in this letter. These are my own views, founded upon the Scriptures of truth, and my views of a just, holy, all-wise, all-powerful, eternal God. I have not written with a view of drawing any one out in controversy, nor for popularity. I know my views are the opposite of the popular view. I am not seeking popularity, but I do desire, if I know my poor heart, to know the truth as it is in Jesus. If what I have written is in accordance with the word of truth, I ask all who love the truth to receive it for the truth's sake.

When it is well with you, remember a poor, old man, who is sure to fall if left to self, and not upheld by God's almighty power.

J. H. YEOMAN.

PINE, Linn Co., Oregon, April 3, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—I wish to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I esteem it; yes, I will say that I love the blessed truth that is so ably and plainly set forth in its columns, and have become so familiar with its contributors, that so long as I can possibly pay for the

paper I must have it. I feel that I cannot think of discontinuing the SIGNS. I could just as comfortably say to you and all the dear brethren and sisters who write for its columns, You can just stay at home; your visits are not enjoyable to me. Now I have the pleasure of receiving but few visits, personally, from the brethren and sisters who write for our family paper; but I can truthfully say that it always gladdens my heart to see my brethren coming. I cannot wait for them to get to my house if I see them coming, but I must go and meet them. And it is not simply the meeting of our old bodies, but there is a glow of love (shall I say heavenly love?) and a sweet union and fellowship in the meeting, which the world knows nothing of. I am a very little one, I know; but in this respect brethren Beebe, Chick, Stipp, Purington and Durand will join me; for that love, union and fellowship is just as sweet and simple as a little child, in our dear, able defenders of the gospel. Now as I could not possibly say to any of my dear brethren and sisters who can visit me personally, Stay away, so neither can I say to them who communicate to the SIGNS, Do not visit me. My dear brethren and sisters, I can truly say that your visits to me are sweet and comforting. Though I cannot see your faces nor enjoy your company personally, yet I do embrace you with and in the arms of faith and love in Jesus. I rejoice with you, and mourn with you. Your sorrows are mine, and your joys are mine. How often tears are made to flow for very sorrow and love for poor (though rich) sister Parker and others in their sore afflictions. These things, dear brethren and sisters, give me confidence; for if I were not interested in this glorious truth, did not really love the truth and the cause, why such sympathy for its advocates? I am indeed a very little one, and have sore trials, and need some one to lead me. I have been called to pass through deep waters of affliction in the past two years. I first lost my property, then two dear sons, William and John, and then what few horses (five) I had left died last summer. Then my son (single) was taken sick at Walla Walla, W. T., and lay very low for a long time. About the time he began to recover, my only single daughter was taken sick away from home, and lay very low for seven weeks. While she was lying thus, my wife being with her, my twin boys, past thirteen years of age, met with a painful accident (to them an accident), by the discharge of their guns. One of them lost his arm, and the other had his arm badly torn, the whole charge passing through his arm. But through the mercy of God the family are now about all well. So, dear brethren, you see that I am not exempt from affliction; and truly, in this world we shall have affliction and tribulation; but in Jesus we shall have peace. O that sweet peace and calm rest in Jesus! I think I can truly say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Dear brethren and sisters, to com-

municate forget not. May the dear Lord enable you to gladden our poor hearts, by continuing to prompt you to communicate to us who cannot write for publication, and also to those who do. Pray for a poor old sinner. Dear brother H. B. Jones, of Texas, say those same things some more; for I glory in the doctrine so ably set forth by you in number seven, present volume, of the SIGNS.

Now, brethren Beebe, it is right, is it not, if we surely feel like we cannot help it, to speak in praise of our editors? Well, I do feel to thank God for the ability with which you are enabled to speak the truth, to the consciences of God's children. Your editorials are truly comforting and edifying. May it please the good Lord to continue to bless you in your labors in the Lord; and may the brethren be enabled to rally to the support of the SIGNS, that it may ever gladden our homes by its timely appearance.

Fare ye well in the Lord, all. Your brother in love and fellowship.

J. P. ALLISON.

LONG GREEN, Md., Oct. 16, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I am providentially prevented from being at the yearly meeting at Welsh Tract, Delaware, I feel like penning some thoughts in regard to my own feelings or experience; for it is alone by experience that we know anything, especially of the kingdom of our God. To those of like experience, it is a pleasure to talk, and from this, fellowship is felt and manifest, and in no other way can the children of God know each other. There is therefore a needs be for the assembling of the saints. There can be no fellowship brought about by sight, by merely seeing each other's face; but by like experience, by hearing each other tell of the dealings of the Lord with them, how the Lord has led them all the way. When we hear one tell how he has walked in his own light and by his own strength, there is no answer in the feelings of the poor, little, weak child of God, but instead feels to be alone, so far as that one is concerned, and not able to take one single step but in the wrong direction; and the only hope of this little one is that the Lord will lead him, will keep him, will uphold, support and defend. How great the goodness and mercy of our God, and how little we deserve. We would do good if we would obey every command of a loving Father; we would walk in all the ordinances of his house blameless; but we are weak and in the flesh, and cannot do the things we would. We are engaged in worldly enterprise, and feel that we must be doing something to support nature. Well, this is all right, and we also are commanded to do the same, but not to the exclusion of our obedience to the command of our God in things pertaining to his kingdom. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together;" for in so doing we miss the blessing; and for this cause I am impressed to write at this time. "Seek ye first the

kingdom of God," that is, let everything else be subordinate to that duty. The assembling of yourselves together at every appointment and every opportunity, and thus manifest your interest in each other, and tell of your travel through the wilderness, and see how soon you will become more interested in each other, and how your fellowship for each other will seem to grow and strengthen, and brotherly love will continue. For the last three months my time, mind and interest have all been in my business; and everything of a spiritual nature has been shut out, and for a long time this did not even worry me. But finally I became so impressed with the great darkness I was in that it became almost indescribable. And all at once my mind was led to the assembling of the saints, and concluded to go to Welsh Tract yearly meeting, and seemed to enjoy the thought so much that my business was of no account. And as the time neared I longed to go, but here I am alone. Yet I hope not alone. Methinks I can see you all listening to the messages from your Father's throne, the word of truth, the word of his power, the sweet messenger of his love; and his messengers, how sweetly they appear; and how sweetly the words given them fall from their lips. Is this a myth? No, but a reality. Is there not a blessing in this? to sit and listen to the blessed words of the Master, and be lost to everything else; to bask in the sunshine of his love, and to feel a desire to leave this tenement of clay and soar beyond this vale of tears to view the glory of the eternal world? How little we know, and yet how much we desire to know. Our desire is sometimes so great that we are lost to this world for a little while; but how short, yet how sweet. We may believe that salvation is of the Lord, but that amounts to nothing unless we feel it. Do we love the brethren? If we do we will love to meet with them. Do we love the truth? Then we will go to hear it proclaimed. Do we love the Lord? Then we will love his children. If we do not love the begotten we cannot love him that begot. Therefore let us manifest that which we profess by not forsaking the assembling together; and thus fulfill the law of Christ, and let our light so shine that all may see it. I mean the light that God has given us. And if we have that light we will look in vain for any good in or of ourselves. We fully realize the weakness of our own strength.

"And simply to the cross of Jesus cling,
Trusting he our salvation did secure,
When on the cross he suffered death to bring
All those to rest for whom he thus endured."

Yours in hope,

MILTON DANCE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Nov. 2, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you inclosed a letter from a sister in Iowa, which I think breathes out a true, genuine christian feeling and experience. I became acquainted with them one year ago,

when they attended the two meetings in Maine, their former home. Before they returned to Iowa both her husband and herself were baptized and united with the church at North Berwick. I am sure all who read the SIGNS will enjoy the letter, and especially those who know them in Maine. The letter did me good. I have been doubting much my call to the ministry, of late, and have seen but little evidence that I am a child of God at all; but expressions of some comfort to the heart of some little one by a word spoken from my lips, do encourage my confidence to still hope on. It is a real experience with me of late that I know less and less and am less and less. But at times I can see that Jesus and his grace abound more and more as my weakness and sin abound.

In humble hope, your brother,
F. A. CHICK.

CRESO, Iowa, Sept. 27, 1887.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I do feel so unworthy to address you thus, but my heart's desire is to call you brother; for although I feel to be the least of all, if a sister, I know, if I know my own heart, that I do love the brethren and sisters; and I rejoice this morning that I was blessed with the privilege one year ago of meeting with the dear ones, and was led to join with them in following our Lord and Master. I cannot tell you the comfort it has afforded me in this one short year; and although I feel unworthy of a home among them, I feel to say to them, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I hear that it has been your privilege to once more meet and mingle with them for a short season, and preach to them; which I have no doubt was enjoyed very much by them. I feel that if it had been the Lord's will for me to have been there, I should have enjoyed it very much; for it seems to me that the Lord always gives you something good to say, something to help the poor in heart, and feed the weak and needy ones; and as I always feel poor and needy, your preaching and writings always give me strength and courage. I thought a great deal about the meeting, and wished that I could join with you in singing the songs of Zion, as we did one year ago. My husband and I often sing them together here. We read the precious communications in the SIGNS, which are very dear to me. Those letters which you have been sending, and have been printed, have been read with much interest by me, and have given me much comfort. The experience of your sister-in-law was refreshing to me, it seemed so much like my own. Her thoughts and feelings, as she was led down into the water, were so much like mine that it gave me comfort to think a true follower of Christ had had the same thoughts and feelings that I, a poor, unworthy worm of the dust,

have experienced; and I felt that I would like to clasp her hand in mine and call her sister. O if I could only write as others can, how gladly would I write and tell the loved ones of God's goodness to me; but my poor writings would only crowd out better matter. O the glorious theme of salvation by grace alone! The more we think and hear of it, the more glorious it appears. Its greatness can never all be told by mortals. I have just read again your two precious letters to me, and they seem almost new; and as I read in your first, of what was the first text you preached from, it reminded me very forcibly of a time when the text seemed to be spoken with much force to me. I was feeling very much cast down, and almost as though forsaken by God and man, when, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," seemed spoken to me. It gave me much comfort at the time, and has given me comfort since. In another passage of Scripture quoted by you I have found much comfort. It is where the Lord says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths which they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." How often I have been strengthened when he has seemed to say to me, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." O what a blessed promise this is to the poor, weary sinner, when he feels forsaken, helpless and alone. The promises are all very precious, but this one, when we are made to receive it, seems so great, to think that the great Father of all has said that he will never leave nor forsake us, is sublime in itself. In your last you speak of the goodness of God in providing us a way that we can correspond with each other. Yes, dear brother, I feel that it is a great privilege that I can receive precious messages of love and comfort from the loved ones scattered over this land, although I feel that my poor scribble can be no comfort to others; and I feel that I must ask pardon for this intrusion upon your time. But your kind letters are such a feast to me that I hope you will, if you can spare the time, write to me again. I thank you for your interest in our behalf, and hope you will remember us at the throne of grace. We have received a letter from Elder Wood, telling us of the association in September; but we could not see that we could attend. It cheers us on our way to hear from the brethren. Although they are strangers in the flesh, they do not seem like strangers when we hear them tell of their joys and sorrows, their doubts and fears; for we feel that we are brother-wayfarers, poor and sinful in and of ourselves; but if we are the chosen we are rich in his love and grace. Who can be poor that are children of the King of kings? It seems that this is too great a blessing for one so unworthy as I; but I hope that through grace I shall be permitted to meet the re-

deemed of the Lord around his throne. But grace alone must save me if I am saved. I feel to ask this morning if there is among that throng one so vile, so ungrateful, so forgetful of his loving-kindness, as I.

But, dear brother, I fear you are weary of this poor letter, so I will close, with much love to yourself and family. I should be more than glad to receive a letter from your dear wife, for you do not seem like strangers to me. I must admit that I think my letters poor pay for the ones I receive in return, yet I know that the Lord can bless you for the great favor. I should like to hear how you enjoyed the meetings east this fall.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain, as ever, your most unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

N. B. LIBBY.

OZARK, Ala., Nov. 6, 1887.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I have been made to rejoice to day, having the pleasure of meeting God's dear, humble poor. Our meeting was at a church that I have been serving ever since I have been in this country. I have had the pleasure of baptizing about fifteen in that church. At the last meeting the church became offended with her Deacon at his conduct toward the church and ministers. He refused to commune with the church not long since, and treated the church with contempt by leaving the house, &c. The brethren were all troubled, and thought they would have to exclude this brother. Some wanted to let the matter wear out; but I told the brethren when a trouble got among them to get rid of it as quickly as possible. I troubled over it so much that I could not rest. Yesterday I went there, but I could not pick up courage to talk to the Deacon, and went off feeling condemned. This morning I came back, and the brethren were arranging to hold a conference to-day to exclude the brother. I went to an old mother in Israel and asked her how she was, and she replied that she felt very bad. She said she could not sleep last night on account of the trouble. All the brethren seemed scattered. I told the brethren that I wanted to have a talk with the Deacon before conference. I took him off, and tried to go in the spirit of meekness and love. I talked a few minutes, and saw that he was in the spirit, and I could not keep from crying. He agreed to give the church satisfaction, and said he was willing now to confess all his faults. We went to the house, and I called the church in conference, and the brother got up and made such a humble acknowledgement that the church was melted into tears, and we had a joyful meeting indeed. I could then see the fruits of laboring in meekness and love, and having forbearance one with another. The brethren seemed to love each other better than ever; hence "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

The poor pastor of a church sees

many things to trouble him; and there are new things or matters continually getting up in the church which are very difficult for a poor little boy like I am to know how to manage. Hence Paul says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." How deficient I feel in things pertaining to the kingdom of Christ, and how I should go in and out before them as an under-shepherd. The safest plan that I have found in matters of difficulty is to labor in love and meekness and the fear of the Lord; and when trouble arises, say as little about it as possible, and be very careful about talking in the presence of the world, for they are ready to join you in any abuse against a child of God. Be careful in talking before brethren. Some children of God are easily excited, and will cause trouble. If a trouble arises, my opinion is that it is best to keep it concealed from your pastor. Settle it among yourselves; for frequently pastors will take sides in matters of difficulty, and often cause hurts which are hard to get rid of.

There is nothing on earth which I do appreciate so much in a church as to see peace and love. What is the interest of one should be the interest of all. We are commanded to be of one mind one toward another, and to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. God's people are all one family. Did you ever know natural brothers and sisters to prosper when they were finding fault continually with each other, and going through the neighborhood talking about each other? I never did. Neither will the church prosper when that is the case among them. Love hides a multitude of faults. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Why is it that you can see more fault in other people's children than in your own? Because you love yours better. If you love a brother right good, everything he does is all right. It is our duty to keep in view the love and fellowship of Zion, and to work for that; but be careful that you work for peace and harmony in a clean house. Then if you have Missionary baptisms among you, put them away at once, no matter if they have been there twenty or thirty years. An error never gets gray-headed (old) enough to make it the truth or right. Put away Arminian works of every kind, and then work for peace.

Yours in a humble hope,
LEE HANCKS.

HOPEWELL CAPE, N. B., Sept. 20, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I avail myself of the opportunity of remitting for the SIGNS. I consider Elder Durand's remarks on Hebrews xii. 22-24 worth more than the price of the paper, to say nothing of the editorials, which are equally good, and also other communications. We delight to hear from the household of faith, and of the prosperity of Zion. I can say, Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health, both spiritually

and temporally. I am pleased to hear from the tried and afflicted. I would like that some mention be made of them in every issue of the SIGNS. Dear sister Mary Parker, how dreadfully she suffers. Is it not strange that those dear ones should be called to suffer so? But no more strange than true; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth in some way or another.

I am a whole predestinarian. I could not be anything else if I should try. I did not receive it from man or means; for the absolute sovereignty of God was placed in my mind while I was too young to receive instruction of this nature from any human source. To say that the Lord wills one thing, and another takes place, is simply saying that his will is of no consequence one way or the other, and calls God a liar; for he says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." And Paul says, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." But it is of no use arguing with the dead. The sinner has nothing to do with the purpose of God as a rule of conduct. It is always wrong to do wrong.—Rom. i. 18-20. To obey God is right; to disobey him is wrong. Neither men nor devils can violate the secret will or purpose of God. The Lord had need of the devil, or he would not have made him.—Col. i. 16, 17. The devil has no power only so far as the Lord sees fit to give him, and he can bind him at his pleasure.—Rev. xx. 2. It would be an everlasting task to prove from the Scriptures that sin is not in accordance with the purpose of God, not excepting the case of Lot with his daughters, Judah with his daughter-in-law, David with Uriah's wife, Peter in denying Christ, and Judas in betraying the Savior; or that all things do not work together for good to the whole family of God. I never heard any one attempt to prove it but by their own carnal reasoning. If you hear any person say that the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God leads them into sin, you may be sure that they know nothing of the grace of God.

Yours in brotherly love,
GILBERT DIXON.

OCOQUAN, Va., Oct. 28, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I returned to my home the 17th instant, having been absent since August 23d upon a visit west. I attended the Tygart's Valley River Association, of West Virginia, the Licking, of Kentucky, the Western Corresponding, of Missouri, and the Pilgrims' Rest, of Kansas, together with a number of appointments among the brethren in West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri and Kansas. I experienced some evidences, I hope, of the Lord's gracious presence in a travel extending about three thousand miles, with the many inconveniences and exposure attending such a long journey. Throughout the entire journey I found brethren devoted to the truth of the gospel, faithful watchmen upon

the walls of Zion, esteeming the doctrine of God our Savior above everything else. This is certainly encouraging in a day of terrible delusion and darkness. I desire to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving and gratitude to our God for his goodness and mercy so abundantly bestowed upon me during this trip, and to remember the brethren among whom I visited for their courtesy and hospitality.

Some of the churches and associations that I visited were few in number; yet "Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."—Prov. xv. 16, 17. The Lord's eye is ever upon his people. When lowest sunk in sin and shame they cry unto him from the "end of the earth," he hears their cry. In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and the angel of his presence saves them. It is he who comes to them in their darkest hours to open the prison doors, and to make the darkness light. In his presence the desert blooms like the rose. He is the eternal, invisible and immortal King, whose presence fills us with heavenly delight, and we rejoice again "in hope of the glory of God." At his appearing crooked things become straight, rough places plain, as he "moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Wait with patience the unfolding of his will. Wait in patient, fervent hope, for he will do all things well. We can trust him who made all things and disposes all events; he who can

"Dash whole worlds to death,
And make them when he please."

His dominion is from everlasting to everlasting; and all things are made to redound to his glory and the good of his people.

In this precious assurance I remain, as ever, yours to serve in gospel bonds,

WM. M. SMOOT.

NORTHEAST, Ala., Sept. 14, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—We have just closed a harmonious session of the Little Hope Association at our little church here. I never enjoyed a meeting much better. We had a very small attendance, but we felt that we had the Lord's presence among us, and that was better than a large audience of idle listeners. Elders J. T. Stewart and P. J. Powell, of the Mt. Moriah Association, were with us, and preached much to the comfort of the little few present.

Dear brethren, I hope to send you a remittance for the SIGNS before long, and I also want the Church History. I am always glad to get the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and frankly, I would not give it for all the papers I ever saw. I am like a brother who once wrote in it, "It advocates the doctrine I believe."

What has become of brother C. B. Welch, of Jersey City, N. J.? Why does he not write to me? I had appointments out beginning at Acworth, Georgia, to-morrow; but here I am. "Man proposes, but God disposes."

Please publish the foregoing, and oblige your unworthy brother, if one at all,
H. J. REDD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1887.

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

SINNERS SAVED BY JESUS CHRIST.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Is it the general belief of the Old Baptists east that it is the Adamic man that inherits eternal life, as held by brother Lee Hancks in a communication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of August first? If so, please give your views on Romans ix. 8 and viii. 7, 8, and oblige a poor old sinner saved by grace alone, if saved at all. I ask this not to criticise, but to know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; for I do desire a knowledge of the truth. I sometimes fear that I do not know anything as I ought to know it.

Brethren, fear not, but wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and declare the whole counsel of God.

Yours in much tribulation,

R. S. BELKNAP.

BLY, Oregon, August 22, 1887.

R E P L Y .

"I CAME not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Luke v. 32.

In compliance with the request of brother Belknap, we will endeavor to present in as brief a form as possible some of "those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word." Certainly there can be no more important subject for the investigation of those who love the Lord Jesus than the doctrine of salvation as revealed in his inspired teaching; and in searching for the truth on this momentous subject our only reliable guide is the word which is given by inspiration of God. All the opinions and teaching of mortals must be brought to the test of this rule; and if not sustained by the word of the testimony of those who here by authority of the Lord Jesus rule in judgment, even though they have the indorsement of all the wise and noble of the earth, they must be rejected as contrary to the doctrine which we have learned in the school of Christ Jesus. Every subject of divine instruction, being led by the Spirit of God, is qualified to judge all the doctrines presented in the religious world; for there is no truth which is not in perfect harmony with the revelation of Jesus given in the experience of each little trembling child of God. So it is written, to the little children, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."—1 John ii. 20. While to their natural mind it seems that this declaration is not true in their own individual case, every saint has the witness in himself by which this truth is demonstrated. They may become perplexed by the deceitful workings of false teachers, so that it is difficult for them to comprehend what is meant by the cunningly devised expressions of artful deceivers, and thus it may be that for a time they may oppose the very truth in which alone is all their hope of salvation; yet they cannot be persuaded that there is any

other name under heaven given among men whereby they must be saved, except the name of Jesus. However plausible may be the appearance of those doctrines which deny the exclusive work of Jesus in saving them from their sins, every one who is taught of God knows that "Salvation is of the Lord." This is not merely an abstract truth to them, but each one can testify to its reality in their own case. Thus they are all qualified to bear witness to the truth by personal experience of its power.

In the words of our Lord Jesus, as recorded in the text quoted at the beginning of this article, the whole doctrine of the gospel is involved. In no other work of divine power is there such a display of the infinite sovereignty of our God as in the salvation of his people from their sins. Under the just condemnation of the holy law of God there was no possibility that any created arm could bring deliverance to them. Neither was it possible that one jot or tittle of that law should fail, even though heaven and earth should pass. Herein appears the force of the question in the prophecy of Isaiah, "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?" Until the utmost demand of divine justice should be satisfied no power could deliver those who were lawfully held under the curse of the holy law. While with reverence all creatures must confess that all power is in the hands of our God, he has himself said that "It is impossible for God to lie."—Heb. vi. 18. Hence the truth of his law cannot be sacrificed in the salvation of sinners. Well does Paul say, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness."—1 Tim. iii. 16. In the systems of false religion there is no great mystery presented, as they all teach that sinners are saved from the punishment due to their sins by the sacrifice of divine justice to the display of infinite mercy. If such a way had been possible for sinners to be delivered from their guilt, then there was no need that Jesus should die for the redemption of his people from their sins. So Paul says, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."—Gal. ii. 21. If that law which was given directly by the hand of God himself could not give life to the guilty sinner, it is evident that no device of created intelligence can give that perfect righteousness without which no sinner can live before the Lord. Hence all those doctrines which have been devised by men for the saving of sinners must be false, whether they profess to be based upon reason or a perversion of the revelation which God has given. Every point of that doctrine which is of God will recognize three essential facts, without which there can be no true knowledge of the grace of God that bringeth salvation.

The first of these is the immutable perfection of God in all the attributes which he has revealed as belonging

exclusively to himself. This great truth is so important that it may be regarded as the foundation upon which rests all the doctrine of God. Without it there is no possibility that anything else should be certain.

The second fact is taught in every genuine experience of grace, and none who are led by the Spirit of God can dispute its truth, as they know it in themselves, that is, that they are hopelessly lost in their sins, and already under condemnation as sinners against the holy requirements of divine justice. Until this fact is realized no sinner can know his need of salvation, and therefore he cannot ask of God for mercy.

The third fact which is included in all the teaching of the Spirit is that the only way in which such hopeless sinners can be saved is by the infinite grace of God as revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Every one who has learned these three facts by personal experience is qualified to testify to the truth that God is just in justifying him which believeth in Jesus, as well as in condemning the sinner who is not so justified.

However much religious zeal may be manifested by carnal worshipers in their efforts to render themselves acceptable to God, without the light of the knowledge of God which is revealed alone in the face of Jesus Christ none can ever receive in the love of it any one of these points of gospel truth. The acceptance of any one of them must necessarily involve the others, as well as every point of the truth of the gospel of Christ; for the whole gospel is one harmonious testimony of grace, which cannot be divided. The rejection of any point of divinely revealed truth cannot be consistent with the admission of any other portion of that truth. Therefore, when any point of clearly revealed truth is denied, it must be that such denial originates with the spirit of antichrist, of which John warns the saints.—1 John iv. 1. This may seem severe judgment to apply to the erroneous notions which are so often embraced by the dear children of God; but it is not the object of the tempter to deceive any but the saints. They who know not God are not troubled by the deceitful workings of the enemy of all righteousness. It is to his "beloved brethren" that John says, "Believe not every spirit." The warning is not less needed now than when it was written. The denial that Jesus did save all for whom he laid down his life is the assertion that Jesus Christ is not come in the flesh, as much as the open avowal of the atheist who denies the truth of all the Scriptures. This is worthy of the special consideration of every tempted saint, as every doubt suggested to his mind comes from the same spirit which denies in this way that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. Without belief in God there is no such thing as trusting in him for salvation; and this belief must necessarily be in the God of unlimited power and sovereignty, who has revealed himself in the inspired record which

he has given as the testimony of Jesus. All other ideas of God are no more consistent with the true knowledge of his glorious name than the dreams of heathen idolaters. The immutable perfection of his eternal purpose which he purposed in himself, which was in Christ Jesus, is the very ground on which the Lord himself declares that the preservation of his people depends. "For I am the Lord, I CHANGE NOT; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. If this foundation could be shaken there would remain no sure support for the hope of any subject of divine grace. But the very existence of God is not more clearly revealed than the assurance of his unchanging faithfulness toward the objects of his eternal purpose of love. In this fact rests the whole comfort of those who hope in that salvation which is in Christ Jesus. If they could believe that any event could change that love of God or turn it from its chosen objects, no amount of testimony could afford them any comfort; for such is their conviction of their own sinfulness that each of them would feel sure that if no other sinner had forfeited the love of God, his own sin gave assurance that he was the one whose transgression had turned away that love from him. But it has pleased the Lord to leave no room for this cruel apprehension to torture the humble ones who hope in his grace, for he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.—Hebrews vii. 25. In the full confidence of his immutability, therefore, is the only ground of hope to them which believe in God, and have hope in Christ Jesus. As this includes his knowledge of the end from the beginning, it necessarily includes also that unchanging purpose of God which is known by the name of absolute or positive predestination of all events which come to pass. This neither excuses those whose sinful actions are thus determined before in the predestination of God, nor yet renders them less guilty than if they had succeeded in their wicked design of defeating the good purpose of God. So the wrath of man is made to praise God, and the remainder of that wrath he restrains.—Psalm lxxvi. 10. Instances in which this sovereignty of God is displayed are numerous in the revealed record; but the one most prominent and also most unquestionable is found in the murder of the sinless Son of God, which is expressly declared to have been done according to what was before determined by the hand and the counsel of God.—See Acts v. 27, 28. And our Lord himself said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; THEREFORE HE THAT DELIVERED ME UNTO THEE HATH THE GREATER SIN."—John xix. 11. Thus the Lord reverses the judgment of those who say that it could not be sinful to carry out the determined purpose of God. While the wickedness of man is made to fulfill the purpose of God, they who are thus controlled by divine power are not less sinful because their

wickedness was made to result in the accomplishment of the good pleasure of God.

Of the second fact stated as recognized in the doctrine which is of God, it will hardly be necessary to present arguments to those who have felt the justice of God in their own condemnation. None can claim that they deserved anything but condemnation at the hand of the holy God against whom they had sinned, when once they have felt the fire of divine purity consuming all their own filthy rags of self-righteousness. To any sinner who has not experienced the exceeding sinfulness of his own sin, we should have no hope of showing the strict justice of God in his condemnation. The whole testimony of inspiration would avail nothing in such a case. To the conscious sinner it should afford comfort to know that the whole work of the gracious Redeemer in his sojourn upon earth was to save sinners who were lost. It is the glory of the gospel that Jesus did finish this work which he came to do, and that in consequence of his perfect fulfillment of all the demands of infinite justice there is no condemnation to them who are justified in him. None can know the consolation of this glorious gospel of complete salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ but those who know themselves as hopelessly condemned sinners. All who feel that they are in a condition to deserve the favor of God by their own works of obedience, in that claim give evidence that they never knew themselves as utterly lost. To such the gospel of free salvation from sin is not the joyful sound of life and peace. Never having realized the burden of sin, they do not long for deliverance from its power. Selfishness may prompt such characters to pray, with Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." But they can never feel that love which caused Moses to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. While suffering with Jesus is the highest joy of those who love him, to the natural man there is nothing desirable in it. So, while to them who are led by the Spirit of holiness there is nothing more desirable than freedom from sin, to the carnal mind it seems more of a sacrifice of pleasure than a desirable release to be delivered from the power of sin. So all false religions offer great rewards to compensate such as will deny themselves the pleasures of sin and engage in the unpleasant duty of being religious and pious. Such professors expose their hypocrisy even to their fellow-mortals; how can they hope to deceive the Judge who sees the secret thoughts and intents of the heart? That sinner is blessed to whom the consciousness of his true condition is a continual occasion of mourning. Such mourning is inseparable from hungering after righteousness. All those who are thus suffering are assured that they shall be comforted and shall rejoice.—Matt. v. 2-12.

The third fact which is peculiarly characteristic of the doctrine which is of God is the embodiment of all the glorious truth of the gospel. That is not the teaching of the Spirit of truth which represents the salvation of sinners as dependent upon any condition or circumstance aside from, or in addition to, the work which was completed by Jesus Christ in that one atonement by which he has perfected forever them that are sanctified. Every subject of divine grace must be qualified to bear witness that Jesus alone is the complete Savior of sinners, each of whom is made sensible of the fact that he has not the least claim upon the favor of the just God, against whom he has sinned. The merely traditional knowledge which is accepted from the teaching of pious parents or honored instructors cannot qualify any one to testify to this truth. It must be known by personal experience. In this way the Lord qualified the inspired patriarchs, prophets and apostles to be his witnesses, and to speak that comforting testimony which has cheered the hearts of all the saints in subsequent ages. By the same one way he still qualifies all his saints to speak his praise. There can be no gospel truth where this essential fact is not clearly maintained. Neither is it possible that the saints should find any real comfort in any other doctrine. The devices of men may present a fair appearance and promise rest to the weary soul, but all such promises will ever disappoint the hope of those who trust in them. That they may be qualified to bear testimony to this truth, the saints are at times led into fiery trials, where they learn the folly of trusting in their own hearts. So it is written, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool; but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered."—Prov. xxviii. 26. The pride of the carnal mind ever seeks to be its own guide and to glory in self; but the goodness of the Lord will never fail to disappoint all such devices of his chosen people, so that they shall trust exclusively in the name of the Lord, not only for their eternal salvation, but for all the direction of their steps through their sojourn in this temporal state. When they can rest in this perfect confidence in the watchful care of the Lord they are saved from all doubts and unbelieving fears, and all enemies are subdued under their feet. Then it is manifested to them that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.—1 Peter i. 5. This is not an abstract theory, invented for the sake of novelty; but it is the very substance of the whole gospel as it is revealed in the experience of every one who has felt the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ in the washing away of his sins. That subject of salvation must be sadly bewildered who can dispute the fact that he is dependent upon the grace of God for every favor in time or

eternity. But every time they depend upon anything they have done or can do for divine acceptance, they practically deny that they trust alone in the Lord. For this reason it is needful that they repeatedly learn the lesson of the utter vanity of all their own willing and doing.

That the work of our Lord Jesus was to save his people from their sins, cannot be disputed by any who hold the truth of revelation; yet the natural mind cannot comprehend the grace which saves lost sinners. Upon this point the saints are called to encounter continual doubts and fears. Their accuser urges the inconsistency of conscious sinners hoping for deliverance from guilt and condemnation by the favor of that holy God against whom they have sinned; and their own reason confesses the force of the charge. If they were not delivered by the hand of their strong Redeemer they would fall before the fierce and cruel assaults of this persistent and malicious adversary. But with Paul, they must ever confess that thanks are due exclusively to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Rom. vii. 25. So all the saints are continually taught that their salvation is alone by the grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the natural worlds were made. That they received this great grace as sinners is the miracle of salvation, to which created intelligence has never been able to find an explanation. Yet the truth is clearly revealed both in the inspired Scriptures and in the individual experience of every sinner who is led to hope in the blood of Christ for that salvation which cannot be found in any other name but his.

While we see no essential difference between the doctrine stated by Elder Hancks in the letter referred to and that which is taught in the Scriptures, we do not take him nor any other uninspired man as our authority in the doctrine of Christ. Brother Hancks expressly disavows in that letter any desire to dictate to others how they shall speak their views on the subject of salvation. But as to the question who it is that inherits eternal life, the Lord himself has settled that in Matthew xix. 27-30. If there is any revelation of salvation for any but sinners we have not found it in the Bible; and we know of no sinners except such as have their natural life and existence in Adam. It is not our design to discuss the aggravated point of what it is that is born again. If the statement of that doctrine by our Lord is not clear to any follower of his, we have no hope of making it more intelligible by any language which we can use. He says it is needful that a man be born again. We know of no man who needs to be born again unless it be one of the family of Adam. The context explains the passages in Romans, to which brother Belknap refers, more clearly than we could hope to do if we should write a volume. Detach-

ing those verses from their connection destroys their meaning; but to the unprejudiced reader the connection shows the true sense in which the apostle used those expressions, as showing that the natural children of Abraham were not heirs of the promise given to him as the father of the faithful, but that they who are Christ's are the seed unto whom the promise applies. Praying that the Lord may lead all who love him into all truth, we must for the present leave the subject to the consideration of our readers generally, and of brother B. in particular, only adding that we have no other object but to present the truth as it is taught to every saint.

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G. BEEBE'S SONS.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please give notice through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I have changed my residence and also my post-office address from New Market, Platte Co., Mo., to No. 2002 Francis Street, St. Joseph, Mo., and that I wish all my correspondents to address me at the latter place; and any and all who may find it convenient to visit me here are cordially invited to do so.

R. M. THOMAS.

2002 Francis St., St. Joseph, Mo., Oct., 1887.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

WILL Elder Chick give his views on the duty of Deacons, and Elder Rittenhouse on the duty of pastors, and of the church toward her pastor, and oblige a poor boy?

LEE HANCKS.

OZARK, Dale Co., Ala.

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MARRIAGES.

Nov. 15, 1887, in Warwick, by Elder W. L. Beebe, Mr. Oliver C. Macardell and Miss Harriet A., daughter of the late Joseph Worcester, both of Middletown, N. Y.

In North Berwick, Maine, Nov. 14, 1887, by Elder Wm. Quint, Mr. William B. Getchell and Miss Dora Higgins, both of Sanford, Maine.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—October 2, 1887, at his residence in Juniata Co., Pa., of diabetes, and other ailments incident to old age, **John P. Shitz**. He was born in Dauphin Co., Pa., December 5, 1793; consequently he was ninety-three years, nine months and twenty-seven days old at the time of his departure.

Brother Shitz was in many respects rather a remarkable man, possessing in an eminent degree many sterling qualities; truthful, honest and fair, in all his dealings with his fellow-men. He lived in the vicinity where he died for more than seventy-eight years (having moved there with his father at fifteen years of age), without there having been the slightest accusation against him. But it was in his church relation that his character showed to the best advantage. It was there he was best known and understood. His whole heart seemed centred in the welfare of the church, and by his devotion to her interests manifested his love of his Lord. His experience presents some noticeable points. He was educated in the theories and practices of the Lutheran religion, and had been received as a full member of that denomination before his marriage. At the time that his wife joined the Baptists, somewhere about the year 1822, he was so much incensed at her course as to refuse to speak to her for a considerable time; but the Lord took him in hand, showed him that he was a sinner, and led him to seek an interest in the precious Savior's blood. He was then separated in his affections from the people with whom he was connected. He often told me of the sweetness felt when the Lord revealed his grace. He loved to speak of that time; and when his mental faculties had become greatly impaired through age and infirmities, he still remembered the way the Lord had led him. The assurance of an interest in the salvation of God was given him one night as he rode homeward, and the verse,

"When God revealed his gracious name,
And changed my mournful state,
My rapture seemed a pleasing dream,
The grace appeared so great,"

came instantly to his mind with great comfort. He was then led to desire a home with the Tuscarora Church, being received and baptized in the fellowship of that church at her June meeting, 1832, by Elder Jesse Ashe, the then pastor. He served the church as Deacon for many years, filling the office well. He leaves no family, but many who feel and mourn the loss, but not as those without hope.

During his long life he enjoyed a good degree of bodily health, till within the last seven or eight years. Along about that time he had quite a severe spell, and felt that his end might be near. In a conversation with sister Eleanor Mayhew, at that time, he said, "I am satisfied with whatever is the Lord's will, either to go or stay." His sufferings during his last illness were exceedingly severe, but he bore all with patience and resignation to the will of God. His loss is felt most by the church at Tuscarora. Having but few members, and situated in an isolated place, they feel deeply the loss of every one that is taken. May the Lord build the waste and desolate places.

A. B. FRANCIS.

SISTER **Maria Politt** died July 2, 1887, in the eighty-third year of her age. She had her home with her son, where she died, for a long time, near the place of her membership, Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md. Sister Politt had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church nearly fifty years, being baptized by Elder Warner Staton, about 1836. I think if any one ever lived a life that was irre-

proachable, it was she. She was truly a model christian, never failing to hold her tongue when the enemy was before her. She was a loving peace-maker. If she was reviled, she reviled not again. She did not seem to need any admonition to keep her in her place, for the observance of the law of Christ seemed to be her heart's delight. I had been intimately acquainted with her for about fourteen years, and the better acquainted I became the dearer she seemed to be to me. She had been gradually failing for two or three years, but was cheerful. She was like a shock of corn gradually ripening, ready to be gathered home. The nearer she approached her end, the stronger she manifested her desire for the welfare of the church. She expressed such a strong desire to see me before she died, that a dispatch was sent to me, and I went immediately, and was with her nearly a week. A few days before she passed away she had her grandchildren all called in, and gave them, one by one, her parting advice, with all the tenderness of a mother. It was truly a solemn time. She told me that she had prayed so earnestly for me, that I might be strengthened under the many trials that I had to encounter, and she did hope that peace and fellowship would once more reign in the church. This is the fourth one of the old pilgrims that have been removed from the militant to the triumphant state, from Indian-town and Nassaongo, this year. May God give grace to the families and the churches.

The subject of this notice leaves one sister, one son, and grandchildren to remember her humble life.

T. M. POULSON.

NEW CHURCH, Va.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By the request of the son, I send you the notice of the death of **Mrs. Jemima Mellott**, which took place near Pleasant Ridge, Fulton Co., Pa., June 28, 1887, at the age of forty-seven years, nine months and six days. Her disease was blood poisoning, from which she suffered greatly, but bore her sufferings with patience and resignation. She was sick two weeks, and on the night preceding her death her friends were very hopeful, as she seemed so much better; but the Lord was pleased to take her from the sufferings of earth.

The subject of this notice in early life was a member of the so-called "Christian Church," by whom she was immersed. She was an earnest reader of the SIGNS for several years before she united with the Baptists, and also a regular attendant at our meetings. She did not place any confidence in self, but seemed to feel little in the presence of brethren; and when it pleased the Lord to bring her to his banqueting house, his banner over her was love. She did not consider her Arminian baptism of any importance, but desired to go in all of the Lord's appointed ways. She, in company with her husband and another sister, were baptized by the writer in the fellowship of Fairview Church, Fulton County, Pa., I think, in the summer of 1880, and remained a very worthy and consistent member until death. She was a good neighbor, a kind friend, and highly esteemed in the community in which she lived. Her son writes me that her funeral was very largely attended; but there was no preaching, as Elder Rose was away from home at the time. Sister Mellott raised a very interesting and worthy family. She leaves her husband, our brother, D. R. Mellott, several sons and daughters, numerous friends and relatives with the church to mourn; but we mourn not as those without hope. May the Lord bless all the mourners, and give them consolation in trusting in him, because of his goodness and mercy which endureth forever.

As ever, yours in fellowship,

J. BEEMAN.

CURFEW, Pa., Sept. 23, 1887.

DEAR mother, **Polly Berry**, died August 27, 1887, at her residence in Jennings Township. She was born in Virginia, December 13, 1793. Her father moved to Tennessee when she was quite a young girl, and afterward moved to Champaign County, Ohio, and lived there. She afterward was married to

Malachi Berry, and resided for many years in that county. In 1850 they moved to Van Wert County, Ohio. In 1861 father died of palsy. She joined the Baptist Church in the year 1819, of which she was a faithful member until her death. She was eighty-eight years, eight months and fourteen days old. She had twelve children, of whom two sons and two daughters are still living; also fifteen grandchildren and thirty-five great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was preached by Elder Samuel Seitz. Her remains were deposited in the Venedocia Cemetery. She was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES almost from its commencement. She believed in the sovereignty of God. She was a member of Jennings Creek Church, which has been held at her house ever since it was constituted, in the year 1856. Her house was always a home for all her brethren, sisters and friends. She has belonged to the Mad River Association ever since it was organized. She was always a faithful church member, and greatly beloved by all. If any one is worthy the name of mother in Israel, she was.

JOSEPH BERRY.

DEPARTED this life on June 15, 1887, at the residence of her husband, near Camden, Ouachita County, Ark., sister **Hannah Ross**, wife of Israel Ross, aged seventy-three years. Her maiden name was Barger.

Sister Ross was born in Adair County, Ky., Sept. 14, 1814, received a hope in Christ, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists, in her eighteenth year, by Elder Cox, in Adair County; moved to Arkansas in the year 1837, and was in the constitution of Bethesda Church of Primitive Baptists, where she continued a consistent member in good standing, loved and respected by all who knew her. Sister Ross was sorely afflicted for several years before her departure, when she fell asleep in Jesus, in the triumph of living faith in God. Sister Ross left seven daughters, thirty-four grandchildren, eighteen great-grandchildren, to mourn, with many friends. May her dear family be led by the Spirit of God, and her dear husband receive sustaining grace in his bereavement, finally join her in that heavenly land, is the prayer of the writer.

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

MARY E. McDONALD.

CAMDEN, Arkansas.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—We have just buried our youngest child, little **Bessie Durand Redd**, aged two years and one month. After seven weeks of intense suffering from inflammation of the stomach and bowels, and some derangement of the kidneys, she passed away and breathed her last at 11 p. m. last night. She was a bright jewel, and was a great comfort to us; but she is gone forever from our presence. We sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we believe that she fell asleep in Jesus; and the apostle says, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

This is the fifth child we have buried since our marriage, in April 1869. The first was born dead; the second lived only two months, and then died; the fourth, a boy, lived to be six years old, and died; the fifth, a little girl, lived to be eleven months old, and died; and lastly, little Bessie is gone. We still have four children left, one boy and three girls. Truly our bereavements have been great; but we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father, believing that he knows what is best for us, and believing that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

H. J. REDD.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Sept. 14, 1887.

SISTER **Adaline Watson** died at her residence, No. 156 West 36th St., New York, Oct. 8, 1887, at the age of seventy-five years and six months. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church in

New York City, in May, 1829, by Elder Duncan Dunbar, and was received into the membership of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in May, 1858, where she continued a worthy and exemplary member until she fell asleep.

Sister Watson became a widow many years ago, with the charge of two sons, who grew up and remained with her until the close of her life. Under adverse circumstances she always bore testimony to the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord, in whom she trusted. For several years before her decease she was unable to stand or walk, having been drawn to a permanent sitting posture by the painful effect of rheumatism, so she could only go around in a portable invalid carriage or chair. Yet amid all her suffering she manifested the Spirit of her Redeemer, being fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation. Such was the character of this beloved sister, affectionate mother and faithful friend.

Funeral services were held in the Ebenezer Baptist meeting house, 154 West 36th St., conducted by the writer of this memorial, assisted by Elder Wilson Housel. On the following Monday we consigned her to her place of rest, mourning, but not as others which have no hope.

W. W. MEREDITH.

234 AINSLIE ST., Brooklyn, N. Y.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please publish the death, on Sept. 20, 1887, of my brother, **Samuel D. Fox**, in the fifty-second year of his age. He, with all our family, was born in Loudoun County, Virginia, and all raised on one farm, where our parents resided for twenty-one years. Thus has passed away the last one, and I only am left. He did not belong to any organized meeting, but he told me he felt willing to die, and said the Lord would take care of him. His faith seemed to be fully established in the Lord, and he said man had no power of his own. He did not believe it was in man to direct his steps. About one month before he died he visited us here, and spoke of being at a revival meeting, and was asked if he could tell the church what the Lord had done for him. He answered by saying that he was not allowed to tell it there. I learned in our talk that he thought life was short; but at every turn, even on his bed, he felt fully resigned. His disease was asthma. He was troubled very much with shortness of breath. He spent one week with us, after which he returned home, and was taken to his bed, from which he never recovered. I attended his funeral in Hampden, Baltimore County. He was buried in the Episcopal grave-yard, and a discourse was delivered by a New School Baptist preacher.

Your brother in hope,

JESSE T. FOX.

PORT DEPOSIT, Md.

DEPARTED this life in Christian Co., Ill., Sept. 8, 1887, **Mrs. Mary Frances Thomason**, in the thirty-first year of her age.

The deceased sister was the beloved wife of brother Wm. J. Thomason, and a daughter of G. W. and Lucinda Sanders, and was born in Sangamon Co., Ill., March 24, 1857. She was united in marriage with brother Thomason November 5, 1874, and became the mother of three children, two of whom, a son and a daughter, survive their dear mother. Sister Thomason made a profession of religion, and was baptized, and united with the Horse Creek Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in her native county, some time before her marriage, and continued in fellowship with them, beloved and respected, till death removed her to the church above. This dear sister suffered many months with an affection of the lungs, and was confined to her bed much of the time for some months before death released her from her prison of clay. She continued rational till the last, and while she could articulate a word she would speak of her prospects of everlasting rest, and fully triumphed over death; calling up and kissing her grief-stricken husband and children, and bidding them adieu. She left a request that I should speak on the occasion; but as I was at the time too far from home to receive the telegram, a meeting was appointed for the purpose at Horse Creek last Sunday, when and where I addressed

the bereaved and the community, from Phil. i. 23, followed by her grandfather, Elder Elisha Sanders, who is now nearly eighty-four years old. May the Lord bless the bereaved brother and his motherless children.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, Ill., Oct. 25, 1887.

Robert T. Thompson died August 14, 1887, in his eighty-ninth year. He was baptized by Elder Obadiah Brown, in Washington City, about the year 1817. He was received by the Frying Pan Church, by letter from the First Church of Washington City, May 21, 1821. For a long time, and so long as able, he was clerk of the church.

Since my knowledge of brother Thompson he has been a devoted and attentive member of the church, filling his place and duties with zeal of earnestness that showed that the matter was in his heart as well as his head.

A few years back we had ten members out of forty whose average age was over eighty years; but, like the autumn leaves, how fast they are falling. We that are left often think, What shall we do without them? But it is a pleasure to know that such men and women have lived and died.

I tried to preach on the occasion to an attentive congregation.

Your brother,

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., Sept. 10, 1887.

It has pleased God, in his all-wise providence, to remove from the church militant to the church triumphant, as we humbly believe, our beloved brother, **Elder James Jennings**.

Elder Jennings was born September 5, 1806, joined the Regular Predestinarian Baptists in 1832, was chosen Deacon in 1839, liberated by the church to speak in public in 1850, and ordained in 1860 or 1861. Our association [Highland, Ky.] has been called to mourn the loss of another preacher, but we feel to rejoice to say that we believe our loss to be his eternal gain; and we pray the Lord to reconcile his family to this dispensation of his providence, and prepare them and us for the second appearing of our Lord, when he shall bring all his dear children home to wear that crown of glory which the Lord has promised them that love him.

W. MORGAN, Mod.

L. B. SUTHARD, Clerk.

DIED—Of cholera infantum, in Davenport, Iowa, July 31, 1887, little **Georgie C. Butler**, son of B. F. and Meriba R. Butler. He was a lovely child, too bright a bud to unfold amid the chilling blasts of this cold world; and after a short stay of only one year and twenty-four days, God called him home to rest in heaven. Darling Georgie, good-night, but not good-by.

"This lovely bud, so young, so fair,
Called hence by early doom;
Just came to show how sweet a flower
In paradise would bloom."

My brother-in-law, **M. V. B. Cockburn**, died Sept. 1, 1887, aged forty-nine years, ten months and twenty-four days. He was sick four weeks, and passed away easy. He has gone to the long-sought home, we trust, far better than this. He died a strong believer in the faith and order of the gospel.

WM. ARRINGTON.

SCOTT, Arkansas.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware County, N. Y., on the first Saturday and Sunday in January, 1888.

Those coming on the Ulster & Delaware Rail Road will take the train that leaves Roundout at 7.40 a. m., the day before the meeting, and stop off at Halcottsville or Roxbury, and they will be taken to and from the meeting.

A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren.

JAMES AVERY, Clerk.

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SPECIAL PREMIUM LIST.

THE starting of numerous periodicals in many sections of the country has made such inroads upon our subscription list, that we deem it advisable to make a special inducement to our patrons to assist us in increasing our circulation. It is not any one of these publications that has had such an alarming effect in decreasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but it is the combined effect of some ten or more papers started throughout our country within the last twenty years, and claiming to be devoted to the Old School or Primitive Baptist cause. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started at a time when no one but the late editor and a little band of brethren dared to venture on so precarious an undertaking, and for a score or more of years the SIGNS OF THE TIMES struggled through what to our order of Baptists in this country might be termed the "dark ages." Any one reading the earlier volumes must be convinced that nothing short of the divine power of almighty God could have sustained a poor, illiterate boy, taken from a baker-shop, in contending against and repelling the efforts of the learned and wealthy clergy of those days to bring into the church of Christ the many new and alluring inventions of men. None of these modern publications springing up throughout the country have been without their depressing effect upon the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in their particular localities, until now their combined effect has decreased our circulation to nearly one-half what it formerly was. To all lovers and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we now sound the alarm, and appeal to them as they value the publication to come to our assistance in paying amounts due, and not only renewing their own subscriptions, but in procuring new subscribers; and to remunerate our subscribers for their trouble and labor in thus aiding us, we offer the following rewards. These premiums will be given only to our subscribers, and no one who is not a subscriber will be entitled to them.

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Second. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us two new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one of our large type Hymn Books, or a copy of the Church History.

Third. To any one who is a subscriber, and will pay up all arrearages, and their own subscription to 15 December, 1887, and send us five new full price subscribers at the same time, we will send one large two dollar Hymn Book and one small one dollar Hymn Book and either volume of the Editorials, or both volumes of the Editorials and one small Hymn Book, or the Church History and either volume of the Editorials and one small one dollar Hymn Book, or any of our own book publications to the amount of five dollars.

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ON

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 55. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1887. NO. 24.

POETRY.

THE KING'S ADVENT.

"TELL ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass."—Matt. xxi. 5.

Thus spake the heaven-sent messenger
To Zion's daughter; and she heard,
But laughed to scorn the warning word;
For what was such a king to her?
"The monarch that hath rule with me,"
Swift she made answer haughtily,
"Comes in no mean disguise like this,
But with a royal retinue,
And with pomp and honor due
Alike to my degree and his.
Go to! ye prophets that foretell
A Sovereign so contemptible."

And Zion's daughter, fair and proud,
Smiled with a bitter smile to hear
The ignorant tumult of the crowd,
As the meek King foretold drew near.
"Fit monarch for a rabble rout,"
She spoke, disdainful; "Let them shout
Hosannas now: full soon their cry
Will ring as loudly, Crucify!"

Came one amidst the gathering throng,
Whose heart had suffered cruel wrong;
Whom want and woe had driven to sin,
Until the tale of life had been
For many an evil year the same
Dull round of wretchedness and shame.
Men gibed at her; and women drew
Their garments closer, lest the stain
Of some uncleanness might remain
From a chance touch. But pressing through,
Heedless of both, she reached his side,
And fell upon her knees, and cried,
"Art thou the King in truth? O King!
Have mercy on a wretched thing,
Too vile to venture any plea
Save its exceeding misery."

Men scoffed at her despairing cries,
And women flashed their virtuous scorn
At the base creature, woman born,
Whom shamed their sex. But the King's eyes
Of her woeful sight took heed,
With searching glance. Then tenderly,
"I am the King in truth," said he;
"And whoso cometh unto me,
My grace shall answer to his need.
Go, and fear nothing."

And she went,
Lost in a strange and sweet content
That took no thought of day or night,
Or henceforth any murmurs spent
Upon their dearth of world's delight;
For joy exceeding all the rest
Was in her sense of peace possessed.

But Zion's daughter, proud and fair,
Still waits to see her King advance
With fitting pomp and circumstance,
Of waving banners, and the blare
Of trumpets on the startled air:
Waits with a vain desire yet;
While she whose bitter need was met
With his compassion; whose disgrace
Was blotted out with her despair,
Dwells in the sunshine of his face,
And knows the King came then and there.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MEDITATIONS ON THE LAST DAYS OF MOSES.

NUMBER THREE.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In the last pages of Meditations Number Two we were blessed with the sweet privilege of looking into some of the glorious things contained in the wonderful name of Jesus. Moses, in all the wonderful teachings of the law, enabled God's dear people in all ages since it was given to look with the purest and most heavenly adoration to some of the sweet, precious and consoling things contained in the character of him whose name "shall be called Wonderful." That name is declared by Moses, when he says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God." Moses was a servant of the Most High, and the chief thing in all his service was to publish the name of the Lord. O how wonderfully was that man of God prepared to discharge that service. The Lord in his wonderful majesty said to Moses, "Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever." Then Moses talked face to face with the Almighty. In the introduction of these meditations I was made to inquire why Moses introduced that chapter with these awe-inspiring words, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth." But that inquiry is silenced when he says, "Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God." David, when inspired from on high, heeds that admonition, saying, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." With this wonderful view of the power, glory and wisdom of heaven's exalted King, David turns his thoughts within, and says, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me." And the fervent prayer of the dear saint is, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer." Thus these two ancient servants of the Almighty join in ascribing greatness and glory to the

ever-precious name of Israel's God. But unto the Son the everlasting Father saith, as quoted by the apostle, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Here is declared the eternity of our God and his kingly power. Sceptres are not swayed by any except kings; and this sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness. The sceptres of earthly kings have been pointed to the victims of royal hate and tyrannical power, who have been sacrificed to satisfy an insatiate thirst for power; but here is presented a King in whose kingdom the King sways a sceptre of righteousness. In the reign of king Ahasuerus, queen Esther stood in the inner court of the king's house, and the king held out to her the golden sceptre that was in his hand; so Esther drew near and touched the top of it. This was an assurance to the queen that she had found favor in the sight of her Lord, the king. That favor extended to her and her kindred. The decree had gone forth that she and all her kindred were to be put to death. She sought the king to secure a reversal of that decree, and succeeded. So a decree has gone forth, dear saints, which reaches all the elect, the chosen people of God, and that decree is, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." But that decree applies to your mortal bodies; and although death and the grave have power over these bodies, yet that power is limited, and that decree will be revoked on the great and glorious morning of the resurrection of the dead. We say it will be revoked; but perhaps it would be better to say that it has been revoked from eternity. Our Lord said, "I am the resurrection and the life." He never changes; he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Then if he was the resurrection and the life when he talked to Mary and Martha, he was the same from eternity. To Abel he will be as fully and completely the resurrection as he will be to the last one of the chosen family whose body will yield to the power of the grim-visaged monarch of the tomb. All that will be, because his throne is forever and ever, and the sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of his kingdom. The prophet says, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." Mark you, that kingdom was set up by the God of heaven, and its King is the glorious Son of God. Then that King had just come in holy triumph from the tomb, where he had lain for three days, after he had paid the penalty of the law which was

against his people. 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." He had come from that dark and lonely resting place, having fulfilled all righteousness. Then the sceptre of his kingdom was a sceptre of righteousness; and all the subjects of that kingdom, like queen Esther, are permitted to touch the top of that sceptre, because their glorious Lord is made unto them righteousness. He being made unto them righteousness, and they being given a strong assurance and a precious hope by the regenerating grace of their glorious Lord that he is made unto them righteousness, they cease to look to the law or to their own works for justification. In regeneration they are given that faith by and in which they behold Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Here, as we have suggested, mercy comes to us on angels' wings, and lifts our hopes above the law, and places them on Jesus, the end of the law. Then Moses has no further claim on us; yet we rejoice that he was faithful in all his house. But while he was counted faithful in his house (the old heaven), our Lord was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who buildeth the house hath more honor than the house. "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God." The prophet says of him, "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in." "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else." Then surely he created all things for his own glory. By him were all things made that are made, and without him was not anything made that was made. Moses having talked to him face to face, and beheld his wonderful character, could appropriately say, "I will publish the name of the Lord." Yea, and he could say to all that should live on the earth throughout all coming time, "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God." Surely he beheld him in that wonderful greatness declared in these words, "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" Ah, dear little saint,

just here you find a source of joy and rejoicing. The house here mentioned is the temple at Jerusalem. In that house there was no place of rest. Then the priests were standing, and were continually making offerings for sin. While you were under Moses, under his law, you found no rest; but your Lord inquires by the mouth of his prophet, "Where is the place of my rest?" The Lord by the psalmist answers that question, saying, "The Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath chosen it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell, for I have desired it." He dwells in Zion, in the hearts of his redeemed. The apostle, talking to the saints at Colosse about the great mystery of regeneration, says, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory." The natural man has never been able to look into this wonderful mystery. A ruler of the Jews thought it wondrously strange when our Lord said to him, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." It was a mystery then, it is a mystery now, and it will remain a mystery to the redeemed, because they are not able to explain how Christ is in them the hope of glory. Yet they rejoice when they are enabled by the Spirit to hope, trust and believe that he is dwelling in them the hope of glory, and that their heart is the place of his rest. It is then they rest from all their own works, and rest in Jesus; for he is in them, and they in him. It is then they desire to ascribe greatness to our God. By faith they then behold him as their Creator, as their Redeemer, as their wisdom, as their righteousness, as their sanctification, as their redemption, as their resurrection, and as their life. What more can they desire? What more could they want? Although while clothed with mortality they are made daily to realize their poverty, because they know that death reigns in and over their mortal bodies, and they know too that the death to which they must yield is the wages of sin; knowing these mournful truths, they realize the low depth of poverty into which they are sinking. Hence they are poor in spirit; but for their comfort our Lord said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The Lord hath said by the mouth of the prophet, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." None are in deeper poverty, none in deeper contrition, than those who are lingering on the verge of the tomb, and hearing it proclaimed, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Before that sentence all earthly fame, riches, glory and honor vanish. By it the king is brought as low as the beggar. None realize that poverty but those who are taught by the Spirit to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its fearful consequence, which is death. Yes,

"The Lord declares his will,
And keeps the world in awe;
Amidst the smoke on Sinai's hill
Breaks out his fiery law."

None see and know the spirituality of that law but those who are taught by the Spirit; none but those whose deaf ears have been unstopped, and they prepared to see the smoke and hear the thunders from mount Sinai. When they see and hear those things they tremble at his word; and they then see and know that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." By that knowledge they are made to realize and know how poor they are spiritually. All their righteousness, upon which they heretofore rested their hopes, becomes as loathsome as filthy rags. Then they can fully adopt this language of the poet,

"When to the law I trembling fled,
It poured its curses on my head;
I no relief could find.
This fearful truth increased my pain,
The sinner must be born again,
O'erwhelmed my tortured mind."

But just here the law becomes the school-master to the poor, mourning child of God. The apostle says, "But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master; for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The law as a school-master is no longer needed when the dear child of God by faith beholds his glorious Lord as the end of the law for righteousness to him. He being the end of the law, the dear saints do not need Moses to lead them into the spiritual Canaan; but it is by faith in the glorious Son of God that they are enabled to enter there, and enjoy that rest and peace which are secured to all the heirs of promise, not by or through Moses, but by the Lord Jesus Christ, who by one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Then they who are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, can sweetly sing,

"All hail the Lamb that once was slain!
Unnumbered millions born again
Shall shout thine endless praise."

H. COX.

GHEENT, Ky., Oct. 1, 1887.

ACWORTH, Ga., Oct. 27, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if approved, the experiences of our highly esteemed brother and sister Awtrey, of Acworth, Georgia. His was not written for publication, as you will see; but I obtained his permission to send them both to you for the dear SIGNS, believing that they will be read with comfort and interest by the household of faith, as they have been by me. You remember, Elder Wm. L. Beebe, that you and your dear father visited them at their home, when on your tour in the south in 1880. Their physical health is feeble, especially his. With a heartfelt desire that the God of all comfort will continue to sustain you as heretofore, that you may still help the scattered saints, I am, as ever, your unworthy sister,

L. P. MCDANIEL.

ACWORTH, Ga., September, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am now very near the grave, being in my

sixty-fourth year, and very badly diseased, I feel inclined to write a few lines, to express my feelings and tell how the Lord has led me up to this time; and surely I can say, Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.

I was about forty-five years of age before I saw myself a sinner before God, as I am sure I saw myself afterwards. I was in a low state of health for several years, and thought it was doubtful about recovering; and while reflecting over my past life, I saw I had been a great sinner and a rebel against God all my life, and that he had been very kind and merciful to me, while I had been very unthankful for his kindness. He had spared me up to old age, and although I knew I was not perfect, yet I had not thought how vile and contemptible I had been in his sight. I read the Scriptures almost constantly, and thought I would work myself into God's favor; but I found that my works were as filthy rags. My pretended prayers did not reach the throne of grace. I felt like I had sinned away all my chance for mercy; that I was too old; that I had no chance for escaping the vengeance of the sin-avenging God; that mine was an outside case; that there was a chance for everybody else but myself. I could sleep but little. Many nights I would get up and get the Bible and read, hoping to find some relief; but instead of relief I would find condemnation. I was in this solemn condition for two years or more. One morning this Scripture came to me with force and gave me some relief, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward; not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."—2 Peter iii. 9. A few weeks after this, a very prominent Missionary Baptist preacher called to see me, and I asked him if Peter meant everybody should come to repentance. He said he meant everybody. This, though being in accordance with my previous opinion, did not exactly satisfy me. After a short time, an eminent Primitive Baptist preacher called on us, and I called his attention to that Scripture, and he said it was the church Peter alluded to—that the Lord was not slack concerning his promise to the church, his people, and that he would bring them to repentance; that Jesus was exalted a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. This explanation satisfied my mind as correct. But as I was not a member of the church, I could not see how I was included in the promise (a point, I hope, I now understand). I was still very much distressed; and one day being in deep distress, I took up the Bible, and my eyes fell on this passage, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6. I hoped it was the work of the Lord with me, and also he would carry it on. I was not satisfied that my sins were forgiven, but I had a

great desire to be baptized and follow the Lord Jesus Christ. I made up my mind to go to the church; but because of a deep sense of my unworthiness, and for fear of deceiving the church, I did not present myself for four or five years. On one occasion we were going to a baptizing, and I was inquiring in my mind and desiring that the Lord would show me if it was my duty. This Scripture occurred to my mind, or it seemed rather like words spoken to me, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." A while after this, old brother David Patman called on us and preached for us, and of course our conversation was on religious subjects; and when about to bid me farewell, he said, "Go to the church and discharge your duty; for I have all confidence, from what you have told me, that you are one of God's children." After brother Patman left, I was sitting down, wondering and pondering in my mind what he could have seen in me to cause him to think that I was a child of God and a fit subject for the church. I felt myself to be a condemned sinner. But suddenly, and in a way I could not tell, a calm and pleasant sensation came over me. I felt my sins forgiven, and that it was through the merits of the blood of Jesus. I felt I could tell and explain to anybody that it is through the merits of the blood of Jesus that we are saved, and that it was the grace of God given us in Christ his Son, and who had given us to Jesus before the world began; and that Jesus, for the love he had for us, voluntarily died upon the cross; and the good old song came into my mind,

"Grace, 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear," &c.

I sang the song through. I did not think I should ever see any more trouble, and did not think I would ever sin any more. I felt that

"Now my remnant of days
I will spend in his praise."

But alas! I soon found that I was yet in the flesh. The hymn number 1091, Beebe's Collection, expressed my feelings better than I can tell them myself, and I often read and sing it. I wish here to copy two or three verses:

"When first I was deliver'd
I hardly could believe
That I, so vile a sinner,
Such favor should receive;
Although his solemn praises
Were flowing from my tongue,
Yet fears were oft suggested
That yet I might be wrong."

"But soon these fears were banish'd,
And tears began to flow,
That I, so vile a sinner,
Should be beloved so:
I thought my trials over,
And all my troubles gone,
And joy, and peace, and pleasure,
Should be my lot alone."

"But now I find a warfare,
Which often bends me low;
The world, the flesh, and Satan,
They do beset me so:
Can one who is a christian
Have such a heart as mine?
I fear I never witnessed
Th' effects of love divine."

As before stated, I had a great desire to be baptized and follow the Lord Jesus with sinless perfection; but finding that I could not cease from sin, caused me to hesitate, lament and mourn, and to doubt the genuineness of my conversion. I did not become satisfied that I was a subject of grace, or one of God's chosen children (and I did not then, nor do not now, believe that any others ought to join the church here); but being anxious to discharge my duty, I went to the Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church of Acworth, with much fear and trembling, in June, 1887, and was received, and baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks. Since that time my mind has been at ease, so far as joining the right church and receiving the proper baptism is concerned. The great trouble with me is, Am I a proper subject? I do not feel worthy to sit in church capacity with God's children; but of this one thing I feel sure, that the world has no charms for me now. Things I once delighted in and took pleasure in have no charms for me now. My chief delight is in trying to follow Jesus, and my great trouble is that I cannot do it. My whole trust and dependence is in the blood of Jesus, which, I believe, he shed on the cross for the children which his Father gave him in covenant before the world began.

Brethren, I have read many of your precious letters published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Very few of you have I seen face to face, and would not know you if I should see you in this world; but if we are the favored of the Lord, we will meet in that good world above, where we will know one another as the redeemed of the Lord.

SARAH AWTRY.

ACWORTH, Georgia.

DEAR SISTER MCDANIEL:—You ask me to write out my christian experience. My dear sister, I fear very much that I have no christian experience. To have a christian experience is to be a child of God; and my life has been so unlike what a child of God or a christian should be, that I hardly dare claim the name, or to claim relationship with the dear children of God. Sometimes in reading the relation of the travel of dear children of God, I can rejoice, and shed tears of joy, and say, Surely I have traveled the same road. But as soon as I reflect on my past life, remembering how good and kind the Lord has been to me, and how unthankful I have been, and how sinful and worldly-minded, I say, O! I am mistaken. Theirs is true and genuine, but mine is only the shadow. And could you know, my dear sister, the wickedness and depravity of my heart, and the forbidden paths I have walked in, and how unthankful and ungrateful I have been to my Lord and Master, who, I know so well, has been kind, and merciful, and long-forbearing with me, I am satisfied you could not fellowship me as a christian. But I cannot tell you by words how very unworthy I am.

The word says, "No man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him: even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." So, sister, you may know some of the same things by experience; but I hope, trust and believe that you have not been as disobedient as I have; and I would hope that no child of God has; for if I am a child of God, I know I have been a very disobedient and unthankful one, which causes me to go mourning much of my time. I have been annoyed by sin since the days of my youth; but then I took some consolation in the thought that if I lived to be old I would be relieved from the annoyance of sin, and that I could spend my time in the delightful and unadulterable service of my God. But instead of getting clear of sin, I look back and see how I have been piling sin upon sin, until it looks like I have been heaping up wrath against the day of wrath. This being my condition, with much more which might be truthfully said, I feel like it is presumption in me to undertake to write out a christian experience. I feel more like getting down in the dust, in sackcloth and ashes, and trying to beg the Lord to have mercy on me, a great sinner. When I was about four years old, an old aunt (my father's sister) staid awhile with us, and while there told me of God and heaven; also of the wicked one, and of a place of torment, and of death also, which was the first knowledge I remember to have had of a future state. She told me that those who did good in this world would go to heaven in the next, and would sing good songs; and I thought I would do good, and go to heaven, of course. It was not continually on my mind, but I never forgot it, and it would occur to me occasionally. When about nine years old my father told me that I ought to pray every day to God, and thank him for his mercies, and pray to him for everything I received, as he gave us all things. I only saw it in a natural sense, and did try to pray for temporal blessings. About the same time, or very soon after, my brother asked my father in my hearing what he thought of the day of judgment and the end of the world. My father said that the Scriptures were being fulfilled, and he was looking constantly for the end. Then I was alarmed; for I found out that I was a sinner, and I tried to pray constantly, thinking the Lord would forgive me. But I soon got to thinking that I was too great a sinner for the Lord to hear my prayer, and became greatly distressed, and often would find a lonesome place for prayer, or when by myself would try to pray to the Lord for mercy. I thought I would be lost forever. I desired very much to be transformed into a brute, or some inanimate thing. I really envied the brutes their happy condition, having no souls, and not sinners. I would go often to some place to pray, but when getting to the place would hasten away, for fear the Lord would sink the place

with me in it. In the summer of 1857 the family were all sick except my oldest brother. A smaller brother and sister than myself were very bad, and it was thought they would die; and one did die. Although I liked them as well as ever a brother did, I suppose, yet I really thought it was much better for them to die before they got to be as old as I was, for they might be as bad sinners as I was. I was not a wicked boy, only very ill-natured and easy to get angry. During that summer and fall was my darkest time. I was continually in trouble over my condition as a sinner, and it seemed that I gave up all hope. I was taken sick about the middle of October (on the eighteenth day). I do not recollect the exercises of my mind during my sickness, for I was out of my senses a good deal of the time. I know it was thought by the family and neighbors that I would die, but I do not recollect my own thoughts on the subject. In about four or five weeks I began to mend, and recovered slowly. After being able to go about the house and yard, I would do so, and lie down occasionally. One evening, between sundown and dark, I was lying on the bed, and whether in the body or out of the body I knew not: the Lord knoweth. I thought I was lying at the foot of a mountain, and a voice said to me, "Get up." I made an effort to do so, but could not. I thought that I got assistance from the same voice, which also said to me, "Look up." I looked up the mountain, and a straight path led up to the top, and at the top was a beautiful whitehouse, which I thought was heaven. The path was interspersed with dark places and with light places. I could see through the dark places, by reason of the brightness of the light places. The same voice said, "Travel the path." When I would get to the dark places I would get out of the path, and would fall among rocks and brush; but the same voice which spake to me at the first would assist me back into the path, and continued with me until I arrived at the top, and assisted me to get over the inclosure which surrounded the house. I got to the door, and felt very joyful, saying to myself, This is heaven, where I have for a long time had such a desire to get, and which I had lost all hope of reaching; but now I am safe, if I can get in. I looked in at the door, and I saw Jesus in the middle of the room, with several others around, none of whom I knew. But I knew Jesus, whose countenance was beautiful, and who said to me very pleasantly, "You cannot come in now: you must serve your time out on earth." The next thing I knew, I was on the bed, praising God in my heart. I do not know whether I spoke out or not. I looked around, and everything looked beautiful. Next morning the whole world, as far as I could see, looked to me like it had been painted, or a new face put on it. I thought the Lord had showed me the vision to assure me that he would take me to heaven; yet I did not think that it

was a christian experience like I had heard my father, grandfather and others tell. I was calm and rejoicing for four or five days. Then I began to think that perhaps I was mistaken, and that there was no reality in it. But one night I was sitting by the fire, with several in the house, and a peculiar feeling came over me, and I felt a renewal of the appearance of heaven. I felt like I could tell the world how they could be saved through Jesus, and that thought is perfectly bright before me now. I can see now how it was presented to me then, that I surely could easily show anybody and everybody how they could be saved. I continued in a happy state of mind for about two months. One night some neighbor boys came to our house for a hunt. We went out into the woods, built a fire, and got into a fuss; and though I did not use bad language, nor get into a fight, some of them did, and I took sides with them. This prostrated my feelings, and caused me to think that all was delusion. I was brought very low, and have been stumbling on ever since. I wanted to say something about my condition to christian people, but felt ashamed to do so. Every opportunity I had I would get up the subject, and listened to them talk, and drew out of them their christian travels. I thought I could find out whether I was mistaken. My older brother and myself were together most of the time, and I told him of the vision. He said it was only a dream. I had not thought of it being a dream up to this time, which was four or five months after I had seen the vision. This made me feel very bad. I thought there was nothing in dreams, and surely it was a delusion, and I would throw it away and take my burden of sin back, which I thought I could do. But I could not do it, for that bright and dark path would come up before me. I could not get the load of sin back on me. I had a strong desire to join the church, and went to the meeting at every opportunity. There was considerable stir in the church at this time, and a great many joined. I would try to get near enough to hear them talk. We were going to move away from that place that fall (1828), and I concluded I would wait until we moved before I offered to join. We did move, and settled within two miles of an organized Baptist Church. The desire to join still occupied my mind, but by this time I had been angry so often that I did not think my father and mother would have any confidence in me, and I could not bear the thought of joining the church if my father and mother lacked confidence in me. I had said nothing to them about it, but my father knew that something was the matter with me for some time past. About this time, which was perhaps two years after I saw the vision, my brother told my father and mother about it. My brother told me that he had told them, and said that father said it was a very pretty dream. I then thought that if my father said it was

a dream, it surely was, and I would throw it away; and I made a very strong effort for some time to do so, and abandon the idea of joining the church. But I desired very much to live like the best of church members, and decided to try to do so out of the church. I adopted a rule to pray three times a day, night, morning and noon, and kept it up until I concluded it became too formal, and thought I would pray when the Spirit moved me, if it was twenty times a day. I had many pleasant hours by myself, and sometimes I would say, Surely I will never again get so dark and in so much trouble. If so, I will look back to this time, and surely I will be able to take courage from calling to mind my feelings at this time. I would not have you think that I was getting on smoothly all this time, for I was an ill-natured, fractious boy, and got in much trouble in consequence of it, and would decide that I was no christian; but I desired to be relieved from ill-nature. I never desired to relapse back into the world. I tried often to throw my hope away, and get by burden of sin back, thinking I would take particular notice so that I could tell when it was removed. I still had a desire to join the church, and resolved that I would do so; and then I would decide that I was altogether unworthy. I kept on in this condition until my twenty-third year. The impression was so strong on me that it looked like I could not defer it any longer. I was somewhat satisfied for awhile; but I found myself so full of sin and corruption that I made many resolves that I would have my name erased, as I did not want to act hypocritical, nor deceive the people of God, nor do them any harm. But I am very fearful that I have got into the sheep-fold in some other way than by the door; and such are denominated thieves and robbers.

Sister McDaniel, I have made this imperfect and unworthy communication quite lengthy, but I could not tell you all I wanted to without making it lengthy; and, in fact, I have not told you the one hundredth part of my travel over forbidden ground, and my unworthiness and corruption in general. I intended to have said something about my late trouble and distress of mind, but I have already worried you with that. Dear sister McDaniel, after looking over what I have written, I find so much imperfection in it that I feel much inclined to not expose it even to you; but I know your generous heart and forgiving spirit will be ready to throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections and failures, even where they should not be covered. I have written of things which occurred sixty years ago, but they are as bright and vivid now before me and in my mind as at first, only I am afraid I was mistaken, and that it was delusion, and that I have tried to build upon a sandy foundation. If it was from the Lord, the foundation is sure and steadfast; but if through my own wickedness and corruption I

have misapplied it, the fault is mine. I fear you will place too much confidence and importance to the bright side, without giving the dark side its full and condemning effect. I have failed to write of my corruption as I should have done; but, as before said, words fail to express that intensity that is felt, even of joy or anguish. And now I will continue and say that I ought to have spoken of how I have failed in discharging my duty, and how prayer is so burdensome to me, and how I am inclined to neglect it, and perhaps would, but from a deep felt sense of the obligation I am under to my Master; and how Satan, the old archenemy, annoys me, and, I fear, has caused me to blaspheme the name of Jesus, the blessed Savior; and how I am easily thrown off the proper track for christians to travel; and I should have tried to portray all my imperfections and corruptions. But could I have brought up all this in its horrible deformity, you could not have borne it; so I will close, after saying that when you have read it (if you can and do read it), if you find anything in it unworthy of a christian, or if you find nothing in it that a christian would likely entertain, that you lay aside the mantle of charity, and speak your conclusion freely to me (it will be best for me), and feel to say, like David, "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be an excellent oil."

Yours unworthily,

M. C. AWREY.

PORTLAND, Ind., August 16, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I had thought for a long period of time that I would refrain from intruding upon your brotherly forbearance in the way of submitting anything for your patient inspection, feeling that your watchcare over the subject matter that is given space in the SIGNS is a care that has many times been a grievous burden; for I often think that at many times there are submitted to your judgment many things that, were they printed, would not be just what the saints of God should have as healthy food. Now, dear brethren, if any doctrine or exhortation which I humbly submit to your inspection shall be found unstable, you will confer a favor on me if you withhold it from publication.

My mind has been led to reflect on the subject of God's certain foreknowledge of both the virtues and vices of men, of their good and evil practices, and of his foretelling such events, and also of foretelling how at a certain time men should do things rewardable and punishable. First. If God does not foreknow, he cannot foretell such events. To positively foretell is to positively foreknow. Second. If God does not certainly foreknow the future volitions or choosings of men, then he cannot certainly foreknow the consequences dependent upon those volitions and choosings of men. The knowledge of the existence of the one depends on the knowledge of the existence of the other, and the one cannot be more certain than the other. In other

words, if God does not certainly foreknow the acts of men, how can he provide for the consequences? If he does not foreknow them, it is certain that he must be ignorant of all the consequences that follow. If we admit for a moment that he is ignorant of their acts, and the consequences of their acts, then we will be at a great loss for words and ideas to reconcile the following passages of Scripture: "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." Here Christ tells them that it was written in the Jewish law, or the Old Testament, just what those Jews should do. It was foretold; and if so, was it not foreknown? Yet who can say that it was a christian act to hate Christ? Yet it was foretold; and who will profess that those Jews did not follow their hearts' desire—the liberty of their minds? Now, was this in the *permissive* decree? If so, why should such permissives, and such liberty of action of those Jews in hating the Lord, transpire at the time foretold, and also be wholly without a cause? Likewise Pharaoh's conduct, in refusing to obey God's command to let God's people go, was foretold. God said to Moses, "I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go."—Ex. iii. 19. Here God professes to know Pharaoh's future disobedience. God says, "But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt."—Ex. vii. 4. Here it is plain that God knew just what Pharaoh's mind would be, and how his heart would be inclined, and also told the consequence of Pharaoh's disobedience; and it certainly cannot be denied that Pharaoh did follow his own free will. It is here that I would have the reader notice that Pharaoh's will, and his desire, and his heart's pleasure, was the very thing that God had foretold; and in following his own carnal desires he fulfilled what God had foretold of him. His heart was inclined to its own lusts. Yet it must be noticed that in all he did, in binding burdens on the children of Israel, and all his persecutions, and his obstinacy, he only fulfilled a decree; and the consequence of Pharaoh's obstinacy was foretold as a thing that God knew, and not what he guessed at. Then was it *permissive*, or was it decreed, "that I may lay my hand upon Egypt?" Likewise the cruelty that Hazael should be guilty of is foretold in 2 Kings viii. 12: "I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel. * * * Thou wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child." Yet Hazael seemed surprised to think he should ever be guilty of such cruelty, and he said to the man of God, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Yet, as much surprised as Hazael was at this prophecy concerning him, we find that when the time came for this prophecy to be fulfilled Hazael's mind and heart were so set that in fulfilling his heart's lusts he then and there did do just what God foretold, to a jot. His free moral agency, as some would

term it, did not vary in the least from following God's solemn decrees.—See 1 Kings xv. 16. Likewise the moral conduct of Cyrus was foretold long before he was born in his mercy to God's people, and his regard to the true God, in turning the captivity of the Jews and promoting the building of the temple.—Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. 13. It was foretold of Cyrus how his heart should be inclined at that time, and what he should do; and still he was not yet born. Now this was one of the great morals foretold, and also the consequences of it were foretold. Then can it be successfully denied that God does foreknow the future actions of men, and also the consequences of those acts, both of the virtues and vices? How many instances of the moral conduct of the kings of the north and south, particular instances of the wicked behavior of the kings of Syria and Egypt, are foretold in the tenth chapter of Daniel. Their corruption, violence, robbery, treachery and lies; and particularly how much is foretold of the horrid wickedness of Antiochus Epiphanes, called a vile person in that chapter; and also in the eighth chapter, verses 9, 14, 23, to the end, are foretold his flattery, deceit and lies; his having his heart set to do mischief, and set against the holy covenant; his destroying and treading under foot the holy people in a marvelous manner; his having indignation against the holy covenant, setting his heart against and conspiring against it; his polluting the sanctuary of strength, treading it under foot; taking away the daily sacrifice, and placing the abomination that maketh desolate; his great pride, magnifying himself against God, and uttering marvelous blasphemies against him, until God should destroy him. Yet, with all the pride, liberty of action, and in fulfilling his heart's desire, it was foretold that he should do this. Then again in this event, when whole nations were involved in this terrible ravishing of nations, when two hundred thousand Israelites fell by the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, in all these bloody years of wars and pestilence, I ask, did not the Lord's prophets foretell this? Did not also the consequences follow in line? If God both foretold the acts and the consequences, then what wisdom we see. Our God sees and foretells the events, and not one jot or tittle can fail, but all must be fulfilled. With all the moral conduct of the Jews on the occasion of this persecution, as predicted, it is foretold that he should corrupt many by flatteries (Daniel xi. 32-34), but that others should behave with a glorious constancy and fortitude in opposition to him (verse 32), and that some men should fall and repent (verse 35). Here both the virtues and vices are foretold.

Likewise Peter in denying his Lord, with its circumstances, and that great sin of Judas in betraying his Master, and its dreadful punishment, were foretold in like positive manner.—Matt. xxvi. 21-25. Here the conduct

of Judas was specifically foretold, centuries before he was born; and when our Lord and Master was to be betrayed into the hands of wicked men Judas, as it was foretold of him, proceeded in the manner and form, with his heart set by the devil, as Christ said, "What thou doest, do quickly." I ask, did not Judas do just what his heart desired? Did he not use all the "free moral agency" that any Arminian could ask? Did he not follow his own will? Yet, I ask, did he not fulfill a decree as specifically and as pointedly, and with all the treachery that the man of God had foretold of him? The thirty pieces of silver that were offered by the Jews as the price of blood; was it not done with all the desire and heart's choice possible? Yet did it not fulfill a decree that had gone before? Also the accepting of it by Judas, as a free act on his part, and also the dividing of Jesus' raiment ("For my vesture they did cast lots"), were done with all the hatred that mortal man could wish or desire; yet in all this was anything done that did not fulfill a decree foretold? Then how much is gained by denying the absolute predestination of all things, if it puts us in any better condition to compromise with Arminians by saying, "Just so far as the church is concerned," or, "So far as the church goes?" Then that passage of Scripture which says that he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" should read, All things in the church; and where it says, "All things work together for good to them that love God," it should read, All things in the church. But as a believer in the Bible, I only wish to leave it as the Bible has it, unlimited. When the Bible is so full of the things foretold by God, both of the vices of some and of the virtues of others, and especially when he foretells how good some should act, and how wicked others should act, it certainly must be admitted that our God is wisdom. To foretell is to foreknow; and how can our God foretell or foreknow an uncertainty? Can he foretell a thing he does not know? If he knows it, is it not a fact? If so, are certain facts certain to come to pass? If so, are they not fixed? The happiness of the saints is firmly assured; and how can it be thus unless the opposers of their happiness have their bounds? To all those whom our Lord has called, and who have tasted the good things of God, if any shall think this Scripture hard to reconcile, I would say, I have realized that among Baptists there are a diversity of gifts. All is not an eye, all is not an ear. It is the same God who is rich over all things to the church; and while in this vale of flesh we are not a perfect body.

Seeing the Scripture foretold events of the future, and also that many of the events have already transpired, how necessary it is that we render due credit to the wisdom set forth by our God. Our God has in many instances foretold just the acts of certain creatures, and at many times whole nations, as in the interpreta-

tion of Daniel's dream in regard to that great image whose head was of fine gold, whose arms and breast were of silver, whose belly and thighs were of brass, whose legs were of iron, and whose feet were of iron and clay mixed, each different metal to represent the overthrowing of the kingdom preceding it. In this were involved the acts of kings, rulers and their subjects of the different nations of the earth, which were to continue from Daniel, at the time of the Jews' captivity at Babylon, until the coming of Christ, which was that stone taken out of the mountain without hands, which should smite the image on its feet; which was a fulfilling of another decree, that the sceptre should not pass from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, till Shiloh come. The terrible slaughter of kings, rulers and their subjects was as specifically foretold as if it were then enacted. Now, who will assume that this was merely *permissive*, when it was an absolute decree? If all the acts of whole nations of men, with their minds so inclined that they all with one accord follow right in line with the things foretold by Daniel, how can it be mere permission or accident? How much is gained for Arminians, who claim liberty of action when they follow the dictates and inclinations of their minds, and do not in the least get away from the very things that were foretold of them? If they are allowed liberty of action, how much is gained by this liberty? Is it not in accord with that Scripture which says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps?"—Jeremiah x. 23. Also that Scripture which says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord." This we can realize as true when we look back at Daniel's prophecy in regard to what certain kings for centuries should do. Think of Nebuchadnezzar when it was foretold of him that his reason should depart from him, and that his dwelling should be with the beasts of the field, and that he should eat grass as an ox, and that his hair was to be like eagles' feathers, and his nails like eagles' claws; which was all fulfilled as specifically as prophecy could tell it. Even his haughtiness and pride were foretold; and was it merely *permissive*? Yet his mind and heart were set to do the things which prophecy had foretold.

Now we will return to David, when he committed that noted outrage with Uriah's wife, and had Uriah put in front of the waged battle. It was then told David that God would surely visit his iniquity upon his own household; which was fulfilled by his own son Absalom lying with his father's concubines in the sight of the sun. Yet while this was so specifically visited upon David's household, can it be allowed for a moment that it was merely *permissive*? I count that such a conclusion is a mild form of compromise with those who are not able to realize that man in all his career has only been fulfilling some wise decree. It is further to be ob-

served that many things are spoken of by John in Revelation concerning the acts of men, both wicked and righteous, yet to come, when Gog and Magog shall be gathered to battle; and that great red dragon that is to be let loose in the last days, which shall deceive the nations of the earth, and shall cause all, both small and great, to worship the beast and his image; whose names are not written in the book of life. They are to encompass the camp of the saints, and make war against them, and overcome them. This is all to transpire in the future. Now, is this all to come by mere permission, or is it to come pointedly and in the very line as John tells us? Is there any question about it? Will not men's hearts and minds be so inclined and corrupted at that time that they will worship the beast and his image? Will not those whose names are written in the book of life be so instructed that they will worship the true God, and suffer martyrdom, and their camp be encompassed by the worshipers of the beast and his image? If this is all to be merely permissive, and yet so certain to come to pass, what will those who advocate permissive decrees harmonize those things with that are certain, fixed and unalterable? John tells of this matter as a fixed decree, and that he was instructed by the angel. Likewise the prophecy of the bringing in of the Gentiles was foretold long before Christ was born of the virgin Mary. Then in the place where it is said, "Ye are not my people," they shall be called my people, or the people of God. The scattering of the Jews to the four winds of the earth, among the people of every nation, and the gathering together of them, was foretold in like manner. So when the particular acts and conduct of men for ages to come have been so specifically foretold, how that some should believe on Christ and be saved, and that others should reject him, and that he should be wounded in the house of his friends, are things not to go unnoticed, but to be looked upon as the wisdom of him who created all things by himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven, whether they be visible or invisible. Can there be anything besides things in earth and in heaven, things visible or invisible? If not, God has made all these for himself, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; he made them all.—Col. i. As these things, which Paul claims God made or created, cover all creatures, what then is left out? Yea, he made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. There is no power but of God, and all the powers that be are ordained of God. If all the powers are ordained of God, and men's actions and minds follow to a jot in the very things foretold, how much of the way of man is in himself?

Brethren Beebe, you alone must be the judge as to whether this argument in proof of God's sovereignty will be profitable and edifying to that camp

of saints who shall not worship the beast and his image, whose names are written in the book of life.

NEWTON PETERS.

BUTLER, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Suppose a company of men were to launch out from a seacoast town with intent to fathom the depth of the sea, but in attempting to sound found their line too short; however, on their return to their city, suppose they affirm that the sea is deeper than the diameter of the earth. Should we not expect, under such circumstances, that a discussion would ensue? While others of that city might be as fully disqualified to give the exact depth of the sea as those who had attempted to sound it, still they might, as doubtless they would, question a report that the sea is deeper than the diameter of the earth. Such a discussion, to my mind, would appear much like this discussion on the subject of predestination. Men—citizens of our city—have been sounding for centuries to ascertain the origin of evil, but their lines being too short, they have failed most signally. But that failure of itself would have been no reproach to themselves nor perplexity to others, had they not affirmed that evil and wickedness originated in God's holy decrees. But as there is no possibility that the sea should be deeper than the diameter of the earth, so there is no evidence that holiness is the source of evil, or that incorruption is the source of corruption, or that light is the source of darkness, or that God's holy decrees are the source of wickedness. If this vexed question of predestination cannot be settled upon any better terms than for all to consent that mountains obtain their height from the lowness of valleys, or that streams swell to overflowing from the dryness of their banks, or that the dryness of the earth is from the falling of rain upon it, or that the wickedness of the world is from the fountain of all good—I say, if this question cannot be settled upon better terms than these, it is not likely to be settled within the next ten centuries, if the world should stand that long. Why should we not as well conclude that ice obtains from heat, or that steam is raised from the cold north wind blowing upon the locomotive, or that the mill-man raises his head of water by throwing open his flood-gates, or that the plowman stiffens his soil by plowing it up? I ask, why should we not as soon suppose such things, as to conclude that that which God hates, and that which has ruined mankind, was embodied in God's holy and spotless decree? The fact that I myself am unable to fathom the sea and report its exact depth, lays no obligation upon me to accept the conclusion that it is deeper than the diameter of the earth. So the inability of myself, or of any other man, to explain and state the exact source of evil, lays no obligation upon me to accept the conclusion that it has emanated from a purely holy fountain. It is a poor shift to argue, as some

have, that it is consistent and just in God to have appointed the wickedness of the world, seeing that he is supreme and not under law to any. True, God is supreme, nor is he a subject of law; nevertheless he possesses a nature and character, and it is a holy nature and character, and hence all his appointments, purposes and works are holy; to admit which is to contradict the conclusion that he has appointed or imperatively decreed the wickedness of men. Again, it is a poor shift to argue, as some have, that after all there is a great virtue in sin, and that it is greatly to be admired because it is supposed that none would have known the riches of his grace if sin had not entered. Who has shown, or who can show, that grace has abounded through sin, or that sin in anywise influenced the abounding of grace? If sin had any such tendency as to influence grace to abound, then the more persistently wicked men were the more certainly grace would abound to their salvation; and with such views could we conceive how any sinner could be lost? True, it is said in Genesis i. 20, "*But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*"

Truly Joseph's brethren meant evil against him, and their conduct toward him was evil, being the fruit of depraved jealousies; and such wickedness, abstractly considered, could have had no other tendency than to destroy God's purpose to "save much people alive." Note, I say such wickedness, abstractly considered, would have tended to destroy God's purpose; but, considered in connection with God's determination to overrule it, and turn it from its natural effect, and from the design of the wicked, thus as overruled, and not otherwise, it tended to save much people alive, and to glorify our sovereign Lord. How strange, then, that intelligent men will express an admiration for sin, when its natural effect could tend to nothing else than the destruction of all mankind. Should we not rather honor and adore the sovereign hand of God, by which sin is subdued to his purpose? By quoting and commenting upon that class of Scriptures which declare the foreknowledge and sovereignty of God, the minds of good people may be diverted from the main point in this discussion. But such a course and effect does not at all affect the truth upon the point.

The question still is as to whether wickedness is the fruit of God's holy decree; and if so, then unclean things have come out of a clean, though Job asks and answers to the contrary. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."—Job xiv. 4. The question further is, Had God previously and imperatively decreed that the first Adam should do the very thing which he had clearly forbidden him to do? If so, where is the unity of God? Once more, Did God's imperative decree necessitate the transgression of Adam? If so, how fruitless must arguments be to

show that God is not the author of sin! These are questions, and the only questions, that come properly under consideration in this discussion. And if it should ever be proven that God's holy decrees are the fountain from whence wickedness flows, that he has imperatively decreed his own forbiddings, and that his own decree has necessitated his forbiddings—I say, if such things should ever be proven during my lifetime, then I stand pledged to recall what I have written in opposition, and to destroy its influence as far as I can. But none will prove such things by pursuing the old stereotyped line of argument drawn from that class of Scriptures declaring the foreknowledge and sovereignty of God.

J. ROWE.

—*Gospel Messenger*, Sept., 1887.

REMARKS.—The above is the article to which we referred in our editorial on page 212, present volume, headed "Railing Against Truth," which we publish at the suggestion of a number of esteemed brethren.

Neither we nor the original editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever claimed that our views were the standard of divine truth. But we do hold, with all followers of Jesus, that the inspired Scriptures contain the only standard of truth. We now present the article against which we were compelled publicly to record our protest, asking that our readers will impartially compare it with the Scriptures. We claim that it does flatly contradict the following Scriptures: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."—Genesis i. 20. "And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him."—2 Samuel xvi. 10, 11. "And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee."—1 Kings xxii. 19-23. "The Lord hath made all for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. "I form

the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."—Isaiah xlv. 7. "Zion spreadeth forth her hands, and there is none to comfort her: the Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries should be round about him."—Lam. i. 17. "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"—Amos iii. 6. "And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."—Matt. xxvi. 39. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."—Luke xxiv. 25-27. "Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."—John xix. 11. "But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."—Acts iii. 18. "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."—Acts iv. 27, 28. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."—Jude 4. Also, we refer to all the testimony of prophecy concerning the wickedness of men.

Our authority for withholding fellowship from the writer until God shall give him repentance to the acknowledging of the truth is in the text, "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 a one no not to eat."—1 Cor. v. 11. "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."—1 Tim. v. 20. "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."—1 Tim. vi. 5. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."—2 Tim. iii. 5. "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in

works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."—Titus i. 13-16.

In obedience to the scriptural commands quoted in the last paragraph, we published the editorial referred to; and we now propose to lay the matter before the churches of which we are members, the Warwick and the Middletown & Wallkill, of the Warwick Association, which meet December 31st, 1887, and ask for an expression from them as to whether or not we are in order. As to personal fellowship, it is a matter beyond our own control; and if we find a brother ridiculing and railing against a principle of doctrine that is precious to us, we immediately withdraw fellowship from him, whether we openly express our non-fellowship or not. If we are wrong in our convictions, and it can be made to appear from the divine rule and testimony that we are in disorder, we then hope and trust that God will give us repentance to the acknowledging of our error; but until then it would only be hypocrisy to make any such acknowledgement.—ED.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Nov. 6, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have been sitting alone, the family having retired for the night; and "while I mused the fire burned" in my mind. I have been led to consider some of the afflictions of the Lord's people in this wilderness world. I am feeling a sweet peace in my soul, and my mind is carried back to what I trust was christian experience, but it was before I united with the true church. I was enabled to walk about Zion, to tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces, desiring above all things to know that her King was my God. It pleased the Lord to show me the true church in a dream. I have related this dream in a former communication, but it is again presented to my mind, with the interpretation which I trust my spiritual Joseph gave me at that time. In my dream I saw a child bound to the stake, as though about to be executed. I saw the wood placed around her and set on fire. As the flames grew higher and hotter a sweet, calm, heavenly smile lit up her countenance. I myself stood in the background beholding the scene; but I was not to see her destroyed, for she was not to be and never will be destroyed. That child was to me a figure of the church in this time state. I believe it was to try me. I thought if I could only realize that her God was my God, O that I might be counted worthy to suffer for his name's sake. I was made willing, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

Brethren, do you not realize at times that you are coming through great tribulation, that you walk in the furnace of affliction daily? Do not be dismayed. It is only to purify the silver by consuming the dross, and to try the gold. "They shall be

mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." They cannot be destroyed, for their "life is hid with Christ in God." The afflictions of the people of God here spoken of are not anything of a worldly nature, such as the loss of friends, or property, or bodily infirmities. In these things all the race of men are alike liable to be afflicted. But the dear child of God is liable to be afflicted in a very different way. He is spiritually weak. As soon as he begins to live he begins to die. Paul said that he died daily. The child of God is so sin-sick that he gives up in despair, until the great Physician comes and applies the healing balm, the only remedy for this sickness, his own precious blood, which cleanses from all sin. He is blind, and cannot see, until Jesus opens his eyes, and brings him to the light. He cannot hear, until given a circumcised ear, so that he can distinguish the certain sound. He is lame, and feels that he must go halting all his journey through. He is ignorant and slow to learn; and is helpless, and cannot do the things that he would, and has to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Truly, the chosen of God are an afflicted and poor people. They are so poor that they have nothing to buy bread when hungry nor milk when thirsty. They are wholly dependent upon their heavenly Benefactor to supply them with bread, which is his own flesh, and with his own blood to satisfy their thirst; for his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed.

The unregenerate soul knows nothing of any of these afflictions, and so has no use for this great Physician, nor for this remedy for sin, his precious blood; for they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Brethren, here is the discriminating line with me. If I know nothing of these afflictions I have no use for an all-wise God, a dear Savior, a precious Redeemer, and have no right to claim a name and a place among the Lord's people, who I believe to be, with all their afflictions, the excellent of the earth.

NOVEMBER 10.

DEAR BRETHREN:—With fear and trembling I again take up my pen to try to speak of those things that seem too wonderful for me; but I dare not withhold them, God being my Judge. My mind goes back to the evening of the day on which I was led down into the baptismal waters. I cannot express what I saw in that holy and solemn ordinance; but in the evening, while entirely alone, my Bible before me, it seemed to me that I was carried away in the spirit, and beheld what to me was a striking contrast to the picture I saw in the dream I have before related. Yet they are both one and the same. I saw the redeemed church of God; and as I looked, and trembled, my soul exclaimed, "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with

banners." They were gathered out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and were clothed in white robes. The words came to me with such great power, "These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He whose word cannot be broken
Formed thee for his own abode."

Just as sure as God sits "upon a throne high and lifted up," just so sure will his train fill the temple. Rejoice that ye are counted worthy to suffer for his name's sake. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" "Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation."

With much fear and trembling I subscribe myself your sister in a precious hope,

SARAH P. LEFFERTS.

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G. BEEBE'S SONS.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please give notice through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I have changed my residence and also my post-office address from New Market, Platte Co., Mo., to No. 2002 Francis Street, St. Joseph, Mo., and that I wish all my correspondents to address me at the latter place; and any and all who may find it convenient to visit me here are cordially invited to do so.

R. M. THOMAS.

2002 Francis St., St. Joseph, Mo., Oct., 1887.

"THE EDITORIALS."

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1887.

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

CLOSE OF VOLUME FIFTY-FIVE.

WITH this issue we complete volume fifty-five. For more than half a century the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been sustained in defense of the principles published in the first number, and until recently these principles have been indorsed by the Old School or Primitive Baptists throughout the United States, with hardly a dissenting voice; but within the last few years there has been a desire manifested among the brethren to modify certain cardinal points of truth, especially the predestination of all things. For continuing to firmly advocate this doctrine the SIGNS has lost many subscribers within the last five years. We are well aware that by being a little more liberal on this subject, as well as many others, we would gain the favor and support of many who have withdrawn their patronage; but we dare not, with the firm conviction we now have of the overruling will of God in all things, yield this truth to conciliate those who are opposed to the doctrine.

The closing volume has been one of the most eventful and trying years to the editors of the SIGNS that we have ever been called to pass through. While for several years there has been a manifest falling off among those who once professed to love the whole truth of God, none have until within the last year openly attacked the sovereignty of God by asserting that if the plain declarations of the Scriptures were true, it destroyed the unity of God; or, if God decreed the fall of Adam, it was useless to argue that he was not the author of sin. To such rationalism we would answer, "Let God be true, and every man a liar."

We are painfully aware of our inability to fill the position to which we are called; but having been sustained hitherto, we feel to take courage and press on.

PROSPECTUS FOR VOLUME LVI.

HAVING been continued to the present time in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and relying on the sustaining power of him who we trust has helped us hitherto, we will with our next number commence our fifty-sixth volume, and with an entire new dress. The type will be large-faced long primer and brevier; and with ink costing about four times that which is usually used on newspapers, and paper costing nearly twice that which is ordinarily used, we confidently expect to furnish our readers with a very handsome sheet. As to the matter which the paper will contain, we can give no better guarantee than to refer our subscribers to the past volumes of more than half a century.

It has been suggested by a few of our brethren that we publish the SIGNS in pamphlet form, but the objection to this is that there is too much space wasted in margins around each page. A column of the SIGNS contains about as much as a page and a half of a pamphlet the reading matter of which is four by seven inches; or the whole forty-eight columns as much as a pamphlet containing seventy such pages. In its present form the SIGNS contains more reading matter for the subscription price than any paper of our order published in this country.

Our terms will remain the same as given in our advertisement on page 286; but partially to repay our subscribers for their time and trouble, in procuring for us new subscribers, we will from now until April first, 1888, make the following offer in

CASH PREMIUMS.

To any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS

and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS,

sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

These terms, brethren, are really below what we can afford; but if by this means we shall double our subscription list, and by a little effort on the part of our subscribers it can be done, we will then lower our subscription price to one dollar and fifty cents per year, and run the single sheet of eight pages weekly. Let each subscriber see what he can do.

NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH.

"NEVERTHELESS we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 Peter iii. 13.

Although this subject has been repeatedly discussed, both by gifted correspondents of the SIGNS, and editorially, in compliance with an urgent request we propose, if the Lord will, to consider the text in its connection as recorded by the inspired apostle. In this manner of examining the Scriptures it would save the saints much perplexing care if we could divest our minds of traditional ideas which have been gathered from uninspired sources. On the subject proposed, as on many other points of revealed truth, even the saints have sought to establish theories formed in their own minds, and for that purpose the Scriptures have been wrested to the support of errors, both in doctrine and in practice. It is only as guided by the Spirit that even the honest inquirer after truth can find the correct application of the inspired Scriptures. All other efforts ever have and ever will result in nothing else but confusion. This is the manifestation of

that wonderful pleasure of God for which Jesus gave thanks, as recorded in the connection where he revealed to his disciples the infinity of that dominion which was given unto him.—See Matt. xi. 25-27. Having the Spirit of the Lord God upon him, as declared in the prophecy of Isaiah, he gave thanks for ALL the will of the Father, for hiding "these things" from the wise and prudent, not less than for the revealing of them unto babes. This is one peculiar and exclusive mark of the leading of that Spirit. While all other spirits assume to discriminate between the events which display the divine will, and pronounce upon them as good or evil, according to the light of finite wisdom, that Spirit which leads all them who are the sons of God not only submits to the hand of God, but always dictates the prayer, "Thy will be done."

"Nevertheless." This first word of the text submitted by our inquiring brother sums up all that has been presented in the two epistles of Peter, of which this is the conclusion; and after all the opposition of earth and sin, the apostle by inspiration declares the confidence of the saints, which assures the fulfillment of the promise of God. To carnal reason the preceding context appears to forbid the expectation that the promise can be fulfilled to those who see all that is here recorded. Nothing less than that faith which is the gift of God could enable any to "endure as seeing him who is invisible." By that faith all the saints in all ages have overcome the world.—1 John v. 4. So long as they remain in this world of tribulation they must realize the need of the comforting assurance contained in this divinely authorized "Nevertheless." It changes the terrible sufferings of this present time into "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment." It shows to Israel that the unbelief of Jacob was in error when he said, "All these things are against me." Then Israel is enabled to say, "It is enough."—Gen. xlii. 36; xlv. 28. This record is for the instruction of the saints in all their sojourn in this temporal state. No trial, affliction or chastening ever can come upon one of them but that by faith they shall realize it as included in the declaration of the apostle, "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." So it proved in the case of Joseph, and so it was with all the old saints. The divine "Nevertheless" is of inestimable value to the tried and suffering saints. Let it not be forgotten that this is the positive declaration of the Lord, lest we suffer loss of assured comfort in resting upon the immutable foundation of that word of the Lord which endureth forever, being forever settled in heaven.—1 Peter i. 25; Psalm cxix. 89.

"We, according to his promise." By these five words the Holy Spirit has settled beyond all cavil two promi-

nent points of gospel truth which have been denied by all carnal religionists since the days of Cain. The one point is, that it is exclusively those who stand with Peter upon the foundation of the apostles, who look for the new heavens and a new earth. And the other is of equal importance, that we look according to the true promise of God, and not according to any works of creatures, either good or bad. When they remember the true ground on which they look for this "new heavens and a new earth," the saints are not troubled about the fearful array of opposition which they must encounter. Although the world, the flesh and the devil are combined against them, they are secure in resting upon the promise of God, that cannot lie, which he promised before the world began. Their confidence is not in themselves, nor in their own faithfulness, but in that unchanging truth of God; therefore their hope cannot be shaken by all their own unworthiness. It is very important for the comfort of the saints that they should ever be assured that they are no more under the old heavens, and in the earth which with those heavens has passed away. They can grasp this truth only as they are enabled by faith to look "according to his promise" for things beyond the range of natural vision. The old heavens, which overspread the chosen nation of Israel, were so clad in the blackness of terror and condemnation that they could not allow a single gleam of hope to shine upon them who were held under their gloomy covering. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10. Under those heavens there could never be any deliverance for the conscious sinner. The awful thunder of the holy law proclaimed hopeless condemnation as the sentence of all who looked to it for righteousness. Upon the more than midnight darkness of these terrible heavens the dawn of a glorious day broke in the promise revealed to the faith of the saints, and proclaimed by inspired prophets, who foretold the gospel day and the new heavens and a new earth. This glad tidings is the message borne by all the prophets of the Lord from the beginning of the revelation of divine truth from God. Yet even among those who were favored to hear their testimony none could receive it as truth without the light of divine life by the indwelling Spirit of God. All of those so enlightened are included with the apostle in the word "we," as here used. And all such "looking" as he speaks of is always "according to his promise." None can look in this way without that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God. Consequently all who do so look are subjects of salvation. If any are looking upon any other ground besides the promise of God, they are not included with the apostle in this

declaration. Such can see nothing beyond the old legal heavens. As already quoted, the seal of divine judgment consigns all such to the hopeless curse.

From the context it is evident that the old heavens and old earth, which are said to be about to pass away with a great noise, refers to that dispensation which followed after the destruction of the world with water. In the Scriptures the words "heavens" and "earth" are applied to the particular systems established by the appointment of God, as well as to the firmament and the material earth which are visible to the natural eye. The perishing of the antediluvian world, being overflowed with water, is but an example of the terrible destruction by fire which was about to be visited upon those legal heavens and the earth of national Israel, which was under them. This fearful doom had been positively pronounced against that house by the great Judge himself; and the fulfillment of the vengeance announced by him was at hand when Peter wrote this epistle. In the heavens being on fire is foretold the total destruction of that whole legal system which had been originally authorized by the command of the Lord, but was now to pass away forever. The close of that dispensation was indeed with a great noise in the tumultuous overthrow of the nationality of the Jews; while the fervent heat expresses that severe and great tribulation which had no precedent and should never be equaled in after ages. That the day of God, to which reference is made in the context, was to come within that age when this epistle was written, appears from the exhortation following the text as the legitimate deduction from it. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." As the Spirit of truth does not make any false appeals, it is evident that those then on the earth were to be found of the Lord at his coming to which this text refers. It is not disputed that the material universe is reserved unto final destruction. When it shall have subserved the purpose for which it was created, the same word which commanded it to exist will remand it to nothingness; but it does not appear that in this text the Spirit refers to the final destruction of created things. In the sense in which the natural mind understands the destruction of the world by fire, it certainly did not come in the primitive age of the church, nor has it yet come. But it was doubtless fulfilled in the true sense to all those to whom this epistle was written, whether they were then in time and on earth, or have been since that age born in time.

"Look for new heavens and a new earth." This declaration is descriptive of the peculiar people included with himself by the apostle in this text. It is not an admonition to anybody, enjoining on them the duty of

looking; but it is a settled fact that all who are led by the Spirit of Christ are ever after they have been called by grace looking for these new heavens and a new earth. No others ever do look for any other heavens but the old legal firmament. They think they have life in the service of Moses, and claim to be his disciples; therefore they have no desire for any other heavens besides that law which was added because of transgression, by which is the knowledge of sin. As before stated, nothing but condemnation can be found under those old legal heavens; therefore every one who is enabled to see his true condition under those heavens is driven by necessity to look for the new heavens and a new earth. This is in the experience of all who are led by the Spirit of God. Their prayer is, with Paul, "That I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."—Phil. iii. 9. Under the old heavens there was no discerning between the carnal servant who rendered his obedience merely in the letter, and the true child of God who worshiped in spirit and in truth. The Spirit of Christ causes every one in whom it dwells to hunger and thirst after righteousness; and consequently they do seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. In this they are looking for new heavens and a new earth; "for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."—Romans xiv. 17. Therefore all who long for this true righteousness do look for new heavens.

In another sense the saints of God throughout their pilgrimage in time never cease to look for these new heavens and a new earth. Having been born of the Spirit of God they have the love of holiness dwelling in them, and consequently they look for righteousness upon the same principle as is manifested in the natural creation, wherein every order of creatures looks for its own appropriate element. As the fish looks for (or desires) the water, and the bird has the same desire for the air, so every one in whom dwells the Spirit of God looks for and desires that righteousness which is its spiritual element. This desire is manifested in them not less by their continual sorrow for the evil which they feel working within themselves, than in their joy in contemplating the perfect righteousness which is in their holy Redeemer. The mourning of the captive in a strange land attests his love of his own land, as much as the rejoicing of the liberated exile in his return to his loved home. Though confined by prison walls in hopeless captivity, the prisoner may still love his home with all the ardor which is felt when at liberty he dwells in his own land. So the dear disciples of the Lord, who had left all and followed him, were admonished, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto

you."—Matt. vi. 33. This application of the admonition of the Lord is in perfect harmony with the looking for new heavens and a new earth in our text. It also accords with the solemn assertion of Paul when he warns the saints, "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."—Rom. viii. 13, 14.

"Wherein dwelleth righteousness." While in the holy and just law, which was the heaven of the former dispensation, there was presented the standard of righteousness, it could never make the comers thereunto perfect, because it was weak through the flesh.—Heb. x. 1; Rom. viii. 3. In glorious contrast with that heaven in which dwelt terror and condemnation, the Spirit moved the apostle to specify the peculiar excellence of the heavens for which he and the saints with him look. In these heavens dwelleth righteousness. This was not the case with the former heavens. In them was revealed the just condemnation of sinners, covering with the pall of death all the children of Adam, in whom all have sinned. All that the law could do was only to give witness to the justice of that sentence which remands the sinner to the dust out of which he was taken.—Gen. iii. 19. It required perfect, perpetual and sinless obedience, but could give no life to the dead, nor could it recognize tears of penitence. Its awful thunder proclaimed unceasingly, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." No hope of relief could come to the trembling sinner from that old heaven. But to the faith of the saints is revealed the amazing grace of God in the promise that he creates new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. In this new creation he creates Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy.—See Isa. lxxv. 17-25. It is in accordance with the promise revealed in this and all the prophetic declarations of the kingdom of Christ that the confident faith of the saints in all ages has, with the apostles and prophets, looked for this new creation of our God, in whose heavens and earth dwelleth righteousness. This abiding righteousness is that which was brought near by the Lord when he came in fulfillment of all that was written of him as the mighty Redeemer of his people from the power of sin and death. This is that righteousness which exceeds all that the Scribes and the Pharisees ever attained to. It is the immaculate perfection of the eternal God. As Christ Jesus, who dwells in his saints, is himself the very righteousness of God, they are thereby justified in him with that divine holiness, which is beyond the measure of all legal righteousness as far as the heaven of eternal glory is above the cursed and sin-stained earth. Instead of that servile bondage under

which all are held who trust in legal works for justification before God, the subjects of the grace of our God are freely justified in this perfect righteousness of their divine Redeemer.

It is worthy of special observation that the apostle by inspiration deduces from this doctrine of assured justification exactly the reverse conclusion from that which is drawn from it by the natural mind. While all carnal professors regard the doctrine of complete salvation by sovereign grace as giving them encouragement to continue in sin, the Holy Ghost finds in it the highest incentive to those who "look for such things" to exhort them to diligence, "that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." Those who find in it a tendency to licentiousness give evidence that they are guided by a different spirit from that which moved the apostle in writing this epistle. On the other hand, all who find themselves in harmony with the apostle in this conclusion drawn from the unchanging promise of God, have the witness in that agreement that they are born of God, and led by the same Spirit which was in the inspired servant of God who wrote this epistle.

In conclusion, we wish it to be understood that nothing in this article is intended to deny the final destruction of all the sin-cursed world. While the wise and prudent of earth vainly strive to understand the mystery of the revelation which God has given in the Scriptures, to babes in Christ is the hidden wisdom of our God revealed; and all who are taught of God know the truth which is safely hidden by the hand of God himself from all the search of the carnal mind.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

ARE you trying to think of something for a Christmas present? If so, look over our list of books advertised on page 286, and see if you cannot find something to suit you. From now until January first, 1888, we will sell the "Editorials" at half-price; but all the other books are quoted at prices as low as they can be sold. These prices include postage.

MARRIAGES.

ON October 1, 1887, by Elder William J. Purington, at his residence in Hopewell, Mr. William H. Cray and Miss Laura Reid, both of Trenton, N. J.

ON November 15, 1887, by the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Wesley B. Titus, of Ewing, and Miss Mary C. Vannoy, of Hopewell, both of New Jersey.

ON November 24, 1887, by the same, at the residence of the bride's brother-in-law, Mr. Augustus H. Bodine and Miss Josephine Drake, both of Hopewell, N. J.

ON November 30, 1887, by the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. George B. McClellan Hunt, of Princeton, and Miss Carrie A. Hoagland, of Hopewell, both of N. J.

ON Tuesday, Nov. 8, 1887, by Elder F. A. Chick, at Black Rock, Md., Mr. Samuel McElroy, of Baltimore, and Miss Annie Ressler, of Black Rock, Md.

IN North Berwick, Maine, Nov. 22, 1887, by Elder Wm. Quint, Mr. Fred A. Bennet and Miss Carrie Finnie, both of Sanford, Maine.

Nov. 23, 1887, in Washington, D. C., by Elder W. M. Smoot, Mr. N. B. Claryoe, of Washington, and Miss Annie G. Curtis, of Fairfax Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BY request it becomes my painful duty to chronicle the death of a mother in Israel, **Anna Hogan**, who departed this life on Feb. 5, 1887, aged ninety-three years, three months and nineteen days. She was born in the state of Virginia, Halifax County, Oct. 17, 1794, daughter of John and Mary Anderson. She moved to Tennessee in her sixteenth year. In her eighteenth year she was married to William Hogan. She received a hope in Christ in her thirty-fifth year, and joined Sugar Creek Church of "United Baptists," it being before the division, in Limestone County, Alabama, and was baptized by Elder James Shelton; moved to Arkansas in 1840, and settled in Madison County, and united with New Hope Church of Regular Baptists; thence moved to Johnson County, Ark., and at the time of her death was a member of Pleasant Grove Church of Primitive Baptists. She was the mother of fourteen children, twelve of which she raised to be grown. All except one preceded her to the grave. She leaves only the one child, an aged daughter, and about ten grandchildren.

Sister Hogan was a consistent member of the Regular or Primitive Baptists about fifty-seven years. Her hearing had been deficient for a great many years, so much so that she could not hear preaching. But brethren Beebe sent the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to her, which she would read, and said while she could not hear preaching she could read the able pieces in that paper, which were as good to her as preaching. The humble writer frequently visited sister Hogan in the last four years, of which time she was always ready to talk of her Redeemer and of the glorious work he had done for her. She was kind and benevolent, often of her scanty means helping the poor ministers of the Regular or Primitive Baptist order, of which the writer has often shared her gifts. She was sick only three days previous to her death, and utterly refused to take medicine, saying her time had come, and she wanted to go. On the fifth of February she passed away without a struggle, and all that is mortal of sister Hogan now sleeps in the tomb, while her spirit is at peace.

L. E. BAGWILL.

COAL HILL, Johnson Co., Ark.

DIED—In Dover, N. H., July 8, 1887, sister **Betsy Horn**, aged almost eighty years. She professed a hope in Christ in her youthful days, and her life until death corresponded with her profession. She was a Bible Baptist in every sense of the word, and believed that the Old School Baptists, in faith and practice, stood upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. She was a worthy member of our church, and we shall greatly miss her.

ALSO,

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Aug. 18, 1887, **Mrs. Oliver Hanson**, aged sixty-five years. She died very suddenly. She worked until about two hours before she died. She was a fine woman, and, we believe, a child of God; for she talked well about God and his perfections; that man's bounds were set, and that he could not pass them.

A large number of people were at her funeral. She has left her husband and other near relatives to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Aug. 29, 1887, brother **James H. Quint**, aged about sixty-two years. He died with consumption. His sufferings were great, but he was well reconciled to his fate. I baptized him in the year 1858. He was a kind husband and father, and a good neighbor. He has left his wife, five children, brothers and sisters, his aged mother, and the church, to mourn, but not without hope.

A large number of people attended his funeral; and as brethren Purington and Chick had arrived at this place to attend our yearly meeting, I took them to the funeral, and they both took part in the services with me.

ALSO,

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Sept. 13, 1887, **Tryphona Ford**, daughter of Mr. Caleb

Ford, aged nine years. She was an interesting little girl; but God saw fit to take her to himself, from the troubles of this sinful world. She has left father, brothers and sisters to mourn.

ALSO.

DIED—Sept. 20, 1887, **Mr. Libbreus Butler**, of Sanford, Maine, aged forty-six years, seven months and seventeen days. He died in Colorado. His disease was consumption. About six weeks before his death he had a mind to go there, hoping to improve his health; so his wife and nephew took him there; but after all was done for him that man could do, death did its work. They then took his lifeless body to his home in Sanford, and on Tuesday, one week from his death, a very large number of relatives and friends assembled at his house to pay their last tribute of respect to him, and to sympathize with his wife and children in their afflictions. It was one of the most solemn funerals that I ever attended. His daily walk was such that not one could say aught against him. He never made a public acknowledgment of a hope in Christ, but had said that in private conversation which made it evident that he was a child of God, and it was evident that his religious belief was with the Old School Baptists. May God bless his sorrowing wife, two children, brothers and sisters, his aged mother-in-law, and all that mourn.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DIED—At her home in Fayette County, Ohio, sister **Alma Waddle**, daughter of John Q. A. and Louisa Blue, and wife of Elder George Waddle. She was born January 23, 1856, and died July 1, 1887, aged thirty-one years, five months and eight days. Sister Waddle united with the Baptist Church called Turkey Run, in February, 1881, of which she was a very useful, worthy and consistent member until death, dearly beloved by all who knew her. Nothing gave her more pleasure than to be engaged in the welfare of the Master's cause. She died as she lived, in peace and love with God and mankind. Truly the church feels the irreparable loss. She was united in marriage with Elder George Waddle August 29, 1886, and to all appearances were well matched, and moving forward with happiness, love and prosperity, with a bright future before them. But alas! how soon was the curtain drawn, the silver cord broken, and in place of unbroken love and joy, sorrow, grief and death. Such universal sorrow, regret and grief were never witnessed by the writer of this notice. She leaves to lament her death a kind and broken-hearted husband, her loving father and mother, four brothers, three sisters and a very large circle of friends and relatives. Alma's inheritance and refuge is in Christ. Her last utterances on earth were,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

Her funeral took place from her father's residence, where she was removed soon after she died (same day, Sunday, July 3, 1887), in presence of an unusual assembly of sorrowing relatives, friends and neighbors, giving their presence in token of their love and affection for dear Alma. The funeral was conducted and a sermon preached by Elder G. N. Tusing, after which her remains were interred in the Amanda Township Cemetery, to await the final resurrection, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and the victory won through Christ, who is the resurrection and the life. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

G. N. TUSING.

DIED—At her home in Pickaway County, Ohio, Sept. 20, 1887, sister **Dianna Davis**.

Sister Davis was born Jan. 3, 1796, removed with her parents from Maryland to Ross County, Ohio, at the age of seven years. She was united in marriage to John R. Davis, at the age of twenty-three years. Of this union were born nine children, eight sons and one daughter, four of said children having preceded her to the spirit world. Quite a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren survive her. Her age was ninety-one years, eight months and seventeen days. Sister Davis united with the Primi-

tive Baptist Church fifty-three years previous to her death. She was a christian woman, ever faithful to the cause of truth, and was at her post when able. She was a firm believer in salvation from sin by God's grace alone.

The funeral took place on the 22d, at the Darbyville meeting house, in presence of a large congregation of citizens and relatives, when a sermon was preached on the occasion by Elder G. N. Tusing, after which the remains were laid in the Darbyville Cemetery, to await the final resurrection.

G. N. TUSING.

OUR dear sister, **Nellie Johnson**, died Sept. 24, 1887, aged sixty-six years. Her disease was complicated. She suffered, being in bed most of the time, for over a year. Her sufferings at times were great, but she was very patient, and we believe she enjoyed the presence of the Lord. She never had the privilege of uniting with the church. After she was made willing it was too late, she said, for she was not able to leave the house. We asked her if she had a desire to be baptized, and with emotion she said, "Yes; but it is too late now." We told her that was only for our enjoyment while on earth, and she replied, "That is what I thought." A few weeks before she died she spoke freely of the Lord's dealings with her. She spoke particularly of a sermon preached by Elder Chick, which she enjoyed, four years ago. We often read to her, and at times we could see that her joy was full of glory. We believe she was willing to die, trusting in the dear Savior.

How sad it was to give thee up;
Thy face no more we see;
On earth we drain the bitter cup;
But thou art from sorrow free.

Yes, our loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God who has bereft us,
Who can all our sorrows heal.

Your afflicted sisters,
ESTER & MARGRET JOHNSON.
SALISBURY, Md.

DEPARTED this life on November 2, 1887, at his home in Hocking County, Ohio, brother **Simeon Beery**. He was born January 25, 1821, and died of consumption, aged sixty-six years, nine months and seven days. He was united in marriage to Catharine Weaver, March 12, 1843. As the fruit of this union there were born unto them ten children, two of which preceded him to the spirit world. He leaves to lament his death a companion, eight children, one brother, and many friends and relatives. Brother Beery united with the Scott Creek Baptist Church some ten years prior to his death, and was beloved by all his brethren and sisters. He died as he lived, in peace with God and all mankind, a great admirer of the doctrine of grace in the salvation of God's people. Truly brother Beery was one of the precious of the earth, ever filling his seat when permitted.

His funeral took place at the Scott Creek meeting house, on the fourth, and a discourse was preached on the occasion by Elder G. N. Tusing, to a very large concourse of people assembled to pay the last tribute due to so excellent a man and brother; after which the remains were laid in the Scott Creek burying ground, to await the final resurrection of the body, at the second coming of the Master.

Farewell, ye friends, whose tender care
Has long engaged my love;
Your fond embrace I now exchange
For better friends above.

G. N. T.

It has become my painful duty to send to you the obituary of my darling husband, **William Cotton, Jr.**, who departed this life January 25, 1887, after an illness of ten days duration, of typhoid pneumonia. He was born September 22, 1857. He suffered greatly, but bore his suffering with a spirit of reconciliation to his Master's will. He leaves a wife and a large connection and friends to mourn; but we mourn not without hope; for he told me a few days before his death that he was willing to go, but disliked to leave me. He was buried at Martha's

Chapel. He was a devoted husband, a kind and affectionate child, loved and respected by all who knew him.

CARRIE L. COTTON,
HUNTSVILLE, Texas.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware County, N. Y., on the first Saturday and Sunday in January, 1888.

Those coming on the Ulster & Delaware Rail Road will take the train that leaves Roundout at 7.40 a. m., the day before the meeting, and stop off at Halcottsville or Roxbury, and they will be taken to and from the meeting.

A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren.

JAMES AVERY, Clerk.

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