

Signs of the Times.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1886.

NO. 1.

POETRY.

A SINNER'S CRY.

LORD, let a helpless sinner's cry
Come up before thy throne,
And send thy blessed Spirit down
To mark each secret groan.

I sometimes fear amidst it all
My groanings are not right;
Lord, am I one of thine elect
Who cry both day and night?

Astonish'd thou shouldst spare me thus,
Beyond the age of man;
Yet, Lord, when counting up the days,
Their length seems but a span.

Lord, come according to thy word
And purely purge my dross,
And let me hear the joyful sound
That echoes from the cross.

J. ELFORD.

TRIBULATION.

O BLESSED path of sorrow!
In thee I have been taught
To commune with my Savior,
And near to him been brought.

Through blessed tribulation
Comes glory and a crown;
By Jesus' cross redemption
And fellowship are known.

O blessed souls that trust him
In darkness and distress,
Waiting for him, though eyes grow dim,
Until he whisper peace.

O blessed they who still can pray
Though clouds surround his throne;
And Christ appears to mock their fears;
Yet cling to him alone.

O blessed will the meeting be
When he shall say, "I come
To gather thee my face to see
In my eternal home!"

O blessed land of peace and love
Where tears are wip'd away;
Fullness of joy forever there,
One bright eternal day.

A. F.

ISAIAH XL. 29.

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them
that have no might he increaseth strength."

Cheer up, poor soul, and be not faint;
For though you have no might at all,
God is the strength of every saint,
And he will hear you when you call.

His promise he will ne'er forget,
But power and strength increase to all
Who on the Lord sincerely wait,
And at his footstool humbly fall.

When inward troubles they shall feel,
And outward foes shall them affright,
God will regard his promise still,
And strengthen those who have no might.

Faith, hope and love he will increase,
And make their prospect very bright;
They will enjoy substantial peace,
And strong shall be in Jesus' might.

Christ is the strength and righteousness
Of each and every helpless saint;
Jehovah will their strength increase,
And give his power to those who faint.

J. H.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"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."—Romans viii. 24, 25.

To hope for a thing is both to desire and to expect it. If we would learn what the child of God hopes for, we have but to inquire what he desires. The Savior fully expresses the desire of every quickened soul in these precious words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." The Lord has put his fear in their hearts, which is "to hate evil;" and the one desire of that new heart is to be free from all sin, and to be filled with the perfect righteousness of God. Every one who has such a desire is one of those whom the Lord has blessed. He already has divine life. This desire does not constitute a hope, and one may be exercised by it for a long time without being able to realize a hope; but in God's own time every one who hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be given a good and sure ground to expect it, through the exceeding great and precious promise of God given to him in our Lord Jesus Christ. Now he has a hope, a "good hope through grace." He hopes for complete deliverance from sin and all vileness. This is his salvation. He hopes for righteousness. He does not now see in himself that deliverance from sin, but feels in his flesh a subjection to the law of sin. He does not now find in himself that righteousness which he wants, and which alone can satisfy his desires, and present him blameless and holy before God in love; but he waits "for the hope of righteousness by faith."—Gal. v. 5. Now the presence of evil in our hearts, and the absence of righteousness, is the cause of our trouble and groaning. It is this that causes us so often to fear that our hope is not good. Is it not wonderful, and a great comfort, that the apostle describes this very condition which we so sadly lament as that in which the Lord has been pleased to leave all his children in this mortal state? How clearly and fully he has set forth and described, in a few sentences here, the peculiar sufferings of every child of God, with the cause of them, dividing, by that word which is sharper than any two-edged sword, between the soul and spirit, between that which is natural and that which is spiritual within us. Wherever the Spirit of Christ is, there must be an abhorrence of sin, and consequently a suffering when forced to remain in contact with it,

and in any sense subject to it. Sin caused all the suffering of Jesus, and is the cause of all the suffering of his people. It is in this experience that they suffer with him; and when this suffering under the bondage of corruption is over, they shall be glorified together with him. There are times when they have by faith such a soul-transporting view of that glory that shall be revealed in them, that they can reckon with the apostle that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with" it.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." This creature is the new creature in Christ. It is the divine life within us. Not that the divine life itself is a creation, but its manifestation in us is the work of God. In our experience of that divine life "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." It is only as having the life or Spirit of Christ that we are new creatures in Christ. In the flesh we are not new creatures. The flesh is just what it was before, with all the depraved powers and propensities of the fleshly heart and mind. "But we are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in us." It is by this Spirit of adoption that we cry, Abba, Father. It is this Spirit within us which itself cries, Abba, Father.—Verse 15; Gal. iv. 6. How carefully the apostle discriminates between the flesh and Spirit, clearly showing that it is by no power of the natural or old man that we worship God. This creature is capable of expecting and waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, which is another proof that it is a spiritual creature. We cannot now see in ourselves the manifestation of that divine relation of sons. We do not appear to ourselves like sons of God. This gives us much cause for mourning. By faith we are at times assured most blessedly that we are sons; and the Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, with the Spirit or life of Christ which is given to us, that we are children of God. But "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." We are waiting for the manifestation of that sonship. As yet we are poor sinners, who have only a hope of something better; but that hope is glorious. We are saved by it. It is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." When that precious hope was first experienced by the poor sinner, and he felt the love of God shed abroad in his heart, so

sweet, so exalted, so full of joy were his feelings that he could hardly have been made to believe that the holy and heaven-aspiring principle within him was subject to vanity. But when the sweet light began to fade, and darkness came over his soul, and evil propensities and vile passions began to show themselves, and sins and transgressions caused shame and sorrow and doubts and fears to fill his heart, then he experienced this truth, though he could not then understand that these sad and wretched feelings were only an experience which is common to the children of God. If this subjection of the creature to vanity were willingly, then we should not mourn when the vanity of our carnal nature is so grievously displayed that we cannot do the things that we would. But the will of this new creature is the will of God, who works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure. When we would do good, evil is present with us; but it is still a most precious truth that we would do good. To will is present with us, but how to perform that which is good we find not, because the creature is made subject to vanity. We shall never be able to do what we would while in this bondage of corruption. In this the manifestation of the sons of God is not yet, but is waited for. The Lord works in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ (Hebrews xiii. 21), making us desire and seek after those things, and giving us faith to see them all in the dear Savior as ours. While therefore the creature is made subject to vanity, causing such groanings within us as cannot be uttered, the Lord has subjected the same in hope of a final and eternal deliverance "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Not the natural creation, neither men nor beasts. The natural man does not experience a pain that causes groaning and travailing. Many, very many of the human family hardly know pain. The pain that is experienced by them does not make them long for deliverance from their present state of existence. When the pain ceases they remain satisfied with the present condition of things. But the whole spiritual creation, without exception, do groan and travail in pain together. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened."—2 Cor. v. 4. The travail is because of the burden of this sinful nature, from the corruption of which we desire to be

delivered, and because of an earnest desire "to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," "that mortality might be swallowed up of life."—2 Cor. v. 2-4. This has been the experience of all the children of God in all ages. In all the Old Testament Scriptures we read the same experience of trouble and sorrow, and hear the groanings and lamentations on account of a corrupt nature, mingled with joyful expressions of a precious hope of final deliverance.

"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." If any could be regarded as possibly free from this sad state, it would certainly be the apostles and saints who were called by our Lord first, who were witnesses of his resurrection, upon whom was poured out his Spirit first after his ascension to glory, who received first the gift of the Holy Ghost, and were privileged to see and understand and proclaim those things which God hath prepared for them that love him, to proclaim the good news of salvation in the morning of the gospel dispensation, and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the poor in spirit. But it was not so. They had the same experience of suffering and inward groaning, and were enabled to describe out of their own hearts all the trials and afflictions of the family of God; and then by inspiration to tell just what those afflictions mean, and in what glory they shall finally be swallowed up. In them, as well as in the Lord's afflicted poor of to-day, the flesh lusted against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these two were contrary the one to the other, so that they could not do the things that they would.—Gal. v. 17. What we are waiting for is the adoption, which is the redemption of our body, or in other words, the change of our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. This will be the manifestation of the sons of God, for which the earnest expectation of the creature is waiting. Then it will appear what we shall be, for we shall be like our glorious Lord, and shall appear with him in glory.—1 John iii. 2; Col. iii. 4. We have now the spirit of adoption, but the adoption is yet in the future for us. It is not by adoption that we become sons of God; but by adoption this vile body, redeemed from death and the grave, and changed according to the working whereby our Jesus is able even to subdue all things unto himself, (Phil. iii. 21,) is prepared for the inheritance, and that inheritance is the more excellent name which our dear Savior received when in the resurrection from the dead the Lord said unto him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."—Heb. i. 4, 5. This blessed name all of his redeemed inherit in him. It is the new name which he writes upon them.—Rev. iii. 12. No one was ever made a son by adoption, but by adoption he is

prepared legally to inherit; and when he has inherited the estate, then the purpose of the adoption is fulfilled, and the adoption ceases. In this case the inheritance to be received when the adoption is completed in the redemption of our body, is the manifestation of the sons of God, the full entrance into and the glorious experience of the sonship of Christ. We are sons of God in him, and are sons just as he is, having his name and nature; and therefore will not appear in heaven as adopted sons, but as real sons, born of the Spirit, born from the dead, and glorified with him. Thus we see how necessary it is that we carefully observe always how and for what purpose a word or term is used when in the Scriptures it is applied to spiritual things, such as grafting, adoption, building, planting, and the like.

The religion of the natural man consists in good works that he can do. His hope is in the things that pertain to the flesh. If he could see no good thing in himself, nothing meritorious in his works, he would think he had no religion. It is plain to be seen that the great multitude of professed christians know nothing of that religion which consists in hoping for that we see not, and in trying to walk according to the purity and holiness of that hope; not to commend ourselves to the favor of God, but because he has already bestowed such an unspeakable favor upon us in giving us this precious hope, and in great mercy forgiving all our iniquities. If any man professes to see an improvement in himself, that is, in his flesh, it is clear that he no longer hopes for that. The Lord's people are enabled by grace to walk as becometh the gospel of Christ, but they are never given to see any goodness in themselves, nor any ground of trust in an arm of flesh. When they are enabled to keep under their body, and bring it in subjection, they cannot give themselves any credit for that; but thankfully they ascribe all the power to their dear Savior, and praise the riches of his grace that has kept them from acting out the depth of depravity that is in their heart.

All that they desire the Lord's people are waiting for. The apostle says they wait patiently for it. This may cause some poor, trembling child to fear that he is not one of the right kind of hopers, because he cannot see that he has any patience. To such I want to address a few considerations concerning this grace of patience. Many feel as though they had no patience, because they are so full of complaints, and are so restless and fretful. Well, Job was said to be patient, but who ever was more complaining, and fretful, and full of bitter cries and struggles? The psalmist says, "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." Then it appears that although he was waiting patiently, yet he was crying. In another place he says, "My soul refused to be comforted." Now it must be that

the scriptural meaning of patience is different from what we ordinarily understand by that word. It means continuance, endurance, in this and in all but two places where it is used in the Scriptures; and in those two places the meaning is but slightly different. David, while in the horrible pit and miry clay, was forced to look alone to the Lord for help, and to wait for him. He cried mightily to the Lord, and was in deep trouble, but he looked nowhere else for help. He continued to look to the Lord, and his faith enabled him to endure. That was patience. Job was in a fearful state of affliction; health, riches and children gone, his wife and friends turned against him, and the Lord had so withdrawn and hidden himself that he could not find him, whether he went forward or backward, to the right hand or to the left. Yet he had faith by which he continued looking alone to him for deliverance, and endured all the temptations of the devil and the opposition of his friends, and even the apparent withdrawing of the Lord from him, without losing his confidence and trust in him. By faith he was enabled to say, "He knoweth the way that I take: when I am tried, I shall come forth as gold." And again, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." This was Job's patience. Every child of God possesses patience, but it requires tribulation to work or manifest that patience, (Romans v. 3,) as it requires the fire to try the gold, and manifest its quality of continuance and endurance. You may cry and fret and complain, but are you not looking alone to the Lord for deliverance? This is your patience; and "In your patience," says the dear Savior, "possess ye your souls." Notwithstanding all the obstacles and apparent impossibilities in the case, you still have a hope of being delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. You have a hope that you will receive a crown of righteousness in the unveiled presence of your Lord; and, in a way far beyond your present power of comprehension, that you will be satisfied, having fullness of joy at his right hand, and in his glorious presence pleasures forevermore. As long as you hope for these things you are patiently waiting for them. By this hope therefore you are saved in this sinful world, in this wretched, depraved state; saved from despair and death; saved from falling; saved from false and deceitful doctrines and ways; saved, as by a sure and steadfast anchor, from being drifted away from Jesus by the currents of evil in our deceitful hearts; saved from being wrenched away from that anchorage by the winds of false doctrine and fierce storms of temptation, and driven out of the haven of rest and destroyed. We are saved by hope.

Affectionately your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Dec. 9, 1885.

STATE ROAD, N. C., Nov. 30, 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—BELOVED BRETHREN:—I am at a loss, while feeling so worthless, to know how to make the attempt to trouble you again with my rambling story; for sometimes I wish I had never written at all, as I sometimes view my efforts so weak and worthless. But by divine grace I hope I may continue to give the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a short sketch of my travels in this world of sin and folly. In my last letter I commenced telling of my visit to Mitchell's River Church, and closed by saying that I met my grandmother, for the first time since a child. When it was made known to her who I was, she greatly rejoiced over me, and I went home with her. While at supper I saw Elder Caudell passing down the road. I arose from the table and ran out to overtake him as he rode upon his horse. We had not passed many words before he said that he was very glad he had the opportunity of conversing with me; for said he, "Ever since I saw you at Rock Spring I have longed to see you again and to have an opportunity of conversing with you about your experience as a christian." Then my heart began to flutter: for I said within myself, "If I should tell this man of God any of my weak impressions, or the impressions of the Holy Spirit upon my soul, he would think very little of my travel as a saint. He asked me many questions concerning my christian experience, and I answered them as best I could. We had not gone very far until we came to the place where we had to cross the river. On reaching the water, to my surprise Elder Caudell said to me, "Seeing here is water, what hindereth you from being baptized?" This struck me with deep solemnity, and was a shocking surprise. It being dark, and rather cool weather, and thinking that when people were baptized they did not exchange their clothing, I refused on that account. But he insisted very much that I should consent and let him baptize me. He said, "I will baptize you, and to-morrow the church will receive you into their fellowship." But he could not prevail upon me. We crossed and recrossed the river, and reached the house of G. Bryant. On entering the house we found Elders Taylor and Lawson sitting with others around a very warm and comfortable fire. Then I began to regret that I had not let Elder Caudell baptize me, for I thought what a good fire that would have been for me to dry my clothing by. Poor creature, how simple I was. We had not been long in the house until Elder Caudell called upon me to tell my experience. O how little I felt. But I told them a little of God's dealings with me, but not more than a drop of the bucket, comparatively speaking. When I had finished talking, Elder Caudell said, "Seeing here is a quorum of the church, I move that we receive him into the fellowship of the church and baptize him to-morrow." I objected to his motion, and brought forward an excuse, saying

that I wanted to give in my experience to Rock Spring Church and be baptized nearer home, where my relatives could see me follow Jesus down into the likeness of his death, and arise out of the water in the likeness of his resurrection. I prevailed upon the brethren to spare me longer, but to my sorrow, notwithstanding all the members present seemed most joyfully to receive my little experience as the travel of one of the mourners in Zion. On the next day, which was Sunday, I was blessed to hear Elder Caudell preach from these words, "I will arise and go to my father." Elder Taylor followed and preached from these words, "Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." The preaching was a feast indeed to me, and my soul leaped for joy, in great fear and trembling, and in love to God and to his people; for those men of God did preach in the power of the Spirit. The long-to-be-remembered services of the day closed, and I set out for my earthly abode. While on the way I feasted on God's grace, my mind being deeply engaged in meditating upon the great fountain of God's love, and I delighted myself in the experience of that love. While those few moments of joy lasted I could witness with "the preacher," to wit, Solomon, while I looked out upon the earth and viewed the pride and foolishness of this world, "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." There is no pleasure under the sun. For all passeth away like a vapor. "Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit." While I was in this condition I greatly desired to die, because of the goodness of God and the love of Christ, and because of the vanity of the world. I desired to quit this vain world of sin, and to be at rest with my dear Savior. I arrived at home and all my peace vanished, and I was made to struggle for a time. During this struggle my toil was severe, both in literal and spiritual labor, and that for several weeks. I felt myself the least of all mortals, and thought if I was one of God's children how great was the love of God in saving such a poor, wretched worm of the dust as I was; for I was well assured that it was God's great mercy that had saved me, by the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Praise the Lord, all ye his saints. For his mercy endureth forever, and his loving-kindness ceaseth not toward poor, lost sinners. My desire still continued very great to go to meeting, but my opportunities were very poor, my father's poverty being so great that he could not furnish me with respectable clothing. But I would go to meeting sometimes in my ragged clothing, and be laughed at by the proud and haughty world. Time passed on and I was permitted to go to Rock Spring and

meet with the few who met at that place, professing to be the true followers of Christ. The members having learned of my profession, brother York called me to come and sit with him. So I seated myself with the male members, which did not amount to a half-dozen. I was greatly astonished when they and their pastor began to shake hands with me. When I had sat down, Elder Harbour, after singing and prayer, preached from these words, "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" I did shake while at this meeting, because of the power of God which was upon me, and the gospel was as a flame of fire in my breast. I could hardly keep my seat and hold my mouth shut. At this time and onward my mind would be in great labor while hearing men discoursing upon the Scriptures and giving their opinions as to what the Scriptures did mean; for I did not believe as they did, and I did not think they were in the faith of God's elect. But not having my faith established, as I sometimes thought, and while I would be in doubt of the orthodoxy of my belief, in regard to the Scriptures, I would be often at prayer unto God that he would tell me whether the faith that had been revealed unto me was by the Holy Ghost or by some other spirit. Then would the Holy Ghost come in comforting confirmation of what had been revealed to my understanding, and I would rejoice in God my Savior and be made to say in spirit, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." Sometimes I would hear men giving their views on passages of Scripture which I had never had a view of, yet I could not accept their views. Then I would ask God to give me a view of those phrases also, that I might know their true meaning. At length they would appear in a different light from what others had held them forth. At times I would be greatly perplexed, and would groan continually in my spirit, wondering why it was that I could not believe like others, and also wondering whether I was led by a right spirit. At times I would think that it was impossible for everybody, with the exception of two or three, to be wrong, and that I was right. Then I would begin to sink in despair, and to go about groaning, travelling in great pain to be delivered. For the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. We know not what we should pray for as we ought, for the power of the pollutions of the flesh brings the mind into a polluted state. Therefore we cannot pray, if the Spirit helpeth not our infirmities. When I would be led to pray, the emotions of my heart would be of that which I cannot express by words of human language. Thus the Spirit has always brought me off more than conqueror. O may I ever be engaged in praising him who has always enabled me, when on the verge of destruction, as I have thought, to surmount all the contaminations of the flesh. Thus I passed on in the midst

of the vanities of my poor life, sometimes trying to read my Bible with great desire, yet not able to understand much of it, or as I would wish to. For these reasons I betook myself to earnest prayer, and would sometimes find myself speaking to this amount, "O Lord, am I a fool, and not able to know the truth of thy ways from the errors of death?" Then perceiving my much weakness and my many tossings to and fro, I would cry and say, "O Lord, leave me not to myself, nor to my own blindness, nor to approve or condemn any view of any individual; but lead me by the right way." But all my pleadings seemed to be in vain, so far as I could see; for my mind was in such a state of sluggishness and dullness that I could not read for some time. I laid my book aside during this period of dullness, and, in fact, my reading of the Bible has been very little since that time. During the above mentioned time I hardly ever took the Bible in my hands, for it seemed as a burden of great toil to my mind, body and strength. I passed on in this condition, in great sorrow and weeping, and my pillow would often be wet at midnight hours; and while following the plough from sunrise till sunset my face would seldom be dry. But when I would be about to enter the cabin for the purpose of preparing dinner for my father and his little family, I would wipe away my tears, for fear they would surmise my trouble. But the appointed time of the monthly meeting at Rock Spring, when Elder Caudell was to attend for my satisfaction, rolled around, and I began to regret that I had ever let any one know of my feelings; for I thought that Elder Caudell and the few of God's people at old Rock Spring would expect me to come and tell the church what I had felt, as the effect of my being born again, and then to be baptized; for Elder Caudell had said that if he came he would expect to baptize me in Mitchell's River. And what was I? A poor, deceived wretch. And if I had been rightly judged by those people, who had heard a portion of my travel, I would not be in such a state as I now am in. For it seemed as though I had experienced nothing but wrath and condemnation. My mind was completely hedged in from those heavenly seasons when God had manifested his love to me. I will just say that the lifeless state I was in is indescribable. But I finally concluded that it was a mistake on my part; that Elder Caudell and others thought I was a christian, and that I would go to the above named meeting, which was on the eighteenth day of May, 1878. When I arrived at the meeting it was late in the day. All the people had gathered, and Elder Caudell was about ready to preach from Acts xvi. 4, 5. I entered the house with great quakings; inso-much that my body quivered all over; for the deep sense of my unworthiness no tongue can tell nor pen describe. As I went into the house the thought struck me that I would take

a back seat, and that no one would notice me. But as soon as I turned to go to my selected seat, brother C. W. York said to me, "Here is room for you. Come here and sit down." But I stoutly refused, and started for my selected seat, when brother York said, "Come and sit down here. We are not going to hurt you." Then I went, with a dreadful feeling of nothingness. O how solemn and desolate were my feelings. O how fearful I was. I felt that God was in the place, and that I was one of the most sinful creatures that ever lived. I took a seat right in front of the stand. After Elders Caudell and Harbour had preached, the church was called together, and they called for my experience. I began to think, What could I say? I thought if I could crawl out of the house I would never look one of those people in the face any more. I began to tell them as best I could, but did not think I was telling them much of anything. Almost every breath I drew was with the thought, "O Lord, what have I now done? O Lord, have mercy on my poor soul, and if I am deceived, undeceive me." So in much affliction I gave a short account of my travail, and to my great surprise I was joyfully received by all the brethren. On the next day, which was Sunday, I was to be baptized; but on coming together we learned that brother Harbour desired to do the baptizing, which was not satisfactory to me, and therefore the baptism was postponed until the next month. Now I will just say that I had never heard any person tell a christian experience, and therefore it was a serious undertaking to me, always fearing that I was not worthy to sit in the midst of the children of God. I would often betake myself to prayer, and when approaching the place of prayer would quake and tremble, because of the fear of the Lord. As I have already stated, I would get into such a condition as to think that I had no christian experience at all. The day after I was received into the church, Elder Caudell preached from the words, "For the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." The comfort I received from this sermon was great.

Yours in love,

WM. R. WELBORN.

SMITH'S STATION, Ala., Nov. 22, 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Through an impression of the Lord, as I trust, I desire to communicate to the household of faith through the SIGNS. I hope my desire is to edify and comfort those of like precious faith. It is perhaps unknown to many of the dear readers of the SIGNS what peculiar feelings I now have, since my restoration to church fellowship among the Primitive or Old School Baptists. Some time ago I sent you my experience, and it appeared in the SIGNS. I was then living in the enjoyment of gospel peace and fellowship with the brethren, and had no more idea of being excluded than I

had of flying. Hence in our prosperity we know not the day of adversity; and who can tell what tomorrow will bring forth? I wish to say here, that I justify the action of the church, without entering into the particulars. My peculiar feelings are that I appreciate gospel fellowship as I never did before. And while I once thought I loved the Baptists, I now feel that I know I love them, and will suffer much before I will lose fellowship among them again. I did not expect to say this much, but was impressed with a portion of Scripture, Song of Solomon ii. 3. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." The Song of Solomon seems to fill a very necessary part of the word of God, although some have seen no use for it, and are rather disposed to deride it and declare that it is of no use. It is said that the Jews in pretended modesty refused to let the young men and maidens read it. How astonishing it seems to the children of God, who are taught in righteousness, that such should be the case with any. But it evidences the glorious truth that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; neither can he know them; and none but Jews outwardly, natural men, could entertain any objections to the Song of Solomon. There seems to be much wisdom of God disclosed therein. It is prophetic, historic, doctrinal, experimental, yea, wonderful to the humble saint who, like Mary, sits at the feet of Jesus. It seems to be a dialogue between the church and Christ. The church enjoys the love of the Lord Jesus, and Jesus accepts the praise of his bride. The comparison is of Christ to the apple tree among the trees of the wood. We know that there is a peculiar difference, for it excels in looks, comeliness, utility and glory. And without attempting to speak of all the peculiarities of the apple tree, suffice it to say that Christ is the glorious beauty to the bride, the betrothed, the espoused. The church could also say, He is "the chiefest among ten thousand," the one "altogether lovely." While the queen of Sheba beheld the glory of Solomon, and she had heard of his fame, and had come to see, she declared that the half had not been told her. Jesus said, "A greater than Solomon is here." We then gather that the church has seen and does see in Christ ten thousand beauties and excellencies for which she praises him as the King of saints, as the only Potentate, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He is head over all things to the church. He is her Head and her Husband. She further says, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." This is an expression in the past tense. But when we view the whole body of Christ, with all his members, as manifested in the earth, we can hear the voice of Abel, crying or speaking

his praise, when he slew the lamb in sacrifice. And his sacrifice was accepted. It was there he enjoyed the glorious promise made in the garden, and virtually became an heir to the promise, which was the first shadow of Christ that was ever cast upon this sin-stricken and sin-smitten earth, in his offering which was by faith, mixed with divine wisdom. He saw Jesus; yea, he reclined by faith, sat down under his shadow, and took great delight. By faith he looked forward thousands of years and saw Christ as the remedy for sin. Hence it was by that faith which enabled the bride to say, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Abel, as a component part of that bride, could say the same. Without attempting to bring in all the declarations of the church, which existed even prior to this writing, we only cite to show when and how the blessed shadow of the Son of God, as the Bridegroom of the believer, first hovered over them. We read later in the prophets, that a man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the storm, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. This man is Christ Jesus, the great Rock of eternal ages, laid in Zion as the chief corner stone, the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Yes, he is our Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. The gigantic Rock, which casts a shadow from eternity to eternity, hovers over, protects and affords a lasting and eternal shade to all, yea, to the very least of his blessed flock, throughout the length and breadth of the universe. The church sits down under this shadow, which protects her from the fiery vengeance of the law, and affords her a house of defense against the howling beasts of the field and wilderness. This great spiritual Rock, which anciently followed Israel, is the same Rock upon which we stand and bless God, the immovable Rock. I think often of a circumstance once related of a great rock near a city, which was in the way, and was an offense unto them of the city. So they thought to remove it by gradually destroying it piece by piece. They worked on it with their picks and blasting powers, but finally gave up and decided that it could not be done. So we see the vain efforts of poor, puny men, picking on this huge Rock, which is Christ. The Rock looks down upon the poor, puny efforts of men to displace him. They cannot with all their boasted power and progress destroy the effect of this glorious shadow upon the least of his dear little ones. They cannot deface his blessed image in one single instance. "His shadow." There seemed to be efficacy in Peter's shadow as he went to and from the temple; but all the virtue in Peter, as he said, was Christ. So the shadow of Jesus gives a cooling sensation to the weary pilgrim on his journey to that better land and country. The peculiar delight which permeates the believer's entire

spiritual being is indescribable and full of glory. Of all the delights, this nearness and sensible realization of the peculiar benefits of Christ cannot be expressed. As the poet says,

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.
That sweet comfort was mine.
When favor divine
I first found in the blood of the Lamb."

There is a sweetness which excels literal honey; and this must be the spiritual honey from the Rock, and oil from the flinty Rock. "His fruit was sweet to my taste." The believer, or the bride, enjoys the fruit of his atoning blood which poured forth; for he was sacrificed for his church, for believers, and by faith they partake of his benefits. Yes, by faith we find him. For God by his Spirit implants faith, and that, working by love, which is a gift by the same Spirit, draws us, and we run after him. We come to him by faith. By faith we partake of his benefits, which enables us to say, "He died for me." Here we find peace, and see the justice and mercy of God in our salvation. Here we realize that we are saved; yes, "saved by the blood of the crucified One." We are made to say, "There I would sit forever, viewing streams of mercy in streams of blood. "His fruit." O the abundance of grace which flows through and from Jesus to his dear believing ones. Truly we sing,

"Grace, 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear.
Grace led my roving feet
To tread the heavenly road:
And new supplies each hour I need,
While pressing on to God."

His fruit, his love, his mercy. O what sweet fruit to the believer! Peter says we have tasted that the Lord is good. Have we indeed "tasted the heavenly gift?" Do we partake of one single joy or blessing that does not come from Christ? Not one. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The office of the Spirit is to take of the things of Jesus and show them to believers. O what a contrast there is between the highest ecstasies of this vain world, and the excellencies of Christ Jesus our Lord. Do you wonder at Paul, when at this fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for exclaiming, "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ?" Can you wonder at the poet in breaking forth in such strains?

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

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

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

This is indeed the honey out of the Rock, which satisfied the desire of Jacob and of David; yea, of all the patriarchs and prophets. What a wonderful Savior! What a compassionate, loving Redeemer! Yea, how lovely and gracious! Then what next? We will run after him, when drawn by such cords of everlasting love. May our hungry, fainting souls be continually filled with this manna from heaven, this bread which came down from God, which if a man eat he shall never hunger. Here I might enlarge, but this article would perhaps be too lengthy. I submit it to you, brethren Beebe. If you see fit, publish it; if not, cast it into the waste-basket or the fire, and all will be well. Hoping that prosperity of soul will attend all the Lord's children, I am yours in hope,
W. LIVELY.

GARNET, Kansas, May, 1885.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—This is Sunday and a beautiful morning. All nature seems to wear a bright and cheerful smile. The bells are ringing, calling the people to their different places of public worship. And as I am feeling sad and lonely, my thoughts turn toward Zion, the beautiful city of our God, and to the inhabitants thereof. There, I humbly trust,

"My best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Savior reigns."

And trusting to God to guide and direct my thoughts in the way of truth, I will try to place a few of them on paper, for the perusal of the dear ones of my Father's family; especially those who, like the writer, are denied the sweet privilege of meeting and mingling with those we hold near and dear, and to hear the glorious gospel trumpet sound forth the praises of God, by our dear ministering brethren, who fail not to declare the truth as it is in Jesus. It has been a long, cold and dreary winter and spring in nature, and it has been my lot to suffer more than usual in body. But with the return of spring I am thankful to say that I am feeling much better. The cold and desolate appearance of the earth has been to me as nothing, when compared with the cold and barren feelings which have prevailed to a greater or less extent over my mind, and shut out the bright rays of the Savior's love, or caused them to shine so dimly that their warmth was scarcely perceptible. O how I missed the sweet assurance of the Savior's love. How hard it seemed to appear cheerful and happy before the world. How often I had to turn aside to hide the silent and rebellious tears, while my soul cried out in anguish, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." O how heavy these afflictions seemed; so heavy that I felt at times as though I should surely sink by the wayside. One day, while feeling even more cast down and dejected than usual, I took up my little Bible with a faint hope of finding some comfort. I turned to the words of our Savior, "What I do thou knowest not now,

but thou shalt know hereafter." Words are inadequate to express the flood of light which was let in upon my benighted soul. I could then say with Job, "He knoweth the way that I take. When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." I could then see that the fiery ordeal through which I had passed was to bring me to my Savior's feet. And it is ever thus with all God's dear children. He will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in him. Weeping and sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. The night may be long and dark, wherein all the beasts of the field do creep forth; but the morning will come. The sunbeams of God's unchanging love will break through and scatter the dark clouds, and the enemy will flee. Though we are often made to exclaim, "He hath brought me into darkness and not into light," yet even then we are commanded to trust in the Lord. And surely we have no other place to go. For is he not our only hope of salvation? And have we not learned by sad experience to put not our trust in the puny arm of flesh? For in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing. The ways of providence may seem dark and mysterious to our finite minds; we may not now see why it is that we have to pass through so many dark and dangerous scenes; all our earthly hopes and aspirations may be destroyed, and at times we may feel that we have nothing left us but the ashes of life; yet may we remember that our God is the God of providence as well as of grace, and in infinite wisdom he guards and directs all, and these are among the "all things," and in the end will redound to our good and to his glory. For what he doeth we know not now, but we shall know hereafter. The Scriptures abound with precious promises; and when by faith we can call them ours, how light our bodily afflictions seem. Then how cheerfully we take up the burden of life, desiring to wait patiently till our change come, when we shall hear the glad summons, "Child, come home." How gladly will we lay aside these tenements of clay, to be clothed in the spotless robe of Christ, and enter the haven of eternal rest, no more to suffer pain or fear, but on his bosom rest. May we ever be found watching and waiting, for we know not the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh.

Before I close this imperfect scribble I feel that I must say a few words to the many correspondents of our dear family paper. Your instructive and comforting communications are read with interest. O how thankful ought we to be for such a medium of correspondence, bringing us good news from a far country; especially to those who, like my dear parents and myself, live isolated from the brotherhood. It is all the preaching we get. I often ask myself the question, What would I do without them? Surely I would feel more lonely and desolate than I now do. For they are to me what food is to

those who are hungry, and drink to those who are thirsty. For,

"Though crumbs are much too good
For such an one as I,
No less than children's food
My soul can satisfy."

Write on; and though you may not know how much comfort your communications give the scattered lambs, may the reward of him that giveth a cup of cold water to one of the little ones be yours.

I would say to sister Mary Parker that I feel to sympathize with her in her great affliction. May the strong arm of God's love be around her and support her in all her trials.

And may you, dear Elder Beebe, long be spared to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." May God strengthen, comfort and support you in the future as in the past, and enable you to fill the station he has assigned you, to the great comfort of his little ones; and to his name be all the glory.

From your unworthy little sister,
SARAH A. VAN VELSAN.

DE KALB, De Kalb Co., Ill., Dec., 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—VERY

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose four dollars for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also for a year's subscription to the same for my dear daughter. Suffer a poor, vile worm of the dust to add that I do feel to rejoice in witnessing so zealous a contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, as has been maintained in conducting the SIGNS through another year, together with the kind and courteous exclusion of all unprofitable controversy. But even controversy, if conducted in the spirit of the adorable Lord and Master of the house, has its use, and is designed to subserve the interests of truth, when the Lord God is seen to reign therein. But alas! too often it is seen to furnish food to the vulture, rather than to minister the pure grain to Christ's dove. We were made to rejoice in seeing once more the signature of our beloved sister Bessie; the more as she had the ability to recognize the glorious majesty of grace as exhibited in that remarkable trophy, to the praise of the glory of sovereign grace, in the person of dear brother Welborn. For I verily believe that however humble his first birth, his second birth and breeding ranks him with kings upon the unstained throne of sovereign, reigning grace, to the praise of the divine glory. How clearly do we behold in such cases one more of the bones of "the whole house of Israel" moving around, utterly destitute of moisture in and of itself. Nevertheless we find this bone of the mystic frame set in motion to find its kindred bone (not some other bone), and finally brought to his mother's house, and to the chamber of her that conceived him. All such, being identified with Joshua, their High Priest, are "men wondered at;" yea, "a wonder unto many." But they are the greatest wonder of all unto themselves.

We sincerely hope that all the gifts

which have helped to adorn the SIGNS in the past, will still continue to minister, by their writings, grace to the readers of our beloved paper.

Dear brethren editors, will you be kind enough to insert for me, by way of inquiry of the readers of our family medium, if there are any of the old order of Baptists, having a church organization, and as such meeting for the worship of the Most High, stately or occasionally, in the county of Harvey, state of Kansas, or in any of the counties immediately adjoining Harvey, as I anticipate moving there-to, should the dear Lord so ordain concerning me? If there are any such, and they will do me the kindness to inform me, either by private letter or through the SIGNS, I will esteem it a favor. Such as are "grieved for the afflictions of Joseph," such as are not afraid with any amazement when the determinate counsel of the divine will is advocated, even such as can endure sound doctrine; and rejoice in it and its glorious Author, I desire to hear from.

Yours in the best of bonds,
THOMAS NORRIS.

ATHENS, Texas, Nov. 7, 1885.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—The SIGNS is a dear family paper to me, and for me to give it up I cannot feel satisfied. I have been thinking for some time of giving to the few scattered ones a sketch of what I hope are the Lord's dealings with me. But I have been dealt with so differently from some whose experiences I read, I feel that if I am a saint, surely I am the least of all. I have had serious thoughts about death since a very small child, and I did hope that when I grew up to the years of maturity I would be good enough to belong to the Primitive Baptist Church; for I believe now that I ever loved them. No other sound of preaching was ever sweet to me. My father and mother carried me to meeting with them from my earliest recollection, and I am made to believe that I was raised up in the way that I should go. When fifteen years old I was taken one morning severely with cramp colic, and I surely thought death would be my portion in a few moments. The next thought was, If I die, what will become of me? Instantly something said, "Now is the accepted time." I verily thought I was lost. This was the first time I ever prayed, and I said, "I feel inclined to thy will, O God; but if it please thee, spare my life." I did not think I would be cast into a burning place of torment, as I had heard some people say. Right there my troubles began. My bodily pain was relieved after a few minutes, and I did believe that it was the work of the Lord. I still felt inclined to his will, but thought I never would tell of it. At the next meeting at old Cedar Creek, Cowetta County, Georgia, I heard you, brother Wm. L. Beebe, preach once at the association, when I was seventeen years old. Brother Johnson Pate took for his text, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." O how guilty

I felt. It seemed that he preached his whole sermon to me, and yet I had told no one. I was troubled for five years. During that time I visited parties, and danced, to try to get rid of trouble; but my trouble only increased the more. I wanted to read the Bible in a concealed place where no one could see me. These words of comfort came to me at times, "Where I am, there you may be also." I found them to be the words of our Savior. O how unworthy I felt. During this time I married and moved to Alabama in 1856. I was much troubled about my condition one night after I retired. A neighbor woman who lived a few hundred yards away was singing,

"O when shall I see Jesus,
And reign with him above?"

She had a clear voice, and I thought I never heard such good singing in all my life. I fell asleep with the sound ringing in my inward parts. Just before day I awoke, and I had dreamed that my father, Cohen Attaway, had got up in the midst of a large congregation and read my little experience as printed in the *Southern Baptist Messenger*. O how guilty I felt. I thought I had deceived my father and the congregation. In the midst, I thought, were the twelve, washing the disciples' feet. My little brother was at their feet, an innocent little child. I awoke, and these lines came with force to my mind,

"O do not be discouraged,
For Jesus is your Friend;
And if you lack for knowledge,
He'll not refuse to lend."

Then I went out, and thought I would try to pray. I certainly was afraid to get on my knees, fearing I would be making a mock of my God. My burden was gone, and I could not tell how it went. Right then, if I had been at the Cedar Creek, I should have told the church, for I wanted to be baptized in the fellowship of that church, which I thought I had loved when a little girl. After this, clouds of gloom followed for years. In 1869 I was baptized in the fellowship of County Line Church, by brother Thomas Jones. I have had trials and trouble ever since. This is the first attempt I ever made to write for publication. If you give this a place in the SIGNS, please correct mistakes.

Your unworthy sister,
M. M. C.

POMEROY, Garfield Co., W. T.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Brother Lee Hancks' letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of Oct. 15, current volume, is too good to pass unnoticed, hence I wish to say, That is the doctrine of Christ, and is what I have been contending for the last twenty years on the Pacific coast, mostly in California, but partly in eastern Oregon and Washington Territory. But I find some in my travels that cannot endure sound doctrine or practice, but are ready to depart from the faith of God's elect, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; and by fair speech and plausible arguments they lead captive

the simple. However, the great majority of Old School Baptists on this coast are sound in faith and practice, having no fellowship for the hidden things of dishonesty, and are contending earnestly, both by walk and conversation, for the faith. And it is a source of great comfort to the children of God to know that, go where they will, east, west, north or south, there is still a remnant according to the election of grace, that have not nor will not bow to the image of Baal; for they are reserved unto the Lord, being kept by his power. May the Lord our God ever keep us as little children, and then we will not think our own thoughts nor speak our own words, but will be dependent on him for all we have and are.

A. H. HAGANS.

SHELBYVILLE, Tenn., Nov. 24, 1885.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR SIR:—Inclosed you will find money order for two dollars, which you will please place to the credit of sister Elizabeth Reagar, Flat Creek, Tennessee. Sister Reagar is a great admirer of your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and says she must have it to read as long as she lives.

We have just closed a three days meeting at our church (Flat Creek), and had a very enjoyable meeting. There is a much better interest now among the churches of our faith than for many years past. I have had the pleasure of baptizing fifty-two persons in the past three months within my travels. Some of the churches of our association (the Elk River) have been greatly revived, and many added to them, namely, Mount Moriah forty or more, and Buckeye eighty-four. Nearly all the churches have received some additions since September last. May the good Lord continue the good work according to his good pleasure, bringing in the "other sheep."

As ever, yours to serve, for Christ's sake,

J. E. FROST.

ACTON, Texas, June 16, 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Mr. James Armstrong sends on his remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He has been confined to his bed for several months. He is very old. He is not sick, but just gradually giving way. I do not think he will be here much longer. He has been an extraordinary man, an extra good citizen, and a firm indorser of the doctrine of the Bible, as advocated through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He has been a subscriber to the SIGNS for a number of years, and perhaps from its commencement. I have often heard him say that your father was the nearest right on every point of doctrine of any one he ever read after. Mr. Armstrong has both volumes of the "Editorials," and several other Primitive Baptist books. Notwithstanding he is so feeble, he is ready to talk about the Bible.

What I have said about Mr. Armstrong you may publish if you feel like it. He moved from Mississippi here ten or twelve years ago.

J. A. TANDY.

ROXBURY, N. Y., Dec. 22, 1885.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR FRIENDS:—I have been a subscriber for the last twelve years to your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, richly laden with gospel truth; and when I received the last number of the present year, and read the contents, I had such a love for your welfare and the spread of your paper, that I started out to see what I could do in your behalf by way of new subscribers. I soon learned that there were a great many church members who did not take the SIGNS, and also a great many of what people term dry land Baptists. Among such I have had good success, all claiming an interest in reading what this paper contains. I will send you immediately the number already subscribed, as they all want to begin with the new year, 1886. Please print a few extra copies. I will, providence permitting, send you what new subscribers I obtain from the date of this writing up to the close of our Yearly Meeting, which is the first Saturday and Sunday in January. Please send me three copies of the "Everlasting Task." I will inclose thirty cents in postage stamps.

I wish you all a Happy New Year. Love and best wishes to all.

JOHN W. SQUIRE.

[A list of fourteen new subscribers accompanied this letter, and twenty-eight dollars were inclosed to pay for the same. We wish to thus publicly thank our friend Squire for his kind and efficient aid in increasing the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and hope that many others of our brethren and friends will interest themselves in response to our appeal.—ED.]

INFORMATION WANTED.

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

John H. Adams, formerly of Marion, Oregon.

Mrs. L. Hill, formerly of King's River, California.

B. E. Selman, formerly of Jewett, Texas.

Maggie Miller, formerly of Spring Hill, Iowa.

Suspension of the Publication of the "Primitive Pathway."

WITH the issue for fifteenth of December, 1885, the *Primitive Pathway*, a paper published in Alabama, announces that with that number they suspend its publication. It has been evident to us for some time that there were more papers among our order of Baptists than could be sustained by the brethren, and that some would have to go down for want of financial support. We do not believe the brethren are able to support all that are left, and we think it only a question of time when others will have to also suspend. It is for the friends and patrons of the SIGNS to decide whether it shall be the first and oldest publication or some of the more modern ones.—ED.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

To the Amite Primitive Baptist Association, October 20th, 1885, now in session with the Middleton's Creek Church, Franklin Co., Mississippi.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We submit this letter in compliance with a resolution of your body at its last session, appointing a committee to prepare and present a written statement of the cause of the separation, and the difference between the Primitive and the Missionary Baptists in this locality, or within the bounds of the Mississippi Baptist Association, the oldest in this State, and was constituted in the year 1806, upon an "Article of Faith" which we believe is regarded as orthodox by all Predestinarian Baptists. Five churches constituted this body. Peace, union and harmony prevailed, and the Lord blessed them; but when their number and wealth increased, Missionism was introduced. Then began the cry, "Lo here" and "Lo there." Then began the strife between the children of promise and the children of the bond woman, which clearly shows two contending parties, one for "the faith" and the other against it; until the separation, which we date in 1854, when the Mount Olive Church, of Franklin County, Mississippi, withdrew from the Mississippi Baptist Association. First, we will, in as brief a way as possible, show the cause of this separation; and, second, the difference between the two orders of Baptists.

First. The cause of the separation grew out of a difficulty between Elder Rowland Wilkinson and the Zion Hill Church, a member of the above named association; and as we have a copy of the church record, and Elder R. Wilkinson's published explanation of that difficulty, we deem it expedient to let the record speak for itself.

"In August, 1852, two members were sent (not by the church, but by a caucus of six or seven members) to inform me that I could not preach any more at Zion Hill Church; that I had advanced doctrine which they could not receive; that I and their pastor were preaching 'crosswise'; that I might go to other churches and preach for them, &c. I proposed that if they would show me my error, I would retract; but this they did not attempt. I then requested them to prefer a charge against me, in order that the matter might be fairly investigated; but this also they declined doing."—*Eld. Wilkinson's Pamphlet, page 9.*

"In December, 1852, I introduced the following resolution before the conference, and moved its adoption, viz.: And as there are so many institutions of men, called 'Benevolent Institutions,' in this church, believing it to be her duty to provide for the peace and harmony of her members, she therefore declares non-fellowship with all the unscriptural institutions of the day, such as Theological Schools, State Conventions, Missionary Societies, Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Temperance Societies (so called), and all their kindred relations,

holding them to be unscriptural."—Page 3.

"This resolution was lost, four voting for it and twenty against it. The Moderator, seeing that he had the power, or majority, called on Elder Wilkinson to know if he would abide the decision of the church. He requested time to give his answer. On the ninth of February, 1853, a committee was appointed by the church to wait on brethren R. Wilkinson and John C. Wilkinson, and their wives, Margaret and Philadelphia Wilkinson, and notify them to attend at their next conference and satisfy the church whether they would abide the decision of said church made on the resolution above mentioned." "On the nineteenth of March, 1853, Rowland Wilkinson answered in writing as follows:

"AMITE Co., Miss., March 11, 1853.

"To the Zion Hill Church, Amite Co., Miss.

"It is now more than twenty-seven years since I became a member of the Baptist Church, and during the last twelve years I have been a minister in that denomination. At the time of my connection with the church I believed the faith and practice of this professed body of Christ to be in accordance with the teachings of the holy word of God, being founded upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Since that time, however, I have with many others been grieved to witness the gradual introduction of error, both in faith and practice, so that I have been, and am now, painfully convinced that the Baptist Church, or church of that denomination, as they are popularly known, are not now, as a body, what they formerly were, but have widely departed from the faith and simplicity of the gospel of Christ; together with the scenes of trial and persecution through which I have lately been called to pass, have at last compelled me to believe that the prevailing ministry and the churches of the Baptist denomination, so called, are not the servants of Christ, nor the bodies which are governed by the laws of his kingdom. In thus expressing myself, I would not be understood as expressing the belief that there are not those in the ministry and churches whom the great Head of the church has set apart to the work, or who are subjects of his spiritual kingdom, purchased and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. It is believed, however, that they have become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and that they do not truly rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free; and this they would openly acknowledge if it were not that their character and reputation would be in jeopardy. Therefore, my own personal observation and experience have convinced me, as before remarked, that churches and ministry have departed from the faith and simplicity of the gospel. Such being the honest conviction of my own mind, after much prayerful

and serious examination of the word of God I must, however painful and self-denying the step, hereby formally withdraw my membership from the church and from the ministry, and inform you that I shall not hereafter consider myself in anywise connected with the Baptist Church, ministry or denomination, as it is now known or understood. My reasons for this step, among others which might be named, are as follows: Because this church has recently refused to provide for the peace and harmony of her members against unscriptural institutions of men, of late origin. Because ministers who have not enjoyed superior worldly advantages or literary qualifications, but who have nevertheless been greatly blessed of God in the work of the ministry, are now generally but lightly esteemed, and crowded aside to make room for those who have not been called of God, but have merely received the literary honors of a college or the diploma of a Theological Seminary. Because professed ministers thus uncalled by the Spirit have had no dispensation of the gospel committed to them, but are rather such as teach for doctrines the commandments of men. Because churches under the influence of such a ministry must and will depart from the gospel of Christ, both in faith and practice. Because many schemes and inventions of merely human origin have been sought out and introduced into the churches, which are nowhere authorized by the word of God, but are contrary thereto, both in nature and spirit. Because conventions, associations, councils, ministerial conferences, and other professedly religious institutions, are of human origin and invention; and, as at present conducted, they greatly interfere with and impair the independence of churches, both in faith and practice. These, in brief, are some of my reasons, among others of a similar nature, which have convinced me, as before remarked, that the ministry and churches have departed from the faith and simplicity of the gospel; and such departures are allowed and tolerated in the churches, although in the beginning it was not so. For years, however, I have been vainly hoping there would ere long be a reformation in these respects; but my own recent experience has convinced me that the evil has so generally pervaded the entire mass as to preclude reason for hope; and thus I am compelled to withdraw from the ministry and membership of the Baptist Church, as it is now popularly called. I shall not, however, thereby yield my position as a professed believer in the Baptist faith as such, and would still humbly acknowledge my belief in those sentiments and principles which so eminently distinguished the Baptist denomination in this country during the early period of its history. Since that time, however, a great and deplorable change has taken place, so that the evil consequences which the earlier fathers of the Baptist cause so confidently predicted and feared are now more than realized. Large and

powerful monied institutions, for the purpose of converting souls, and otherwise promoting the cause of him whose kingdom is not of this world, have been established. Thousands upon thousands are annually lavished upon professed ministers of the cross, the officers, subordinates and employes, whose well-paid agency is required in the collection of funds for carrying out the avowed purpose of their professed religious establishments, whose very life, soul and existence is money, and money continually. With these views, therefore, and the painful convictions of my own mind in respect to the present state of the ministry and churches, I must, as a professed disciple of Christ, however unworthy, declare non-fellowship with the new schemes, inventions, doctrines and commandments of men, which now so extensively prevail in the modern Baptist Churches, which are but the unfruitful works of darkness, and should be reprov'd by all who seek the old paths, and who would earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. For this I expect to have my name cast out as evil; but in every persecution, trial and reproach which I am called to suffer for bearing my feeble testimony in behalf of Christ and his truth, I would count it all joy, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the despised people of God, than to enjoy the applause and popularity of the enemies of the gospel for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the kingdoms of this world, or the glory of them. In withdrawing from a denomination with which my earliest religious associations and sympathies have been so long and intimately acquainted, and formally separating myself from the communion and fellowship of those among that people with whom I have so often taken sweet counsel, and whom I must esteem as the honored servants of the cross and partakers of the common salvation, I feel it to be one of the most painful and self-denying acts of my life thus to sever a relationship which was once so tender and endearing. It is not, however, because I love them less; but, as I humbly trust, it is because of the attachment which I entertain toward the institutions, ordinances and truth of him who alone is King in Zion. I can indeed truly sympathize with them in their anxieties and fears, and would fervently hope they may yet speedily be delivered from all spiritual bondage, and once more rejoice in the liberty of Christ. But deliverance from the corruptions of the gospel, and the unholy and oppressive influence which men and seducers from the truth are now exerting in the denomination, can never be experienced while going in the way of Cain, and running greedily after the error of Balaam for reward. The people of God are commanded to renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them; being assured by the word of him who cannot lie that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being de-

ceived, and is the testimony of the holy word of God, which is as a light that shineth in a dark place. In obedience therefore to the teachings of that word and my own convictions of duty, I herewith communicate this letter of withdrawal, and declare myself henceforth no longer in connection with the new order of Baptists, as they are popularly known and understood.

"ROWLAND WILKINSON."

"After reading the above answer, on motion, it was

"Resolved, That this church call a presbytery of ministers to attend and sit in council with this church at its next conference, in relation to the above answer of brother Wilkinson, and the charges therein made; and that Rev. W. Clark, with a member from Ramah Church, Rev. A. McKenzie, with a member from Galilee Church, and H. McKnight, with a member from Liberty Church, be invited to attend at said conference; and that two members each from New Providence, East Fork and Mt. Zion Churches be invited to seats with this church at said conference, on Saturday, April 16th, 1853.

"Members were present from the following churches, and were, on motion, constituted a committee to examine the action of the church, to wit: Galilee, New Providence, East Fork, Liberty, Mar's Hill, Ramah, Mt. Zion and Mt. Olive. On motion, the church requested the committee to examine into the action and proceedings of this church in relation to the difficulty between this church and brother R. Wilkinson and others, and to make a decision thereon. Motion before the committee, that the action and conduct of this church in relation to the resolution offered by R. Wilkinson are proper and scriptural, which said motion was unanimously decided in the affirmative. On motion, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted by the church, to wit:

"WHEREAS, At the regular conference of the Zion Hill Church, held on the 18th day of December, 1852, Rowland Wilkinson, a member of said church, presented a certain preamble and resolutions for the action of the church, declaring non-fellowship for certain and sundry religious institutions with which said church felt it her duty to co-operate; and,

"WHEREAS, Upon the vote being taken on said resolutions, they were rejected by a large majority of the church, he, the said Rowland Wilkinson, with three other members, voting for their adoption; and,

"WHEREAS, The said Rowland Wilkinson was called upon by the Moderator to give an expression, whether he would abide the decision of the church, he asking time for reflection; and,

"WHEREAS, He, the said Rowland Wilkinson, was by order of said church duly notified to attend at the conference of said church in March, and satisfy said church of the course he intended to pursue relative to the decision of the church above mentioned; and,

"WHEREAS, He, the said Rowland Wilkinson, did attend and appear before said church in conference, on the 19th day of March, 1853, and file his answer in writing, and in answer charged the Baptist Churches and ministry with having departed from the faith, practices, customs and usages of Baptist Churches, and with being knowingly entangled with the institutions of men alone, for the sake of filthy lucre; also charging that some of the ministry would leave the error of their way were it not for the fear of jeopardizing their reputation; and for these and sundry other reasons justifies his course in declaring non-fellowship with the Baptist Church and ministry as they are now known and understood; therefore be it

"Resolved, By the Zion Hill Church, in conference sitting, that the answer of said Rowland Wilkinson above referred to is not a satisfactory justification for the conduct of him, the said Rowland Wilkinson, toward this church.

"Resolved, That in the opinion of this church the said Rowland Wilkinson has by his own conduct rendered himself liable to exclusion from this church.

"Resolved, That Rowland Wilkinson be excluded from the fellowship of this church."—*Zion Hill Record; copied from the Minutes of the Mississippi Baptist Association of 1854.*

Now, dear brethren, can you not see that Elder R. Wilkinson had truth, justice and the word of God to sustain him, while his opponents had error for their foundation, and the majority for their defense? His declaration of non-fellowship was one month in advance of theirs, and based upon legal gospel charges, "a departure from gospel order, both in faith and practice." One month later they declared non-fellowship for him, because his "answer and conduct" were not satisfactory. When his answer was read the church called for "a presbytery of ministers to attend and sit in council with this church," "in relation to the above answer of brother Wilkinson, and the charges therein made." At the next conference, instead of organizing a "presbytery of ministers," they say, "Members were present from the following churches, and were, on motion, constituted a committee [not to examine and refute the charges made against them by Elder Wilkinson, but] to examine the action of the church." "Motion before the committee, that the action and conduct of this church in relation to the resolution offered by R. Wilkinson are proper and scriptural." Did not the resolution declare these certain and sundry institutions unscriptural, and non-fellowship them? Did not the church vote them scriptural and retain them in fellowship? Now if these institutions are of divine authority, then the action of the committee declaring the action of the church "proper and scriptural" is correct; but if they are not of divine authority, then the action of the church and committee was improper and unscriptural.

"I now propose to give a few brief extracts from the Circular Letter of this association in 1845, showing her views of faith and practice at that time, which are precisely the same for which I still contend. These were the views that the members of Zion Hill Church 'could not receive' in August, 1852; and hence I was requested to preach them no more at Zion Hill Church. These were the views which they consider 'crosswise' to the preaching of their pastor at that time. 'Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.' As we have received the charge and exhortation from divine authority, we must see to it very carefully that it be really the christian faith which we believe, profess, propagate and contend for—not the creeds and doctrines and man-made abstracts called faith; nothing of later date than the inspired writings of the holy evangelists and apostles. Their sayings are faithful, and worthy of all acceptance. It is the faith once delivered to the saints, to which nothing should be added or taken from. Here let us abide; here we are safe. If we stir a step further we are in danger of being entangled or seduced." "From these texts it is plain that all the means and instrumentalities which were to be used to effect the salvation of his people were chosen at the same time. It is the opinion of some of our modern preachers that this doctrine should not be preached, because it perplexes the minds of men; and some have been wicked enough to say, after they had come in the church by acknowledging and professing to believe the doctrine of election and predestination, and for several years trying to preach it, that they now prefer a universal system. Such men must be unstable in all their ways, and must have used hypocrisy when they came into the church; but their objection is not the question to be decided. Is it a Bible doctrine? Has God revealed it in his word? If so, then it is to be proclaimed throughout the length and breadth of the land, and earnestly contended for as a part of that faith once delivered to the saints." "When Christ preached this doctrine the people murmured, and so they do yet. He told them, John vi. 44, 'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.' But the creeds of man-made faith tell poor sinners that it rests upon their own voluntary acts. This contradiction we leave for the Lord to decide." "The law by which the church is to be governed is a part of that faith which we contend for. Everything that God requires us to do is plainly taught in the Bible." "The reader will recollect that the Circular Letter from which the above extracts were taken was written in 1845; and now not only those who rule the association, but the writer (Elder Z. Reeves) of that Circular also, are holding and fellowshipping

and bidding God speed to doctrines and practices which are crosswise with the teachings of that Circular. It has been mainly through the yielding influence of the writer of that Circular that modern Missionism has obtained a permanent foothold in the association; and yet he knows that the practice of modern Missionism is not plainly taught in the Bible. He knows that they rely mainly on money for the advancement of Christ's kingdom. He has good reason to believe that they would have accepted Simon Magus's money; because he well knows that they do accept money for life memberships in their 'certain and sundry religious institutions.' What shall I say to these things? I will merely use his own language, and say that this inconsistency I 'leave for the Lord to decide.' And now, friendly reader, in conclusion of the whole matter, I am willing to admit that the Missionary Baptists may be as sincere in their convictions of duty as I am; but I do contend that as professed christians they should be as candid as their honored leaders, Fuller, Judson, Benedict and others, who are honest enough to acknowledge the great change that has taken place in the denomination, and who glory in that change. Then honorable principles would require them to let me and those who believe and act with me continue on the 'old particular plan,' and they follow their 'new plan,' without trying to destroy us because we honestly differ with them. We have done them no harm, neither are we trying to do them any harm. We are simply contending for the 'old particular plan' on which the churches of this association were organized."—*Elder W.'s Pamphlet, from page 13-15.*

"I was then pastor of Mt. Olive Church, and in the latter part of the same month she entered upon the following preamble and resolution:

"FRANKLIN CO., STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, }
Mt. OLIVE CHURCH, April 30, 1853. }

"We being well acquainted with the principle of doctrine and faith held by Elder R. Wilkinson, which has caused a difficulty between him and Zion Hill Church, in which duty compelled him to publicly withdraw from the fellowship of that church, and we having examined his letter of withdrawal, and the reasons therein contained, do heartily approve of his course in opposing the unscriptural institutions of the day and traditions of men.

"Done in conference, and signed by order of the church.

"MADISON WHITTINGTON,
"Church Clerk."

The Mt. Olive Church, for thus indorsing the course of Elder Wilkinson and retaining him as her pastor, was complained of to the association; and in October, 1854, she sent the association a letter of withdrawal, and stated, with other reasons, the following: "First. The Zion Hill Church has felt it her duty to cooperate with 'certain and sundry religious institutions' which are unauthorized by the Scriptures, and which tended to destroy the peace and harmony of her members. Sec-

ond. When the Zion Hill Church was told of her unwarrantable course by a faithful servant of Christ, who labored to promote the peace and harmony of her members, and to keep her separated from the world, instead of casting off all connection with these unscriptural institutions, she excluded him for his faithful course, and then attempted to seize his credentials in an unwarrantable manner." The above charges were by the association denounced as "abusive and insulting," and she withdrew fellowship from that church. "This same Zion Hill Church, in 1844, complained to the association against the Liberty Church for being too slack concerning the faith, and in 1853 she called upon the Liberty Church to justify her course in departing from the faith; and then complained against the Mt. Olive Church to the association because she continued true to the faith."

Beloved brethren, we have given you the main reasons which caused the separation, and feel that enough has been said to show the difference. In 1848 the Mississippi Baptist Association declared, "This association does not transact missionary business;" so they "recommend to the favorable attention of the churches the missionary society in its bounds, as affording a facility through which they may carry out their benevolent designs." Now they claim to be "missionary in doctrine," and ought to be in "practice." In 1870, "Resolved, That the members of this association resolve themselves into a committee of the whole, as collecting agents;" and in 1875 declare "that contribution to the Lord's cause is an act of worship." So this association is now a "facility" through which all may join in "worshiping" to their heart's content, or to the amount of their spare cash. This same association in her purer days declares, "We are told nothing in our Bible of missionary societies for sending the gospel to the heathen."—*Minutes of 1827.* Then they must have departed from the teachings of the Bible, or perhaps have a new version. In 1830 they say, "The Baptists believing that their faith is in strict conformity to the Scriptures, whatever is contrary to their faith is heresy to them." Her fourth article declares, "We believe in the everlasting love of God to his people; in the eternal, unconditional election of a definite number of the human family to grace and glory." In 1871 the Summit Baptist Church, a member of this same body, adopted a different faith. The fifth article reads as follows, "That the blessings of salvation are freely offered in the gospel to all mankind; that it is the immediate duty of all who hear to repent and believe the gospel; and that such as will not repent shall inevitably perish." Are not these articles "crosswise?" And if so, is not one heresy to the other? In 1872 this query, No. 1, "Is it not the duty of a Baptist Church to require of those whom she receives into her fellowship a knowledge of and acquiescence in our articles of faith?"

was submitted to a committee of five of their ablest ministers, who could not answer it. In 1873 the same query was submitted to three able ministers, "to report at the next meeting of this body." "This body" met in 1874, and have held their regular sessions annually ever since, and we are unable to find the report or the discharge of that committee; so we are led to believe that "this body" does not know whether their "Articles of Faith" ought to be known and believed or not. In 1830 "this same body" declares, "It is necessary that such who enter into a church state should have a knowledge of the truths of the gospel and confess them, and not be ashamed of Christ and his words before men. Their soundness in the doctrine of faith should be inquired into, and this be testified by their assent to the Articles of Faith held and maintained by the church." "Crosswise" again. In 1875 "this body" says, "Mississippi College, the foster-child of our denomination, the pride of our Mississippi Baptist," "to her we look for the instruction of those who shall teach our children and children's children the way of life, the true religion, which will fit them to meet us in the life to come." While "this body" looks to their "foster-child" for a teacher, we look to our blessed Savior, who promised to send a teacher, the Holy Ghost, who shall teach us all things. The teaching of this heavenly Teacher makes wise unto salvation. His lessons are perfect, and will result in the everlasting salvation of the Lord's chosen and redeemed people. Now, dear brethren, that religion or gospel which can be communicated from man to man is not the religion or gospel of Christ, but is "another gospel;" for Paul certifies "that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Again, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Jesus, our precious Savior, has "power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Then let us look "unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Jesus promised "another Comforter," "even the Spirit of truth," who shall teach us all things necessary to salvation.

In 1836 the Mississippi Baptist Association in her Circular declares, "Were all the associations, conferences and presbyteries on earth to unite their counsels and exert their authority, they could not make one preacher. The true minister of Christ, as such, is the special work of almighty God." Again, in 1811, she says, "The end which God has in view is the salvation of his people; and it is inconsistent with his wisdom to appoint means which will prove ineffectual, seeing it is completely in his power to make them effectual to

the accomplishing the end. God has appointed his Son as the author of this salvation, which he has wrought out by his obedience, sufferings and death, and that for his people; and has appointed, as the means of their enjoying it, the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, for which purpose he sends his Spirit to sanctify and work faith in them, whereby these means become effectual and the end is accomplished. Here we see the wisdom of God highly displayed and glorified; but where would be the wisdom to appoint a people to salvation and not save them? To send his Son to redeem them, and they never be the better of it? To send his Spirit into them to begin a good work, and not complete it? But this is not the case, for he has put the work of redemption into the hands of his Son, by whom it has been completed; and assigned the work of sanctification, in its beginning, progress and issue, to the agency of the Holy Spirit, who is adequate to it, and by whom it will be effected." These last two quotations we adopt as in keeping with the word of truth.

"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."

JOHN C. WILKINSON,
JOHN R. TEMPLE,

Committee.

The Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, in session with the Otter Creek Church, Clarke Co., Iowa, October 2d, 3d and 4th, 1885, to the churches composing her body, and to all with whom she corresponds, sends love and peace in the Lord. May the peace of God and the love of Christ be multiplied unto you.

BELOVED:—When we attempt to communicate unto you, through or by a Circular address, of those things pertaining to the holy child Jesus, and our union with and relation to him, as objects of his love and subjects of his grace, the thought fills the soul with wonder and astonishment, that a being with such a grand and glorious embodiment should be united and related to corrupt and fallen sinners, as we are made to know that we are, helpless, defiled, polluted, dead, unworthy even of life, dependent on him for everything we here receive, possess or enjoy. All, all are gone out of the way. None doeth good, no, not one. This is the true condition of all of God's people in the forest of nature. But notwithstanding all this, Paul, in Ephesians second chapter and first verse, says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." And he further says, "Wherein, in time past, ye [those dead, that is, who were dead in sins] walked according to the course of this world, 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." What, doing in a state of death? Yea, "fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind." "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." In this state of death they are capable of acting; and Saul did a great many things contrary to the power that quickened him. But what was quickened? Paul further says, "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." Again, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Jesus says, "Born of the Spirit;" that is, spiritually born, a manifestation of the Spirit, a revelation of the Spirit made known. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." That which is flesh is born flesh, and remains flesh. Spirit born spirit, remains spirit, and will, until God divides asunder soul and spirit, joints and marrow. Hence the apostle's mind is brought up to comprehend the whole counsel of God. "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. That which is unsearchable cannot be searched, and that which is past finding out cannot be found out. But God reveals them "unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." It is not the flesh quickened, for Paul says there is no good thing in the flesh. And further, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." Yet, "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."—Rom. viii. 11. "For this mortal must put on immortality, and this corruptible must put on incorruption;" not something else. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."—1 Cor. xv. 54. What death? The death of this mortal body; this natural, sinful, corruptible body; this sinner saved by grace; even us, for whom Christ was made (to be) sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So his name shall be called, "The Lord our Righteousness;" even him, "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."—1 Cor. i. 30, 31. Upon this foundation Paul says, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."—Phil. iii. 17, 18, and to the close. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we

look for the Savior." Not from earth, nor anything earthly or earthy; for that which was first was not spiritual or heavenly, but that which was natural and earthly; and afterward that which is spiritual. You are now quickened, though you possess a vile body; but you have a heavenly conversation, and are looking for a change to come. Job said (xiv. 14), "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." And Paul said, "Who 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." And he says again, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die."—1 Cor. xv. 35, 36. Jesus says (John xii. 24), "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Paul again says, (Eph. ii. 1), "You hath he quickened." And again (Col. iii. 3), "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." And Jesus intercedes for his dear saints in these words (John xvii), "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine: and I am glorified in them." "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 they may be one, even as we are one." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." And Paul says (Eph. iv. 3), "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." And in Hebrews ii. 11, "For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." And in verse 14, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death [ah, yes, all must pass through death] he might destroy him that had the power of death." Yes, beloved ones, as we pass onward through the march of time, bearing the cross which Christ our Savior has laid upon us, notwithstanding we so often murmur, mourn and repine, when our minds are called to survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of life and glory died, and are made to realize that we were represented there, that it was our sins, our cruel sins, that caused his sufferings, and caused him to be a mourner all his days, even him who is our life, well may we cry, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But we can say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me;" even an offering and a sacrifice, holy

and acceptable unto God. Ah, brethren and sisters, could we step out of this mortal body, and view the body of our dear, sovereign Redeemer, without the veil of nature, we might with our beloved Paul say, "I knew a man, whether in the body I cannot tell, or out of the body I cannot tell, caught up to the third heaven." O ecstatic joy! This old mortal body lost sight of. "Behold the man."—John xix. 5. But through a blessed hope may we say, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." The substance of my hope, the anchor of my soul, the evidence of things which I cannot see through the veil of nature, but through the Spirit, that eternal Spirit, which is God. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," and to him who says, "Behold I come quickly;" even so come, Lord Jesus; unto him be glory now and ever. Amen.

R. M. THOMAS, Mod.

THOMAS SHEARER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, in session at the place of meeting of Otter Creek Church, Clarke Co., Iowa, October 2d, 3d and 4th, 1885, to the several associations and corresponding meetings with whom she corresponds, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—

Through the tender mercies of our ever-gracious God we are blessed to hold another of our annual meetings, and to rejoice that our covenant-keeping God still reigns, though we have to mourn the evidences of our own frailty and corruption, which we see and feel among ourselves. We have heard from all the churches composing our body, and all save one testify of steadfastness in the faith and order of the gospel, and love for the truth; and though without many additions as to numbers, yet we hope not without fruit in the Spirit, and not entirely barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have also heard from nearly all of the associations that correspond with us, and we rejoice to receive and greet your messengers of love, and hope it may be oft repeated. Because of the fact that our present session is held in a locality isolated and distant from our correspondence, both of churches and associations, our number at this meeting is very limited, and we feel that we are a little flock, few and feeble. But our God has said, "Fear not;" "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And this gives us great comfort.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church called Unity, in Platte County, Missouri, to commence on Friday before the first Saturday in October, 1886, and to continue three days, when and where we hope again to meet with your messengers and receive your sweet, loving messages. And now may the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

R. M. THOMAS, Mod.

THOMAS SHEARER, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1886.

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

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME FIFTY-FOUR.

REMEMBERING all the manifestations of mercy and goodness which have been so abundant and so constant in the past dispensations of divine providence concerning the poor and needy subjects of that grace which brings salvation to lost sinners, it becomes us to regard every incident in our pilgrimage as presenting renewed occasion for grateful praise to our God, by whose wise decree each revolution of the wheel of time fulfills some important design for the good of his saints and the declarative glory of his great name. While every creature of his power is under obligation to adore the majesty and wisdom of the Creator who gave their existence, the highest praises which ascend to the eternal throne must ever be the worship of his saints, who are redeemed unto God out of the depths of pollution and condemnation by the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanses them from all sin. To those who have been made to hope in this wonderful salvation every day brings renewed occasion for joyful thanksgiving to their Savior, for "he hath done all things well." As the ceaseless tide of time sweeps our fleeting moments into the unreturning past, we may well pause upon the threshold of the new year to review the many and signal displays of unchanging and infinite favor which have kept us, although in the midst of dangers and deaths, and given us continual occasion for gratitude even for mercies bestowed in the temporal dispensations of divine providence. In the kingdom of his grace our precious Redeemer is justly entitled to inexpressibly greater and incessant praises for the rich and effective treasure of his own precious blood freely shed for our sins, by which he has redeemed us unto God. It is in admiration of this miracle of divine grace that the anthems of saints have swelled with heavenly rapture since it was revealed in the experience of the earliest subjects of salvation; and the exhaustless theme will not cease to fill their songs with enraptured ecstasy in the everlasting rest of their home in the unclouded light of the presence of their Lord. Amidst the trials and discouragements of their pilgrimage through time it is only needful that the Comforter shall take of these things of Jesus and show them personally to each of the trembling little ones, and all their weakness and mourning is immediately turned into strength and joy. Though they dwell in dust, they shall at that glorious revelation awake and sing. The afflictions and grief which are peculiar to these pilgrims are far more

precious than all the transient comfort and pleasures which the world can give or the heart of man desire.

As was indicated in the typical nation of Israel, the chosen people of God must sojourn in a strange land where they have no certain dwelling place. They have no promise of any other portion but tribulation in the world; and while enduring the appointed trial it is often so dark to them that they cannot see the hand of the Lord by which they are led. In such a season Malachi records, "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. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." In this, as in every peculiarity described in the Scriptures, there is a marked contrast presented between the Lord's people and the world. Worldly religionists in their times of adversity speak to the world, and seek the help of men. They that fear the Lord can hope for no assistance or relief from the world, because they are like their Leader unknown to the world. Conscious of their own helpless condition, they do not expect help even from their brethren; but their sorrows are mutual, therefore they speak of them one to another, and in the fellowship of suffering they find strength, thus receiving the assurance that the Lord hears them even in their groanings. Such strength is exactly suited to their need, for they can fulfill no condition by which to merit the favor of God. Even their utter destitution is not a condition which they have chosen to fulfill, but it is the mark which God has set upon them as his peculiar people. As they are scattered in their earthly locations they cannot speak often to each other personally; but they have apostolic example for addressing one another by written correspondence. To facilitate this method of communication the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was first established, and by the blessing of God the saints in all sections of our country have been comforted and encouraged by its visits for fifty-three years. In entering upon this new year we desire to make no new departure in doctrine or practice, but to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This can be done only by continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. In this course the paper has been sustained hitherto by the patronage and correspondence of thousands of those whose love of the truth attested their fear of the Lord. Relying upon the favor of God to continue unto us the same kind support and forbearing love, we are encouraged to go on with our work in serv-

ing the saints with such ability as the Lord shall be pleased to give, yielding no principle of truth and making no compromise with error, either to escape the enmity or secure the favor of the world.

With grateful acknowledgment of the kind forbearance and generous aid of our patrons by which we have been sustained in the past, we confidently trust their support will be continued through the coming year. The cause for which we labor is of vital importance to every lover of the truth of the gospel. The comfort of mutual love is ministered to the needy and lonely little children of God by the testimony of our numerous contributors, who are enabled according to the wisdom given unto them to express the truth as it is revealed experimentally to each one who is led by the Spirit of God. In this wonderful work of building up the saints on their most holy faith, there is no qualification needed more than that which is supplied by the Holy Spirit in the new heart which is given to every one who is born of that Spirit. This is manifested in the church when some trembling child, in talking of the mercy of God as extended to him, unconsciously stirs the depth of experience in the oldest and strongest veterans of the cross. Thus the very weakness which is of God in them is infinitely stronger than men.—1 Cor. i. 25. The simple story of the revelation of Christ as the righteousness of the self-condemned sinner, embodies wisdom beyond the grasp of created intelligence. When this wisdom is revealed in the ignorant and simple child there is no room for nature to glory. Thus boasting is excluded. It is for this cause that the saints often derive more comfort and instruction from reading or hearing some stammering expression of an unlearned and weak one, than from the most elaborately composed essays of an educated writer. In this is exhibited the propriety of the apostolic rule which directs that the prophets shall speak one by one, and the rest shall judge.—1 Cor. xiv. 29-33. Often have the letters of some very weak and fearful child of God found the kindred spirits of the writer in those who were strangers in the flesh, and who could not have heard from them by any other medium but their published writings. The involuntary feeling of love which flows out to the writer as his words melt the heart of the reader, attests that both are led by the Spirit of God, whose fruit is love, thus giving the assurance that both are the sons of God.

The past year has borne from our society many very dear ones, both in our natural relations and in the fellowship of the gospel. Each of these afflictive dispensations admonishes us that this is not our rest. Of those who enter upon this new year doubtlessly thousands will be called from earth before its close. While none can know how soon the summons may

come for him, it is the triumph of the living faith of Christ which enables one to pray in sincerity, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." The love of God in the saints would always lead them to desire that the Lord would order all their changes for them; and resting in the immutability of his counsel and the sure word of his grace they need not be troubled about their times of adversity or prosperity, of suffering in the body of this death or departing to be with Christ. Committing our way unto the Lord, we shall find rest in the assurance that he careth for us. It is our refuge and strength to trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon our God; and while sojourning in this world of tribulation we shall find support and relief in bearing one another's burdens, and by love serving one another.

It is not promised to the saints that they shall ever find a time in this world in which they shall have no tribulation, but they are assured of the victory over every trial through the reigning grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and in their temporary seasons of discouragement they are authorized to exhort and comfort one another with the words of truth. The inspired wisdom of the apostles shines as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever in the gospel heaven; and all revealed truth harmonizes with that perfect record which they have left for our guidance. All truth will be found in that standard which God has given through them. Therefore we desire to hold nothing as the doctrine of Christ without the seal of apostolic authority. This has been the test by which it has been the purpose of the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to be governed from the first issue of the paper. It is not claimed that there has been no failure to follow this perfect rule; but we have not willingly withheld any truth nor knowingly presented any error. We still rely upon the faithfulness of our brethren to call attention to any expression of ours which might be construed as departing from the principles of the gospel; and while wishing to assume no censorship over the views or writings of brethren, we must reserve the right to decide whether any article is consistent with the standard of inspiration, and whether its publication will tend to the edification and comfort of the saints. The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is indispensable to the enjoyment of the fellowship of the saints. This must be kept by all who would walk as children of the light. While the weakness of the flesh will ever render them liable to divisions and discord in their natural minds, they who would follow the Lord must deny self, and under the leading of the Spirit they will walk in love, each esteeming others better than himself.

As heretofore, we shall be thankful to receive the contributions of lovers of the doctrine of salvation by grace

through the blood of Jesus Christ; and so far as our space will admit such articles as are consistent with that doctrine will be published. It will be especially our wish to give our readers such experimental articles as record the way in which the Lord has brought the writers from the power of darkness, and translated them into the kingdom of the Son of God. Such accounts are always interesting to those who have been led by the same right way; and each one of the saints having the same witness in himself in this particular, there is no room for contention or misunderstanding in regard to it. Attending circumstances may differ, but the essential truth of salvation by grace is contained in every case of divine teaching. The views of brethren on the doctrine and order of the gospel will be acceptable; and we shall be pleased to submit such to our readers, even though we may not in everything see clearly with the writers. This will not imply, however, that anything manifestly inconsistent with the doctrine of the apostles will find a place in our columns. While we must reserve the right to judge the propriety of publishing every article submitted by our correspondents, we earnestly solicit a continuance of their highly esteemed contributions.

Many of our patrons have sustained the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for years, and feel a sort of affectionate interest in the prosperity of the publication. They have read with profit the instructive articles of the founder of the paper, and have loved the very names of able correspondents who have finished their labors here, and been called to everlasting rest. They have felt earnestly anxious for the effect upon the paper when the editorial charge fell into younger and less experienced hands. But none have felt more serious apprehension than they on whom this great responsibility devolved. We realized that the scattered saints who had learned to expect cheering and strengthening messages in the visits of their loved paper, were entitled to better services than we were qualified to render; yet with gratitude to God and to our generous patrons we have to acknowledge their kind forbearance thus far. For their material assistance and loving expressions of sympathy and encouragement in the past we return most sincere thanks; and while soliciting their continued patronage, we can only promise to give our best efforts to the work of serving the great cause to which the paper has ever been devoted, trusting in the favor of God to guide us in the right way. The work is of equal importance to every lover of gospel truth; and all such are requested to aid us both by their patronage and by their contributions to our columns. All present patrons are authorized to solicit and secure new subscribers, and to act as agents in extending our circulation. For terms, see advertisement on page twelve.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. Tomlin, near Bastrop, La., Nov. 25, 1885, Mr. Joseph W. Morris, of Jefferson County, Ark., and Miss Lizzie Hayden, daughter of Elisha Hayden, of Bastrop, La.

Oct. 22, 1885, by Elder Uriah Trumbo, at the residence of the bride's parents, near Galloway, Franklin Co., Ohio, Mr. Francis W. Wilson and Miss Libbie Myers, all of Franklin County, Ohio.

ON Nov. 18, 1885, by Elder William J. Purington, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Oliver R. Roberson, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Miss Sarah E. Brewer, of Kingwood, N. J.

DEC. 3, 1885, by the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Charles H. Sked and Miss Laura B. Van Dyke, both of Hopewell, N. J.

DEC. 6, 1885, by the same, at his residence, Mr. Jacob G. Pierson, of Lawrence, and Miss Josephine P. Savidge, of Hopewell, both of N. J.

DEC. 23, 1885, by the same, at the residence of the bride's mother, Mr. John P. Blackwell, of Hopewell, and Miss Mary A. Anderson, of Princeton, both of N. J.

By Eld. T. M. Poulson, Nov. 26, 1885, at the house of the bride's parents, near Spring Hill, Mr. William Mitchell and Miss Caroline Hastings, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, Dec. 15, 1885, at Nassaongo meeting house, Mr. Rufus Johnson and Miss Tabitha Davis, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, Dec. 22, 1885, at the house of the bride's father, Mr. T. Lee Dicherune and Miss Florence H. Laws, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

At his residence in New York City, after a brief illness with typhoid fever, brother **M. Horton Tuthill** fell asleep in Jesus November 3, 1885.

Brother Tuthill was born near Salem, N. J., November 27, 1844, being the son of Jacob and Elvira Tuthill. His mother, one brother and four sisters survive him. In his childhood his parents moved to Elmira, and thence to Waverly, N. Y., where he lived until he married Miss Elizabeth Slawson, January 19, 1870, when he settled in New York, where he remained until called from earth. He leaves two sons and two daughters, with their mother, to mourn their loss of a kind and devoted husband and father.

In the spring of 1877 he received a hope in Christ, and was baptized by the late Elder Wm. L. Benedict, in the fellowship of Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, in New York, on the second Sunday in June following, and remained an exemplary member there until called to everlasting rest in the presence of the Lord. In him the church has lost one of her most steadfast members, and one whose departure will long be mourned by all who were intimately acquainted with him. He was very clear in the doctrine of Christ, giving to God all the glory of salvation, and abasing the creature. Truly his walk and deportment attested the genuineness of his profession of faith in Jesus.

His body was taken to Waverly for burial, where many of the family reside. Elder Wm. L. Beebe spoke at his house on November 6, to a large assemblage of mourning friends, from Psalm xxxvii. 37. The next day Elder Marvin Vail preached to a large audience in the Old School Baptist meeting house at Waverly, from John xi. 25; and both at home and at Waverly it was to the comfort of all. While the church feel that the Lord has smitten us heavily, we would confess that he has taken but his own, and we would bow in submission to his will. While his family deeply mourn, it is a comfort to the widow that he had a hope beyond this life. May their sorrow be sanctified to their good.

"How blest is our brother bereft
Of all that could burden his mind;
How easy the soul that has left
This wearisome body behind!"

Of evil incapable thou,
Whose relics with envy I see,
No longer in misery now,
No longer a sinner like me.

This earth is affected no more
With sickness or shaken with pain,
The war in the members is o'er,
And never shall vex him again;
No anger henceforward, or shame
Shall redden this innocent clay;
Extinct is the animal flame,
And passion is vanish'd away.

This languishing head is at rest,
Its thinking and aching are o'er,
This quiet immovable breast
Is heav'd by affliction no more:
This heart is no longer the seat
Of trouble and torturing pain;
It ceases to flutter and beat,
It never shall flutter again."

In the hope of life,
SARAH E. SLAWSON.
New York, Dec. 23, 1885.

At a regular meeting of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, in New York City, held on December 6th, 1885, the following was unanimously approved and adopted:

WHEREAS, It has pleased almighty God to remove from our midst by death our highly esteemed brother, **M. Horton Tuthill**, for many years clerk of this Church; therefore,
Resolved, That in his death we have lost a beloved and worthy member of our body, and are once more reminded that our days are known to God alone, the number of our months are with him, and that he has appointed the bounds that we cannot pass.

Resolved, That the above be embodied in the minutes of this meeting, and entered in full upon our church book.

GEORGE B. HOOTON, Mod.
R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

DEAR EDITORS:—By request of the bereaved wife, who is a subscriber of your valuable paper, I forward a notice of the death of her husband, written by a friend, and which was read at the funeral. He was one of the best men that ever lived. In his death the church sustains the loss of a warm and faithful friend, the wife a devoted and true husband, the children a kind and affectionate father, and the relatives a kind and sympathizing counsellor; yet we mourn not without hope.

M. L. BRADY.
REILY, Butler Co., Ohio.

Walter Brady was born January 10, 1817, in Reily Township, Butler County, Ohio, and died August 20, 1885, in Bath Township, Franklin County, Indiana; consequently he was sixty-eight years, seven months and eight days old. He was married to Elizabeth Thurston, daughter of Deacon Oliver Thurston, April 9, 1848. Eight children were born unto them, which have preceded him to the better land. Mr. Brady lived all his married life on the farm on which he died. None knew him but to respect him as an honest man, an enterprising citizen and a great benefactor. He was not a member of any religious denomination, but always worshiped with his family in the Old School Baptist Church. He was a great sufferer, and during his last illness was much of the time unconscious. The writer of this had a long conversation with him when his mind was perfectly clear, in regard to his future state. He stated that he had no fears as to the future. He believed in God, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the only Savior of sinners; that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved, but through Christ alone; that he did believe and trust in him fully for the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation of his soul.

WILL SHULTZ.
DIED—Of inflammation of the bowels, at the residence of her son-in-law, Wilson Henderson, Franklin, Johnson Co., Ind., Sept. 8, 1885, our dearly beloved sister, **Juliett Hammer**, in the sixty-second year of her age. The subject of this notice was for thirty years a humble believer in Christ, but felt too unworthy to make a public profession of her faith in her Lord and Master,

until in May, 1877, when she united with the church called Bethel, giving a very satisfactory evidence of her hope in Christ. She was first married to Thomas Mitchel, Dec. 3, 1840, with whom she lived six years. They had two daughters born to them, one of whom survives her. Her second marriage was to John Hammer, Sept. 1, 1850. She was a loving wife and devoted mother, and beloved by all who knew her. She was always ready to administer to the wants of all. She was a very devoted christian until death. Her daughter asked her the day before she died if she was willing to die. She replied that if it was not the will of the Lord for her to recover, it was all right. She leaves an aged husband, a devoted daughter and three sisters to mourn their loss; also a large circle of friends, who will miss her.

Her funeral was attended by a large congregation, and our dear Elder, Isaac Sawin, preached a discourse from Job xix. 25, greatly to the comfort of those whose hope of life and immortality is in Christ.

ELIZA J. MITCHEL.

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Oct. 20, 1885, **Mrs. Annie Abbott**, wife of Mr. Joseph Abbott, aged thirty-two years and ten months. She died very suddenly, leaving an infant seven weeks old. She was one of the best women that ever lived. She was a kind companion, mother, sister and neighbor. She has left a sorrowing companion, three children, mother, brothers, sisters, and other relatives, to mourn. She never made an open profession of her faith in Christ, but she was an Old School Baptist in faith, and told me years ago that she had a hope in Christ. A large number of people attended her funeral.

WM. QUINT.
NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

R. A. Hancock 2, J. W. Willis 2, J. M. Bouton 2.—Total \$6.00.

ORDINATIONS.

By request of Mount Pisgah Church, in Drew County, Ark., a presbytery met at said church on Saturday, December 5, 1885, and examined **WILLIAM BRADY** on his experience, call to the work of the ministry, and his faith in the doctrine of the gospel; and being satisfied of his orthodoxy and his gift as a minister, proceeded to ordain and set him apart to all the functions of the gospel ministry, by solemn prayer and laying on of hands of the presbytery, composed of Elders A. Tomlin and G. W. Caldwell, and Deacon W. J. Goyne.

The above we desire published in the SIGNS. With continued good wishes for your happiness, dear brethren editors, and for the continuance of the much esteemed and highly prized SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I remain unfeignedly yours,

A. TOMLIN.
LACY, Ark., Dec. 8, 1885.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a two days meeting at the house of J. May, near Penn Yan, Yates Co., N. Y., commencing on Tuesday after the second Sunday in January, 1886, at 10 o'clock a. m. Those coming via Syracuse, Geneva & Corning R. R., to Dresden, will find a train in readiness for May's Mills Station, where the meeting is to be held. Those coming via Northern Central R. R. will find the depot of the Penn Yan & Dresden R. R., a branch of the Syracuse, Geneva & Corning R. R., near by, which will take passengers to May's Mill Station. Connections will be quite good on the noon and five o'clock trains due at Penn Yan. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth.

Done in behalf of those desiring to be formed into a church.

J. MAY.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

If the Lord will, a yearly or two days meeting will be held with the Second Church of Roxbury, at their meeting house, on the first Saturday and Sunday in January, 1886, to begin at half-past ten o'clock. Ministers and brethren of our faith, and also friends, are invited to attend. Those coming by rail will come the day before the meeting, and stop at Kelly's Corners, Halcottsville or Roxbury, and they will be cared for.

I. HEWITT.

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 one year in advance, 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 in advance one year, 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 a year in advance, 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 a year in advance, 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.

Any person who is not now a subscriber, by sending his remittance in addition to the new ones he sends, can have the same advantage of these rates; but his own subscription must not be counted as one of the new subscribers.

"THE TRIAL OF JOB."

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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.

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.

INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBSCRIBERS.

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.

RULES FOR ORDERING.

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

AGENTS

FOR THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

ALABAMA—G W Norris, T J Norris, Wm E Freeman, H J Redd, J S R Bullard, C F Hedgpeth

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ON

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

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

Signs of the Times.

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

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1886.

NO. 2.

POETRY.

LONGING FOR REST.

STILL out of the deepest abyss
Of trouble I mournfully cry,
And pine to recover sweet peace,
And see my Redeemer, and die.
I cannot, I cannot, forbear
These passionate longings for home;
O when shall my spirit be there?
O when will the messenger come?
Dear Savior, in pity draw near;
Permit me to rest on thy breast;
Appear, to my rescue appear,
And gather me into thy rest.

BUT NOT TO-DAY.

SOMETIME, when all life's lessons have been
learned.
And sun and stars forever here have set,
The things which our weak judgment here
has spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with
lashes wet,
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deepest tints of
blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans were
right,
And how what seemed reproof was love
most true.
And we shall see that while we frown'd and
sigh'd,
God's plans went on, as best for you and
me:
How, when we called, he heeded not our
cry,
Because his wisdom to the end could see:
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seems him
good.
And if sometimes, commingling with life's
wine,
We find the wormwood, and rebel and
sbrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out this portion for our lips to drink.
And if some friend, we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach their
face,
O do not blame the loving Father so,
But bear your sorrow with obedient grace.
And you shall shortly know that lengthened
breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends his
friend;
And that, sometimes, the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon his love can
send.
If we could push ajar the gate of life,
And stand within, and all God's workings
see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key.
But not to-day. Then be content, poor
heart.
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, un-
fold:
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart:
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if through patient toil we reach the
land
Where weary feet, with sandals loosed,
may rest,
When we shall clearly know and under-
stand,
I think that we shall say that God knew
best.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Dec. 23, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is seldom that I have the privilege of hearing one who is a subject of grace talk, or of reading what he has written, without feeling that I have received some benefit. Sometimes thoughts expressed by brethren which appear to contradict some of my former opinions, will at once commend themselves to my spiritual judgment as the truth. At such times I think my satisfaction at now seeing the truth is too great to allow of chagrin because I had not seen it before. When the views expressed upon some important subject are not in accordance with what I understand as the truth, I often find myself stirred with a zeal to quickly show my reasons for differing. This anxiety I have more than once been sure was but the zeal of the natural heart, which is always ready to claim for ourselves much important responsibility in spiritual things which does not belong to us. Spiritual zeal is trustful and patient, waiting the Lord's time, and desiring a full assurance of the direction of his Spirit in all we do, knowing that all the Lord's people are taught of him. When we remember that we can in no case give the knowledge of one spiritual truth to one who has not already experienced it, we feel quiet and restful, and yet are actuated by a zeal which is true and ardent, and whose object is alone the good of the Lord's people and his own glory.

Although we cannot give to each other the knowledge of spiritual truth, yet it is for our mutual instruction and comfort to speak often one to another of those things which each already knows. "I have not written unto you," says the apostle John, "because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it." "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."—1 John ii. 21, 27. The word of God, whenever and in whatever manner it comes to us, always divides between the soul and the spirit, between those thoughts and exercises which are from the natural mind, and those which are the work of the Spirit.—Hebrews iv. 12. How often in hearing preaching, in reading some experimental writings, or in conversing with some one who is spiritually minded, we are comforted by being made to see some motives or some views that we had been entertaining, but which had yielded us no

comfort, as having arisen from a carnal source; and by having some exercises that we had never understood before now shown to us as the work of the Spirit and a part of our experience. Those whose words have had such an effect upon our minds have not had dominion over our faith, but have been "helpers of our joy" by telling us their own exercises, which witnessed to ours, and by faithfully presenting the word of truth, which clearly distinguishes between that which is of faith and that which is not; "for by faith ye stand."—2 Cor. i. 24.

I believe it to be of great benefit to the family of God to communicate often and freely with each other concerning those precious things which are our only real joy and comfort. Let brethren present to each other such thoughts and experiences as they have upon any subject for their mutual consideration. Only let us always remember that it is not to exercise dominion over one another's faith, but to be helpers of each other's joy. Controversy which is carried on in a fleshly, overbearing spirit, in which brethren manifest impatience and heat toward each other, is likely to distract the mind and disturb the peace of those who are spiritual. But when we can be content with presenting what we believe the Lord has taught us in a spirit of love and brotherly kindness, and with deference toward those of our brethren who have seen differently, there is nothing in such a conference that will hurt the tenderest heart, or disturb in any degree the cords of sweet fellowship. This is conference instead of controversy, and it is instructive and comforting. We can feel assured that what the Lord has been pleased to reveal to us, he will in his own good time reveal to all his dear children: If he choose to make use of us to declare that truth which shall manifest the same teaching in the hearts of others, it is a great comfort to us as well as to them. We have reason for deep and humble thankfulness when we have the assurance within our own hearts that the dear Savior has given us the power and privilege to declare any portion of the truth in the spirit of love and meekness, even though we never know of any who have been comforted by it.

I have of late thought much of the important distinction between the working and knowledge of faith and that of the carnal mind. I understand all spiritual knowledge to be the peculiar and exclusive province of faith, and into that field no natural

powers can ever enter. It has occurred to me that much of the confusion and darkness that we feel, and much of the disagreement of dear brethren upon scriptural subjects, may arise from a neglect to give due consideration to this absolute distinction between the power and province of faith and of the natural understanding. Faith is not of the natural mind, and does not belong to it. It is the fruit of the Spirit. It "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

I will here present one illustration of the absolute separation of these two powers from each other. An inspired apostle says, "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come." Now when Isaac was pronouncing the words of faith with which he blessed Jacob, he was convinced that it was Esau who stood before him. All the doubts that had arisen in his mind by the sound of the voice had been dispelled, and he was sure that he was giving the blessing to his eldest son. How startled he was and how he trembled when he found that he had been deceived. But his faith had not been deceived nor made any mistake. By that faith he said words to Jacob that could not have been said to Esau. "See," he said, "the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed." When he became conscious of the deception, he saw at once that it was Jacob whom the Lord had blessed; and that his words had been of faith, even though at the time he knew it not.

It is often the case that the people of God find their faith and their natural understanding as much at variance concerning some subject as were those of Isaac, and can look back and see where they have been led into error by following the natural mind, which is always trying to intrude into spiritual things and assuming to know them, instead of paying exclusive attention to that understanding of faith which the Son of God has given us that we might know him.—1 John v. 20. How often the soul is cast down because we can see no righteousness as belonging to us, but on the contrary see ourselves as altogether vile. At such times any declaration concerning the righteousness of Christ seems in vain, for we cannot see it as ours. That is something that can only be known by revelation; and that, with all the revelation of spiritual things, is to our faith. When the Lord's time comes to give us comfort, he sends into our souls the power of the gospel of Christ, wherein the righteousness

of God is revealed from faith to faith, and then we rejoice.—Rom. i. 16, 17. Many times our sins and fears prevail, and we seem about to be overcome by the temptations of the enemy. We struggle in vain. We do not know how to resist the devil. We cannot cause him to get behind us, nor overcome his power. But in the Lord's own time our faith beholds Jesus as having overcome for us, and at once the victory is ours. He gives us the victory. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John v. 4.

In the work of salvation our dear Savior did not set an example for his people to follow. If he were not more than an example no sinner would be saved. In his patient suffering of evil, in not reviling when he was reviled, nor threatening when he was persecuted, he left an example that we should follow in his steps.—1 Peter ii. 20-23. But in his obedience to the law, in his victory over the devil, in his death, resurrection and ascension to glory, he was not an example, but far more. In following him we are not doing those things as after a pattern, but are experiencing them as done for us. No mortal can ever do one of them. Jesus did them for all his people, and in his own time reveals to them that finished work; and this is their salvation. Jesus is the only one who ever lived such a holy life as the law demands, who ever was tempted and yet without sin, who ever died under the curse of the law and lived again, whose body ever came out of the grave without having seen corruption, and who ever, in an absolute sense, ascended into the heavens. In all this work he did what no others ever have done or ever will do, except as they experience the power of his work. He did not set an example to show his people how to do this work, but did it for them, so that his work is theirs, his victory theirs, his salvation theirs. He is the ark in which they are saved. For them he died under the curse of the law, and they died in him; as the apostle judged, "If one died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. If their sins had not been laid upon him, death could not have taken him; but he became obedient to the law, even unto death, laying down his life because of the sins of others. That was all the law could claim. Its curse could extend no further. It could not demand his body for corruption, because it was a sinless body. "He knew no sin." But as death had taken it, the grave must receive it; and being obliged to yield up that sacred body again as free from corruption as when it entered its dark portals, the grave was destroyed. Its destruction was proved then by the coming forth of many of the bodies of saints from their graves. The grave is only mentioned twice after that in the New Testament, and that is to declare this victory.

It is by faith that the Lord's people understand that they are crucified with Christ and quickened together

with him, and that they are raised up together, and that Christ lives in them, and that in the same mystical sense they are with him in his ascension; as the apostle says, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." It is only by faith, not by their natural understanding, that the children of God receive these things, and only by faith do they understand their own experience of them. They cannot in themselves live a sinless life; but there are times when with a most solemn joy in the spirit they experience the power and glory of his sinless life. They do not die under the curse of the law when this body falls. He removed the curse, and they experience both the death in him and the eternal life in him while yet in this mortal state; and when the time comes for this mortal tabernacle to be dissolved, they shall know that death has lost his sting and the grave its victory. They do not die, but fall asleep. They sleep in Jesus.

Jesus was laid in a new and strong tomb, and when he arose that tomb was empty. That will never be so in the case of any other. It is a precious and glorious truth that the dead shall rise. The resurrection of Jesus gives assurance of that. But his resurrection did not show *how* the dead are raised up. He wrought the resurrection of all his people. He is the resurrection as well as the life. They receive now the knowledge of that glorious truth by faith, and rest in it by faith, and by faith they know that it is "ready to be revealed in the last time." Until the revelation of that resurrection in their own experience of it they will never know how the dead are raised up nor with what body they come; but by faith they hold fast the form of sound words, waiting till the Lord shall reveal their glorious power in "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23.

If the resurrection of the body of our dear Savior is an example showing the manner of the resurrection of his people, then their bodies must be put into graves and come forth again uncorrupted; but it is not in that way that he is the first fruits of them that slept. The figure which both Jesus and the apostle have employed in declaring this wonderful mystery is a corn of wheat falling into the ground. In the resurrection of Christ he brought forth much fruit. In the experience of that resurrection by his people at his coming, the apostle has said, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." That poor, weak, mortal, corruptible body, which is sown in the moment when life leaves it, is not the body that shall be. That grain of wheat, that vile body, is not lifted out of the ground, although it is the subject of the resurrection or change. It is our vile body which shall be changed, or raised; but in the resurrection, in the change, it will not be a vile body, but a glorious body, just like that which our Lord

has now in glory. It does not appear to me correct to say, "The body is raised, and then changed." In that case it would be raised a natural body, and then afterward changed to a spiritual body, which I believe the Scriptures teach us was the case with the dear body of Jesus. But with reference to the resurrection of our body, the form of sound words which we have heard of the apostle is, "It is raised a spiritual body." We are not told by the apostle, although we hear it frequently elsewhere, that the body is raised and then ascends to glory. The apostle says, "It is raised in glory."

Now here is a subject that faith alone can deal with, a field where faith alone can enter. The natural mind cannot possibly comprehend a spiritual body. As it cannot be seen by the natural eye, so it cannot be thought about by the natural mind. It is one of those things which have not entered into the heart of man.—1 Cor. ii. 9, 11, 14. "The things of the Spirit knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." The natural man cannot know them, for they are spiritually discerned. My natural mind can no more comprehend the appearance of a spiritual body than it can comprehend the end of time or the limit of space, or a state of existence where there is neither time nor space, the existence of God. I do not at this time understand that our Savior's body was a spiritual body when it came out of the tomb. It was the same body, unchanged in any way, that was laid there. He expressly told his disciples, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." He also showed them the print of the nails in his hands, and the place of the spear in his side. It was this that proved his victory over the grave. There are incomprehensible mysteries about that risen body that I do not wish to intrude upon. It was not a mortal, but an immortal life that now animated it, for it was born from the dead. I only call especial attention to this thought, that the body was not changed until it was glorified. It could not, in my view, be said to have been changed to a spiritual body while it was yet declared to be flesh and bones. But was it not changed when he ascended to glory? I will submit two things for the consideration of brethren upon this point. The apostle says, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Again, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." If we do not yet know what we shall be, we certainly do not know how he appears in glory. Now here is one of the places where we are apt to be led into confusion by following the natural mind, and allowing its reasoning to control our views. When Jesus ascended that body to some little point in infinite space. It will insist that it knows very well how he went into heaven, and how he is now seated on the right hand of God, a body of flesh

and bones such as was seen by those who followed him here; and therefore this intrusive and self-confident natural mind will maintain that if Jesus shall so come in like manner as the holy apostles saw him go into heaven, he will be seen some day by the natural eye emerging from a cloud in the sky above us, and coming down in that same form in which he appeared as he lifted up his hands and blessed his disciples before he was parted from them. But our natural mind must be ruled out. It has no business here. It knows nothing about the subject. It does not know how he went into heaven, nor how he reigns in glory there, nor how he will come again. But all this time the faith of this same dear child of God is right, as Isaac's faith was, even while the natural mind is so busy with things it knows nothing about; and when the Lord's time comes to show us where within us the true spiritual knowledge is, we shall see everything very clearly, and take notice of feelings and deep-seated sentiments in the heart which have all the time been the source of all our true rest and joy. Jesus said to his disciples, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." Thomas said, "We know not whither thou goest." But Jesus was right. That knowledge was even then within their hearts, but the eyes of their understanding were not yet enlightened to see it. So there is much deep and glorious knowledge of eternal truth within a poor, ignorant child of God, but it is the knowledge of faith, and not of the carnal mind. By faith we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. By faith we see him at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. By faith we see him everywhere present. By faith we wait for him from heaven, wait for the experience of all his salvation and glory. By faith we at times even here experience his presence in all his glorious power and wisdom and grace. By faith we know that he 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.

Faith never looks into the grave, even when the christian may be fearing and dreading its gloom, but looks directly from earth to heaven, from mortality to immortality. Faith sees what we call death as but the sowing of the mortal body; and faith only can see the resurrection of that body on the other side of time, beyond the region of mortality. By faith we know that there is a spiritual body as well as a natural body; that there are bodies celestial as well as bodies terrestrial. By faith we know that we cannot comprehend nor estimate the dimensions of that which belongs to another state of existence, where there is neither space nor time. It is only by faith we know that we cannot know while in this mortal state how a spiritual body shall appear. But by the same faith we know, and rest in the knowledge, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall

be like him, and shall appear with him in glory.

The natural mind is always asking "how?" and "why?" and insisting upon its ability to receive and to give answers to these presumptuous questions. Faith never asks such questions, but receives the words of promise from the Lord with more than childlike confidence, holds them lovingly fast, is satisfied with them, embraces now the spiritual substance expressed by them, and waits with holy content, and yet with infinite desire, till the Lord's time shall come to fulfill them, and to unfold their inexpressibly glorious meaning. All the answers that ever could have been given before the day of pentecost to the question how the prophecy of Joel would be fulfilled, would have been entirely at fault. It was reserved to be revealed for the first time on that day to the people of God how the sun was to be darkened, the moon turned to blood, and signs to appear in heaven above and in the earth beneath, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. So it is reserved to be revealed in the last time to every child of God how the promise of the resurrection shall be fulfilled, in his own experience of this crowning fullness of salvation; and until then all attempted explanations in answer to the question how, with reference to this great mystery, will be entirely vain.

Faith is a glorious power. It is the victory which overcomes the world. It is both the substance and the evidence of our heavenly inheritance, of that salvation which is "ready to be revealed in the last time." It sees no death before us, nor any grave, but sings the triumph over both through Jesus Christ our Lord. It sees the poor, tried, waiting one, whose hope is in the Lord, fall asleep in Jesus when flesh and heart fail; and it sees the same one awake in his likeness beyond the bounds of time in a blissful eternity. It sees Jesus "gone into heaven," and dwelling there forevermore, and knows that he will never for a moment leave that place of eternal bliss and glory, even when he visits the poor sinner's troubled breast. He brings heaven with him wherever he appears, and makes it "a heaven below the Redeemer to know." And by that blessed and glorious power of faith the weary pilgrim, who has never been satisfied in the earthly house of this tabernacle, is enabled with holy rapture to say, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Your brother in the hope and fellowship of the gospel,

SILAS H. DURAND.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."—Rev. ii. 7.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Some time last summer there was in the SIGNS a request from a brother Cobb, in North Carolina, for me to write upon the above text through its columns. I have been absent from home nearly all the time since then, and so have

had but little time for writing, and have felt but little of the spirit of so doing. I have more time just now, and some inclination to comply with my young brother's request, but do not have much of the spirit of writing. But I have found long since that it does not do to be guided by my feelings; for half the time, if I followed my feelings, I should not fill my appointments for preaching when they come around. So I will try, little as I feel in the spirit of it, to suggest some thoughts upon the above words.

These are the concluding words of the address to the church at Ephesus, the first named of the seven churches especially addressed in this and the following chapter. The first words of the text are the same as are addressed to each of the seven churches at the conclusion of what is said to them, as will be seen by reading these two chapters. These short sermons addressed to these churches are full of instruction and warning to us as well as to them. Here were seven churches contemporaneous with each other, and at one and the same time in these seven different conditions, and needy of these seven different addresses. It has been always so; it is so to-day. Churches are to be found in the world to-day which are in the state of each of these churches; and the same church at different times may fall into each of these states and need each of these addresses. For instance, a church may be in the Laodicean state to-day, and in a few years may be in the condition of the church at Ephesus, and *vice versa*. I see no reason to suppose that the gospel dispensation is divided into seven stages, each period of time being marked by one of these seven churches. There is no proof that such is the case. The Holy Ghost does not say so, and therefore I do not believe it. It is speculation to say so. It leads to a forgetting of the practical warnings contained in these chapters to churches which may be in the state of any of these seven churches.

The keynote of every gospel address of comfort, reproof, warning or exhortation is found in the opening words of this text, "He that hath an ear, let him hear," &c. The Spirit here speaks through John to these churches, giving a wholesome admonition to each. This language is equivalent to saying, "He that is capable of understanding what the Spirit saith to the churches will hear what is here said." He that hath an ear to hear. All might hear the sound of the words, but he that has a heart opened to attend to these things, let him really hear them; that is, they shall find a lodgment in his heart. Or it might be said in this way. He that hath a love to God, and a desire to hear the Spirit's voice, he shall receive these words which the Spirit has spoken also. He that can say, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak," to him God will speak. We use similar language every day. We speak of a man

whose ear is open to the cry of the needy, who has an ear to hear their cry; and we mean by it that his heart is with them, that he loves and pities them. Now if any man loves the words of God, let him hear these words; and such an one does hear them. On the contrary, this language implies that some had not an ear to hear; and that this was true of some even in the churches, is clearly implied. Their ears would be closed by having left their first love, as was the case with this church; or by false doctrine, as in the church at Pergamos; or by harboring teachers and workers of evil, as in the church at Thyatira; or by deadness, as was the case at Sardis; or by lukewarmness, as in the church at Laodicea; or from harboring any false doctrine or evil practice contrary to God our Savior. This might be the case with some even of God's own dear children, who might be filled with surfeiting and drunkenness, or the love of money, or the desire for worldly applause. Such would not have an ear to hear. They would have no desire to hear words that should rebuke their carnal mindedness. But if any there were who mourned over the evils in their midst, these words would come to them as a trumpet call, bidding them prepare themselves for the battle. It is a thought full of solemn warning to us, that in all but two or three of these cities there is not even the semblance of a church left, and only the semblance in the rest.

The second expression, "To him that overcometh," is also used in the final address to each church. It also implies that some should not overcome. The people who had an ear to hear should also overcome. They who hear not, do not overcome. Surely this seven fold declaration teaches, if anything can, and teaches most emphatically, that the believer's life is a struggle against obstacles—a warfare. Not a warfare in which the Peters shall cut off ears or heads, or harm the bodies or reputations or possessions of men; but a warfare of truth against error, of goodness against evil, of spirit against flesh, in which very often the natural life of saints is to be laid down, that the spiritual life may be seen to have its victory. The weapons of this warfare are not carnal, but spiritual. They are, first, the word of God; then faith, hope, love, patience, endurance, meekness, long-suffering, rendering good for evil, and blessing for cursing, and prayer for stoning, or the spear, or the nails, or the crown of thorns. There are spiritual victories now as well as in the days of apostles. There are martyrdoms to-day as well as then. Crucifixion is not a thing of the past. The cross or the rack or the fire not only tortures the body, but when restrained from torturing the body can torture also the soul. There are those to-day whose life is one long martyrdom, and yet have victory daily, because they see him who is invisible. The victory in this

warfare is faith; faith that sees God, that rests in Jesus. He who ruleth his spirit is mightier than he that taketh a city. He that takes a city often is carried on his way by evil passions, over which he has no control, but which make him their slave. He may have applause of men, and his name may go down to posterity as a hero, while in God's sight he is a miserable, paltry coward, a slave to "every lust obscene." But there are thousands who fight in secret a warfare harder than Alexander or Wellington or Grant ever thought of, whom God only knows, and win victories which angels wonder at through faith in the blood of the Lamb. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to 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." These bear palms in their hands, emblems of victory, signs of warfare that has been successful, and they cry, "Salvation unto our God." These wear no uniform of blue or scarlet or gray, of gown or cassock or stole; they march not with sound of drum or fife or organ; but they are clothed in righteousness, and they make melody in their hearts unto God. They are unknown, but yet well known; dying, yet they live; having nothing, and yet possessing all things. God knows them, though kings do not. They never saw a palace on earth, but the heavenly mansions are theirs. These are the people that overcome. To them God gives all heaven.

Let us then consider who and what are the foes against which the christian fights. Paul says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," but "against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." These foes are within and without. Without are oppositions to the truth, false doctrine, sin in all its forms, the allurements of the vain world, the temptations of the devil. Against such foes as these only faith can prevail. Faith sees Jesus, and beholds victory in him, and rests in him. Having in our own hearts felt this warfare and this victory of faith, we must bear testimony before the world against that which opposes God, whether it be the open sins of men or the false religious professions of the day. Against the sins of Pilate, as well as against the phariseism of Caiaphas, we must bear this testimony. It is a great victory that enables a frail, sinful man to stand as a witness against all that is evil around him. Separating himself from such evils, and lifting up his voice against them, is all the warfare he must wage. To do this the fear of the world's frowns and the love of its applause must be overcome. In such a man we see wrought out and perfected a victory grand and great. Blessed is he that overcometh in this warfare. In the church at Ephesus that man was blessed who, amidst prevailing declension and coldness, still was steadfast and filled with love and zeal.

But there are also well nigh numberless inward foes. All the lusts of the flesh fight a fearful fight against the child of God. These foes cannot be cast out, but they may be cast down. They cannot be put out, but they may be put off. To put them off, so that they do not rule in our mortal bodies, is to overcome; and this victory also is by faith in Jesus. "Purifying their hearts by faith." What a glorious victory! Hearts purified by faith! Who shall say that the sinner is not a partaker of this work? Surely a heart already pure cannot be made pure. That which is made pure must previously have been impure. What a glorious victory when in our hearts, all destitute of the love of God, that love is shed abroad. I know that I do hate sin, and that one desire is uppermost, I believe, namely, to be free from all contact with it; but the believer finds pride, lust, envy, wrath, hatred, covetousness, vainglory, &c., fighting against him all the way. They are clogs upon his feet when he would run the christian race. He is a new creature in Christ Jesus, but the defiled nature is still within. Here is the warfare. He once hugged these things to his bosom and fostered them; now he fights against them as he would against a slimy reptile whose folds were around him. His cry is now, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And victory is through Jesus Christ our Lord. What a wonder that the slave of sin should through Jesus be a slave no longer, but a master! Paul could exultingly say, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under the law, but under grace." Sin once reigned unto death, but now grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life; and as grace reigns in us, we become kings also over self and unto God. This victory causes no self-boasting; for faith sees Jesus as its author, and rejoices to praise his grace. The christian now fights for a victory that is already won. The new man is formed within him by divine power and grace, and so the child of God can be exhorted to put him on, and to put off the old man. There is not a child of God on earth who has tried, for instance, to put off pride from his words and deeds, and to put on humility, but what knows the fearful warfare it involves; and so of the endeavor to fight against every other evil passion. We cannot create within us the new life, neither can we cast out or destroy the old life; but we are exhorted to put on the one and to put off the other. When we sin we must not seek to take shelter under the old man, and say the sin is his. No! a thousand times no! The sin is ours. I have sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. I have been yielding my members as instruments of unrighteousness, and in this I am guilty. The renewed sinner, the christian, is one man, and not two. He is one man with two opposing principles in him; and these are called the old man and the new, the law in the members and the law in the mind. Thus the life of the be-

liever is one long warfare against indwelling corruption, which he hates and loathes and longs to be free from. The serpent may be put in a cage, but he longs to leave the hideous thing out of the house. The dead body may be coffined, but he wants it buried. Blessed is the man that overcometh; that is, that is not carried away and enslaved by all these carnal lusts and worldly allurements and doctrines of devils.

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." There is, no doubt, in this an allusion to the garden of Eden, the temptation and fall, and the tree of life, from which our first parents were excluded. They did not overcome in the temptation, and so they were shut out from eating of the tree of life. But here in contrast it is said, He that overcometh shall eat of the tree of life. This contrast carried out would open up a vast field, into which it is not now my purpose to enter. My desire is to speak of the comforts, joys and peace which grow like fruit upon this tree, and of which they that overcome are given to partake. Notice, first, it is the victor, and the victor only, to whom this boon is given. It is not every child of God even who eats this fruit. "The willing and obedient eat the good of the land." This reward is not in heaven, but here. The text illustrates a present experience of daily victory and of daily comfort and blessing. Furthermore, the victory and the reward are inseparable. In keeping the commandments there is great reward. Righteousness and peace are inseparably connected. The victory and the spoils cannot be disunited.

We are told concerning this tree of life that it bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields its fruit every month. This signifies that the fruit is always found upon this tree, and that it can satisfy all our need. It is the tree of life, and its fruit is living fruit, which never decays and is always good. That which this world provides perishes with the using. All that is of the earth contains the seeds of decay and death. That which feeds the body and ministers to its desires, as well as that which feeds the mind and ministers to its hopes, loves, fears and passions in general, must all perish; but this fruit which is given for the growth and comfort of the spiritual graces never fails. The promise of the text, then, is not of the blessings of this life, but of that which is heavenly. It is not a promise of riches, friends, honors, fame, or creature comforts, but of the joys of the renewed mind. He that overcomes shall enter into these joys. For him there shall be peace of mind, joy in the Holy Ghost, the fellowship of saints and communion with God. All these things grow upon the tree of life. Such an one shall also feed upon doctrine. He shall be given to eat of predestination, election, special atonement, the new birth, effectual calling, final preservation of saints to glory, the resurrection of the body and final

glory. All the promises shall be his daily meat as he has need of them. It has been my experience and observation that the child of God who is overcome of the lusts of the flesh, or by the allurements of the world, does not eat of the very doctrine which he may believe. He believes it after a fashion, but it gives him no joy. The love of God constrains the believer, and then as he runs in the way his joy is increased and his love burns brightly. Lastly, this promise is sure. Faithful is he who hath promised, who also will perform it.

I hope what is here written may do some one good, and be satisfactory to brother Cobb.

I remain your brother in Christ,
F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Dec. 17, 1885.

LONG GREEN, Md., Oct. 18, 1885.

BELOVED BRETHREN BEEBE:—

In answer to a burdened mind I will try to write a few things that press heavily upon my mind this Sunday morning, after reading brother Lee Haucks' letter in the SIGNS of October fifteenth, on the subject of salvation, or what is saved. I do not propose to repeat any words of our brother, yet I may do so. In the first place, I do not believe there is any real difference of opinion existing among our brethren on this important subject. The only difference is in understanding just what the apostle means when he says, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Romans vii. 22, 23. Paul here represents himself as having two minds, or principles, directly in opposition. "You hath he quickened, who were dead," &c. When Paul was dead, he was a persecutor. I do not mean corporeal death, because that has nothing to do with our revealed salvation; but dead to God in a spiritual sense, or knowledge of him. There is a corporeal man before a natural birth, and also before a spiritual birth. And after being born again that corporeal body is the same. And the same body that was manifested in the natural birth is still manifest after the spiritual birth. In being born of the flesh we manifest a sinful life, a sinful mind, a sinful disposition, a heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Now this is not the corporeal body, for without life it would be inanimate. Without mind it would be an idiot. Without disposition it could not act. Without a deceitful and wicked heart it could not manifest sin. When Adam was formed of the dust of the ground he had a corporeal body, which was inanimate. And when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul, that breath of life became the life of every one of his progeny. In that life Adam had neither a sinful life, mind or disposition, neither was his heart deceitful or wicked; but he was passive, if I may so express it. But

when Satan entered, he was possessed of all that Satan was capable of; and Adam became disobedient to God's command, and must suffer the penalty, which was death. Paul carried about with him during all his natural life a body of death; for he says, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death."—Romans vii. 9, 10. Now we come to "I." "For that which I [Paul] do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me [Paul] (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," &c.—Romans vii. 15-18. So then it was not Paul, nor his flesh, that troubled him, but sin that dwelt in him. And this is the body of death of which he cried, and of which all the children of God cry, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body [not *this* body] of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind [of Christ] I myself [Paul] serve the law of God; but with the flesh [the lusts of the flesh, sin] the law of sin."—Romans vii. 24, 25. The word flesh does not signify alone our flesh, but our mind, life, disposition and nature. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Thus appear two minds; one of carnal lusts, the other spiritual. One brings death, the other life and peace. One manifests the body of death, the other manifests Jesus. And so we die, and so we live. This is the death we experience in our salvation, and not our corporeal body; but on it is the effect of death or life. This corporeal body is the creature of God. This carnal mind is corrupted by Satan, or is Satan himself, or rather itself. So we find Paul a man, possessed of a carnal mind, and also of a spiritual mind. And so we find every manifest child of God. One is called the old man, the other the new man. We are taught 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."—Eph. iv. 22-24. Put away lying, wrath, and all corrupt communications, with all malice; and be ye followers of God as dear children, walking in love, &c. All admit that they are sinners. And the Lord said to Joseph that Mary should bring forth a son, and should call his name Jesus; for he should save his people from their sins; which proves that he had a people among the people. And it settles the doctrine of election, and that this people was a part of the Adamic race, were real people, not imaginary or spiritual beings, but sinners, children of wrath, even as others, who walked in lasciviousness,

lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries; wherein others think it strange that they do not still run with them to the same excess of riot. But here is the effect of being born again; being in possession of a new and different mind, a mind that would do good, and which does do good. But that other mind, the carnal mind, is always objecting to and challenging the other, so that the man is continually in trouble, and feels as though all he does and says is wrong, is evil, is selfish, is idolatrous, and the good he would is not done, in his estimation. And here stands the man, we will say Paul, with two minds. One is called the old man, and the other the new man. And it is sometimes hard to know which to serve, or which we are serving. But the man, Paul, is continually hoping, and cannot cease to hope. He may only be hoping that he has or may have a hope, but still he hopes. Not hoping that he may be lost, but in hope of the glory of God; that he may see the glory of God, and rejoice in the glory of God; hopes for a brighter evidence of his acceptance in the Beloved; that his name is written in the Lamb's book of life. Who is this that is hoping? Certainly not the Spirit of Christ. Certainly not the spirit of adoption. But it is the man, Paul; the very same man that was formerly a persecutor, is now hoping. The spirit of adoption has enabled the sinner to hope. What for? The adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Therefore we, the creature, the man, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And this is the constant expectation of the creature. For we are saved by hope; and this is the hope, which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil. When you were made to see your sinfulness, and that you were lost, and cried out, "Lord, save, or I perish," who was it that cried? Who was it that was lost, and was condemned because of sin? Was it the spiritual man? or was it not rather the creature, the Adamic man, who now, by the light which God had given him, saw himself, and was enabled to see the vileness and corruption which was within, even in his heart, causing him to cry out in anguish, "Vile, vile, from the soles of my feet unto my head. There is no soundness in me?" There can be no doubt as to who this is. So then, when we receive the spirit of adoption, and cry, Abba, Father, it is the same man that was in distress a short time before, but now, by the light of Jesus, is enabled to rejoice, and says, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" I admit that it is by the Spirit of Christ that we thus mourn and rejoice; but that it is the spirit of adoption that receives and rejoices in hope, I must deny; because I cannot harmonize that with my experience; and what I have not experienced I cannot understand or

comprehend. It must first be revealed. What a man knows, he can tell; but what he does not know, is impossible to tell. Therefore I have just my own experience to tell; and if I should branch out from that, it would be of man, and not by revelation. Humility is the groundwork of all revelation. A haughty mind never receives the revelation from God. The discipline of the church of God is to keep the body under, for the destruction of the flesh—the lusts of the flesh. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid."—1 Cor. vi. 15. "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? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. We might fill many sheets with quotations, to show that the reproofs, rebukes and exhortations are for the Adamic man. I wish to be understood that I do not claim that the natural mind can comprehend anything spiritual, or of a spiritual nature; for we read in 1 Cor. ii. 14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But having been born again, and having another mind, a spiritual mind, this same man can receive spiritual things with this mind, just as he can receive natural things with his natural mind. Neither does one destroy the other, nor in any way diminish its capacity. By our natural mouth we speak of natural things, and by the same mouth we speak of spiritual things, and we hear, feel and see on the same principle. The carnal mind cannot understand the things of the Spirit, neither does it desire to, because it is enmity itself: not at enmity, but enmity, and cannot be reconciled to the working of the Spirit. "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 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. 57, 58.

I find that I have scribbled about enough, and hope I have not gone beyond what the Scriptures teach, and what I have learned by deep experience, for beyond that I am lost in bewilderment, and am, as it were, dumb. I heartily concur in everything that brother Hancks has written on the subject. I see so much to commend in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, both editorially and communicatively, that I will hardly expect to see this in print; but to your judgment it is left. May God continue his mercy to you, and to all the household of faith, according to his own will.

Yours, rejoicing in hope.

MILTON DANCE.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Dec. 7, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The most excellent communications of sister Abbie Coddington and brother H. Cox, in the SIGNS for December first, on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, impress me with a desire, by your permission, to offer a few thoughts upon the same subject, as the subject is a glorious theme with me. And I will here say that I have no desire to change anything in either communication referred to. I was well pleased with the remarks of sister Coddington upon the meaning of the passage in John, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be," &c. I readily adopted the views as set forth by her, but I never had thought of it in that way before. How true the language of the inspired record, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; and base things of the world hath God chosen; yea, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. 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." "For 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. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." "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." Thus it is that our God hides the purpose of his grace from the wise and prudent, and reveals the "hidden wisdom of God in a mystery" to his saints.

What I wish to present to the readers of the SIGNS is my understanding of some things connected with the subject of the resurrection of the dead. And before I say a word, I know that some, and perhaps all, will differ with me; but I ask no one to receive my views unless in their judgment they are sustained by the word of God. I simply wish to present my views for the consideration of those who may read. As I have already intimated that I endorse the views as set forth in the communications referred to, it will not be necessary for me to go over the same ground. I wish to present an idea or two that may, by the blessing of God, remove some seeming impossibilities from the minds of some who are ready to doubt the resurrection of the mortal bodies of the saints. It is thought by some that because Paul says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,

neither doth corruption inherit incorruption," that it is impossible that these "vile bodies" should be resurrected and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God. But Paul says again, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." And again, "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." From this it is clear to my mind that the sleeping saints shall be simultaneously raised from the dead, and the church of God will be presented to God as a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. Again, it is written, "He that raised up Christ, shall also raise up us, and shall present us, with you." The apostle further says, "This mortal must put on immortality, and this corruptible must put on incorruption. So when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" &c. Why should the apostle triumphantly ask, "O grave, where is thy victory?" if it were not that the grave shall in the resurrection be robbed of its dead? This same apostle asks this important question on one occasion, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Once more. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep," &c.—Heb. xiii. 20. From all this array of inspired testimony it is plain to my mind that the same identical body of Jesus (who offered his own body once for all) that was laid in Joseph's new tomb, was raised up from the dead, and ascended into heaven; "Who is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." Again, "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." I make these quotations to show that the very same Jesus that was crucified, and laid in the grave, arose from the grave, and ascended into heaven. And the language he used to his disciples after his resurrection goes to prove the same truth. "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." "It is I myself." So will it be with the saints. It will not be a "spirit," but "I myself;" a "vile body" made holy; a "mortal body" immortalized; a natural, fleshly body spiritualized; a corruptible body made incorruptible and full of glory; a dead body made alive, and alive forevermore. "Neither shall they die any more." Surely that which dies and is laid in the

grave is that which is raised up from the dead, else it could not be the "resurrection of the dead." The blood is the life of the body, and Christ "shed his blood for the remission of sins," and then gave up the ghost and died; and we have no account that his blood was ever buried. It was spilt upon Calvary's bloody summit. The blood of the beasts that were offered upon Jewish altars was caught in vessels; but the "blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God," was spilt upon the ground, and was taken up by its mother earth; and we have no account that it was either buried or resurrected; but his flesh and bones were buried. Not a bone was broken. And it is evident that his flesh and bones, were resurrected; for he says, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." And I see it just in this light. The blood is the life of the natural body; it is that which animates and vitalizes the natural, mortal, corruptible body while here in the world; hence it is a natural, mortal, corruptible life; a life that dies. But in the resurrection, the "Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead" will take the place of the blood, and hence the same body that was once animated and vitalized by blood will be animated and vitalized by the Spirit, and thus it will be made a spiritual, immortal and incorruptible body, which can never die; and thus it will be fashioned like the body of Christ. The language of the apostle "Thou fool, that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain," proves nothing against the idea here set forth, so far as I can see; for the apostle goes on to say, "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." From this I understand that the body that is sown in Adam is sown a natural body; but the same body is raised in Christ a spiritual body. Hence the body sown in Adam is "not that body which shall be," for it is a natural body; but the "body which shall be" is raised in Christ, and is a spiritual body. Hence the apostle further says, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Hence the apostle says, "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." It is thought by some that the resurrection is simultaneous with the death of every person; but to my mind this idea virtually destroys the doctrine of the resurrection. When Stephen was stoned, he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the

name of the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Nothing is said about the Lord Jesus receiving his body. But "devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him." Hence the resurrection of Stephen was not simultaneous with his death. And the apostle says, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain: yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." And thus the glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the saints is set forth in language that cannot be mistaken. Take from me the resurrection of my body, and you take from me all my hope. That is exactly what I am hoping for. Hence "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." And this is what David meant when he said, "All the days of my ap-time will I wait till my change come." Dear "child of sorrow, child of care," is not this a

"Glorious hope of perfect love,
That lifts us up to things above."

While I lie here in bed penning these lines, racked with pain, and suffering both mental and physical agony, by faith I look forward to the time when I shall be delivered from the "body of this death," and when I shall be able to say with the apostle, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The foregoing are some of my views upon the glorious subject of the resurrection. I do not urge them as a test of orthodoxy on this all-absorbing theme; but I feel so much relief in writing upon the subject, I must believe that some at least will take comfort from a perusal of the same. May God bless all his dear people everywhere, and give them proper conceptions of his word, and apply his precious truth to their comfort, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Yours in tribulation,

H. J. REDD.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, Dec. 21, 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has nearly expired, which reminds me that it is time I should send you my remittance for 1886, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and as I have to write to you, I will give a request of

brother George Hardy, of Loraine, Ill., concerning Balaam, a passing notice. "Was he a true prophet of the Lord?" To which I unhesitatingly answer, No. I suppose he was a kind of conjurer, or enchanter; something like the witch of Endor, or similar to modern spiritualists. But Peter called him a prophet. Speaking of false (not true) teachers, he says, "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed 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; but was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet."—2 Peter ii. 14-16.

I will here relate an incident which occurred when I was a small boy. Elder John Hutchison was the pastor of a Regular Baptist Church called Mill Creek Church, then held on Opequon Creek, four miles east of Martinsburg, Berkeley Co., Virginia. The Elder lived up in the Capon River mountains, some forty miles or more west from Martinsburg. There was a place called Timber Ridge: it was sparsely settled in consequence of the poverty of the soil; but there was a man lived there by the name of Sherod, who had a little store, and kept a kind of hotel, which was known by the name of Sherod's Store. This was a kind of lodging place for travelers. One day as the Elder was on his way to Mill Creek Church meeting, it was raining, snowing and hailing, and the wind was blowing a gale. The Elder stopped in at Sherod's Store to warm himself. There was a Methodist preacher by the name of Hull, who had also stopped to warm himself. Soon after, an Irishman stepped in, and as he was shaking the snow off from his overcoat by the door, he said, "This is a very bad day." Hull rebuked him, saying, "There are no bad days; they are all good days." "Was it not a bad day when Sodom and Gomorrah were burnt?" said the Irishman. "I am authorized to speak," said Hull. "And so was Balaam's ass, but never but the one time," said the Irishman. The same may be said of Balaam. He was authorized by Israel's God to prophesy good concerning Israel, but never but the one time. And the same power that opened the mouth of the ass to speak and rebuke Balaam, opened the mouth of Balaam to speak the word of the Lord to Balak concerning Israel, according to the blessing wherewith the Lord blessed them, while at the same time his heart was as hard as was Pharaoh's when he would not let the same people of Israel go out of Egypt. The Lord by John saith concerning the church of Pergamos, "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of

Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."—Rev. ii. 14. Let us see what the doctrine of Balaam was, and we upon examination will find that he was an Arminian. "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people. And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams. And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram. And Balaam said unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt offering, and I will go; peradventure the Lord will come to meet me; and whatsoever he sheweth me I will tell thee. And he went to a high place. And God met Balaam; and he said unto him,"—what did he say? Did he say, like the publican, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner?" or like Job, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further?" or like Hezekiah, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it. I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul?" No, none of this: but like the Pharisee that went up into the temple to pray, he said unto the Lord, "So I have prepared seven altars, and I have offered up on every altar a bullock and a ram."—Numb. xxiii. 1-4. Now, did he not think that the Lord would surely curse Israel for his sake, who had done so much for the Lord, in preparing seven altars and offering seven bullocks and seven rams to the Lord upon the high places of Baal, where all the Arminians present their offerings? And the Lord put these words into Balaam's mouth, and said, "Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak. And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt sacrifice, he and all the princes of Moab. And he took up his parable, and said, Balak, the king of Moab, hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel. How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied? 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. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast blessed them altogether. And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth? Now although disappointed and discouraged, still they were not willing to give the matter up. They must make other efforts to please the Lord, by their

continual offerings and supposed good works, in order to change the mind of the Lord concerning Israel, into their favor. Hence they went to another place to offer sacrifices, hoping to enchant the Lord from there to curse Israel, and bless them for their sacrifices and good deeds. Now, as they thought that they by their sacrifices could change the mind of the Lord, he put the following words in Balaam's mouth, and made him speak them (though contrary to his will) by the same power that made the dumb ass rebuke Balaam. And the Lord said, "Go again unto Balak, and say thus." And he went. And Balak said to him, "What hath the Lord spoken? And he took up his parable and said, Rise up Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor: God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and will he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Now, after repeated efforts to change the mind of the Lord, Balaam was constrained to say, "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought?" Now we must remember that all this was done; not to seek the Lord, but to seek for enchantments against Israel: Balaam being an enchanter, or conjurer. Webster defines conjure thus: "To charm; to enchant; to practice magical arts." So that was Balaam's employment, instead of being a prophet of the Lord. Now these things are for our learning. Seeing their utter failure by their efforts to accomplish anything, shows clearly that the whole Arminian effort system from beginning to end is an entire failure; that no good has ever been achieved therefrom; it is only another name for conjuration. Now when Balaam saw that his enchantments proved ineffectual in changing the mind of the Lord, to cause him to curse Israel, he resorted to stratagem, and "taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."—Rev. ii. 14; Numbers xxxi. 16.

Your companion in tribulation,
JOHN STIPP.

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In compliance with an earnest request, I forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some remarks concerning predestination; and if you publish the same, let it be distinctly understood by all who may take the trouble to read the communication, that the editors are not responsible for what is contended for, but the writer himself. The writer of this article hopes he has had an interest in the gospel of the grace of God for more than forty years, and has been a visible member of the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church nearly thirty-eight years;

but there has been no time since he had a connection with the Baptist Church that so much vain philosophy and carnal reasoning have been manifested in the denomination, as at the present time. As the foundation for the remarks, the following declaration of Scripture is taken: "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."—Isaiah xli. 10.

In dwelling upon this awfully deep yet gloriously sublime language, by the grace of God sustaining me, a strict adherence to the law and force of the English language will be observed. Not any where in the Scriptures of divine truth has the "I AM THAT I AM" requested his creatures, either men or angels, to apologize for what he does, or how it is done: but there have been positions assumed by writers on the subjects of predestination, foreordination and foreknowledge, which are positively irreconcilable with any just view of the Supreme Being; for men, in the plenitude of their carnal wisdom, assume to tell us what our God willed, and what he did not will; what he purposed, and what he did not purpose; but they fail to produce a "Thus saith the Lord" for such assumptions; which clearly shows the truth of the following: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." An inspired apostle says in addressing his brethren, "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things [not part] after the counsel of his own will." "O yes, that is so; but then it means all good things." My brother, or sister, or friend, who gave you the liberty to introduce the adjective good before the word things? The written word of God does not, therefore such interpolation is arrogance, without one particle of divine proof.

The writer feels bound to give the meaning of some of the important words about to be considered, although it doubtless will cause a repetition of the same kind of remarks concerning him that have been made, such as, "He wants to display his learning; he thinks others are ignorant," &c., &c. But having become inured to obloquy and reproach for the truth's sake, it will not particularly disturb him; and in this communication there shall be no "plagiarism." While the word predestination is not in the Old Testament Scriptures, there is an abundance of declarations having exactly the same force, and one is the word "purpose;" and that word is equally as full as the word predestinate. In Isaiah, the Hebrew is *yaats*, counsel; and it is Jehovah's counsel. And there are a number of other Hebrew words rendered counsel, with an inferior meaning; because it is man's counsel. In the New Testament the word used, when referring to God's

purpose, is *poieo*, and it means *absolute*, without any conditions whatever. Predestinate is from *proorizo*, and literally means, *to mark off first*, or beforehand: and it is recorded but four times in the New Testament Scriptures, with precisely the same meaning in each case.* And our English word is from *præ*, before, and *destino*, to appoint; therefore a before appointment is the technical meaning of the word. Some brethren have objected to the adjective *absolute* being prefixed to the word predestination, as the word itself means that, which is strictly true; but there are so many kinds of theories talked about, that the *real* believers in the doctrine desire to be distinctly understood that they have no fellowship for the carnal sentiment that a part of God's purposes are predestinated, and part are brought to pass "hap-hazard," which is the reason why they use the expression, "absolute predestination." Having said sufficient as an introduction, now the attempt shall be made to briefly elaborate the subject.

Declaring the end from the beginning. The Being, who spake this by his prophet, said, "I dwell in the high and holy place." Also, "I am. * * * This is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." It was purposed or predestinated in the eternal mind that this earth should be called into existence out of nonentity, and have a place in the universe, and that immutable laws should govern it while passing around the sun; and, according to Scripture testimony it has obeyed the sovereign mandate of the Creator for nearly six thousand years, without any deviation from his fixed laws. And who can gaze at the starry heavens and not own the absolute predestination of all things? Verily, it seems as though the almighty edict has been proclaimed in tones of thunder from the battlements of heaven, through the pen of inspiration, that all things must transpire according to the will of God. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world;" consequently nothing has transpired counter to his omniscience. And if nothing has occurred not known to Jehovah, it must have been included in the "all things." *Objection.* "I think wicked acts are suffered to transpire, not predestinated." Let us hear king David speak concerning a certain man, Shimei, when one of David's men said, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head," But the king's answer was, "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" Was not that embraced in the "all things known unto God?" If so, was it not determined?

Supposing that a man man knows that on the morrow an event would certainly occur, and should say, I do not want it to take place, for it is very wicked. I have sufficient power to prevent its transpiring, and yet I

know it will certainly come to pass on the morrow. Would not all sane persons say, or be led to conclude, that such a person is insane? Yet the logic is equally as good as it is to assume the position that awful matters have, and still are transpiring counter to the will and purpose of God; yet they take place by permission, and were not predestinated. *Question.* Is not the word permit, from which permission comes, in the Bible? Yes, but not in the sense that God permits things counter to his will and purpose. Every flower, every spear of grass, every kernel of grain, every shrub, every tree that has been or ever will be on earth, was determined before time was; every birth, every death, every war, every commotion, which has taken place, or ever will, every crawling worm, every flying gnat, the form of every billow on the ocean, every drop of rain that shall ever fall upon the earth, yea, everything, from the infinitesimal to the most gigantic, was determined with Jehovah in eternity, and the time when all should be made manifest, as well as occur, was unalterably fixed.

(To be continued.)

MACOMB, ILL., Dec., 1885.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Since the brief obituary of sister Spurgin was published in the SIGNS of November 15th, page 263, current volume, kindly furnished by Dr. Dillard, I have felt desirous to see something more said or published in the SIGNS about that aged, faithful and very spiritually minded disciple of Jesus. I feel that it is due to her memory, as a true and faithful wife of a minister of our order, that some further notice should be taken of her by some one and from the fact that no relatives were with her when she passed away, and, perhaps, none of her brethren, I propose to furnish the readers of the SIGNS, by your permission, with at least a few extracts from some of her numerous letters to me; remarking that I never saw this dear mother in Israel, but for some years she has earnestly solicited me to write to her as long as we both lived. I have now before me the most of her letters, though not all of them, and they number twenty-three, dating some years back at first, and continuing on till within a short time of her demise. I would say further about her that three or four times in life the family lost their property by wind, water and fire, and she was finally bereaved of the last one of her family, so that her trials have been great and severe. I would further state that she for some years wrote to me from Palestine, Texas, but for the last few years she wrote from Shreveport, Louisiana. I will begin with her last letter to me, written a short time before her departure, and showing the state of her mind as she neared the invisible world. In her last to me, and while very weak in body, she says:

"My Very Dear and Precious Brother:—I was made to rejoice one

time more when the doctor handed me your precious letter. I made such a joyful exclamation that he looked surprised, till I told him why. I was just able to look over it, and did not read it understandingly till the second day. I have been very low, and at one time I thought it was the last that I should suffer; and to the praise, honor and glory of our blessed, adorable Redeemer, he, as I trust, removed the dread of death, and caused me to resign my all into his dear hands with thankfulness and joy. But in his wisdom, for some wise purpose I am yet spared, and slowly improving, and trying to write, though weak physically and mentally. My dear brother, you make me ashamed by speaking of my profound knowledge of divine truth. I admit that I have had a long experience in what I humbly hope is grace, but O, so little progress have I made! I have often thought if I had the ground to go over again, how much better I would do. Here is carnal nature; for I have had to be scourged and chastised, and to be held in with bit and bridle." "How sweet is this christian love! We love christians wherever we find them; but if it is sinful I confess that I am guilty, for we do feel to love our own people more than others: the dear Savior had a beloved disciple. Yes, my brother, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth; and we need not think it strange concerning the fiery trial, for in all ages his people have been a suffering people to some extent, in many different ways; but he leads them by the right way; and if our carnal nature were subdued we should not have to cry, O wretched man that I am! How often are we made to rejoice that salvation is of the Lord; for if our salvation depended on any other plan it would utterly fail. How secure are his people, inclosed in his eternal wills and shalls! His everlasting love, his unfailing word, his limitless power, all, all are engaged to secure their salvation. Then why, O why, should they fear? But it is not that we doubt him, but we often doubt our interest in this great salvation."

Thus she goes on speaking of the mighty power of God to bring all his chosen to glory, till at last she says, "I am so weak and nervous I must wait till another day." She resumes her pen to finish this last epistle to me, and probably the last she ever wrote, and says, "And we do hope that ere long we shall be released from this tenement of earth, and go to where we shall behold the Fountain of love face to face, as he is, be like him. O what a rapturous, transporting thought! If the stream is so delightful here in this imperfect state, what will it be at the fountain head? O, my brother, why should we murmur at hard trials, tribulations or crosses, when we have such a prospect before us?" She finished her letter on the fourth day, saying, "Please, dear brother, write soon as you feel like you can. I feel like if

there is not a change soon, I shall go away; and all my hope for the future is in the finished work of Jesus, our glorious Redeemer. Nor do I want any other. If I had a thousand souls I would joyfully trust them all to his dear, faithful hands. May the Lord bless you in all things, and may you receive a full reward from the Master; and may we all meet in the kingdom above, is the desire of your unworthy sister in hope, for Christ's sake."

The above is but a part of her last letter to me, and the readers of the SIGNS and her many correspondents may thus learn something of her exercises as she approached her dissolution. I answered this letter soon after its reception, but she replied no more. Our thanks are due Dr. Dillard for his kindness to her while living, and for the notice he gave of her death. I hope that some one who is posted will write her history more fully. I may send other extracts.

Your brother,

I. N. VANMETER.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Dec. 16, 1885.

DEARLY BELOVED OF THE LORD, ONE AND ALL:—Another year is nearly at an end, with its cares, anxieties, trials, sorrows and joys, which are a portion of the inheritance of the saints, and among the all things that work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. If I am allowed to judge, I would say that the path of the christian is a very checkered one; ups and downs, darkness and light, joy and sorrow, doubts and fears; at least this is my experience. How often during the past year have I felt the force of the language of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" How much of the time I have walked in darkness and had no light, when the language of David was the language of my poor soul, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, [shut up, surrounded, or drawn by force,] that I dwell in the tents of Kedar. [Blackness or sorrow.] My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war." I can truly say that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. For to will is present, but how to perform that which is good I find not. When I would do good, evil is present with me. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other: agreeing with the language of Solomon, "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." Erskine says,

"To good and evil equal bent,
I'm both a devil and a saint."

This might have been true of him, but it is not true of myself. There is no equality in the matter. I have done nothing meritorious in all my life; but on the other hand, I have been a wicked, rebellious sinner. I feel at times as though the very devil himself was not as bad as I. The elements of hell are in my nature. I

cannot express the awful depravity and sink of sin that I find within me, and often I think, Can it be possible that others are like me?

"Like one alone I seem to be,
O is there any one like me?"

O how much I need restraining grace to keep me from manifesting the evil there is in my corrupt, deceitful heart. I know that the grace of God is sufficient for his children, but will grace be given me for the next trial or temptation, so that I will not murmur or rebel on account of the roughness of the way, or be led to bring reproach upon the cause of Christ by submitting to the temptation? Such questions arise in my mind often, realizing what a poor, weak, sinful worm of the dust I am. My desire is that the Lord will keep me from sin, deliver me from temptation, and free me from all evil: for the kingdom and the power and the glory are God's. It has been several years since I began speaking in public, by way of trying to preach, and I must confess that my attempts have been very, very weak indeed. I have never as yet seen any qualification in myself that has given me an evidence that I am called of God to preach the gospel. Four years of trouble of mind did not give me an evidence. But I have received some encouragement from my brethren, and doors have been opened for me to go and speak, without any effort or influence on my part to open them. In fact I have always felt a hesitancy in regard to going, for fear it was not of the Lord. I have always felt in my heart to ask to be excused from speaking when there were ministers present to speak. I am not ashamed of the glorious gospel of Christ, but I am often ashamed of my weak, blundering manner of presenting it. O how short I come of presenting it in its power and glory. Many times I have felt so ashamed and discouraged with my attempts that in my mind I have said that I never can open my mouth again by way of trying to preach. I do not consider that my greatest failures have been when I have been shut up and could say nothing to the people; but when I have stood before the people a long time, with liberty as regards words, but with no spirit or power in them, which I feel has been the case many, yea, many times. But my brethren have borne with me, and continue to bear with me. Certainly they are blessed of the Lord with an abundance of charity. I do not know whether I am a sound preacher or not. If I am not, I do not know what I could do to make myself so. I leave that matter to the judgment of the brethren, hoping they will deal plainly with me. I have never felt any desire to be the pastor of a church, knowing full well my inability to fill such a position. Although I am serving several churches, I am pastor of but two of them, and very reluctantly accepted the care of them as pastor. As regards baptizing, although I have baptized a number, I have always felt that it would be much better if some one else could

administer the ordinance. I would be willing and glad if some one else could baptize all that come to the churches which I serve. The same in regard to administering the ordinance of the supper. These are some of my exercises and feelings. Is there any one like me?

Our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, continues to come, laden with precious epistles of love from the dear saints of God scattered abroad in all parts of the land; and if I understand them, they see eye to eye, although they do not express themselves in the same manner. I am glad to say that none, as yet, of the writers to the SIGNS have denied the resurrection of the dead, nor the glorious doctrine of eternal vital union, not between, but with, Christ and his people.

Brethren editors, do with this as you think best. Long life to the SIGNS, and grace to the editors.

M. VAIL.

TYRONE, Kentucky, Nov. 29, 1885.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I again take my pen to talk a little to the dear brethren and sisters through the SIGNS, our dear family paper, which comes to me twice a month, richly laden with good news and glad tidings from brethren and sisters, some telling of what they hope the Lord has done for their poor souls, and some giving their views on some portion of the Scriptures of divine truth, which affords great comfort to me in reading. None but those who have been born of the Spirit of God and taught in the school of Christ can write good news and glad tidings; for we are informed in holy writ 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." And I take it for granted that this "all Scripture" means all; not a little here and a little there; but all, from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation. A man may have all the education this world can give, but unless he has been taught in the school of Christ he cannot understand the Scriptures. For Paul said he was not taught it of man, neither was it revealed to him by man, but by the Holy Spirit. Therefore he could say that he was determined not to know anything among the brethren save Christ and him crucified, as the only way of life and salvation. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life;" and "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," but "will raise him up again at the last day." And again he says, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Well; how are they drawn? We are not left to guess at that either, for our Savior says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Then it is for the love he has for his people that he draws them to himself. There are none that can hinder

him from drawing them, nor can they delay one moment longer than the appointed time of the Father. When he says, "Come," they come forth as shining gold, washed white in the blood of the Lamb. Although when made to see themselves sinners, they feel to be as black as the tents of Kedar, and their sins rise before them like great dark billows, then their cry is, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." "Lord, save, or I perish." But they are just as safe then as if they were sitting at God's right hand in glory. For our Savior says that of all the Father hath given him he shall lose nothing, but will raise them up again at the last day. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Those are the ones that he prayed for when he said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me."

Brother Beebe, I was highly pleased with your editorial for November fifteenth. May the God of all grace and truth still enable you to stand upon the walls and wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon;" and proclaim salvation by grace, is my prayer for his name's sake.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. J. WATERFILL.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please give your views of this parable? "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."—Luke xiii. 6-9. Does it apply to the Jews as a nation, or to the ceremonial law of sacrifices, or to individual Jews? The thought of comparing myself to the unfruitful fig tree came very forcibly into my mind Saturday afternoon at our meeting. I went to our meeting actuated principally by the sense of duty resting upon me, or rather obligation, as it was our regular business meeting, which was to be held after preaching, and the opportunity was given for any who wished to talk of their experience to the church. Having the church record book, and having recorded the transfer of a dear sister to the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore, and wishing the church to see that the record had been properly stated, I was compelled to attend, although as to spiritual things I felt as barren and fruitless as it is possible for any one who has ever known the mercy and love of God to become. Brother Chick came back to us filled to overflowing with the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ, after his visit to the Maine Association, having been absent two appointments, one of which was filled by brother Francis, to the comfort of the church. While the rich stream of gospel blessing came

from the heart, through the lips of brother Chick, with power and much assurance, I only heard the words. Nothing could move or melt this cold, frozen heart of mine; and I wondered if the unfruitful fig tree was organically unable to assimilate the rich nutriment which the dresser of the vineyard gave it, or was it a willful, persistent determination not to receive it. I felt that a right solution of this parable would throw some light upon my own unfruitful state. If, dear brother, your time is too much occupied to attend to the request, please let it be made known through the SIGNS; and perhaps it may be that some brother will grant the desire of a poor, sin-burdened, barren, unfruitful inquirer, who when he would do good, evil is present with him, and how to do good he finds not. Please do not think me burdensome.

Your unworthy brother,

T. H. SCOTT.

(Editorial reply on page 22.)

WALDRON, Shelby Co., Ind.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Through the continued goodness and mercy of our adorable Redeemer I am blessed with another opportunity to send on my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, having received and read the twenty-fourth number of volume fifty-three. It would be gratifying to me to fill up your blank list with new subscribers, were it in my power to do so; but by reason of old age and infirmity of the flesh I have to stay close about home, seldom able to attend our church meetings, especially in cold weather. Now I do hope and trust that the Lord may put it into the hearts of his dear children, those that have strength of body and mind, to exert their energy in supporting the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Dear brethren and sisters, you who write for the SIGNS, and also those that have a heart to understand and read the same, and especially those who in the providence of God are scattered at such remote distance from any church or people who speak a pure language, and seldom meet with or hear one of the true servants of the Lord proclaim the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, I think I speak advisedly when I say that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is a solace to all such. Let me therefore encourage you, dear brethren and sisters, to put forth your energies to sustain this our precious medium of correspondence. I have often thought that if I could write anything that would be edifying or comforting to the dear people of God, it would be a great pleasure for me to do so; but alas! I feel too ignorant and undeserving even to claim that I have a name and a place among the dear ones of the household of faith.

Yours in hope,

R. B. PEEK.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Pilgrims' Rest fourth annual association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, to the churches of which she is composed, and to all with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Though but three little churches compose our body, and this is our fourth annual meeting, we have great cause to feel thankful to our gracious Lord, the giver of every good and perfect gift, that we as a little association can meet together in love and fellowship, believing that salvation is wholly and entirely of the Lord. We find by referring to the Scriptures of truth that God's people through all ages of the world have declared that their only hope for salvation, or eternal rest beyond this vale of tears, is through the Lord Jesus Christ, who according to the appointed time, came to earth, sojourned here thirty-three years, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, and was crucified according to the determinate counsel of God. Just before he expired on the cross he said, "It is finished." All this was done to save his people from their sins. When our gracious Lord by his holy Spirit reveals this Jesus to his chosen people, as a full Savior, and they are filled with joy, and by faith are enabled to soar beyond the things of time, they then believe that all trouble is gone. But they soon find that in their flesh dwells no good thing. They find, with Paul, that with the mind they serve the Lord, but with the flesh the law of sin. Dear saints of the most high and holy One, if we are bearing testimony experimentally to the dealings of God with his people, it should be, and is, strengthening to the poor, doubting child. Our Jesus has said, that in the world his people shall have tribulations. But, dear, doubting ones, let us be of good cheer, for he has overcome the world. "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Then, dear brethren and sisters, while passing through fiery trials, let us remember that God's people have all gone in this way through all ages of the world. But in the midst of all their doubts and fears, he has given them a good hope, as an anchor of the soul; for which good hope through grace may we be enabled to praise and adore our gracious Lord for his goodness and mercy. May we of the Pilgrims' Rest Association, though few in number, be kept humble at the feet of Jesus, watching over each other for good. May our little association be to us what the name denotes, the pilgrims' rest from schisms, strifes and false doctrine; and at last may we be brought off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved us and gave himself for us.

R. FLOURNOY, Mod.

S. P. RAMEY, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Pilgrims' Rest Association, to all with whom we correspond.

ANOTHER year of our allotted pilgrimage, with its attending joys and sorrows, is numbered with the things of the past, and we are permitted by a faithful, covenant-keeping God to meet together in an associated assembly, for which we desire to return our sincere thanks, and to praise his unspeakable name. The Scriptures are a golden chain of inspired testimony, confirming to the faith of God's elect, that God is love. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and declared that this love is the moving cause why saints in every age love God: because he first loved them. "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." The good Lord, speaking to Jacob of old, as a representative of all his people, says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Our blessed Savior says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Jesus says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.

Our meeting has been profitable, and God's dear children have been strengthened and built up in their most holy faith. We desire a continuance of your correspondence. Our next association is appointed to be held with Gilead Church, in Franklin Co., Kansas, at the usual time, when and where we hope to meet and greet your messengers again.

R. FLOURNOY, Mod.

S. P. RAMEY, Clerk.

INFORMATION WANTED.

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

Mrs. E. A. Gatcher, formerly of Ednaville, Texas.

"THE EDITORIALS."

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1886.

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

COMFORT FOR TREMBLING ONES.

MANY anxious inquiries have been received from readers scattered in the various sections of our country, submitting brief statements of each peculiar case, and asking if there is hope for such as confess that in their own hearts they are self-condemned. While perhaps no two cases are alike in their attendant circumstances, they are all so identical in principle that every one is decided in each of the others. Indeed, the very anxiety which forbids their rest in carnal indifference attests their spiritual life, which is Christ in them the hope of glory. While all the promises of the gospel and all the consolation written in the Scriptures are exclusively the portion of these destitute and needy ones, the cruel suggestions of the tempter are ever presented to forbid their rest in the assurance of the immutable love of God. Their own conscious unworthiness gives to their doubts such painful confirmation that they would if left to themselves sink in despair. It is not possible to specify every form of unbelieving doubt with which the saints are assailed in their dreary pilgrimage through this world of tribulation; but they are thoroughly furnished in the inspired Scriptures unto all good works, and "through faith which is in Christ Jesus" they are made wise unto salvation by the holy record of divine truth.—See 2 Tim. iii. 15-17. The saints who will live godly in Christ Jesus are the only subjects of this instruction. Their eternal redemption is complete in the one offering of Jesus as their spotless atonement; but they have need of salvation in their daily conflicts with sin and the weakness of the flesh. It is for this salvation that they must ever cry unto God out of the depths of sin and darkness. It is not by mere familiarity with the letter of the Scriptures that this salvation is secured; the faith which is in Christ Jesus is the only medium through which they are made wise even unto this salvation, which is experienced in deliverance from the temptations and enemies which beset them in their sojourn in this enemies' land. For their peace it is important that they remember the assured certainty of their being cleansed from all sin by the precious blood of Jesus, which is the very reason for which they daily "hunger and thirst after righteousness." Their distress and restless longing for freedom from sin cannot arise from that corrupt heart and carnal mind in which nothing exists but enmity against God. None ever can experience that hunger and thirst except such as are led by the Spirit of God; for that desire is the love of

God, and is the first fruit of the Spirit, not only that it is the first manifestation of the Spirit's work, but it continues ever to be first in the experience of the saints. This causes them to abhor themselves, and confess their own vileness and pollution, just in proportion to their realizing sense of the holiness and perfection of God. They are not conscious that this is the effect of divine light shining in them; but instead of receiving assurance from it, they tremble with apprehension that they can hope for no deliverance from their miserable bondage of corruption. As no efforts of their own can deliver them from these doubts, so not even the words of inspiration can relieve them until the Comforter shall take of the things of Jesus and show unto them. Then they receive the victory which humbles them and reflects glory only to their Redeemer. But it is not for any to be comforted except those who mourn. It is not for any to be glorified together with Christ but those who know the fellowship of his sufferings. As he was made perfect through sufferings, his followers can arrive at that perfection only in the same path marked out by him. The cross must be felt before the crown is received in the personal experience of every saint here on earth. Their final glory with the Lord in eternity is not in any degree dependent upon any contingency. Already their life is hid with Christ in God; as he said to his beloved disciples when about to leave them, "Because I live, ye shall live also."—John xiv. 19. Yet they must continue in this field of conflict until they are called to rest with their Lord, for he has given to each of them to know the bitterness of sin by personal sufferings before he gives the crown of victory. If any are not acquainted with the afflictions, darkness and trials which are the earthly heritage of the followers of Christ, there is no evidence that they are led by the Spirit of God. The Lord himself was led immediately from the assurance of his baptism into the wilderness of temptation, where he triumphantly encountered all the combined allurements which ever beset his followers. In Gethsemane he drank the cup of agony to its bitterest dregs, yet from the infinite depth of his distress shines forth the heavenly glory of perfect submission, as he prays to the Father, "Not my will, but thine be done!" The tried saint is robbed of the comfort of this example by the suggestion that it was only to Christ Jesus in his spotless person that there appeared an angel from heaven strengthening him. But by carefully observing the record every suffering child will see the individual experience of each one who follows in the path of the Redeemer. It was after this divine strengthening that he was in an agony and sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.—See Luke xxii. 41-46. So in other cases to which we might refer, as in the case of Joseph, it was

after God had revealed his glory in his dreams that he must endure all the afflictions of slavery and fetters. It was after David had been anointed by the prophet as king of Israel that he endured such afflictions as he had never before known. And so the Lord says to Israel, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."—Isaiah xlviii. 10. Hence it is evident that the peculiar people who are saved by the Lord bear the impress of the seal of suffering affliction. Dear doubting trembler, do you wish for severer affliction to show more clearly your interest in the heritage of this family whose Father is God? It is better to be reconciled to God, and rest in his love.

Sometimes the tempter will pervert a portion of Scripture, and use it as an inspired witness against the hope of the trembling saint, as in the temptation stated by brother T. H. Scott, in his letter on page 21. The barren fig tree is not used as representing any of the trembling ones, for their very trembling and destitution of confidence in themselves is the fruit in which God is glorified. They who claim righteousness and strength in themselves bear no fruit to the glory of God, since they claim to merit divine approval; but they who have to come helpless and justly condemned, and cry for undeserved mercy and favor, like the Syrophenician woman, worship God, saying, "Lord, help me!"—See Matt. xv. 25; Mark vii. 24. The fruit by which God is glorified in his saints is not that which exalts their pride and causes them to look upon themselves as worthy of commendation. The mournful experience of brother Scott presents just the fruit which abounds in the saints to the glory of God; and every emotion of self-loathing is but the result of the light of life shining in the saints, causing them to "worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."—Phil. iii. 3. This is the cross which cannot be avoided by them who follow Jesus. In bearing it they continually crucify the old man, and hate their own life for its pollution and sin, while their constant desire is that they might be free from corruption, and bear the image of their Lord in their daily walk and conversation. The life of Christ in them is the source of all their holy desires and feelings. No such longing for conformity to the perfect law of Christ can originate in the carnal mind. That desire is the witness which every believer has in himself. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—1 John v. 10, 11. It can exist in none but such as have seen the exceeding sinfulness of sin in themselves, and been cut off from trusting in their own righteousness. Such are they "who have fled for

refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." No others have any need of this refuge. Surely they who trust in their own compliance with fancied conditions have no use for this defense. But with eager haste do they who have been driven from all other refuges, resort to the shadow of this great Rock. To them the name of the Lord is a strong tower, into which they run and find safety. Driven by necessity to the protection of this refuge, they cannot claim any merit to themselves for trusting in the Lord. With the psalmist they cry unto the Lord, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."—Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26. It is important for the comfort of the tried saints that they remember that this language expresses the prayer of none but such as are utterly destitute, poor and needy. In the light of this gracious truth your conscious poverty and vileness is the testimony which assures your interest in the salvation which is of God in Christ Jesus. By divine grace the trembling publican is justified, while the self-righteous Pharisee, with all his boastful confidence, is condemned. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."—Psa. xxxiv. 18, 19; li. 17. This divine testimony exactly meets the case of those trembling little ones who have no righteousness of their own to plead. Those who trust in their own merit can find no comfort in the gracious truth which is recorded in the Scriptures; for all the consolations of the gospel speak to them who are so utterly lost that they cannot claim any favor on the ground of their own works. It should be observed that in the inspired description of those who are the blessed objects of the grace of God there is not a single condition for them to fulfill. Their character is positively stated. The blessings pronounced by our Lord in his first recorded sermon are none of them offered conditionally, but in every case they specify the particular character to whom they are applied. By reference to his words in Matthew v. 3-11, it will be seen that there is no mistaking the object of each of those exceeding precious blessings. Not only does the Lord definitely state to whom each of them belongs, but they are so described that no others can possibly counterfeit their claim. He does not say that if any sinner will be "poor in spirit," or will "mourn," or will be "meek," &c., then such will be blessed. The blessing already abiding upon those described is manifested in the peculiar marks by which they are identified. Even reason ought to be able to see the folly of construing this language

as expressing conditions to be performed by the sinner in order to secure the blessing, since every characteristic stated describes a principle which cannot be assumed by one in whom it does not exist. The tempter often tells the tried saint that his desire for holiness is not "hunger and thirst after righteousness;" and yet that desire still remains, even though the dear child may be unable to refute the false charge. The principle of righteousness abides in every one who is led by the Spirit of God; and this mark, as well as all the others given in the Scriptures, is included in that sealing by which the holy Spirit of God has sealed every heir of salvation.

Since all the testimony of revealed truth is in confirmation of the hope of the poor and needy saints, reason cannot understand why they should still be subject to doubts and fears. This causes them often to cry out of the depths of distress, and with earnest anxiety they call upon God for deliverance. Their prayer is not a mere form of words voluntarily uttered from a sense of religious duty; but without the consciousness on their part that it is prayer at all, they cry in their heart unto God, and the "Father which seeth in secret" answers that prayer in open assurance.—Matt. vi. 6. Yet even this acceptable prayer is not subject to the control of the saints. Often they are made to feel the bitterness of cold apathy, when they cannot even look up to the throne of grace, and no light of the presence of God appears to them upon the mercy seat. In such a state they know the desire of Job, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" It is even more painful to them to be thus shut out from the manifest presence of God in their experience than to feel his chastening rod or to receive his rebukes. In these times of coldness it is vain for them to endeavor to warm themselves either by fires kindled of their own works or by the memory of past experience of divine favor. Even the written word of the Lord upon which he caused the suffering one to hope in his first experience, may be recalled in memory without exciting emotion or reviving the disconsolate spirit. In this temptation the tried one, if it were possible, would lose all hope; but this abiding principle remains even though reason can see no foundation for it. Indeed, the ground of that hope which supports the saints was never seen by reason. It is revealed only by "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, neither knoweth him." The evidence of your life in Christ is the fact that you have that hope which holds you as an anchor of the soul; out of your sight indeed, but so sure and steadfast that neither your coldness and darkness nor your unbelief and all the temptations of Satan can destroy its living testimony. When your heaven is shut up as a brazen wall against your prayers and cries, and

you find no cooling stream or nourishing food on the barren earth, when all within is gloom and darkness, and all without is sorrow and condemnation, then the living words which Jesus has spoken to you spring up as a well of water into everlasting life. It is only in their distress that the saints experience this perfect deliverance; sowing in sorrow, they reap in joy; dying daily, the life of their Lord is manifest working in them. It is with such rich provisions of grace that the Lord commands, "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.

CAN THEY BE SUSTAINED?

In our last issue we announced the suspension of the *Primitive Pathway* for want of financial support, and since then we have received a copy of a new publication called the *Primitive Monitor*. Within the last twenty years there have been a number of publications started for circulation among our order of Baptists which, after struggling an indefinite time for an existence, have had to suspend for want of sufficient patronage, and generally the publishers have to acknowledge that the venture has resulted in heavy financial loss to them; proving, as we have before expressed ourselves, that there are more publications claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptist organs than the brethren can support. If the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has outlived its usefulness, then let the brethren unite on some other publication and give it their combined support; for we again warn our brethren that this cutting up the patronage as it is being done will ultimately result in the downfall of all. The only two papers besides the SIGNS that have gained any prominence among our brethren are, according to the statements of their editors, barely making running expenses. One publishes that if any one will give him his board and clothes he will give them all the profits of his paper. The other says they have made no money out of their publication. If this is the case with papers that have been running for ten or twenty years, how can any brother now start a new one and expect the brethren to support it? If the effect of the experiment of starting these numerous publications ended with the suspension of their publication, it would not be so serious a matter; but each one takes from the circulation of the SIGNS in its respective locality the names of brethren who have been on our list for years, and from whom we never hear again. Within the last twenty years our list has been reduced over one-third from this very cause.

The *Primitive Monitor* is a forty-eight page pamphlet, containing about half the quantity of reading matter of the SIGNS, being equal to seven pages of our paper, and started in one of the States where the SIGNS is best patronized; and either the SIGNS must sustain an embarrassing loss in that section, or the new publication must fail for want of patronage.

MARRIAGES.

Nov. 25, 1885, by Elder Silas H. Durand, at the house of the bride's mother, Albert C. Twining, of Richboro, and Miss Maggie W. Hogeland, of Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa.

Nov. 26, 1885, by the same, at his residence in Southampton, Eli Engle and Mrs. Susanna Search, both of Southampton.

Dec. 24, 1885, by the same, at the house of the bride's father, Milton Marple, of Northampton, and Miss Lizzie S. Leedom, of Richboro, Bucks Co., Pa.

Dec. 23, 1885, at the house of the bride's parents, by Elder James Miller, John Ballard and Loretta Griffin, both of Halcott Centre, Greene Co., N. Y.

ON Sunday, Oct. 25, 1885, at the residence of the bride, by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, Mr. Joseph H. Allison and Miss Annie L. Tynell, both of Prince Wm. Co., Va.

Dec. 7, 1885, by Elder John W. Timmons, at his residence near Pittsville, Peter P. Truitt, of Wicomico County, and Mrs. Mary E. Adkins, of Worcester County, Md.

Dec. 24, 1885, by the same, at the residence of Joshua J. Holloway, John W. Benson of Sussex County, Delaware, and Miss Mary J. Cayfield, of Wicomico County, Md.

Dec. 31, 1885, at the New School Baptist meeting house near New Church, Va., by Elder T. M. Poulson, John H. Marshall and Mrs. Sarah A. Gunter, both of Accomac County, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I am requested to write the obituary of sister **Alfurna E. Broders**, wife of Deacon Joseph Broders, of the church in Alexandria, Va.

Sister Broders was born Sept. 18, 1830, and died Dec. 7, 1885, after a lingering sickness of several months, of consumption. She had been in declining health for several years, gradually losing strength until worn out by disease death came as a messenger to relieve her from long and weary suffering, and to open the portals of endless rest. I was favored with opportunity to see her much during these years of affliction, and can bear testimony of her patience and hope, of her resignation and calm abiding faith in God. Sister Broders was baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington, July 23, 1865. It was a time of rejoicing then with the little flock in Alexandria, and many were coming like doves to the ark, telling of the wonders of redeeming grace. The reality of truth in those who were then gathered into the fold has been tested in many ways since, as they have been called to take their place in the pathway of life, to meet its stern duties, to endure its trials, to realize the vanity of all earthly things, and to look "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Sister Broders was an amiable lady, a kind and faithful friend, a devoted wife, a dear mother, a firm and consistent Baptist. In all the relations of life she was enabled by grace to fill her station well. How wonderful and glorious is the work of grace in the christian's experience. In this case it shone with increasing brightness to the close. The weary pilgrimage of sickness and affliction and patient waiting in the shadow of death led my mind to the fourth verse of the twenty third Psalm, "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." It was used as a text at the funeral. Sister Broders leaves her husband, four children and other relatives to mourn her death, with the church of her membership, and a large circle of brethren and friends of truth, who knew her well, having witnessed her kindness and courtesy, and partaken of her hospitality at her pleasant home.

"Fresh as the grass our bodies stand,
And flourish bright and gay;
A blasting wind sweeps o'er the land
And fades the grass away.
Our life contains a thousand springs
And dies if one be gone;
Strange that a harp of thousand strings
Should keep in tune so long.

But 'tis our God supports our frame,
The God who built us first;
Salvation to the almighty name
That raised us from the dust."

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCOQUAN, Va., Dec. 23, 1885.

Elder Nelson Jeffers departed this life at his residence near Mason City, Iowa, at two o'clock on Sunday morning, October 11, 1885, of heart disease. He did not awake nor speak. He was born in Jessamine County, Kentucky, in 1820, and when five years old moved with his father, Elder Robert Jeffers, to Henry County, Kentucky, where he received a hope. At the age of eighteen years he moved with his father to Crawford County, Illinois. At the age of twenty-two years himself and wife (who were married the winter before) were received by the Old School Baptist Church called Gladly Fork, and were baptized by his father. In 1846 he moved to Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin, and with six others were constituted into the first Old School Baptist Church of Beloit. In 1853 the church in a body moved to La Fayette County, Wisconsin, and changed the name to Mount Pleasant. In 1865 he was liberated to speak in public. In 1870 he was ordained, and in the same year moved and settled in the place where he died. He and others were constituted into a church called Lime Creek. He preached for them one week before he died. He had spent the most of his time visiting churches and associations. He remained a faithful and consistent member during his connection with the Baptists. He leaves a wife and seven children, four sons and three daughters, to mourn their loss. But it is a greater loss to the churches, as many of them have no pastor. As our Father doeth all things well, and for the good of his saints, we feel to bow to his sovereign will and bless his holy name. He has taken our loved one to his embrace. I tried to speak at the funeral. His mother is still living, being in her ninetieth year. She has been a widow since June, 1861. Her hope seems to be as clear as it was fifty years ago. She has been blind for the last six years. She is a pattern of patience and good works, with firmness in the doctrine of the gospel. We hold our prayer meetings in my house once a week for her benefit. She enjoys them greatly, singing with us those old hymns which she learned in her youth, such as, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," &c.

She loves to hear the Scriptures and the SIGNS read. Please publish this.

Yours in hope,

A. J. NORTON.

MASON CITY, Iowa.

Mrs. Margaret Springsteen, widow of the late Deacon William Springsteen, died very suddenly at her home near Suffern, Rockland County, N. Y., December 31, 1885, aged eighty years, four months and twenty-three days. Her death was caused by paralysis, with which she was first stricken about one year ago.

Sister Springsteen was baptized by Elder S. Duxbery, in the fellowship of what is now called the Ramapo Old School Baptist Church, on December 1, 1833, of which church she remained a worthy member until her Lord called her hence. She was united in marriage to brother Springsteen on November 20, 1824. He departed this life at 11.30 p. m., November 18, 1874, it being the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage. Brother Springsteen was the first person that the late Elder Gilbert Beebe ever baptized, being pastor of the Ramapo Church at that time, December, 1823.

Sister Springsteen is survived by three sons and two daughters, who mourn the departure of an affectionate and devoted mother. May the Lord comfort them in their sorrow.

Her funeral was attended by a large circle of mourning relatives and friends, when a discourse was preached by the writer.

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
And, 'mid the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God."

BENTON JENKINS.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish the obituary of my dear mother, Mrs. Barbara Musgrave, widow of David Musgrave, who died November 1, 1865. Barbara Musgrave departed this life April 6, 1865, aged eighty-two years, eleven months and ten days. She died from a cancer on her face. She has had four children, three of whom survive her. She joined the Old School Baptist Church some years ago. I miss her sadly, but feel that she has exchanged this world of sorrow for one of unending rest and happiness; for "he giveth his beloved sleep."

SARAH SHUMARD.

CENTER, Monongalia Co., W. Va.

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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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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TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—From the liberal manner in which the subscribers have responded to my request, I am glad to be able to inform the brethren that, with the permission of providence, the publication of the Church History at no very distant date is now assured. Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, our oldest publishing house in the United States, have the contract to publish the book. I hope that all the remaining subscribers, who have not yet remitted the amount of the subscription (two dollars per copy), will at an early day send on the proper amount, in postal order or registered letter to the brethren Beebe, so that the latter may issue the whole edition of three thousand copies at one time.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

Signs of the Times.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1886.

NO. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

(Concluded from page 19.)

FROM the time God "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 shew thee," until the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, not a single thing transpired by chance, but everything was ordained by Jehovah; and had a single event "happened," as men speak of things, all the purpose of Jehovah would have been overthrown; and how any lover of Bible truth can carefully read the books of Genesis and Exodus, and doubt the foreordination of Israel's God concerning the seed of Abraham, appears very strange to the writer of this communication. When God told Abraham that his seed should sojourn in a strange land and be afflicted, and at the set time be delivered, he did not make known to him how that should be brought to pass; but what God almighty had declared would not fail of being accomplished. For aught we know, Abraham had no just conception of God's method to bring to pass the declaration made to him; but none will deny, who love and fear God, its ordination of God at the time it was uttered to Abraham by Jehovah, for "he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." If ordained of God, it must have been absolutely predestinated.

The patriarch Jacob had twelve sons; and one of them, Joseph, had two dreams, or visions, which his brethren understood as an omen against them, and they resolved to rid themselves of the dreamer. While Joseph's brethren were feeding the flock in Shechem, Israel sent him unto them, and when they saw him afar off they conspired against him to slay him; but God prevented them from destroying him, for Reuben (signifies in English, "who sees the son") delivered him out of their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him." What a "link in the chain of events," that a Reuben should deliver his brother! O glorious doctrine of foreordination and predestination! He was stripped of his coat of many colors and cast into a pit; but those wicked brothers did not know that they were fulfilling the purpose of God in its jots and tittles by stripping their brother Joseph of his coat and casting him into the pit that had no water in it, and clearly setting forth what the glorious Son of God would pass through; for

our God said to the Messiah, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water;" and that the killing of the kid and dipping Joseph's coat in the blood was pointing directly to the declaration, "And I will stain all my raiment." How wonderfully the wrath of man was then and there praising God! But while Joseph was in the pit there passed by Midianites, and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt. All the circumstances connected with Joseph cannot be dwelt upon, for it would make the article too prolix; but all lovers of Bible truth can read for themselves. Joseph was sold "unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard." Though Joseph was in bondage, God gave him special favor in the sight of Pharaoh; and though Joseph was unjustly cast into prison, he was not forsaken, and when the time had come for his deliverance from prison he was set free. It seems that Pharaoh's dreams could not be interpreted by all the magicians of Egypt and all the wise men thereof. "Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day." The time had come for the fulfilling of a purpose. "There was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams." When the butler had told Pharaoh that, Joseph was sent for, and brought "hastily out of the dungeon;" but when he came before Pharaoh he said, "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." After which Pharaoh named or called him Zaphnath-paaneah, one that discovers hidden things, when Joseph had already said that it was not in him to give the interpretation; and Joseph never applied that title to himself, for he was a God-fearing man. After the wonderful explanation of the dreams Joseph was restored, or given his freedom, and exalted to be first in Egypt, Pharaoh only excepted. During the years of plenty Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea; and after the years of plenty came a sore famine, which was over the face of the whole earth. When Jacob saw there was an abundance of corn in Egypt, he sent his sons thither to buy corn for sustenance; and we find, by tracing the history of this wonderful transaction, that Joseph's dreams concerning his father's family were fulfilled, and in the ultimatum Jacob and his pos-

terity went into Egypt. When Joseph made himself known to his brethren did he upbraid them? No; he said, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." Joseph was either mistaken, or God did send him; and as God sent him, was not the way ordained in the mind of Infinity in which he should go into bondage? Joseph did not say, I happened to go into Egypt, or, I was permitted to go there; but it is emphatic, God sent him. If that is not foreordination, then terms have no force whatever. The verb "send" in the text, as used by Joseph, shows that the person, message or thing sent is completely passive; and it is from the Hebrew *shalach*, to send, and it is recorded in the Old Testament Scripture six hundred and fifteen times from the same original word and precisely the same meaning. If that does not mean absolute predestination, then the record made in the Scriptures has no definite meaning. Was not the course pursued by a majority of Joseph's brethren, as viewed by mortals, very wicked? Most surely. Yet it was the appointed way to save much people alive; and dare any accuse God of being the author of sin in this mysterious transaction? Did not Joseph's brethren act out voluntarily their envious disposition toward him? Did they not go to the very *ultima thule*, and were then restrained? Yet it was to be for their own good at last. Truly God's judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Verily, "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God." Did not God's counsel stand and he do all his pleasure concerning Joseph and his brethren? We can plainly see that God appointed the sending of Jacob's family into Egypt as the way in which Abraham's seed should go into bondage. As time passed on, and Israel multiplied, they became sorely oppressed, and their lives were bitter by reason of their hard bondage. As they multiplied, an edict was issued that all the male children of the Hebrews should be slain; but notwithstanding that, Moses was reared to be a leader of Israel, and through him God was to multiply his signs and wonders in Egypt. But Pharaoh could not let Israel go till the appointed time; and if he promised to let Israel go out of Egypt while the judgments of God were before him, soon as they were removed his heart was hardened, so that he would not let Israel go. We are told in this day, by them who deny the predesti-

nation of all things, that God did not actually harden Pharaoh's heart, but only withdrew his restraint. Most marvelous! wonderful exegesis! The God of Israel has not requested any of his creatures to explain how he hardened Pharaoh's heart; it is enough for us to receive implicitly the divine testimony. Admitting that it was done by taking off or away the restraint from Pharaoh, that his heart was hardened, it sustains the same thing; for when the smith has forged the lance, the razor, the knife, or any other edged tool, how is it hardened so as to cut but by immersing it into oil or water, or both, thereby gradually withdrawing the heat? This remark has been made to show that whether it was done by restraint, or increasing the power of his Satanic nature, or any other way, does not in the least detract from the Scripture testimony. God said unto Pharaoh, "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." For this! Was Pharaoh raised up to oppress the seed of Abraham, and bring all those dreadful, vindictive judgments upon the Egyptians, even to the slaying of the first-born, before Israel could go? So says the Scripture. After the host of Israel left Egypt, Pharaoh's heart was again hardened, and he pursued Israel; and as they were in great fear, having the Red Sea before them, the mountains upon each hand, and Pharaoh and his host behind them, God said, "I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen." After the children of Israel had passed "into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground," Pharaoh and his host pursued them; but their chariot wheels were taken off, so "that they drave them heavily." In the morning all the host of Pharaoh were overthrown in the midst of the sea. The fifteenth chapter of Exodus contains the song of triumph sung by Moses and the children of Israel, and the theme of that song is lofty as the heavens, no words in that song of deliverance implying that anything happened by chance or was permitted; but the almighty power of God, his infinite wisdom, his unalterable purpose, his inflexible justice and his glory, are sung in rapturous strains. Did not the counsel of God stand and he do all his pleasure concerning the seed of Abraham and the Egyptians? Before dwelling upon the purpose of God concerning his Son while in the flesh, some quotations will be made from the Old Testament to con-

clusively show that our God raised up men for the purpose of showing forth his power, and that in so doing everything was ordered according to his wisdom; for said the infinite One, "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. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever." "I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy." The sword of the Lord is the wicked, for the words of the psalmist are, "Deliver my soul from the wicked, (which is) thy sword." "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation." When Job had been given into Satan's power, and his wealth and his sons had been taken from him, what did Job do and say? Did he say Satan had been permitted thus to afflict me? No; but "Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshiped, and said, Naked [Hebrew *erom*, absolutely without anything except natural life] came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither [to his mother earth]: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "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." An host more of Scripture declarations might be adduced from the Old Testament to show positively that everything animate and inanimate will exactly subserve the purpose of the Creator God; therefore nothing can happen by blind chance, but are all determined, from the awfully sublime to the falling of a sparrow, even to the numbering of the hairs of our head.

Now it shall be shown from Scripture testimony that every sorrow, every grief that the Messiah should endure, from the cradling of him in the manger till he expired on the cross, were predicted by prophets, and exactly in accordance with that absolute predestination all took place. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah tells us of his sufferings and death and the glory that should follow in as positive terms as can be couched in language; also the glorious Messiah speaks as follows: "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: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave

my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord."

The angel said unto Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." When the Savior was born the mother "wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you [not for you, but right in the family] is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Everything connected with his birth, the angel of God coming upon the shepherds, the song of the heavenly host, and what they should sing, were foreordained of God, therefore were absolutely predestinated; and not only so, but every word that the dear Son of God should utter, every literal journey he should make, every step those immaculate feet should make, every miracle he should perform—and the number recorded is thirty-seven—every parable that he should put forth—and the number recorded is thirty-three—all the contumely he should receive from ungodly men, all the commotion among the Jews and Romans, caused by his being God incarnate, were foreordained by the God of the universe. When Herod "sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men." Now, how can any true believer in God say that such a thing was not predestinated, when the following declarations are as follows? "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there

a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." Jeremy had predicted that hundreds of years before, and it took place exactly according to prophecy; therefore it was predestinated. To talk about true prophecy separate from predestination is a very absurd position to assume—is wholly unintelligible; for the very term prophecy contains embodied in it predestination. In the Old Testament Scriptures the word *naba* signifies to flow forth; and in the New Testament Scriptures it is from *prophetes*, public expounder. In ancient days, as well as now, there were false prophets, dreaming prophets and lying prophets; and because such used the name of the Lord they were none the less false or lying prophets. The word applying to false prophets in the New Testament is from *pseudoprophetes*, which clothes it with a fearful meaning; for that prefix *pseudo* gives a startling meaning to the word, signifying spurious, deceitful, false, &c.

As the time drew near for Jesus to be betrayed into the hands of wicked men he began "to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Nothing here uttered by the Redeemer intimating that the things spoken of would come by chance, for the divine "must" is used; and while it is not an Old Testament word, it is recorded sixty-four times in the New Testament signifying "behooveth," and six times signifying "necessity." Right here we finite mortals, when contemplating the fixed purpose of God, come to the threshold of that impenetrable mystery; that boundless, fathomless ocean, where all our thoughts are drowned, and a voice seems to arrest our steps; for from out the clouds and darkness that are round about God's throne the question comes as in tones of thunder, Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? When the dear Redeemer had stated what must come to pass concerning himself, Peter was so completely in the "coils" of the serpent as to begin to rebuke the Lord of life and glory; and that awfully divine rebuke from Christ should be a warning to all of us when we begin to talk about some things being predestinated, some permitted and some happening by chance, when the Scriptures teach no such things. When Jesus was betrayed, "behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword

into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Reader, do the words of the immaculate Son of the living God, saying, "that thus it must be," show absolute predestination or fickle chance? The thirty pieces of silver that Judas received for betraying him were used exactly as prophecy had declared hundreds of years before they should be, for with them they bought "the potter's field to bury strangers in." Why had not the pieces of silver been used for some other purpose? Because they could not be, for that matter was as fixed and sure as the eternal throne of God. When the holy Son of God was arraigned before the chief priests and elders, they spit in his face and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee? What awful moments for the holy, harmless Son of God! But every indignity applied to him was foreordained; not one more, not one less, than what his righteous Father had purposed; and every thorn in that crown they platted and put upon that dear, sacred head was determined in the counsel of God. During the time that the Son of God was before those ungodly characters, Pilate saith "unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power (at all) against me, except it were given thee from above." Did not Pilate think he had that power in his own hands? Certainly he did. But Jesus told him that the power was given him from above; and untold thousands of vain mortals since that day have talked in precisely the same way that Pilate did; but poor, finite, erring mortals, we are all under the control of the same Being that Pilate was. Everything pertaining to the Lamb of God, even to the putting of the vinegar "to his mouth," had been predicted; for ages before his advent to earth he said, "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." When all was fulfilled Jesus "said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." They could not break a bone of him, for it had so been declared hundreds of years before; but "there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed." "The chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." Their request

was granted, and they had the stone-covered and seal-secured sepulchre watched; and their course caused them to have a watch, which was in reality "a guard of honor" round the Savior's tomb, so that no indignity could be given to that dead body. When the moment had come, "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said, Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

Now let us hear that same Peter, who began to rebuke his Lord while he was under the law, talk about the sufferings, betrayal and crucifixion of his Lord, after he was seated "in the throne of his glory," and the apostles were seated "upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Said Peter upon the day of pentecost, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Again, "Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." This inspired apostle says nothing about *this* being permitted and *that* happening by chance, but all was according to the determinate counsel of God. The apostle Jude says of certain characters who "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." If language has any meaning, those characters were ordained to do exactly what they did do. Another inspired apostle says of certain characters, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Would to God, if according to his will, that our dear brethren and sisters would cease carnal theorizing and vain philosophizing, and read the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully, and be more childlike, and not attempt in the plenitude of their wisdom to tell what our God ordained, what he permitted, and what takes place "somehow" or hap-hazard, and let the record given by inspiration of

the eternal God, and recorded by patriarchs, prophets and apostles, be the test in every doctrinal point of the gospel, and then there would be less commotion amongst us; but as long as men put a construction upon what inspired penmen have written, by saying in substance, if not *verbatim*, "I know it reads so, but then it does not mean that," there will be more or less confusion amongst us as a denomination. From the first word in the book of Genesis to the "Amen" in the revelation given to John and by him recorded, the glorious doctrine is taught, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

"Almighty Power, to thee we bow!
How frail are we, how glorious thou!
No more the sons of earth shall dare
With an eternal God compare."

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Jan. 16, 1886.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Jan. 3, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—How full of mourning and sorrow this world is. Day after day the loved ones are removed by death, "and the mourners go about the streets." How many of those whom we loved in the truth have been taken from this world during the year that has just closed. The obituary department of the SIGNS contains the names of many, and there have been many whose names have not appeared there. There is a great difference between the sorrow of those who have a hope in Jesus, even in their greatest affliction, and that of those who have no hope.—1 Thess. iv. 13. "The sorrow of the world worketh death." The worldly man, when he loses a dear one by death, has no well grounded hope in the Lord to give him comfort. His comfort must come by having the vacant place filled, or his mind taken up by some other worldly treasure, which can generally be done. When it cannot be, then there follows a brooding melancholy which wears the life away. But the Lord's people have been made to realize that this world and its interests and joys are really nothing to them. They are dead, and their life is hid with Christ in God, and all their true and abiding interests are beyond time. When earthly things fail them, they know in themselves that in heaven they have a better and an enduring substance.—Heb. x. 34. They know that all the ties of nature are only for this time state; and when they are severed by death, causing grief and sorrow, they have their hope in the Lord the same as before, and are enabled to trust in him that all things, even the darkest and bitterest, are working for their good. When they have evidence that those who have been removed were children of God, they can rejoice for them that they have entered into life. They know that the far sweetest tie which united them here was not of time. It was a spiritual bond, which death could not break. We can feel at times very sweetly and comfortingly that these dear kindred in Christ are not lost to us, although we shall know them no more

in the tender relation which they sustained to us naturally. "They sleep in Jesus." They rest forever in his presence, where there is fullness of joy. We are one with them in the Spirit yet, and shall never be separated from them. They are ever with the Lord; and all of them will God bring with him when he comes to release us from the bondage of corruption and take us home to glory. At times our mourning for them is very deep and heavy, and it may seem as though the sharpness of our grief can never be abated, and as though our soul must ever refuse to be comforted; but even then we sorrow not as those who have no hope. We are not as one looking up into a cold midnight sky, in which no sun has ever risen. Our Sun of righteousness is in the heavens above us, however thick the clouds that may hide his brightness from our eyes, and shall never more go down. We believe in God, and therefore can never sorrow for the dead as those in whom that holy belief has never been wrought. The comfort will come to us in God's own time, in spite of the persistency of our grief. We have already received everlasting consolation and good hope through grace; and that consolation, which is inseparable from our hope, will assert its power even in the darkest midnight of sorrow, and will "turn the shadow of death into the morning."

I have it in my mind to speak of a sad affliction that has come within the past few months to three of our dear brethren in the ministry in the loss of their companions. In each case there were elements of peculiar bitterness. The wife of Elder J. R. Respass, of Butler, Georgia, was called from her earthly to her heavenly home on the night of August tenth. When he awoke in the morning what must have been his amazement of grief to find, as he approached her bed, that the dear form was still, the spirit having taken its departure during the night. Truly in such a state of mind as must have been his all human efforts to give comfort can be but vain. With all our deep and tender sympathy we could only feel that we were intruding when we try to speak words of comfort in such a case. Into the sacred place of such a grief the Lord only can come with power. But he can enter there, and can cause his power and grace to be most blessedly felt. I had no personal acquaintance with this dear sister, only having seen her once at a distance as I passed by their home with brother Respass on the cars; but I felt a spiritual nearness to her from what I had heard of her lovely christian character, and as the wife of one very dear to me in the Lord. I know that he does not mourn for her as those who have no hope, although there is no healing balm in all this world for such a wound as his. He says, in writing of her in the *Gospel Messenger*, "It is not merely a beloved wife I have lost, but a spiritual comforter and counsellor. Her

words of faith have staid me in many an hour of gloom and sickness, both at home and abroad, in the work of the Lord. She ever encouraged me in the work of the Lord, and bade me go forth trusting in him, though her heart would almost break to see me go forth so feeble and despondent. She has left me, but her words are with me even as I write these lines. She lives with me even now."

The wife of Elder E. Rittenhouse departed this life and entered her immortal state October twentieth. A notice has already been published in the SIGNS. There was a peculiar affliction in the circumstances attending the departure of this dear sister. A wound in the foot, which for several days was not considered as very serious, and did not very much interrupt her in her work, resulted in that dread disease, tetanus, causing her to suffer very great pain. This seems very hard and full of bitter anguish to those who are bereaved. It seems to aggravate their sorrow when accident, as we call it, causes death, and when the last days of the dear one are spent in great agony of body. As our dear brother said, "It seems hard that one whose life had been spent in caring for others should suffer so much herself at the last." I have meditated much upon this and other similar cases of extreme suffering on the part of those who have manifested during their lives peculiarly gentle, loving, unselfish spirits. It has been to me a soothing, quieting thought that these dear sufferers are dearer to the Lord than, because of our gross nature, they can be to us, as he is infinite in every attribute; and that with his tender love and compassion, beyond whatever a mother can feel, he has also all power to do whatever he desires. Then there must be some infinitely wise and loving reason why that great suffering should be experienced by them. Through it there is to come to them, in a way we cannot yet comprehend, an unspeakable comfort and glory. He who has loved them with an everlasting love is nearer to them with his ministrations of love than the nearest earthly relative can be; and while we look upon what seems fearful agony, we know not what tender ministrations they receive from him that sweetly and powerfully sustain them under the pain, so that indeed they do not feel the anguish that appears to us, for the exceeding comfort of that infinitely loving breast, upon which they lean their heads and breathe their lives out sweetly there. Sister Rittenhouse was one of those who was most highly esteemed and loved where best known. I have been acquainted with her since October, 1864, and have esteemed her as a very dear sister and valued friend. In the home from which such a wife and mother is taken what a large place is left vacant, and how much darkness and desolation appear to the bereaved family to have fallen upon it. In a letter to me our bereaved brother says, "I continue to receive letters of condolence and sympathy; and I find people were better aware

than I had any idea of what was the worth of that woman, and the measure of our affliction in her being taken from us. The weight of my grief does not lighten, nor is it likely to. I never knew before how vain, cold and profitless the best spoken words could be. They fall lifeless upon the ear, as the wind blowing. They do not reach the depth of the soul's distress, nor restore in the least measure that comfort and joy that have departed to return no more forever. I have not felt to say much about it, and what I do say is to but few. The busy world only stops to give a moment's thought or to make a commonplace remark, and goes as cheerfully as ever on its way. It is folly to detain its moving throng with a tale of bitterness and sorrow, the depth of which its experience has never fathomed. I have not yet come to the word 'reconciled.' The time may come, but it is out of my sight now." It is not in the power of man to come to the word "reconciled," but how sweetly and easily the Lord's power can bring ore there in his own good time. Not that the bereaved one feels the loss less deeply, but there comes a resting in the will of an infinitely wise and loving God, and also an ability is experienced that we had not of ourselves, to cast our burden upon him; and our thoughts are turned more from the desolated home here to the blessed and glorious home above. The day on the evening of which sister Kittenhouse was taken with the fatal spasms, she was singing the hymns, "Awake, my soul, in joyful lays," and, "Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near."

Only a few days ago the wife of our dear brother, William A. Campbell, died in Utica, a notice of which will no doubt soon appear in the SIGNS. They were both very dear to me, as I had been with them each in their early exercises, and was serving the churches into which they were received, though they were then living far from each other, and unacquainted. I cannot but feel very deeply for this dear brother in his great affliction. So young in the ministry, and what a loss he has sustained. Will not this great trial in some degree unfit him for the work? Not in the least. The Lord knows what is best. He has given him a dear companion, who was truly a helpmeet, to be with him for a short time, and then in his infinite wisdom and love he has seen fit to take her to himself, leaving him alone again. But he can and will uphold the afflicted. He can, and I believe will, make this affliction work for his good as a servant of the church for Jesus' sake. He will give him to experience the comfort that can come alone from God, and will still send him forth with the word of truth to his dear afflicted people, that he may comfort them that are in any trouble with the same consolations wherewith he himself is comforted of God.

How many there are, besides these three brethren of whom I have spoken, whose hearts have learned, and are still learning, deep, bitter lessons of sorrow and grief; some because of

dear ones taken from them; some because of languishing sickness and great pain, from which there is no prospect of release until this mortal tabernacle falls; some because of dire calamities of one kind or another, that seem for the time to cloud all their life. At times it seems as though the wails of sorrow and bitter cries of pain fill all the air, and as though there were really nothing but affliction and grief, lamentation and woe, in all this world, so greatly do these sad and direful sounds overbalance the voices of pleasure. O what a relief and comfort there is in the precious gospel, which declares a glorious deliverance from all this darkness and sorrow and pain, and opens to the eyes of our faith an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; and which assures us that in those realms of blessedness, which are ever bright and fair, no sound of sorrow or shade of darkness will ever come. Our dear Savior is the light of that heavenly abode; and there shall those who have been mourners here dwell in unfading light and eternal joy and blessedness.

Your brother in a precious hope,
SILAS H. DURAND.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Dec. 29, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—A day or two since the following letter fell into my hands, and I felt that its subject matter was well worth publishing in the SIGNS, and so I copy it and send it to you. It will speak for itself.

F. A. CHICK.

DECEMBER, 1885.

MR. KELLAR—DEAR SIR:—You have given me the following passage of Scripture for my views, and so to-day I will comply by letter: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."—James i. 18.

You will remember that our Lord called his disciples. This was one of them here speaking. The apostles were the first fruits of his ministry, and it was of his own will that he called them and also quickened them. He said to the impotent man, "Stretch forth thy hand," and with the command he gave the power. Do you presume to say that any of his ministers of to-day can do this—the work of God? Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. He is of one mind, and has not left the redemption of man from sin to man who is prone to evil. The work is done by his own will in begetting the church from the fall. Is not the Lord, the Spirit, the first predisposing cause in bringing the redeemed back to God through the Spirit? And as all who were in Adam died, so all who are in Christ are made alive, but not by the preaching of the word. The word preached gives the knowledge of salvation, of the things of God. It is given by the same Spirit dividing to every man severally as he will, not as the minis-

ter wills. As the body is one, and hath many members, and they, being many, are one body, so also is Christ in his body, the church. Will there be any of his members lost, or any not there? Will his word that goes forth out of his mouth be a failure? Or will the preacher place the members in that body? For by one Spirit have we been baptized into one body, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit, for the body is one; and where this is, there is divine teaching as well as divine influence. Then they receive the engrafted word gladly, and are not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word. God in the new birth forms the new creature after the image of him that created him. The words from heaven to John are still true, that upon whom the Spirit descends and abides, the same is the son of God. "But 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," not by preachers. Thus we are made to look to him, and behold his beauty, and be taught by him, and so are changed into the same image by the continued teaching of the Spirit bringing to our remembrance the word of God as it is written or preached. The word is the sword of the Spirit; but the word will not smite any one of itself, only as wielded by some one. So is the word preached. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God that must give the increase. I believe that Jesus lives and is omnipresent to-day, and his life in us subdues sin.

The love of Christ is only known and felt and enjoyed in the renewed man. Where this is wanting all is wanting.—See Isaiah lxvi. 24. Their moral acts, however correct in themselves, will be an abomination to God unless his love is shed abroad in their hearts. You seem to think that Jesus has left his body to be formed for him by man, its size and the number of his members; and you have no idea that he has said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them." If he giveth light, who shall give darkness? If he hideth himself, who shall behold him? He said, "I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." True, he leads us about and instructs us by his written and spoken word; but he only hath life, and he only giveth life, and he only brings the word home with unction. The apostle said this, and with himself includes the rest; for he said, He "hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And in more ways than one. They had received life before, and had learned of him, but now they were begotten again unto a lively hope. Now all things were brought to their remembrance by the Spirit. The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; and the hour is not only coming, but now is. Thus we are born of the Word and Spirit of God, and are his children; and our mortal bodies also shall be quickened by his Spirit that dwelleth

in us. This is not by a sermon, nor of our own selves. We are impotent, and have to say, "All my help from thee I bring." He has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." And, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." He dwells in the heart, and therefore his love is there. He makes by the Spirit New Testament truths living truths to us by a living experience. He brings us into personal communion with God, which amounts to a newness of life. Thus is the divine bosom opened up to us, by which we know the things of God. Thus have we the fellowship of the Spirit, and are brought to have filial fear and love, and are sealed unto the day of redemption, and so are enabled to rest in the promises. Paul said, "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." The Spirit takes the things (the word) of the Father and the Son and presents them to our view; and thus are we taught the perfect work of Christ in our behalf. We can then look beyond our doubts and fears and sin, and sing to the three one God, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Then is our understanding enlightened, our affections drawn out to God, and his love made known to us. This is to be born of God; and the law (or dominion) of the Spirit of life has made us free from the law (or dominion) of sin and death, and thus the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. You have inquired how you might know one having the Spirit, and I answer thus. God says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." The poor man is the man. Such an one cannot believe as he would, nor pray nor walk nor think aright. He feels that he comes short in everything. He reproaches himself for not living as he should, and of the deadness that follows a living after the flesh. Such a poor man hears the word gladly. In him the Spirit of God dwells, showing himself to himself, so that he can boast no more.

I remain yours,

JOHN THORNE.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, Dec. 15, 1885.

TO THE many dear ones in the Lord who have sent me sweet messages of love, whose words came to me like water springing up in a desert, like the sweet perfume of flowers, or as oil upon troubled waters, to each one of these, to whom my heart swells with unutterable emotions of love, this letter is addressed. Being weak and ill from a recent hemorrhage and aggravated dropsical troubles, it is impossible for me to write to each of my valued correspondents personally; so I concluded to address you through the columns of our dear family paper, although to do so costs me quite an effort, for I greatly fear I may say something I ought not to say, and perchance may mar the fair pages of the dear SIGNS by the droppings of my feeble, imperfect pen.

Sitting here alone in the quietude of my sick room there floats upon my ear soft, sweet notes from the piano

in the next room, and it makes me think of the music sung by the saints above, where Jesus reigns, and where all is peace and joy and love. If earthly music be so sweet that it vibrates through our whole being and animates and excites our natural feelings, what would be the ecstasy of redeeming love, sung by angel tongues and chanted upon harps of gold in a world of endless beauty and delight? "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Blessed indeed are they who die to sin, and live again to walk in newness of life; whose soul is quickened and made alive through the cleansing, redeeming blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Again are they blessed in the Lord when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and they are clothed upon with their house which is from heaven. It grieves us, O so sorely, to see our dear ones put away out of our sight forever, to look upon the dear face for the last time, and see the coffin-lid close upon it forever. These are scenes which almost rend the heart asunder; but if we have the comforting assurance that our loved ones have died in the Lord, should we weep, should we murmur, or wish them back in a world of suffering and of sin? "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." By this expression we learn that in the beautiful world on high, where Jesus reigns, the beauty and glory of that fair place far exceed our natural comprehension or conception. We are told no night is there, no candle is needed, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and God and the Lamb are the light thereof. O how wondrous the glory, how effulgent the light, that it needeth no other light to illumine a place so great that even the vast multitude which no man can number dwells there, and the rays of our natural sun sink into insignificance, and cannot be compared with the glory that emanates from the throne of God and the Lamb. So dazzling is the brightness of this glory that we are told even the angels veil their faces with their wings when bowing before the majesty of the great throne. O the beauty, the wonders of so fair a place! Even to think of it, to see it through a glass darkened by the curtain of sin, its magnificence causes our hearts to swell, and our spirits long to break the fetters that bind us here, and to soar away to the mansions of the blessed. But, like Job, we find that we must wait patiently for this appointed change, when we at last may join the happy throng, and unite our song of praise with those who are gone before. Blessed indeed are the inhabitants of that fair world; and blessed, thrice blessed, are the dead who die in the Lord. So, my dear aunt, (and sister in Christ,) who one year ago left your comfortable home in Ohio to join your only son in the far west, and who but lately with breaking heart saw his noble form laid in the grave to rest, see that you sorrow not as they who

have no hope. Your darling boy is not dead, but only fallen asleep, to awake in the image and likeness of the dear Savior. Seven years ago this same dear boy, then a child of not over twelve, was made to see himself a helpless sinner. His dear father at the time lay a corpse, and the child would moan aloud that his sins, his cruel sins, had separated him forever from his father and from Jesus. A day and a night the child's state of mind was pitiful to witness; but on the evening of the second day the load was suddenly removed, and the dear child was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable. It was wonderful with what wisdom and clearness he spoke of the Savior's pardoning mercy and love, and how plainly the plan of salvation by grace alone was revealed to him. Has not his bereaved mother just cause to believe that he is now enjoying the fruition of the hope given him at that time, and that he did in very deed die in the Lord? Our dear sister has been called on to pass through deep waters of affliction, and she now feels that all the waves and billows have gone over her. She first stood by the death-bed of the husband of her early love and youth; then she buried two lovely children; next came the death of her last husband, the late brother Albert Parker; and now her dear Frank, who was just entering upon a noble, promising manhood, her only earthly support and reliance, has been called to join the happy throng above. But when the last earthly prop is gone, and the dearest tie is broken, we are brought to cling more closely to Christ, and to rest more steadfastly in his blessed promises. I have learned by bitter experience that it is when the heart tendrils are bruised and broken that Jesus comes near, and we are brought into a closer union and communion with him, and come into a closer fellowship with his sufferings, and it is then that with his stripes we are healed. Let the bereaved, the sorrowing and suffering ones be comforted. Jesus is nigh unto those of a broken heart; a broken and a contrite spirit he will not despise. They that sow in tears shall reap with joy; and though sorrow endure for a season, yet joy cometh in the morning. Darkest hours are just before the dawn of morning; and when the morning of effulgent day bursts upon us, and the Sun of righteousness arises with its healing wing, suffering and sorrow will be forgotten, and weeping give place to joy and singing. When Jesus walks on the tempestuous waves, and cries, "Peace, be still," how grateful is the calm. We can almost touch the hem of his garment, so near does he come to us, and great floods of love flow into the heart, and we marvel that we ever doubted or feared, when he has told us that he would ever care for us; and when the last night for us is past, and we enter upon that final and glorious immortal dawn, to be united to our dear ones, never again to part, never more to sin or grieve or know distress, how blessed we will find it to be to "die in the

Lord," and what glory and immortal light shall fill the soul, and with what gladness shall we sing the song and hear the soft, sweet music of redeeming love. We will then be in possession of that perfect love which casteth out fear, and realize in all its power and sweetness that "God is love."

Sister Dawson, your letter brought to mind the familiar lines,

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

It does seem wonderful that you, from your far off home in New Mexico, should send words of strength and comfort to a poor, little weakling of the flock here in Ohio. Truly "God is love;" and though mountains and seas, vast distance and mighty waters lie between, it cannot quench that love, nor separate those who are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. Through Christ our glorious Leader we are made one with each other, and one with Christ Jesus our Head.

Dear Elder Chick, I cannot tell what comfort your letter gave me, or what a very grievous mountain your words removed from me. How it humbled me to learn that I, poor and sinful and insignificant, had been an instrument to comfort you. But thus it is in this wonderful way of the Lord, line upon line, precept upon precept; and none of us should despise the day of small things.

Should this letter reach the notice of our dear aged brother, Samuel Mattox, of Tennessee, whose generosity so contributed to the comforts of my sick chamber last summer, may he know that he is daily in my thoughts; and may he who loveth the cheerful giver abundantly reward and bless him. My thanks are also due sister Shepherd and sister Sarah A. Blake, of Iowa, for tokens of remembrance and love. How deeply has our young sister, Sarah Blake, been led into the mysteries of the blessed gospel; and since such able writers for the SIGNS as was our dear aged sister, Mahala Spurgin, has left our ranks to join the assembly above, we are glad that there are others who will still wield the pen of the ready writer. I think I speak the language of all our dear spiritual family when I say that I was glad to see dear sister Bessie Durand's name in our paper once more. Elder Durand's letter in the last SIGNS was a comfort to me. To each and all of the dear ones who have written to me, this imperfect letter is addressed, with the hope that they will continue to send me their comforting messages. With deep christian love to all the dear family of God, and the prayer that he may keep us all as the apple of his eye, and that we may be brought off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved us, I subscribe myself the very least of all.

Dear brethren Beebe, do just as you think best with this letter; but if at all fit to appear in your paper, it would be a relief. May the dear Lord strengthen and uphold you, is truly the prayer of one of your sincere friends, and I hope your sister in Christ.

MARY PARKER.

OCCOQUAN, Prince Wm. Co., Va., Jan. 2, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—We have reached another point in the pathway of time, a way-mark in our mortal pilgrimage, that tells of swiftly passing years, and that we have no abiding home upon earthly shores. We are reminded of the unfailing mercy of our God, and of our perverse returns. In the dark ground of our sins and corrupt nature we see the holy light of his faithful care in the eternal covenant of gospel love. We pause to mourn because of our sins and base ingratitude to our God; but with rapturous joy we contemplate his unchangeable love, and the principles upon which our salvation rests. The old year has been laid away by the omnipotent hand of him in whose absolute power are held all years and events. Its purposes have been accomplished. There have been stormy trials and peaceful rest, sunshine and shadow, scattered along its appointed path. Many of the dear ones for whom the Redeemer died have been called from its toils to their long, eternal home. Others again have opened their eyes in wondrous light, to behold the King in his beauty and to find rest in gospel grace. There have been temptations and bitter trials, but out of them all the Lord has delivered us. We pause now for a moment and look over all the years of time. Each one has filled its course. The all-seeing eye of Israel's God has faithfully watched over the development of his purpose in each swiftly passing moment of all the centuries of time. Not a moment without its accomplished purpose, and each year has its appointed bounds; the decrees regarding it are to be fulfilled. Here an empire is to rise, there one is to fall; here are consolations, there is deep mourning and woe, and so on through the vast, unbounded dominion of our God, he sits enthroned in absolute power.

"Here he exalts neglected worms
To sceptres and a crown;
And there the following page he turns,
And treads the monarch down."

Time is but a creature, brought into existence by his creative power, to fulfill its destiny in the lifting of Jesus on high. To this end all things are made to contribute, each fulfilling its appointed sphere, whether devils, or men, or angels, or anything else in the universal dominion of the God whom we serve. Who dares limit his creative or predestinating power, or measure his infinite wisdom by the puny reasoning of the carnal mind? Who among us dare hesitate to proclaim his boundless power?

"Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all."

"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? 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."—Romans xi. 33-36. When there breaks upon our enrap-

tured sight such an exalted view of the mighty God, we are lost in wonder, admiration and praise. It must have been with some such feeling that the shepherds upon the plains of Judea beheld the dawn of the wonderful gospel morning. "The glory of the Lord shone round about them." "A multitude of the heavenly host praising God," were with them. "Glory to God in the highest," was the key-note and full volume of the heavenly song, telling of peace on earth, of good tidings of great joy, of the Savior of lost and helpless sinners. It was a "morning without clouds," full of the radiant light of gospel glory. The long, weary, legal night was at an end, and from that eventful dawn among the redeemed of all generations and ages, the good tidings have been told, "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." The golden bells of eternal truth, in the clearness of the gospel heavens, touched by the Redeemer's hand, have sounded forth through all years the glad notes of salvation, and the redeemed have heard with great joy. "Let the inhabitants of the Rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains."

The present year, like the years that have preceded it, has its appointed place. Many of your readers will not live to see its close, and others who are now careless and indifferent regarding truth will be found anxiously waiting around the throne, "watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."—Prov. viii. 34, 35. We rejoice to know that all these changes are in the hands of the sovereign God, together with all else relating to the opening year. The SIGNS continues a welcome messenger of truth among us, a messenger of gospel peace, a family paper, where the household of faith can learn one of another, the signs of the times in many ways read by the circumcised eye, and understood by the circumcised heart. We hope that the same mighty hand that has hitherto helped you will continue to sustain you, that you may raise a new Ebenezer of praise unto God. Truly without him we can do nothing. May it be "A Happy New Year" to the household of faith, and may those of our number who are blessed with the things of this present world remember "the poor of the flock," not only in the new year's dawn, but throughout the year, as "good stewards of the manifold grace of God." May we remember each other in holy bonds of gospel love, and the ministry be enabled by grace to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine," remembering that it is written, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." This time has come, and to-day many professed Primitive Bap-

tists cannot endure the truth, either in the doctrine or order of the cross. Generally where there is an unsoundness in the one, there is in the other. But the solemn language of Paul to his son Timothy, applicable as well to the ministry of to-day, is, "Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." Let us cling devotedly to the blessed cross, regardless of the frowns or smiles of open enemies or professed friends. We "have an unction from the holy One," and must press on, inspired by his gracious and life-giving presence, until done with all mortality, all ages and generations, and the awful and sublime splendor of eternal glory bursts upon our vision. Then shall we lay our armor by, and be free from the bondage of sin and death forever, entering the portals of endless rest, to shine in the image of the blessed Jesus, to dwell in his spotless purity, and to ascribe in strains of immortal praise, glory unto God and the Lamb.

Yours in gospel fellowship,
WM. M. SMOOT.

NOVEMBER 2, 1885.

MY DEAR SISTER:—How much I do sympathize with you in your deep affliction of mind and body. It certainly does seem very hard that you should be called to pass through such a trial; but O remember, dear sister, that the Lord has promised to lay no more upon his poor and afflicted children than they shall be able to bear; for with the trial he will also provide the way of escape, that they may be able to endure it. But I know how hard it is, when in the depths of sorrow and affliction, to find comfort in aught that poor human lips can say. When we sink in the deep waters, and the floods of trouble come from every side, where can we turn but to him who is able to save, whose word can rebuke the tempest, and who alone can still the waves of the sea of troubles which surround us, and make the storm a calm. It is hard, sister, I know, to feel forsaken by our friends; but how near and close it brings our poor, trembling souls to that dear Friend who is always the same. Though it may seem that he is laying upon us a burden almost too great to bear, yet it is a sweet truth to know that even though he seem to slay us, yet it is also he that "maketh the wounded spirit whole." I remember how sweet those words were to me once, when I felt to sink down even unto death with a trial laid upon me. In some way or other the Lord had seemed to put something between me and my trust in everything and everybody on earth. The cry arose from my tired, weary heart, Where can I go? where can I turn, and find somewhere to rest my weary soul? It just seemed as if everything was taken from me, and nowhere on earth could I find rest. But even as the bitter cry arose from my forsaken heart, the words came to me with a sweet, sad comfort, "Thy Savior, child, when here, had not where to

lay his head." I can never forget, dear sister, the sweet, solemn hour which followed. How my soul was melted within me, to think that poor, unworthy as I was, yet was I permitted to share to some small extent with "the fellowship of his sufferings." Never, even in the sweetness of that first love felt within, did I feel the nearness to my Savior as did I then. I felt to be drawn close, close to him, who had suffered the loss of all things for me. My own poor, small sufferings were lost sight of in contemplating the anguish of that precious Savior as he knelt in Gethsemane's garden, praying that, if it were possible, this cup might pass from him; yet saying at the same time those precious words, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." So I feel it is with us, when the cup of sorrow, pain and affliction is put, as it were, to our unwilling lips; that though we shrink back and try all we may to escape, yet the bitterness passes away as we drink it, and not before. When submission is given to his will, and we are enabled to take up the cross laid upon us, the bitterness of the trial passes away as we pass through it. So at least it was to me; when I could look at the sufferings of my Savior, my murmurings were all silenced, and from the depths of my stricken heart I could cry out, Dear Lord, thou knowest best. Thy will, not mine, be done. The trial was upon me still, but its bitterness had passed away, and strength was given to endure it. These words came to me so sweetly,

"Whom Jesus wounds, he wounds to heal,
O! 'tis a mercy thus to feel;
There's none can mourn while dead in sin;
Thine are the marks of life within."

O may the Lord be very near to you in your affliction. May you find him a present help in this your time of trouble. This is indeed my prayer for you; and rest assured that you have the sincere sympathy of us all. Sometimes the future looks very dark before us; but the Lord, in whom we trust, will provide for us all, even as he has promised. Now, sister, I hope you will write soon again, and let us know of your welfare. Each and all of us send much love and good wishes for your restoration to health again. So for the present farewell.

Affectionately your sister,

H.

SILVER CLIFF, Colorado, Dec. 25, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—If you will allow me a little space in the SIGNS, I will pen a few thoughts for its readers, and especially they of the household of faith. I do not know that there is or has been any other doctrine advocated in the SIGNS than that as advocated by its first editor, our able standard-bearer of the truth, Elder Gilbert Beebe, as I have not seen a copy of the SIGNS for several years past. But be that as it may, this is one thing I do know, that truth is as unchangeable as God himself. Then if what I may be enabled to write be truth, I hope it will

be received for the truth's sake. My mind has been led to meditate of late upon the contentions that now exist among the saints—all for what? the truth's sake? I fear not; but for mastery's sake. Some of our ablest and most influential brethren of the ministry, to whom we have so oft pointed as our able standard-bearers of the truth, have engaged in conflict one with another; so much so that they are found striving about words to no profit, but subverting to the hearers. And not only so, but often they are found engaged in vain babbling about their brethren, which the apostle Paul assures us "will increase unto more ungodliness." Already we hear brethren say, I am for one, or I am for another. I do not wish to be understood to enter any serious objection to any of the saints entering upon a discussion of their views, if they do so in the spirit of meekness and fear; for I have been much edified, comforted and instructed in reading the exchanging of views of many of the saints, when it was done in a proper spirit. But when we let our human nature get the mastery over us, so that we are found to speak evil of our brother, and ere we are aware be found striving, we should heed the admonition of Paul to Timothy, when he said, "The servant of the Lord must not strive;" more especially when we find our contentions and strivings are creating contentions among the saints. And to the brethren who take sides, as Paul found the Corinthians, saying, "I am for Paul, and I am for Apollos," I would warn you. Take heed lest ye be influenced by the carnal mind, and you be found building with material that will be consumed. Bear in mind that it is declared that every man's work shall be made manifest, shall be revealed, tried by fire, of what sort it is. And if our work abide, we have the assurance of reward. Truly these are trying times for the people of God while sojourning in the flesh. For while one is proclaiming in all sincerity that God is using them as a means, or their preaching as a means of awakening some poor fellow-mortal, who possessed no power in and of himself to extricate himself from the terrible condition which he is in by reason of sin and transgression, and are thereby enabled through their preaching to rejoice with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory; another is proclaiming that "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 that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And still another is proclaiming that poor, mortal man, who hath eyes and sees not, ears and hears not, a heart and understands not, whose thoughts are an abomination to the Lord (Prov. xv. 26), must have faith, and come to God, and please God, that he may find God, then God will regenerate him;

while another proclaims that "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him;" and, "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Then in view of the many lo heres and lo theres, I feel to admonish the saints to take the word of God as the man of their counsel; and whatsoever is proclaimed that hath not a "Thus saith the Lord" for it, do not receive it. Nothing but the truth will do us any good. May God give us light and understanding, that we may rightly divide the word of truth, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

J. H. YEOMAN.

HINESTON, La., Jan. 5, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I received a letter not long since from sister Sarah A. Blake, in reply to one that I had written her; and as I have her consent, I will forward it to you for publication, if in your judgment it will be profitable to the readers of the SIGNS. She is a very precious sister with me, and I esteem her as one of the excellent of the earth, from her excellent letters. She is unknown to me in the flesh, but well known in the Lord, I believe, in spirit and in truth. May the dear Lord be her safeguard, and preserve her long in this life to minister comfort to the people of his choice. By publishing this letter, which has afforded me great courage and comfort, you will oblige a friend and brother, who is a well wisher to you and yours, if I am not deceived in myself.

DAVID RICHEY.

WATERLOO, Iowa, Dec. 6, 1886.

ELDER DAVID RICHEY—VERY DEAR BROTHER:—The wheel of time is swiftly rolling on, and where is it drifting us? I sometimes contemplate it, and wonder to which place I am tending; to the place of eternal woe, where hope cannot enter, or to the blessed home of eternal rest. O may God in his infinite love and mercy graciously grant the latter.

"I'm in a world of hopes and fears,
A wilderness of toils and tears:
Where foes alarm, and dangers threat,
And pleasures kill, and glories cheat."

Yes, make the most of it, and it is no more than "a waste, howling wilderness." And we can truly say, with the worthies gone before us, that we are pilgrims and strangers on the earth. "For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country."—Heb. xi. 14. I will take that verse to start on, but I do not know where I will finish. "They that say such things." What things? "Confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Who but God's chosen people "say such things?" The worldling cares not for anything but this present country. All the pleasure (falsely so-called) they can get, all the cheating glories, all the illusive charms, entice and please them enough; so they do not "say such things." Then there is a class who make a profession of godliness; let us dissect them. They have the form of godliness, but deny

the power of it, inasmuch as they go outside of it for their comfort and joy. They deny the power, for they can be a child of God to-day, and a child of the devil to-morrow, they say. They hold religion (at least a form of it) in one hand, and the world in the other. But persecution and trial cause them to loosen their hold on this religion, and there is therefore conclusive evidence that they do not "say such things." But the poor children of God, who feel that this world is not their home, but, like "Christian" in the "Pilgrim's Progress," have left the city of Destruction, and with an intolerable load of sin, turned their backs on their own house. They confess that they are pilgrims and strangers here below; and they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country; and that country lies far beyond, and the road that leads thereto is a rough, thorny one, leading the weary travelers often through trials and sorrows. They find that they are "chosen in the furnace of affliction," and they are tried as silver; yea, often through the most intense suffering and sorrow do they enter the kingdom. They come up out of great tribulation, and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come;" yes, even "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The apostle John said, "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem," &c. O may we be led more and more to see ourselves as strangers and pilgrims on earth. Dear brother, pray for me, that the world and the things of the world may have no attraction for me, but that the meek and lowly Lamb of God may be my delight. I hope I have seen him as the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. I wish to adorn the profession I have made, with an upright life and a godly conversation; but I find there is much in life to draw me away from him whom my soul loveth.

"In this vain world I fain would see
The road to endless day;
I wish to run the christian race,
And never go astray."

I was really glad to hear from you again, as I had thought you considered me unworthy of further notice. I did not know of your absence from home.

Your fellow-traveler from earth to the city of eternal rest.

SARAH A. BLAKE.

OZARK, Dale Co., Ala., Dec. 7, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been thinking for some time of writing a few words to the SIGNS again; but I am so poor and unworthy, I fear that what I write will not be comforting to the "election of grace." That is my chief or main object in endeavoring to write or speak, to comfort Jerusalem; for I know that if the children of God are not benefited by what I say, my speech is no more than sounding brass or a tink-

ling cymbal. The prophet says, or God speaking by the mouth of the prophet says, "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. This declaration is evidently to a living people. Not only this, but I understand that all Scripture is given for the comfort and instruction of the children of God. I sometimes hear brethren say that they are commanded to rightly divide the word of truth, and to give to the saint a portion, and to the dead sinner a portion. I have no impression to preach to any but living sinners. I hope I have a desire to divide the word of truth and distribute it to the children of God, making the right application of the same, by giving the children all their bread, and not giving it to dogs. The feast of fat things which is in the mountain (the church) is all for the elect, and they can only feast upon it when enlightened by the Spirit of God. You never make a supper for the dead, but for the living. It is the poor, hungry, thirsting soul that can enjoy the food that is upon the gospel table. I hear some say, "We are just as much commanded to preach to dead sinners as to the living." But Jesus says, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father," &c. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Notice, they were to preach, or teach the people. Well, are the dead naturally susceptible of being taught? Now suppose I were to go to the cemetery of Ozark and build me an academy for the purpose of teaching those who are dead and have been slumbering with their mother dust for years. Why, everybody would call me insane, for they would all know that it would be an impossibility to impart life to those dead subjects and teach them a knowledge of literature. All will admit that I could make a world as easy as I could impart life to them or teach them a literary knowledge either. Then upon the same hypothesis of reasoning we take the position that no man nor set of men have it in their power to impart life to the dead in trespasses and sins, or to teach them the knowledge of God. Man in his fallen state is just as powerless and dead as the one who is corporeally dead. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." In our schools the teachers never profess to give life to dead children and make them pupils, but they always propose to teach the living. Hence when the Savior commanded the apostles to go and preach, or teach, it must have been to a living people, who were susceptible of being taught. The same power that prepares the hearer, prepares the preacher to preach. The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness un-

to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Then what folly to talk about preaching to that man! But Jerusalem needs comforting, as she feels so cast down and forsaken in her feelings. She cries out in bitterness of soul, "O my leanness! my leanness! Surely the Lord's mercy is clean gone. O that I knew where I might find him. I once thought that children of God had no trouble; but alas! how sadly mistaken I was. For when I would do good, evil is present with me. O wretched man that I am! I cannot have the walk a christian ought to have. I know, in my mind, the brethren are losing confidence in me." Yonder is a poor, little, hobbling saint that wants to join the church, but feels too little, and thinks if he could get along like the rest of the brethren he could come and tell of the dealings of the Lord with him. He says,

"'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?"

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

The foregoing are the characters who need comfort, and who possess the evidences that they are the children of God. Hence all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

I am quite feeble from being thrown from a buggy, bruising my eyes and head severely. With much love to the precious children of God,

Yours in gospel bonds,

LEE HANCKS.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Dec. 29, 1885.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have the consent of the writer to have the inclosed letter published, if you think best. His wife and another lady were baptized in August, and he was baptized in September following. In every christian experience the language of Jeremiah is clearly taught, "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Your unworthy brother,

MARVIN VAIL.

JUSTUS, Pa., Dec. 3, 1885.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—My mind has been deeply impressed within the last few days to write to you concerning the exercises of my mind; and as you requested, I will give you a brief account of my christian experience. I some times think I have none. But when my mind is carried back, and I view the way in which I have been led, I am caused to hope in God's mercy. I was born in Schultsville, Luzerne Co., Pa., in the year 1853. My parents were Methodists, and of course I was taught to believe their doctrine. I remember when I was a boy, twelve or fourteen years old, while at work or play, these words would come into my mind, "Pray to God," and with such power that I would speak them aloud. Then I would wonder why I should have such thoughts. I

attended their meetings quite often, but could not feel interested in them. They told me that I could get religion at any time. At the age of sixteen years I made a profession of religion, and went to work, having a desire, as I thought, to seek and serve the Lord. Still I was not satisfied with Methodist religion. I was led to believe there was a religion of God, but how to obtain that religion I knew not. Thus my mind was exercised. Sometimes I would go upon the mountains, and seat myself upon some large rock, and think of the wonderful goodness of God, and what a great God to create all things. In the year 1863 I came here to live, and went and heard Elder Pitcher preach. He preached the doctrine of election and predestination. I thought that was the most abominable doctrine I had ever heard. Previous to this I had not read the Bible very much, my mind not being exercised in that way. I finally went to work for brother Russell (now my father-in-law), and occasionally we would argue upon the Scriptures; and in order to argue with him I was obliged to read the Bible; and when I came to read it for myself, I found that it read differently from what I expected. I saw clearly that the doctrine of election was the doctrine of the Bible; and being exercised in my mind, I had a strong desire in my heart to know the truth. Many times when alone, while meditating upon the goodness and mercy of God in sparing my wicked life, I would be made to cry like a child, and almost the constant desire of my heart was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." Often I would be in great darkness, still my desire was the same. At times, when alone, I would try to have a good time in thinking of some hymn or passage of Scripture, thinking that it might relieve my mind; but no comfort could I get in that way; proving to me that it was the gift of God. Again, when I was making no effort, in fact was not thinking of those things, there would come some sweet promise of God to me, such as, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." One day last June, while thinking of the goodness and mercy of God, I wondered in my mind if I was one of God's children. I thought, Can it be that the Lord will reach down his everlasting arm to save one so vile, poor and sinful as I know myself to be? These thoughts made me weep; my eyes were blinded with tears, my heart melted within me, and I was made to cry out, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name." And as I was drawn along, I found myself loving the brethren, and the doctrine I once detested. I feel to thank the Lord for what he has done for me, in opening my blind eyes and unstoping my deaf ears, that I may see and hear and know the truth. I feel to quote the language of 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." But I feel unworthy to speak of these things. My sinful nature loves to have its own way, and I feel rebellious at times, and murmur at my lot. But while I am down in the valley I feel to put my trust in the Lord, and feel to love my brethren and sisters in Christ. This gives me comfort and encouragement; for John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." My dear brother, I feel to adopt the language of Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

I remain your unworthy brother,
ELLIS JOHNSON.

CHAMBLISSBURG, Va., Jan. 4, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Having to send you a small amount for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I thought, by your permission, I would write a few lines for the consideration of the brethren and sisters who read the SIGNS, and who are scattered to and fro over the land. The year 1885 is numbered with the things of the past, and has brought us that much nearer the end of our earthly pilgrimage. How has it been spent? Have we shown our faith by our works, by being ready at all times to every good work? Have we kept ourselves unspotted from the world, by turning our backs upon the false doctrines and teachings of men which are so prevalent in our land? 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. The world loves its own, and cannot rise above its fountain head; that is, the ability of natural man. And that is foolishness with God; that is, the wisdom of man. Since the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe; to save them from ways that are false, that they may follow righteousness and seek for that which is good and acceptable with God. If we lack wisdom, let us ask of God, who gives to his children liberally, and upbraideth not. Ask in faith, nothing wavering, in the manner in which Jesus taught his disciples to pray, and we will receive. James says, "We receive not, because we ask amiss." Dear brethren and sisters, God's building is composed of living material, and will last just as long as the Builder lives, which is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The sound of an iron tool never has nor ever will be heard upon the walls; but it is reared by the wisdom and power of God, according to his foreknowledge and determinate counsel before the world began. For the apostle has said, "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." Brethren and sisters, how is it now with you? Can you call to mind the time and place when that light burst forth, and you felt like you were in a new world, and could only behold the glory of God and praise his great and holy name? Perhaps you then thought you could explain it to the whole world, so that they could understand it; but alas! how you were mistaken. And also, perhaps, you thought your troubles were all gone; but alas! I find in me, that is, in my flesh, no good thing. And right here the warfare begins. We groan under the burden of sin as long as we remain here in the flesh, waiting for the time to be delivered, when death shall be swallowed up in victory by and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Dear brethren and sisters, let me say to you in conclusion, Let us remember that if we are God's children, we owe all to him, even the breath we draw.

As ever, yours to serve in gospel bonds, I trust.

P. M. WRIGHT.

HALCOTT CENTRE, N. Y., October, 1885.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I will now attempt to write, according to the request of sister Ann Mariah Sanford, whose obituary notice is in the SIGNS of March 15th, 1885. She requested me to come into her room with pen and paper, and write some of the Lord's dealings with her, and send and have you publish the same in the SIGNS. This was but a few weeks before her departure. She began by saying:

I have thought for many years, since I made a public profession, that I would give a relation of my christian experience, but I have put it off from time to time; and now my strength is so far gone, and my time of departure so near at hand, that all I can do is to give you a brief history of what I trust the Lord has done for me, or some of the reason of the hope I have, which is worth more than worlds like this. I was born in the year 1838. My parents were Old School Baptists, and very strict with their children, and taught them their duty; but for all they taught me I had no love for the God they worshipped. Time passed on till I was fifteen years of age, when my mind became exercised on the subject of religion, and of my awful condition as a poor, helpless sinner. I resolved to do better, read the Bible more, and attend more closely to the rounds of duty practiced by the young people of the neighborhood. My parents lived in a Presbyterian community; but all my good resolutions failed to bring me any permanent relief. Like the Pharisee, I sometimes thought myself much better than others of my associates; then again I felt the most sinful of all, and sorely oppressed on account of my sins. At about the

age of seventeen I came to live for a time with an aunt, who was an Old School Baptist, and living near the place where the Middletown Old School Baptists hold church meeting. I had a great desire to attend, and did so, and when they talked of their sins, and how helpless they saw themselves to be, it just suited my case; but when they spoke of their hope, that I had not. I was satisfied they were good people and told the truth, but felt that I must perish for want of that hope in the Redeemer. Having never attended church meeting, only strengthened my desire to attend as often as I could. My aunt would tell me that if I got my work done on Saturday before noon I might go. The task was light, as my anxiety was so great to go to meeting. So time passed on, and a portion of the time I had the privilege of attending meeting. Sometimes I was sorely oppressed; then at other times in merry meetings with my associates, for which a remorse of conscience was sure to follow. I was married in the fall after I was nineteen, and my burden seemed to increase. My husband was a Baptist in belief, but not a member. I did not dare to tell him how I felt, nor did I hint to him in any way what my trouble was, nor would I suffer him to see me reading the Bible. I embraced every opportunity to listen to the conversation of those who visited father Sanford, where I was then living. How much I desired the comfort they seemed to have; but alas! I thought there was no hope for me, and that I must forever be cast away. In the summer of 1862 I thought I would attend a Methodist camp meeting, which I did, in company with my husband. While there I concluded I had no hope. I could not see as they did, nor could I believe in their mode of worship. It looked worse to me than ever before. The next week, in company with my husband, I attended a Yearly Meeting in Halcott, near where Elder Morrison lived. I cannot describe what a difference there was to me; yet I still felt I had no hope. This was in July. The following September, while in the field gathering some herbs, the feeling came upon me that I must forever perish. My cry was then, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." These words came into my mind, as though spoken to me, "Daughter, be of good cheer; thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." I left the field and came to the house, wondering if the words were in the Bible. I was feeling very light, for my burden was gone. I took up the Bible and opened to the words, which looked so very different from what they ever had before. I began to read the Scriptures, and I felt that the promises there recorded for God's children belonged to me. I was full of new life, and could not help praising the Lord for what he had done for me. I thought I must go and tell it to aunt, with whom I had lived. I made haste to see her, and told her some of my feelings, and what a change had come over my mind. After doing

so, for the first time, I began to be troubled. I thought I had deceived her, and that I was mistaken; yet the Bible was my study all the time I could spare from work. The next person I told was old sister Alaben. I requested her not to make public what I had told her; but she thought the news too good to keep. She told me I had better go and tell the household. In the following December I and my companion went to church meeting. On entering the house how good the members looked. They looked to me like angels; and when they told the exercises of their minds how it comforted me. I thought if I was only fit, how I would like a place with them. On our way home I opened the hymn book and showed my husband the 546th hymn of Beebe's Collection, and remarked that it quite suited my mind—the first I had intimated to him that I had been troubled, or that any change had been wrought in my mind. That night I told him my experience, or how I had been exercised. Now it brings to my mind my hearing Elder I. Hewitt preach, who took for his text, "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my Master's brethren." We both went and told our little stories to the church in March, some twenty-three years ago. We were received, and were baptized by Elder I. Hewitt, in the fellowship of the Middletown Old School Baptist Church, Delaware County, N. Y.

I hope the friends will excuse me for not sending this on before.

JAMES MILLER.

CHERRYVALE, Kansas, Jan. 3, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—HIGHLY ESTEEMED BRETHREN FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—Seeming neglect on my part is the only reason why I have not forwarded my remittance for the SIGNS for another year. Inclosed you will find the same; and I trust and feel sure you will, with your forbearing disposition, pardon my delay. If only one or a few should fail to pay up promptly, the embarrassment on your part would probably be of no consequence; but when several from each part, all over the land, fall behind, I know it really is a hard struggle for you to keep up the expenses of the SIGNS, to say nothing about your feelings when compelled to notify your subscribers of their delinquency. I noticed the inducements you offered in the SIGNS to agents. Now, it is no trouble or expense to any of us to obtain subscribers; and for my part, if I can get any one to say, "I will take the paper," by my asking, I do not want anything for it, for I think it is the duty of us all to do everything we can to keep the SIGNS in circulation, so long as it continues to be what it ever has been and is to-day. I often think, How can it come so regularly, and each number be filled with such precious, truthful reading? Yet I know it is all done by the working of the Holy Spirit. I for one cannot do without our dear paper, so long as it contains the truth and I have the money to pay for it. My desire is

that the brethren and sisters who write so beautifully for the SIGNS may ever be blessed with an understanding of the Scriptures, that they may write on, and others be impressed to write of the dealings of the Lord with them. What a blessed privilege it is to read our own feelings, written by so many different ones scattered over this broad earth, which is good evidence that we are taught by a higher power than man, which is God. The greater part of the time I feel so worthless that I can scarcely claim the Lord as my Savior; and yet when I read of the dealings of the Lord with others, and of their ups and downs, I am made to sympathize with them, and to hope a little, while the silent tear comes, and I sit as one dumb; for if I should speak, how could this stammering tongue speak words in demonstration of the matchless love and mercy of the Lord to such poor, weak and vile worms of the dust?

I trust that our dear family paper may prosper, and that you, dear editors, may be spared long to publish the same, and that you may be cheered and comforted by the way, as none but our great and glorious Redeemer can cheer. Wishing you and all the dear children of God a happy and prosperous new year, both spiritually and temporally, and desiring your prayers, I am your sister, I hope, though very weak,

SADIE R. THOMPSON.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y., January, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—We are glad to hear that brethren and friends are engaged for the prosperity of the SIGNS. We are glad, for through that medium we hear of the Zion of our God and of her prosperity. In some parts of Zion the Lord is gathering in his redeemed people. We have just had our Yearly Meeting, and we were made to rejoice that the Lord remembers the low estate of Zion. We had good weather and a large gathering, especially on Sunday, and we trust the Lord enabled his ministers to come in the fullness of the gospel of Christ. There have been some mercy drops on some of the churches of our association since its last session, and several of the churches have been made to rejoice in the God of their salvation. We would pray for Zion while life remains. Your unworthy brother,

I. HEWITT.

RESPONSE TO OUR APPEAL.

It is truly encouraging to us to see how quickly and efficiently our brethren and friends have responded to our appeal to them to assist us by paying up their arrearages and procuring new subscribers, &c. One friend of the paper, Mr. John W. Squire, of Roxbury, N. Y., has sent us twenty-five, and a number of others have sent quite a list, for which we wish to thus publicly express our thanks.—ED.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1886.

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

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

WILL brother Beebe please give his views on Acts ii. 26, 27, and oblige an old man? Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. B. LEWIS.

REPLY.

"FOR David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."—Acts ii. 25-28.

The expression submitted by our inquiring brother being a portion of the language quoted by Peter from the sixteenth Psalm, we copy the whole expression, as briefly showing both the truth set forth by the inspired apostle, and the Wonderful One whose Spirit moved David to record the prophetic declaration. It must be remembered that it was only concerning Jesus that David could speak these things. In his own individual person it was true of David as of Elias, that he "was a man subject to like passions as we are," having the same carnal mind and evil heart to complain of, and compelled with Paul to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This was the point to which Peter directed attention in his preaching, as recorded in the verses immediately following the text. While David was both dead and buried, and the declaration was not true concerning him as a man, it was fulfilled in Christ Jesus, who is exclusively the Holy One of God. He it was who spoke by his Spirit in David, and the witness borne by all the inspired Scriptures is the unbroken testimony of him, which is the spirit of prophecy.—Rev. xix. 10.

The fact stated in the first verse quoted by Peter applies to none but Jesus. Not even those glorious creatures which dwell in undefiled innocence in the light of the eternal throne could claim the sweet assurance here expressed. While they are honored to do the will of God in being "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," Christ Jesus as the triumphant Redeemer is infinitely more highly exalted, "being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."—Heb. i. 4-6. To the Lord Jesus in his humiliation this must apply, when he took on him

the seed of Abraham, when as the Word he was made flesh, and when he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 7, 8.

It is not presumed that finite minds shall ever be able to comprehend the great mystery of godliness. God forbid that we should attempt to reason upon the awful truth; much less can it be supposed that any intelligence ever has or can explain that which the eternal God has hidden in the effulgent glory of his own unapproachable dwelling in light. It is given to those who learn of Jesus "to know the mystery of the kingdom of God." To carnal reason and to those whose trust is in their natural understanding, not only is this mystery incomprehensible, but it is not even possible that they should so much as know that godliness is a mystery. The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Are we blind also?" They said, "We see." It was not given unto them to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The same distinction is manifest at the present time. While to the natural man and to the religious worshiper there is no more mystery in the doctrine of Christ than in the sciences which are attained by study, to them whose eyes are enlightened by grace there is revealed the greatness of this mystery. It is still true that they give evidence that "their sin remaineth," who can confidently say, "We see." The Lord has given no word of comfort to such; but he says, "I will bring the BLIND by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: 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. It is always a mystery to these helpless ones how they can be brought from the "wilderness where there is no way. They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man."—Job xii. 24, 25. Yet in this deeply hidden path they are brought to see that "he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."—Psalm cvii. 7.

In his eternal power and Godhead our Lord Jesus is not subject to suffering, nor could he in that Godhead be "crucified and slain." It is in being made flesh and taking part of the same flesh and blood with the children that he is revealed as the Holy One of God. In this relation God "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. As the obedient Servant of God, upheld by the right hand of almighty power, the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings. Having taken upon him the infirmities of his people, he says, "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."—Psalm lxxix. 1-3. This prayer could be uttered by the Lord only as identified with his body, the church, whose sins are the iniquities which are gone over his head, of which he groans, saying, "As an heavy burden they are too heavy for me."—Psalm xxxviii. 4. In all the inconceivable depth of his agony he was sustained by the power of God, so that he was not moved. Although it cost all his blood, and required that he should make his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, yet with heavenly submission he prays, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." This prayer was heard, and he was saved not *from* death but *through* death. Here let us notice particularly the difference between what appears to reason and what is made known by faith. To reason it seems that he prayed in vain in that agonizing appeal to be saved from drinking that awful cup; for he must endure the bitterness of being forsaken of God. To faith it is revealed that he was heard in that he feared. Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.—Hebrews ii. 14. Now having overcome all enemies, he proclaims his triumph, saying unto his trembling little ones, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."—Rev. i. 17, 18. Where reason saw the triumph of sin and death, faith sees the victory of almighty love and grace. The death of Christ is the opening of the portals of immortality; and in that apparently triumphant hour and power of darkness, when the Lord of life was buried under the waves and billows of death, Jesus secured the everlasting victory of every saint, and forever vanquished sin, death and hell. Note the contrast. Reason even in his loving disciples says, All is lost; our hope is gone; and they are ready to return to their worldly pursuits. Peter goes fishing, and the others go with him. But they do not succeed until in the morning Jesus is revealed. Then while he kindly supplies their needed natural food, he repeats his command to them calling them to be fishers of men, and to feed the sheep and lambs of his flock. In this record it is not only shown that the Lord cares for the temporal necessities of his saints, but that he reveals his own glory even in their weakness, and makes their disobedience the dark background on which in characters of living light he writes his unchanging and everlasting love. In this is shown by the Spirit through faith to his saints how immutable is his eternal counsel and his purpose of love to them whom he has chosen.

The rejoicing of the heart and the

gladness of the tongue of the Redeemer is only revealed in his connection with his house, "which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." This is his flesh which shall rest in hope. That sacred body which was laid in Joseph's new tomb literally was not left to decay, but in that fact is heard the voice of God declaring the security from corruption of all the members of the body of Christ; and they do indeed rest in good hope, which is Christ in each of them the hope of glory. So, in the fact that it was impossible for all the powers of darkness to break one of his bones, the truth is declared that nothing can sever that unity which identifies every subject of his salvation as one with him. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."—Isa. lxiii. 9. It is not in a merely figurative sense therefore that he says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—Matt. xxv. 40. The grief and suffering of every believer is the suffering of Christ, in which each of them is favored individually with Paul to fill up in the flesh "that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." As all the saints are members of the same one body of Christ, so they are all "members one of another."—Ephesians iv. 25. The joy of every one is the joy of all; and the affliction of the least member of the body is the affliction of the Head. So, it is in them that his heart rejoiced and his tongue was glad. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—1 Cor. xii. 27. As his flesh this body "shall rest in hope."

The reason assigned is the basis on which is founded all the hope of every saint, "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Vain speculation is ready to suggest imaginary deductions from this expression, and some even of the saints may be led to suppose that at least for an instant the power of darkness had triumphed while the God of our salvation was buried in death and the iniquity of all his people was laid on him; but by the faith of Christ they see that even in that dark hour when the sun was hidden at noonday, the "wicked hands" could do nothing but in accordance with the eternal purpose of God. "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. Nothing less than the whole counsel of God could be done by these assembled workers of iniquity. When that definite work was done there was not power enough in earth and hell to forbid the glorious resurrection of our Lord on the appointed morning.

His victory was completely assured to all in his being raised from the dead. This deep and incomprehensible truth is revealed in the experience of every one who is led by the Spirit of God; for it is only by this new and living way that any sinner is caused to hope in the salvation of God. Yet to the most favored apostle of Jesus the mystery remains unfathomable. It is safe to say that the fullness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily in Christ, for so the inspired testimony declares. It is true also that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."—Col. ii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 3. But blind reason is in error when it would conclude that these declarations imply that the eternal God ever suffered either death or pain. Indeed it is sinful presumption for man by reason to pry into the mysteries which God has hidden, "intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." The faith of the Son of God is satisfied with the revelation of truth which God has given, holding it as a mystery. It is the carnal mind which aspires to be over wise in comprehending the secret things which belong unto the Lord our God, while the mind of Christ in his saints accepts what his grace has revealed.—Deut. xxix. 29. It is revealed that it is Christ Jesus, "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 6-8. But it is the comment of uninspired wisdom which says on the one hand that it was only the *humanity* of Christ that died, and on the other hand that the *divinity* suffered in the garden and on the cross. Nothing is revealed in the Scriptures to authorize such a division of the Redeemer; and there is no mention of either humanity or divinity in that inspired record. Christ crucified and Christ Jesus risen and glorified is the full gospel. As the noonday sun cannot be examined by the light of a dim candle, so the revelation of God in Christ Jesus is not manifested to the natural intelligence even of the saints. It is by reason of the continual conflict between the testimony of natural sight and the knowledge which is given by faith to the children of God, that they are made to groan with the longing desire for deliverance from the body of this death. The natural mind can see nothing but death as the end of all our sojourn here. Faith enables the saints to see him who is invisible, and to look at the things which are not seen, and in their eternal reality they see the hills from whence cometh their help.

In his personal experience when he bore the sins of his people and was made a curse for us, the pains of hell gat hold upon the Redeemer, and then he called upon the Lord, "O Lord, I

beseech thee deliver my soul."—Psa. cxvi. This prayer was heard, and his God sustained him, and did give him everlasting victory when Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father.—Rom. vi. 4. He saw no corruption even in all his mighty conflict when he met the powers of sin and hell. Infinite justice found him spotlessly pure and without corruption. He was and is the Holy One.

"For he who could for sin atone
Must have no blemish of his own."

Yet he was made sin, not by unjust transfer of guilt, nor yet by his own voluntary assumption of our sins. But as the Life of his body, the church, he was the very answer to the demand of the holy law of God. Hence, he does not say, "I am so compassionate that I will be a substitute for the sinner." This would have been unjust and cruel, as are all the tender mercies of the wicked.—Prov. xii. 10. "Wherefore 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. This is according to the just provision of the everlasting covenant.

To Christ as *the perfect man*, including in himself all the members of his body, God has made known the ways of life. In his own fulfillment of all the holy demands of infinite justice, and in the rich provisions of the grace of God that bringeth salvation, the ways of life are made known exclusively to Christ as one with his body, the church. And it is in this unity with his redeemed and glorious body that he declares, "Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."

ELDER THOMAS P. DUDLEY.

By a note from brother J. W. Royster we learn that this loved father in Israel is still patiently waiting for his release from the bondage of mortality; and while the earthly house of his tabernacle is gradually giving away, the inward man is renewed day by day, so that his mind is very clear and bright on the subject of the grace of God that bringeth salvation. That hope in Christ which has been his comfort in all the tribulations of his long pilgrimage, glows with the radiance of full assurance as the crumbling walls of mortality flow down beneath the sunlight of the glory of the Lord, who comes to take his weary child into his immediate presence. With him indeed it is strikingly manifest that "At evening time it shall be light."

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is my mournful duty to acquaint you and the dear readers of your paper of the death of sister **Bettie Wells**, who was so severely burned on the 16th instant that she died the following night. God in his wise providence took from her her beloved husband about eighteen years ago. Thus bereaved, she had, if possible, a greater care resting upon her, that of providing and rearing her four little girls. Under this sad bereavement and this great responsibility she fully realized that the great I Am is the widow's God and a Father to the fatherless; for her business qualities were developed, and her efforts for a livelihood were rewarded with abundance of the comforts of life. But amid the sorrows and cares thus visited upon her, God by his Spirit taught her that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto his children. Yet notwithstanding her experience of grace in the heart, being surrounded by Methodist influence, she identified herself with them, and remained with them for a long time. Becoming dissatisfied with their doctrine and practice, because she could not harmonize them with the Bible and with her experience, she sought for a people whose experience harmonized with hers, and whose doctrine was in accord with the Bible. Hence about six years ago she joined the Primitive Baptists at Providence Church, and it was my happy privilege to baptize her into what I believe to be the visible church of God. Since that time her highest desire has been that she might by the grace of God be enabled to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith she was called; that she might leave the things that are behind, and press forward to the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; that she might run with patience the race that was set before her, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of her faith; that the grace of God that bringeth salvation might daily appear unto her, teaching her that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, she should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God and her Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for her, that he might redeem her from all iniquity; that she might be strengthened by the Holy Spirit; that she might keep the faith; that she might, by a well ordered walk and a godly conversation, let her light shine before men that they might see her good works, and glorify her Father who is in heaven; that she might finally, by the resurrection and the second coming of Christ through triumphant faith, receive an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of God, and join the seraphic host to swell the anthems of God's eternal praise. There is rest in heaven.

Your little brother in hope of such bliss,
T. C. HERNDON.
FERGUSON, Ky., Dec. 31, 1885.

DIED—Near Ringgold, Bienville Parish, La., on the last of October, 1884, brother **John Wood**, aged seventy-eight years. His disease was paralysis. The subject of this notice was born in Logan County, Ky., and raised in Marshall County by his parents, Ellen and Thomas wood. When young he married Anna Gripheth, was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church of Union, in 1848, moved with his family to the state of Arkansas, united with the church called Pilgrims' Rest, in 1863, and moved to Louisiana, where he spent his last days, being an orderly and zealous member of the Primitive Baptist Church, a noble hearted, good neighbor, a kind father and a loving husband. He leaves in sorrow his dear companion, many children and grandchildren, neighbors and friends, with the church, clad in mourning, but not as those that have no hope; for we are sure that our loss is his eternal gain.

ALSO,

DIED—In the town of Camden, Ouachita Co., Arkansas, **Elder Granville Gibson**, an aged and worthy minister of the Primitive

Baptist Church. He was born in the state of Tennessee, raised in Kentucky, where he was married to Mary Gripheth in the twenty-first year of his age. She yet survives him, with whom he has lived in the closest of bonds for over fifty years. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Union Church, Kentucky, where he lived until 1848. He moved to Arkansas and went into the Pilgrims' Rest Church of Primitive Baptists, where he was liberated to exercise his gift as a minister of the gospel, and was called to ordination and clothed with the functions of a gospel minister. He has faithfully served until his death. He departed this life February 4, 1885, aged seventy-five years. He had been a very great sufferer with granular affection of his eyes, being treated by a special oculist, but received little benefit. He bore his affliction with christian fortitude. As a minister, to the last the doctrine of salvation by grace alone was his theme. He has been faithfully engaged in the gospel ministry in this and other states, and continued zealously engaged as long as he lived. He is gone to reap the reward of the faithful, leaving his dear companion, many relatives and friends and the church to mourn; but our loss is surely his eternal gain.

ALSO,

DIED—Near the town of Camden, Ouachita Co., Arkansas, November 27, 1883, **Deacon L. Wood**, in the eighty-first year of his age. The subject of this notice was born in Logan County, Ky., in the year 1802. He was the son of Ellen and Thomas Wood. He was there brought up by his parents until about his nineteenth year. His father moved to the county of Marshall, then the new purchase of Kentucky, in the year 1824. He married Elizabeth Gibson in the year 1828. He united with the Union Church of Predestinarian Baptists, and was baptized by Elder Gilbert. He was there chosen and set apart to the office of deacon, and served the church of Union faithfully until 1848. He came with his family to Arkansas, where he has continued a faithful servant of the church up to his death. He was much devoted to the cause of Christ, was firm and unwavering, contending earnestly for the faith of God's elect. Thus he adorned his profession. He was a good citizen and neighbor, a kind father and loving husband. He leaves children and grandchildren, neighbors and friends, with the church, to mourn their loss; but we are sure that our loss is his eternal gain. May the Lord bless this stroke to our good.

Yours in hope,

MARY E. McDONALD.

AT the request of our dear brother, Wm. T. Watson, I forward a notice of the death of his dear companion, our beloved sister, **Sallie Watson**, who departed this life in September last, aged seventy-seven years, five months and ten days. She was a worthy member of old Salt River Church for sixty-five years, dearly beloved by all who knew her. Her disease was typhoid fever. She soon fell asleep in Jesus, to awake in his likeness in a glorious resurrection. While we know that our dear brother and his four children, with the church, sustain a great loss, yet we believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Never did she seem more happy than when she was filling her seat in the assemblies of the saints. O how we miss her. Her company was sweet to us, for her conversation was in heaven. She truly loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. But the Lord has taken her from us, and from a world of sin and sorrow, ever to be with her blessed Savior in paradise.

Now, dear brother Watson, while we mourn our loss, should we not rejoice that she is gone from the evil to come, ever to enjoy the smiles of her dear Savior, in the full sunshine of his glory?

The writer tried to speak some words of comfort to the sorrowing friends at their residence in Tyrone, Anderson Co., Ky. Also, our dear brother, Elder P. G. Lester, spoke in memory of our dear sister, at old Salt River meeting house, to a large assembly of relatives and friends, for they were many. May the Lord comfort them all.

S. HAWKINS.

DIED—Dec. 4, 1885, at his home in Franklin Township, Susquehanna Co., Pa., **Lemuel Roe**, aged forty-three years. Mr. Roe's health had been failing for several months before his death, from a complication of ailments, but was not considered dangerously ill until a short time before his death, when Bright's disease set in, and terminated in death. We had for many years a christian fellowship for him, as one born of God. His love was with the Lord's people, in their doctrine, faith and experience. We have heard him tell of the wonders of grace in his salvation from death and condemnation, of the hope he enjoyed of future and eternal blessings, and of his decided preference for the Old School Baptists, as his companions in spiritual things, above all the fashionable professors of the present day. He was ever present at our meetings, when not hindered, and by his gladdened countenance showed that he fed upon the truth; and yet, like many of the Lord's little ones, he never appeared to have confidence to come to the church for a home. He leaves his afflicted companion, our sister, two promising boys, and his aged father, brother Roe, together with many others more distantly connected, to mourn their loss. He was made willing to leave all in the hands of the Lord, and died in the triumphs of faith.

His funeral took place at his house, on December 2, when the writer tried to speak words of consolation to the afflicted ones. May the Lord sanctify the heavy stroke to the profit of the living, and grant becoming submission to his will.

Yours affectionately,

B. BUNDY.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1886.

DIED—At her home in Jackson County, Mo., May 16, 1885, sister **Susan Dodson**, wife of brother J. K. Dodson, in the fifty-sixth year of her age. Her maiden name was Susan Hand, was married to brother Dodson in 1835, and was baptized by Elder Benj. Jones in the fellowship of the Regular Baptist Church of Christ. She was the mother of ten children, eight of whom are still living. The writer of this article was a member with her in the church at Independence, Mo. Brother Dodson moved to Missouri from Indiana in 1869. We cannot esteem her christian life too highly, for she maintained a christian walk, showing her firm faith and hope in Christ Jesus, and had no fear of death, rejoicing in the hope of a blessed resurrection at the last day. And we say to the bereaved husband and children, and all the friends of the deceased, let us try to prove by our fruits that we are prepared to sit down with her at the right hand of God, and to join the song of everlasting joy, to the praise of him who saved us by his blood, and not by works of righteousness which we have done.

Yours in hope,

J. D. GOSSETT.

INDEPENDENCE, MO.

P. N. Helm died January 2, 1886, and was a native of Virginia, having married Ann E. Blakemore in that state. In early manhood he moved to Christian Co., Ky., living there only a few years, when he moved to Montgomery Co., Tenn., where, in 1851, he lost his fond and loving wife. After the late war, by which he was financially broken up, he moved to Texas, where he spent the remaining nineteen years of his life. He was nearly eighty-five years old. He was naturally modest and retiring in disposition, though his life was as a great beacon light, worthy of imitation by every child of God. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for more than sixty years, ever defending the faith with an earnestness and love, so that the people of God with whom he was thrown were made to feel that it was well to be with him. The sainted father, the old soldier of the cross, often remarked when in health, "There is nothing true but God." He left six children to mourn their loss, all of whom were granted the sacred privilege of being with him in his last hours, to see him fall asleep in Jesus, as ripened fruit, being so resigned to the will of God. His greatest desire in dying was, that his children might trust in God. As a weary child, he left this

world of suffering for one of eternal bliss, and we feel that we can say in truth, He has fought a good fight, he has finished the work his Lord gave him to do.

L. V. J.

DIED—At his residence in Loomis, N. Y., on the morning of Dec. 6, 1885, **Jacob Boice**, in the eighty-fifth year of his age. He was born in the town of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y., his parents being Samuel and Elizabeth Boice. He was married to Mary Winchel, daughter of Henry Winchel, March 2, 1826, who still survives him. They moved to Delaware County in 1840. Six children were born to them, all of which are living, and were at the funeral, with one exception, Mrs. G. W. Robinson, of Montpelier, Iowa, she being unable to attend on account of sickness. His last and only sickness was one short week of terrible suffering, which he bore with great patience, being assured from the first that his work on earth was done, and saying, "It is all right." He had been from a young man a firm believer in salvation by grace alone, and had been a worthy and faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Otego for a number of years; and though living some twenty miles away, he was often present at the church meetings, his last attendance being at the two days meeting in October last. It can truly be said of him that he had no enemies, but was loved by all who knew him, and will be missed in the community where he has lived so long, as well as by his bereaved wife and children, who mourn their loss, but not without hope; for we know that our loss is his eternal gain. The funeral services were held in the meeting house here, which he had helped to build. A sermon was preached by Elder B. Bundy, from the Psalm xxxii. 1, 2, after which the remains were interred in the Waiton Cemetery.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep!
A calm and undisturb'd repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes!"

My father, **Elder James D. Moon**, was born in Halifax County, Va., where he remained until his death. He was born December 17, 1817. He professed a hope in Christ in 1839, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Stanton River, usually called Clover Bottom Church. He was married to Parmelia H. Wood in 1842, was ordained to the work of the ministry in 1869, and died October 1, 1885. Elder Price, of Campbell County, Va., preached on the funeral occasion from the text, "I am now ready to be offered." His funeral was largely attended by relatives and friends. His remains were taken to the family graveyard and laid away, to await the coming of our Savior in the resurrection of his body. He left a wife and five children to mourn their loss; but we believe our loss is his gain. He was paralyzed and helpless eight years. I believe he is now at rest with the Lord, receiving the reward of the righteous. May we all, when we come to die, die in the full triumph of redeeming grace, is the prayer of your unworthy brother.

J. W. MOON.

PALMERSVILLE, Weakley Co., Tenn.

Mrs. Mary A. Hinkle died at her residence in Hamilton, Butler Co., Ohio, July 19, 1885, aged seventy-eight years and four months. Sister Hinkle united with the Old School Baptist Church at the age of fourteen years, lived a christian life, and died in the triumphs of the risen Savior. Her sufferings were great, but she frequently said, "Christ suffered more than that for me." This was her conversation to her daughter, Mrs. A. A. Mixer, who watched over her through her sickness and death. Sister Hinkle was a member of Hamilton Church, in good and regular standing. I do not remember ever seeing her seat vacant but once in ten years. Her loss we deeply feel.

"But 'tis God that has bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal."
Yours in christian love,

E. A. WILLIAMSON.

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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, 1886, 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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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.

INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBSCRIBERS.

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.

RULES FOR ORDERING.

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

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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 of the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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CHURCH HISTORY NOTICE.

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

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

Signs of the Times.

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

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1886.

NO. 4.

POETRY.

THE HEALER.

JESUS heals the broken hearted!
O what cheering news to me;
For my heart is sore and bleeding;
Will he heal these wounds for me?
I'm a sinner lost and ruined,
Sunken low by Adam's fall;
Hence there's darkness, death and sorrow
Settling round me like a pall.
As I grope 'mid doubts and sadness,
Fears, a spectral band, arise;
Through the mist a voice of vengeance
Cries against me from the skies.
Is there none on earth to help me?
None to lead me in the way?
None to lift me from this dungeon?
None to hear me when I pray?
Lo, I see a light before me!
Yes, a bleeding victim dies;
God's laid help on One that's mighty;
Christ becomes my sacrifice.
Thanks, eternal thanks to Jesus;
He has burst the fettering band;
Death's o'ercome and hell is vanquished,
All's subdued at his command.
All around is peace and gladness,
Sin's subdued and heaven is sure;
None but God's eternal Son could
E'er such peace and joy procure.
Yes, he's healed the broken hearted;
Naught on earth can injure me;
Jesus, let all else forsake me,
All my treasure's hid in thee.
SARAH A. BLAKE.
WATERLOO, Iowa.

SOLOMON'S SONG I. 5.

"I AM black, but comely."

Lord, if a child could ever fall
From grace and truth, and lose his soul,
It would be worthless me;
My very nature's prone to sin,
I feel its lurking powers within,
To draw me thence away.
I read thy word with special care;
That none can fall, 'tis written there,
Whose name is fix'd above;
Though plagues and death around them fly,
And loud the tempter raise his cry,
They're safe in Jesus' love.
For them he died, for them he rose,
A mighty conqueror o'er their foes,
Their great High Priest of God;
The atonement made, their foes are slain,
And more than conquerors in his name,
They shout, Redeeming blood.
But O, my soul, how can this be
Good news to poor and worthless me,
When all I do is sin?
But hark! I hear the Master say,
"My grace sufficient is for thee,
Thine enemies are slain."
So this from day to day I see,
I'm black as the Egyptian sea,
Myself is so defiled;
But this one thing is proof to me,
When I so much corruption see,
Of God I am a child.
Then could I no defilement see,
Would prove myself a Pharisee,
And hence no pardon need;
Then 'tis the sinner hardly press'd
That in the covenant is bless'd,
The child of grace indeed.
B. MARTIN.
ASHLEY, Ohio.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Scio, Oregon, Jan. 15, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—In looking over some of my letters I find the following:

ELK MOUNT, Limestone Co., Ala., June 28, 1885.

BROTHER STIPP:—Permit me to ask of you a small favor, which when received will be esteemed as a great favor. When time and opportunity shall serve, give me your views at length, by private letter, on the fifth chapter of Romans, especially the eighteenth verse. Does the first "all men" embrace the entire human family? If so, how shall we explain the second "all men" and escape Universalism? Please give me the scriptural solution of the subject, and oblige a poor, short-sighted brother.

J. M. PAYNE.

Then in a postscript he says, "I suggested a private correspondence, * * * but if you prefer to write through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, all right." I do prefer writing through the medium of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; for if I have any light at all, my desire is to set it on a candlestick (the church), and not conceal it under a bushel or under a bed. The passage of Scripture that the brother proposes reads as follows, "Therefore 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 unto justification of life."—Romans v. 18. Now if we take this eighteenth verse, isolated from other portions of Scripture, it might seem, as our brother has said, to set forth the universal salvation of the entire human family; but we must compare Scripture with Scripture, and understand what the apostle was writing concerning. The verse immediately above the text explains the text: "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." The eighteenth verse commencing, "Therefore," signifieth, in consequence of what is contained in verse seventeen. Now if those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness in Christ are the same number that judgment came upon to condemnation in Adam, then the pronoun "they" in verse seventeen is a useless word. "They" evidently means a part of those to whom judgment came upon to condemnation receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness in Christ, and not all. Now Paul, in the chapter under consideration, as also elsewhere, is bringing to view two families and two heads of families; or in other words, two Adams, a first Adam and a second Adam. Each Adam

has a family, and each Adam is the father of a family. The first Adam is the earthly father of the entire human family, of all nations, tongues, kindreds, peoples and colors that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. Hence Paul says, "By the offense of one [Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation." The second or last Adam is the spiritual or heavenly Father of the entire spiritual family, which comprises the whole election of grace, given him of his heavenly Father as his heritage; and hence Paul says, "Even so by the righteousness of one [the second Adam] the free gift came upon all men" given him of his heavenly Father. As he said, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 2. These comprise the whole number of the "all men" upon whom the free gift came unto justification of life. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given [the pronoun *us* here embraces the *all men* upon whom the free gift came]; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah ix. 6. As a consequence, it necessarily follows that he has everlasting children; and upon them the free gift came, and upon no others. Jacob, in a scriptural sense, is set forth as the embodiment of the whole church of Christ. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 1-7. "That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the

Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."—Acts xv. 17. There are two prominent errors in opposition to each other among professed christians. The one is that all mankind are alike the children of God; and that God loves all alike; and that Christ died for Cain as much as for Abel; and that salvation is offered alike to all upon conditions of their accepting it; and that the only reason some are saved and others are lost is because some accept of offered mercy and others reject it. But Paul contradicts this idea, for he says, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed," &c.—Rom. ix. 6-8. There are others who contend that none are children of God until they are born again, and that none are called sheep till called by grace. A brother wrote to me not long ago that God made a sheep of Saul of Tarsus when he called him by his grace; but I say that God never would have called him by his grace if he had not previously to his call been a sheep. Christ saith, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice," &c.—John x. 1-4. Now we have the whole matter in plain words from the mouth of the Lord himself. The sheepfold that Jesus entered into was a national sheepfold, organized under the old Sinai covenant, and embraced the entire fleshly family of Jacob; and of this nation of people, or sheep, there was a portion given to Christ, the good Shepherd, by his heavenly Father as his inheritance, as it is written, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye."—Deut. xxxii. 9, 10. The good Shepherd, when he entered by the door into the sheepfold, led his portion under the emblem of Jacob out of this old covenant sheepfold, or in other words, out

from under the old covenant or legal dispensation, and they followed him into the new covenant of grace or gospel dispensation; and the reason (if I may be allowed the use of that word) is because they were his own sheep by inheritance in an ancient eternal covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Let the reader bear in mind that the bringing them from under the old covenant of works into the new covenant of grace did not cause them to become either his own sheep, or his own children, or his portion, and the lot of his inheritance; but they were brought because they were from everlasting to everlasting his sheep, his children, his portion, and lot of his inheritance, in an everlasting covenant, as already quoted from Isaiah, "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name," &c. But there were those of that old covenant people who were not of his own sheep; for he said to certain Jews, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 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," &c.—John x. 26-29. The Lord by the prophet spoke of the same things five hundred and eighty-seven years before the coming of Christ in the flesh as follows: "Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds [those shepherds were the priests under the old covenant, which were a type of the gospel ministers under the new covenant of grace]; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. [This was during the legal dispensation.] And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land [gospel land, or spiritual Canaan], and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. * * * I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment." The fat and the strong were the priesthood, and the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and lawyers, which was fulfilled at the general siege and destruction of Jerusalem, when God entered into judgment

with that devoted nation of people, and poured out his unmitigated wrath upon them in their final overthrow and destruction. "Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land. * * * Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God."—Ezekiel xxxiv. Christ saith, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold." He does not say, I will have when I bring them. If bringing them, and they hearing his voice, would make them his sheep, he surely would have said so. Now I ask those who contend that hearing the voice of Jesus makes them his sheep, what they are before they hear his voice? I ask, What was Saul of Tarsus before he heard the voice of Jesus, if so be that hearing his voice made him a sheep? Some affirm that all mankind are by nature children of the devil, and grace makes some of the devil's children the children of God. Can such a thing be? If, as they say, they are only children of God by adoption, that would not destroy their relationship with the devil. If a man would take a child of mine and adopt it as his, it would only be his in a law sense. It would not disannul its relationship to me; I would still be its father. Christ said to certain Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John viii. 44. Those Jews to whom Christ thus spake never became the children of God, neither by adoption, birth, nor any other way, but lived and died just what they then were; for Christ said to the same Jews, in verse forty-three, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." Paul by the Holy Ghost said to Elymas the sorcerer, who was also a Jew, "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil," &c.—Acts xiii. 10. John saith, "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."—1 John iii. 9, 10. Being born of God neither makes children of God nor children of the devil; it only manifests them, *i. e.*, makes them known as such. I do not believe that Saul of Tarsus ever was a child of the devil; for he was born of God, which made him manifest that he was not a child of the devil, but was a child of God. Paul saith, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth

them that are his."—2 Tim. ii. 19. Christ saith, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."—John x. 11-15. Now, my dear brother, whoever you are, if you were not one of Christ's sheep when he laid down his life, rest assured that he never died for you, for he died for no other than his own sheep; and he saith to his Father, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."—John xvii. 6.

In conclusion I will say, lest some might infer from reading these imperfect lines that brother J. M. Payne, of Alabama, in his letter to me advocated the ideas that I in much weakness have endeavored to oppose, let it be distinctly understood by all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that he did not, neither do I suppose from his letter to me that he believes those ideas; but as those ideas are more prevalent than I had supposed, I felt it my duty to oppose them. But, brethren Beebe, if you think these imperfect lines will be productive of harm, do not publish them, and I shall not blame you.

JOHN STIPP.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—My mind has been called to the contemplation of this expression very frequently of late in connection with things that have been written concerning the meaning of these words, and also in connection with my own preaching, and I feel like calling the attention of brethren to them for a little time. There seems to have been an idea with some that the kingdom of God is something tangible, and that can as well be seen as, for instance, the kingdom of Austria; and that, in the proper sense of the word, it is not yet set up, except as is sometimes said by faith, (whatever that may mean). I have not been able to so look upon the matter for various reasons.

1st. This view is supported, in all the writings I have seen, by an indiscriminate quotation of texts of Scripture from the Old and New Testaments, chiefly from the Old. There is seldom, if ever, any examination of any separate quotation to see if it applies to the subject treated of; but every text seems to be quoted whose words sound as if they supported this theory, regardless of their connection or of the theme which they really illustrate. I have seen dozens of quotations made in close succession from the prophecies and applied to this idea of a "world kingdom" and a "visible reign of Christ on earth," which really were spoken of the re-

turn of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, or of the first coming of Christ; or of the spiritual reign of Christ in us. A cause which must be supported by such reckless quotations certainly cannot be of much value. Besides this, in conversation with advocates of this theory, or rather these theories, I have never been able to secure from them a close examination of any given text, upon its own connection and language, to see what it did really mean; and this has made me feel still more sure that the theory could not be true.

2d. This idea of a visible kingdom, or I will call it "Christocracy," was precisely that of the Jews in the days of our Savior's flesh. They interpreted their Scriptures just as these writers of whom I speak do to-day. They also looked for the setting up of a kingdom that all men could see, wherein they should rule over the nations. I should suspect any theory which so entirely fell in with Jewish notions. The Christ and the kingdom of the gospel was a stumbling-stone to them. Let us beware lest we also are found looking for an outward kingdom, and so despise the inward and spiritual one, where Jesus actually reigns and reveals his glories.

3d. Neither unregenerate Jews nor unregenerate Gentiles could see the true kingdom of God; but anybody can see a visible kingdom. All can see the kingdom of Spain or Great Britain, for instance; but this kingdom is invisible to mortal sight. "Ye must be born again" to see it—to enter into it. Such a kingdom as the Jews looked for, such a kingdom as this theory presents, cannot by this very mark be the kingdom of Christ. I cannot, of course, in the limits of a brief article, enter into a discussion of every text that has been quoted as sustaining the above named theory, but I wish to present some general reflections bearing upon this matter.

4th. I desire first of all to refer to some expressions which present the kingdom of God or of heaven, and then proceed to notice a few things concerning them. To this kingdom Moses referred when he said concerning Judah that the sceptre should not depart from him, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, to whom should be the gathering of the people. Of this same kingdom Isaiah spoke when he said, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Of this kingdom Daniel was given to see wonderful things in vision; and he said of it that the God of heaven should set it up; that it should break in pieces all other kingdoms, and that it should never end. Turning to the New Testament we find the kingdom of heaven in some one of its infinite variety of aspects is the constant theme. John the Baptist preached in the wilderness of Judea, and his simple message was, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He testified of Jesus at once the King and Savior; King because he was the Savior first. Then we see Jesus sending out his disciples, first the twelve, and then the seventy, two

and two, into every city where he himself would come; and their message also was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Truly it was at hand, for Jesus was himself the embodiment of that kingdom. Where Jesus is there it is. Of this kingdom most of the parables profess to speak. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven;" "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed," &c. Of this kingdom Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you." Of it he said also, "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight," &c. Of it Paul speaks, when in Colossians he tells his brethren that they have been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Paul again testifies, saying, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And still further, "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." These expressions do most certainly define what the kingdom of God is, and where and when it is set up, and of what origin it is. I desire to refer to some of these expressions in what follows, together with some other expressions bearing upon this matter.

5th. What then is the kingdom of God, or of heaven? Among the above quotations we have an exact definition of what it is and of what it is not. It "is not meat and drink; but [it is] righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." This is the kingdom of God. There is no other. He therefore that is possessed of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost has the kingdom of God in him. If any of us have seen these things, we have seen the kingdom of God. If any of us have entered into these things, we have entered into the kingdom of God. If any of us have experienced these things, we have been born again from heaven. The kingdom of God then is not material, not meat and drink, but spiritual. It is not designed to satisfy the carnal mind, which is always seeking after a sign; but this kingdom does abundantly satisfy the soul that hungers after righteousness. It is not suited to the self-seeking and ambitious, but lovers of peace here find a fullness of supply. It will not satisfy the mental or physical desires of men, but to those who seek the heavenly riches it gives largest measure of joy. Yea, in this kingdom Christ himself is known no more after the flesh, but in the Spirit; not as a healer of men's bodily diseases, but as a healer of the leprosy of sin; not as a giver of natural bread, but of the heavenly; yea, he himself is that true bread of heaven. I could not put into better words than this what the kingdom of heaven is, and why enlarge upon this definition? The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink; it is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

6th. Negatively, I would say that the kingdom of God is not the church as she exists in visible organizations on earth. The words "church" and "kingdom" represent two distinct things. Let us notice briefly the dif-

ference. The church here, or the church there, visibly organized, can be seen and known by the natural man; the kingdom cannot be. There are many churches, as the churches scattered throughout Galatia, but there is only one kingdom of God. A church may be removed from its place, but the kingdom cannot be. Men may be members of the church without any grace in their hearts, without any new birth, but without this they cannot enter the kingdom of God; and *vice versa*, a man may be in the kingdom of God whose name was never enrolled upon any church book. Furthermore, a man must be in the kingdom of God before he can be entitled to church membership. Let us always bear in mind that the church and the kingdom are two things; harmonious indeed, but still two. Again, the kingdom is not an organization yet to be set up, having its headquarters at Jerusalem; but it is now set up, having its throne in every poor, penitent sinner's heart. The kingdom of God is now and has been on earth ever since Abel by faith offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. As quoted before, "The kingdom of God is within you." It was in Abel and Enoch and Abraham and David and Isaiab, and in all to whom God revealed himself in the olden time. If then, the question may be asked, the kingdom of God is within us, how can we look to something outward for it? Shall we come, like James and John and their mother, and entreat that we may sit on the right and left hand in his kingdom? If our prayer be like that of the penitent on the cross, then indeed we shall find the kingdom for which we pray; not in some future earthly state, but in the paradise of God. By faith we have a foretaste of its glories, and find the kingdom of God already begun within us. Again I ask, If within us, why look elsewhere for it? If we find not the kingdom in our own hearts, we shall look for it elsewhere all in vain. James and John found it in the bitter cup and baptism of suffering, and so must we all.

7th. Is there more than one kingdom of God? If so, prophets and apostles were ignorant of it. They never speak of the kingdoms of God, but of his kingdom; and what and where that kingdom is we have just seen. O brethren, one and all, let us give up looking for it elsewhere at once and forever. Again, we may ask, Shall it ever change? Shall it ever be of a nature different from now? It is not so intimated in the Scriptures. It shall most truly reach an infinitely more glorious development in each individual believer, but there shall be no change in kind. It shall not cease to be spiritual and not carnal, righteousness and not sin, inward and not outward, only as the inward fountain shall flow out in outward conduct, in peace and good will to men and glory to God in the highest. I believe truly that Christ shall come the second time, shall descend as he ascended; but it shall be without sin unto salvation, that is, to

perfect the work already begun. As they who love him hail his coming to them in love and joy and peace, to revive all the graces of his Spirit, so shall they likewise hail this perfection of that which concerns them, this perfect salvation from sin, this conformity to God.

8th. There are two portions of the word bearing upon this matter to which in conclusion I desire to allude. One is a text already quoted, "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." This is found in first Corinthians iv. 20. The apostle here quotes a general truth to sustain a special conclusion. The kingdom of God is declared to be not in word, or mere speech, or in anything that is to be seen, but in power; that is, in spirit and in truth. It is like the still, small voice in which Elijah the prophet heard the voice of his God, when it was not heard in the outward tumult of the fire, the wind or the earthquake. Like the leaven, the kingdom of God works silently, secretly and effectually until the whole is leavened. No mortal ear can hear the working of the leaven, no mortal eye can see it, but still it performs its task; the leaven is not in word, but in power. The mustard seed, when once buried in the earth, cannot be found, it is so small; and yet it grows, and becomes a tree by silent, secret and effectual processes. It is not in word, but in power. So likewise is the kingdom of God. But the visible kingdom, in which some fancy that Christ shall reign at Jerusalem, is not like this most surely. As I have seen it described, it seemed more like the fire, the wind and the earthquake of Elijah's experience, than like the still, small voice which was the voice of God to him. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." Notice, it is not future time, but the present; and so also, "The kingdom of God 'is' within you." Also, "Who hath [in the past] delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Christians then have been brought into the kingdom of God. This could not be were the kingdom something yet to be set up. My brethren, we want no other kingdom than that we have now, a kingdom in which we reign over self and not over other men; and there is no reign so glorious as this. To reign over other men has no charms for the spiritual mind; and greater is "he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power;" in the sinner's conviction of sin, in delivering grace, in producing good works, in keeping the soul to final salvation, in giving strength in trouble and victory in death, in the resurrection and change of the mortal body, and in fitting us to dwell in the presence of God. Thus the kingdom of righteousness conquers all, being also the kingdom of power.

The second portion of the word to which I wish especially to refer is the parable of the pounds, recorded in the nineteenth chapter of Luke, and

especially verse fourteen. "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." By reference to verse eleven it will be seen that he spake this parable "because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." This parable was spoken to meet their thoughts concerning his kingdom. In it he shows that his kingdom was of such a nature as they desired not, and as he really was they would have him not; and yet such a visible kingdom as I am combatting in this letter they expected and would have welcomed gladly. But his real kingdom was righteousness, and they loved sin; it was peace, and they loved strife; it was forgiveness, and they taught that revenge was lawful for a Jew; therefore they wanted him not. Not to reign over self, but over their foes, was their desire. This was not, it is not, it never shall be, the kingdom of God. I leave these hasty suggestions with the brethren. O for more of the power of this kingdom in each one of us!

In love, I remain your brother,
F. A. CHICK.
REISTERSTOWN, Md., Jan. 14, 1886.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Jan. 6, 1886.

EXTRACTS from letters of sister Edna A. Ferguson continued. July 13th, 1876, sister Ferguson wrote as follows:

"Dear brother:—Your letter was received on the 7th instant. I was very glad to hear from you; and now I feel a perfect willingness to reply, if I only may have something to say that will be of any interest to you. Be this as it may, I always feel a desire to reply to letters like yours to me. I know that brethren will make all allowance for me; their own experience teaches them to do this. Your letter to me was excellent, and I have just re-read it. Such letters never become stale, but are ever the same. You were in such a comfortable frame of mind, realizing a deep sense of your own unworthiness, and rejoicing in the hope set before you, in that cheerful manner which becomes the children of God. You seemed to have the spirit of praise, instead of heaviness or complaint, which is so common among the saints. There was a response in my heart to your language, and it was good to read it then and now. I consider it a great privilege to hear from the household of faith privately and through the SIGNS. * * * I do think that the truth spoken in simplicity is so beautiful; not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Such language is cheering and delightful to the poor of the flock, to whom Jesus said, 'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' O what a promise! It can never fail. The question often arises in my own heart, which is sin itself, Is this promise made to me? to me, so vile and wayward, and prone to wander from the paths of righteousness? It will ever be a wonder that

I was brought to love discriminating grace, my nature is so averse to the doctrine; but I trust that the grace of God which bringeth salvation has brought me to love and adore matchless grace. Grace all the work shall crown. Nothing but grace can save a wretch like me. * * * It is so pleasant to meet from year to year at our associations, and be permitted to hear the gospel preached by his ministers whom he has set apart for this work. They are to feed the sheep and lambs of the fold. What an indescribable pleasure to meet in the assemblies of the saints, all being of one heart and one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. I do not think I am mistaken when I say that I love to meet among the saints. I feel at home with them, and that they are my people, each one giving expression to the other's experience. It is this which unites them in love and fellowship. Sometimes at such seasons we lose sight of self and all that pertains to the flesh, and feel uninterrupted joy for a season, and that all is well; but we have various sorts of seasons to pass through. Temptations, doubts and fears disturb our joys as we journey along this dark and thorny desert, through which the pilgrims to Zion take their way; but the Lord will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. He will keep the feet of his saints; and children's children ever find his words of promise sure. How sure is the inheritance of all God's dear people. No doubt there. All shall know him, from the least unto the greatest."

Her next letter bears date at Delaplane, Va., Oct. 2d, 1876:

"Dear brother:—I feel an inclination to respond to your highly appreciated letter received on the sixth of August. I did not wish to trouble you with my poor scribble while you were so far away; but I presume that you have returned home ere this, and will have some leisure moments. I hope you had a pleasant trip. No doubt you were called upon to preach frequently. If you had light and liberty, you comforted those who had ears to hear with the same comfort wherewith you were comforted of God. He is in the midst of his people when he gathers them, and that to bless. Where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst; and in his presence there is fullness of joy. 'Without me ye can do nothing,' says the dear Redeemer, who ever lives to make intercession for his tried and tempted little ones, who trust in him for everything they have and are. David says, 'Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.' Again, he says, 'The Lord is high unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.' Here is the qualification, 'to all that call upon him in truth,' that causes me to fear and tremble. I fear that I do not call upon him in

truth. I have just re-read your letter. I find in it the spirit of praise and thanksgiving to the Most High for his unbounded goodness, love and mercy to you, the chief of sinners. It is full of comfort to me to-day. I trust that I believe every word of it, and realize a portion of it in my own heart in my experience. Does it not seem wonderful that one can tell the exact feelings of another? How closely corresponding feelings unite us together. No matter if I fear that I am wrong, I am encouraged and built up if I find the same in another, and am enabled to rejoice, hoping after all that I am in the right way to the city of habitation for the saints; and feel to say, with the psalmist, 'Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.' 'Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties.' O that we may be kept from all these evil things, and walk in the truth. My dear brother, I feel every day of my life that I am the chief of sinners. I cannot do the things I would, and cannot help doing the things I would not; but I hope that I desire to say and to feel that the Lord is my strength and my Redeemer. No one can say in truth, 'The Lord is my strength,' who has any strength of his own. As long as we have any confidence in the flesh, we cannot view God as our strength and Redeemer. If we have any strength in a gospel sense, that strength is made manifest in our sense of entire weakness in the flesh. I trust that while I am so fearful of myself, I am sensible that every good thing is the gift of God, who has all to give. We are just as helpless as an infant, who must starve and die if sustenance is not freely bestowed without money and without price. Arminian doctrine is as false as false can be. Their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges. The reign of grace in the heart produces soundness in faith and practice and in doctrine. Such as are under its reign see more and more of God's goodness, power, mercy and truth; and the more they see and know, the more they love and adore this grace of God that brings salvation to sinners. Grace reigning in the heart likewise produces self-examination; and this examination discovers in us weakness, leanness of soul and great ignorance, under which we at times are wretched. My brother, in looking into my heart, and then at the purity of God as revealed in the Scriptures, and at what I think a christian should be, and what I appear to myself to be, I can but exclaim, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death,' under which I groan, being burdened? Now, if this groaning is that which belongs to the christian, then I have in it the evidence of life, for where there is groaning there is life; and this life is burdened, and the burden is sin. Sin is mixed with all we do; and we are in great heaviness through manifold

temptations. Temptations of every kind beset me on every hand, which makes me doubt my interest in the Redeemer of Israel. I go out to hear the gospel preached, and to see the brethren and sisters and hear them talk, and I hope that I believe what they say and feel greatly comforted. With the mouth I desire to make confession to the truth I have heard spoken by the children of God. I come home and begin to think about what I have heard and what I have said, and often the suggestion comes forcibly to me, 'Now you have deceived the children of God. You have been living on the children's bread when it did not belong to you. Perhaps you know nothing about eternal things after all.' Such suggestions bring a sorrow to my heart which can be felt better than described; but behind all this I know the inheritance of the saints is in him who has all power in heaven and on earth. He is one with them, and none is able to pluck them out of his hand. He keeps them as the apple of his eye, and will present them faultless before the throne of his glory. Hence the apostle could exclaim, 'Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Then the hope of the christian rests in the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle admonishes all such as have this hope to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, and see to it that they walk worthy of their high calling."

Her next letter was dated at Delaplane, Jan. 13th, 1877. She says:

"Dear brother:—I will now try to reply to yours of November 25th, which I received in due time. * * * I do feel, my dear brother, that what I may have to say is little compared with what I have received and continue to receive from the household of faith. I often feel ashamed to send letters off; still I hope and believe that we have like precious faith, which causes the anxiety to hear from each other. It is love for the truth, and for those who hold and preach the truth. If the love of God has not been shed abroad in our hearts, we cannot have this fellowship which is so precious. You say, 'If we only love, all the rest we know.' And further, you say, 'Surely this is an easy test; easy for the child of God, but impossible for the worldling.' This, my brother, I believe, for the beloved apostle says, 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren,' those who are earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. If delivered to us once, is not that enough for all time? Why should we (or I) become so desponding and so disconsolate when our love grows cold, since we know that the Lord is of one mind, and none can turn him, and we also know that his promises are sure? Not one can fail. The Lord says, 'The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee.' O how strong to the believer!

and yet how unbelieving I am as regards myself. There is only one thing in your precious letter that makes me fear. It is this. The estimate you put upon me, I fear, is too great for such a poor, guilty sinner as I am. I fear and tremble, lest you have bestowed labor upon me in vain. O, my brother, I do not want to deceive my brethren, for they are dearer to me than all the world besides. I sit alone and think of them scattered over the land, and they are near my poor, rebellious heart—this heart which cannot do the things it would. But if indeed I am a child of promise, then the Lord is my righteousness, and no other can save me from woe. Your views upon the new birth are mine. I am glad you wrote me upon the subject, for it is clear to my mind that you have the subject at heart experimentally, which made your words come right home to mine; and your letter throughout is comforting and instructive to me. * * * I often wonder why it is that the brethren and sisters do not forget an old, unprofitable sinner like myself; but O, if they should forget me, how very hard it would go with me. Yet I am entirely unworthy of their thoughts. * * * I was sixty-seven years old the nineteenth of last October. While my interest in the cause of truth is the same, if not greater, than in the past, yet the distance and the extreme weather we are having at this time have caused me to remain at home from Ebenezer the last two meetings. Brother J. F. Johnson says, in one of his excellent letters, 'It is poor policy to leave your seat vacant when preaching time comes.' I agree with him; but sometimes it seems impossible to avoid it. I do not stay at home with a ready mind, for it is a very great cross to do so. O that I could learn to be content with my lot; but, dear brother, I am so rebellious. * * * O how good it is to be blessed with faithful and sound brethren in the ministry to feed the flock with strong food, proclaiming truth richly mixed with christian experience. These things cannot be separated. Both go together, making one golden chain, which cannot be broken by all the hosts of Arminians given to false teaching and idolatry. I do often rejoice that the Lord kept me out of their meshes. No thanks be given to any other source."

F. A. CHICK.

"UNTO us a child is born, unto us a son is given."—Isaiah ix. 6.

This precious saying of olden time has occupied my mind somewhat of late, and I have concluded to pen a few thoughts in connection with it, the Lord willing, for publication in the SIGNS, if the editors deem it expedient to give place to them.

The prophet does not speak doubtfully in regard to the birth of this child and gift of this son; but in positive terms he declares him born and given "unto us." And if there was no other witness, his testimony as a prophet of the Lord would be sufficient, to edify, comfort, reprove and correct the afflicted and poor

saints, as far and as fast as God works in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. The vain ambition of men may claim (as far as men are willing to acknowledge the Savior, and even the scoffer or infidel, who denies the existence of God, or denies the revelation of his will,) that if this be true, it applies to the world of mankind, as injustice would be shown on the Lord's part if it were otherwise. And again I say before I enter upon the subject, the testimony of this prophet not only comforts those who have been given an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches, but it effectually stops the mouths of gainsayers. I do not mean to say that the truth of God's word stops ungodly men from their strides of blasphemy, nor from declaring their ability to convert the world; but their mouths are unable to declare the truth, or to successfully controvert it. This is the evident cause of so many works of noted divines, so-called, in the form of truth, but which are perversions of truth. The prophet declared the truth, and all who contradict or misconstrue his word, which is the word of the Lord by him, are in the same dilemma as were those of whom Paul spake in his day, who proclaimed "another gospel; which is not another;" but there be some that would "pervert the gospel of Christ."—Galatians i. 6, 7.

I have said sufficient to show the reader what I do not believe, and it shall be my endeavor to present the truth as it is in Jesus. If I do this in the spirit and love of it, all will be well.

"Unto us." The significance of the pronouns *us* and *we*, in the declarations of this prophet, is very great; because, while his declarations were to console, they also had the contrary effect. Yes, the very notions of Israel were made known to the prophet, as having eyes, yet seeing not, &c. Yet as believing the true report, and having the arm of the Lord revealed to them, they were perceiving, and were not of such a stammering tongue that the prophet could not understand them. Then we assume that the *us* to whom "a child is born," &c., are all the vessels of mercy, whom the Lord had afore prepared unto glory, giving them to the Son before the world was, and which are referred to by the prophet in these words, "All we like sheep have [not had] gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him [the Son] the iniquity of us all;" that is, all the sheep, which Christ, as the good Shepherd, was to lay down his life for; the sheep of the fold which Christ came to; all the chosen heirs of eternal life among the chosen national people, as the identical people to whom he gave the holy oracles. Yet this same prophet is given to know something about the bringing of the "other sheep," which were not of the Jewish fold. The bringing of the other sheep does not make them sheep; neither does the fold change their nature. But our Redeemer does not say that he must

bring them to the Jewish fold (the night dispensation), for he is a child born and a son given to bring out of night, into the day of gospel, to one fold and one Shepherd. Thus our Savior was a Jew by birth. Job, no doubt, had him in view when he said, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble." As a child born, he is identified by and with the nation; identified with a special tribe; showing in this identity his nature, susceptible of the cares and woes consequent to a growth in his nature; growing in stature, and in favor with God and man, as a child given. O wonderful thought for a poor mortal like me, if I am not deceived in regard to a precious hope in the precious Savior, God manifest in the flesh. Here the fullness of the story is being told for us, dear children of the heavenly King. The Son is given to suffer, the just for the unjust; to bleed and die on Calvary's cross. The child born in the Jewish stable is grown to manhood, to feel the pangs of the sins of his chosen people, developed in the body he bore, causing a desire for the removal of the bitter cup, and wondering why his God had forsaken him. "A son is given," to receive assurance of the Father's abounding love of him, to those whose sins he bore away. What wrestling! what obedience and submission! "The Word was made flesh." The blood of a virgin Israelite courses through that flesh in the complex character of God manifest in the flesh. We have both the child born and the son given, or God manifest in the flesh, as a great mystery. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself [the son given] likewise took part of the same." The children that are partakers of flesh and blood, here referred to, constitute all the family of God, past, present or to come, manifested of a corruptible seed, by nature children of wrath, even as others. And why corruptible? Because the mother Eve was corrupt. Now the query arises, Did our Redeemer take part of the flesh of his people, and part of the blood of his people, or did he in taking part of the same take more than the blood, which alone was anciently considered the life? I am not speculating, but earnestly considering an important matter. I answer for myself, The part he took was their blood; and it being taken by him (Christ), he was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. The Word made flesh was made conformable to all the essential requirements of growth, birth and development, in accordance with previous prophecies, with all the fullness of the one name he bears, as "The Word of God," and all the applications of "Wonderful, Counselor," &c. Man is made in the image of God, and God is manifest in the flesh. I hope he is now manifest in my flesh, and I think I know that he can only dwell there by his Spirit. I am corruptible and sinful still. But "that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of

God." "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest."—Luke i. 32-35. "And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."—Hebrews i. 6. And when God brought (as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ) our Jesus from the dead, he said, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."—Psalm ii. 7; Acts xiii. 33. Therefore in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, he could condemn sin in the flesh. And in the likeness of sinful flesh "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men."—Isaiah liii. 14. He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: he hid not his face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God did help him.—Isaiah i. 6, 7. Thus the "child born," protected by divine power from the deceptive Herod and his wicked decree, and from the fear of Archelaus, and called a Nazarene, survives all the evil devices and designs of men, until the maturity of their "hour and power of darkness," and his hour had come. Then the sword of justice makes its appearance; Satan, the serpent more subtle than any beast of the field, had entered into Judas, who sells his Lord, and he is taken before a heathen tribunal, has a mock trial, with false witnesses. But all this does not disappoint or frustrate the purpose of our God; for they only do that which God in his counsel determined before should be done. Thus the son given, having early been about his Father's business, attains to his years; yes, the very hour; showing that there is an appointed time to man on the earth. He becomes obedient unto death. And "if one died for all [meaning the same *us*], then were all dead." Justice must be satisfied and the law magnified, and the Head of the body only could be accepted as a ransom; and he with whom is hid the life of his people in God, could not be holden of death. The grave yields up at the voice of God, and the "son given" comes forth, bearing the marks of vengeance; yet not a bone of him had been broken. The Lord had kept all his bones. Here the testimony of Jude comes forth; "Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Could faith's view be otherwise? Nothing but the satisfaction of justice could release the prisoners; therefore the work of the Son of God, in the redemption found in Christ Jesus our Lord. Sanctified, cleansed, set apart from the law's demands, the whole election of grace. And the heavenly repository of life in Christ Jesus our Lord brings to faith's view a full and final preservation of all the saved of the Lord; and certainly when faith discovers the cleansing and preserving power of the omnipotent God, the calling is most certain. Here then is faith's consistent song, "In union with the Lamb," &c. And then the prophecies, to the faith of God's elect people, in measure

appear plain. There is nothing new under the sun; for that which is to be hath already been, and God requireth that which is past.—Ecc. iii. 15. Then he that instructed the prophet to comfort in that age, caused him to speak of things that were not, as though they were; even as he declared from ancient time the things which were not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Yes, dear saints, my faith rests in the truth that the Lord's "afflicted and poor people" shall be brought off more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them.

And now, dear brethren editors, may the Lord sustain you, and may our brethren each do their duty to assist, is my desire.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1886.

MILLTOWN, N. J., Jan. 17, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I inclose a letter which I received from brother Charles A. Buck, and I am at liberty to send it to you for publication in the SIGNS. This leaves us in only moderate health. As ever, your brother in hope,

WILSON HOUSEL.

AT SEA, Lat. 37° N., Long. 47° W., Oct. 7, 1885.

ELDER WILSON HOUSEL—DEAR ELDER:—As I did not hear you preach in New York, I shall drop you a line, as I am at sea, and nothing to do. I was born in Dorchester, New Brunswick, in the year 1846. My father was a farmer, and had a family of nine children. My parents were members of a small church called "Hard Shells," or "Iron Jackets." The number of members was from fifteen to twenty, while the "Free Willers" and all others had a full house. My parents were poor in regard to this world's goods. At the early age of thirteen years I had to start out in the world to help them. At that age I commenced to follow the sea, and have followed it ever since. In the place where I was born there were no schools, and what learning I have I got after I grew to manhood. I can look back over my crooked path and see the protecting hand of the all-wise God in leading me along in the way he would have me go. Since I left home I have seen all manner of sins, and if God had not ordered otherwise I would have run into shame and disgrace. At a very early age I was troubled about death, as my parents were always talking on matters of religion; but not knowing anything of the goodness of God, I went on, although there was something that made me shun many evils. When I left home my poor old mother put a Testament with my clothes, and this book somehow I did love to read. In every part of it I would find that God would punish the wicked and banish them forever. This was a great check to my mind. I read that all who had not their name written in the book of life must be cast out. This also set me to thinking and reading. The more I read

the Bible, the more I loved to read it. I had several comrades from my native place, and they were extremely wild. They appeared to take pleasure in sin, while it was a check upon my mind, and it was a wonder to me why I should be so different from the rest. At the above age I often wished that I could enjoy myself like them, and I often talked to some of them. Like man by nature, they would "do better some other time." Some of them have run to disgrace and shame. I mention this to show the goodness of God to me, a poor sinner. I read, "He that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile." I have wondered a thousand times that I have not run to the same excess of riot with them. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." At the age of twenty years I was much troubled about my sad condition; so much so that I left off reading my Bible. I thought it must be this book that troubled me. I resolved to do better; but the more I tried, the worse I got. This was another trouble, to do better and get worse. I happened to get some books written by John Bunyan, one of which was on his life and conversion. This book just suited me, for my feelings were somewhat like his. I was afraid that I was given over to a reprobate mind.—Romans i. 28. This made my case appear worse. I read in Romans that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Now to get myself in a frame of mind so that he would show mercy, was more than I could do. Thinking that this trouble was a sham, I thought I must stop reading the Bible, or else I would go out of my mind. Then the thought came, God's people love to read this book, and this is a sure evidence that I am not one of them. My case had got to be a sad one. I thought that everybody knew I was in trouble, and I did not want any one to know that such a wicked person as I was, was inquiring the way to the city of God. A sin-sick soul and a guilty conscience who can bear? I went to all kinds of meetings, and heard the people tell what God had done for them. They would get religion in one night, while I, apparently, got worse. I would tell them that they were wrong, and would give them such Scripture as the ninth chapter of Romans to read. During all this time I got worse. At the age of twenty-four years I was married, and it happened that my wife was a member of the "Free Will Church." We all know that where there is a spark of grace and a free will, they never agree in religious matters. But not knowing that mine was religion, and my wife not knowing at that time what the meaning of grace was, we got along all right; for the love I had for her, I felt that I must lay aside religious matters.—See Luke xiv. 20. I read that when God begins a good work, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. My hope was that he had begun a good work in me. I

read in Luke xii., where Christ says that he came to make division; and in another place we read that we are to forsake all, and even to hate our own life. How to solve the great mysteries was more than I could know. My cry was to God, to remove my load of sin. At one time I lost some near friends, and on one occasion they sang the hymn,

"Keep silence, all created things," &c.

This hymn took hold of me, as if a thunderbolt had pierced me through. The greater part of the world think that all things happen by chance. If such things were the case, I would have been dead long ago. Once I was upset in a boat, and my comrade was drowned. At another time I fell into a pond, and at another time into Philadelphia River; but God was merciful to me in sparing my wicked life. Those were judgments mixed with mercy. No one knows what I passed through from the age of fourteen to thirty years, but those who have passed from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. In the year 1876 I was on a passage to England, and I was at times almost tempted to take my life on the passage out. I thought, while in this state of mind, that I must forever be damned. All that I had done availed me nothing. I was made to stand still and see the salvation of God. I took my Bible and opened it at the seventh chapter of Matthew, and all that I can remember was, I asked God to be merciful to me, a sinner. I offered myself to the church that same year, and was received. I have been doubting ever since. I feel to say with David, "Is his mercy clean gone forever?" I am in the dark for days, and am brought to stand, wondering if I have the root of the matter in me. While here, a thousand miles from land, yet I dare to hope. My cry goes up to the living God, to keep me in the strait and narrow path. This one thing I can say, I love the company of God's people. I have several numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with me, and I love to read the communications in them. I think the editorials are splendid. I had the pleasure to hear Elder Beebe preach in New York, and I think I had a hearing ear that day. I have passed through some hard trials. I have been shipwrecked twice, and have lost my father and mother, two brothers and one sister. We are told that through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. When I am weak then I am strong. It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting. I have been made to see that all things are ordered by our heavenly Father, and not a sparrow falls without him. He says, "I kill, and I make alive." He binds up the brokenhearted. Devils are at his command. He speaks to the wild billows, and there is a calm. He does all for the elect's sake. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Our heavenly seasons last only a short time. God must and will do all the work, for I cannot do any good thing. I appear

to be all in sin. I love to talk of the goodness of the everlasting God. I love to read such Scripture as the fortieth chapter of Isaiah. I am in hope that I shall be spared to hear you preach again. I think I could listen to you preach for a week at a time. I am on a voyage from New York to Marsailles, France. As I did not hear you preach, I felt that I would like to drop you a line. If there is any sense in this, you may send it to G. Beebe's Sons.

I remain as ever, very truly,

C. A. BUCK,

Master of bark *Harriet Hickman*.

Dear Elder, I arrived November 28th, after a passage of sixty-four days, and a very hard, rough passage. I am in hope to go back to New York. If so, I shall have another small present for you. The weather is fine here; no frost. Marsailles is a very fine place, but is destitute of such preaching as yours. I hope to see you soon. The Ebenezer Church is my home when I am in New York. Good-by, dear Elder.

C. A. B.

DECEMBER, 6, 1885.

ST. LOUIS, Mich., Jan. 20, 1886.

TO ELDER W. J. PURINGTON—
DEAR ELDER:—I was much strengthened in reading your communication upon the great God of heaven's predestination; for as high as the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways and decrees above our imaginations; for he not only has given to the literal or natural sea his decrees, but also to the Papal see of Rome, in which Leviathan, that old serpent, the devil (which God has made and placed there) that maketh that see or "deep to boil like a pot." One would think the deep to be hoary; but look at the great see of Rome, and see how it boils and foams with rage, and claims to be hoary with age, in that she says, I am the ancient of days, and sit a queen; or in other words, I am the church of Jesus Christ, which is the ancient of days. And one would think, from her claims, that she is. But the great God that made the church of Christ, also made great Babylon; and in this is the glorious doctrine of "Absolute Predestination" shown. For God said to poor, trembling Job, "Behold, now behemoth, which I made with thee." Job is a figure of the church, whose strength is in Christ; and behemoth is a figure of the man of sin, or antichrist, whose strength is all in himself; and none but God, who "made him, can make his sword approach unto him." This is what the eternal God answers Job out of the whirlwind of his majesty, in his eternal predestination, which covers and controls everything. The holy apostle, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, says to the saints at Rome, "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin." Therefore we see that it was predestinated so. But men say that it does not mean that. But I, by the grace of God, say, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." And that settles the whole matter in my mind. The

people of God who oppose this wonderful truth oppose themselves; for what dreadful fear has taken hold of me at the thought that there might things transpire which the God of heaven had not decreed. I dare not limit the Holy One of Israel, no further than he has done so himself by his apostles, saying, wherein it was "impossible for God to lie," concerning the redemption of his people; for "God, that cannot lie, promised" to his people eternal life before the world began. If he has predestinated opposition to his people in this world, it is for his own glory. He has created every living thing with its seed in itself, and the Lord Jesus Christ as man, Mediator and Savior, with the seed of the church in himself, the Ancient of days. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." And there would be no body without the church. He also made the man of sin with his seed in him, which is antichrist, with the number of his name, six hundred three score and six, whose body is to be given to the burning flame; for only he who made him can make his sword approach unto him. That monster "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped" by the holy prophets and apostles, who in describing the amazing attributes of Jehovah set forth such majesty, power and glory that the man of sin says, "If God predestinated such things, he is unjust." So you see he claims to be more pious than God, sitting in judgment over the God of Israel, which is exalting himself above all that is called God or is worshiped by the holy apostles and faithful in Christ Jesus. And the mystery is, that he sits in the temple of God, "showing himself that he is God." This same man of sin says he has three persons in him, and has marked out the offices they perform and the course for each one to pursue; so he is full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns: a monster truly. There is but one street in the great city of Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified; and God's two witnesses are fast being slain in that same street; but they will not suffer their bodies to be put into graves, which I believe to be genuine morality and truth. And we find the truth, in some instances, opposed even in the church of God, which is the temple of God; but those two witnesses never will be entirely buried there, for the gates of hell shall never prevail against the church, for that is what the Son of God has said. Therefore, dear brother, you need not be afraid to proclaim a complete Savior in the great God of heaven, which he could not be except he be an absolute Sovereign in predestination and execution, who makes no apologies to men, devils or angels; neither has he requested any of his servants to do so. Dear Elder, you could have, in speaking of the laws that govern the universe, shown that God, through one of his servants chosen to execute his

decrees at a certain time, spake through him and stopped the wheels of time, and the great, ponderous sun stood still at the mandate of the Holy One of Israel. But his will is his law that rules the whole creation, and we, poor worms of the dust, are made to grovel here on earth, and cannot change anything, and it is well for us that we cannot frustrate his purpose.

Yours in hope, sometimes, of a better resurrection.

DAVID TITMUS.

FOREST CITY, Mo., Dec. 2, 1885.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—The annexed communication is a copy of a letter I received from brother E. Harryman, of Heppner, Oregon; and inasmuch as he says, "You may copy it and send it to brother Beebe," I take the privilege, believing that it will be read with interest by all true lovers of truth, especially those who personally know him here in the west.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,
ALBERT DAVIS.

"AND whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted."—Matt. xxiii. 12.

That humility which is precious in the sight of God does not issue from a corrupt fountain, neither is it the fruit of an evil tree; hence we may search the whole realm of nature in vain to find that which humbles itself and receives favor of God. For it must be pure as God is pure, else the Most Holy could not delight in it. Is it man that humbles himself? Is it the devil? Nay; but it is Christ. Have we not read that "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death," and, "that ye through his poverty might be rich?" And again, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." But he is now exalted far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named. Now the fruit or product of fallen man is self-exaltation, and the result is condemnation. Now this will appear in the fact that he brings humility which is produced of himself, as a price of exaltation; and the fact of its being a price, proves it to be affected humility, which is hypocrisy. "And he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted." Then humility must come before exaltation. But how shall the heirs of promise humble themselves? By being born of the Spirit. Then Christ in them humbles them as individuals. Hence it is written, "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."—Romans viii. 13. Not that they have the power to live after the flesh or after the Spirit as they please; for if they can refrain from living after the flesh as they choose, or if they need only the assistance of the Spirit after they have willed to do good, then that fountain from which the will issued is good, and they could not will to live after the flesh. Now if they live after the flesh, or not, as

they will, then the flesh is subject unto them; they are lords over it, and it is their servant. But what saith the Scripture? "Whosoever commiteth sin, is the servant of sin."—John viii. 24. And Paul says, "I am carnal, sold under sin."—Romans vii. 14. Is it not evident that one who is sold is a servant, and that his master (sin) does not come and go at his bidding? But contrariwise, he can but do the bidding of his master, until a stronger than he comes upon him. How then do they mortify the deeds of the body? "Through the Spirit." What spirit is it? "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans viii. 14. Is it not evident that it is the Spirit of God by which the saints "mortify the deeds of the body?" But do they say to the Spirit of God, Do this, and he doeth it? or is it because they entreat him to do it that he does it? Nay. "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered."—Romans viii. 26. Now that intercession is always according to the will of God; hence they cannot fail to have that for which the Spirit intercedes. So the mortifying of the deeds of the body is not something which the saints may or may not do, according as they will. But as it is done by the Spirit, it is done according to an eternal purpose, and cannot fail to be done. "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Written for the consideration of all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who may see it, whose servant I am, I hope.

ELEAZAR HARRYMAN.

HEPPNER, Oregon, Dec. 13, 1885.

LONG GREEN, Baltimore Co., Md.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I remember well, when I was but a youth, the interest taken by all lovers of truth in the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and how greatly beloved was the then editor, our dear departed brother, Elder Beebe, and what sacrifices were then made to support what was considered an indispensable comfort to every child of God, and how eagerly they would look for and devour the contents when received. And although there were some differences of opinion on some subjects, in the main all were united as a band of brethren, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. But after awhile jealousies crept in (only the flesh) and other papers were started, and so on for one cause and another. This is all wrong, and I am pained to see it, and I have never helped to support any except the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, feeling sensibly the very great importance of having but one medium of correspondence among all the dear saints of God, for many reasons. First, that jealousies are sure to arise (which are dangerous), and each one tries to get all the subscribers he can, irrespective of the interest of the other. This is not

brotherly love. Then, again, a brother may take some exceptions to another's views as published, and replies rather sarcastically, and the editor thinks best to withhold this communication, and this brother takes offense; and if he does not stop his subscription, he will send his answer to another paper, and it is published, the editor not knowing anything about its rejection by the other; and so discord is spread amongst brethren. And then, it is impossible for all to live, as the Primitive Baptists are not a wealthy people. Yet they want to see and read all that is published from the pens of dear brethren, and so subscribe for each until they find they cannot pay for any, to the loss of the editors in money, and to themselves in comfort. But the most important of reasons why we should have but one medium of correspondence is in the fact that we are one people. Some may say, We might on the same principle do with one preacher. Well, I hope we do; but many deliverers. All faithful and true brethren will, and no doubt do, desire to see all that is written on the all-important subject of the salvation of God; and if all was published in one paper (which could easily be done, for the paper could be enlarged and sent out every week to the hungry children of God), they could. But as it is, many excellent communications are missed by a large portion of the brethren. What a feast this would be throughout the land, when the brethren could all feast on the same rich food at the same time. Such a support would enable the editors to publish their paper for much less money subscriptions, and enable many to read who are not able to take any one of those now published. If any of our periodicals are published for the purpose of making money, they will surely fall to the ground and cannot prosper, except for the glory of God. If alone for the glory of God, they will surely prosper, so far as to keep alive. And as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was the first to send out messages of love to the brethren, under very adverse circumstances, and has been ably supported by the brethren for many years, or until rival papers have been published, the great Jehovah-jireh has been its support and stay all these many years, and has provided the many rich and comforting messages of love that have been sent out to the members of his body. Now, dear brethren, let all who desire the peace, union, harmony and fellowship of the saints here below, decide what course they will pursue in this matter. I do not propose to support the SIGNS because I do not think well of the brethren who publish the other papers, but because it has stood foremost in the battle for truth, and has always manifested a great interest in the brethren, both individually and collectively, and is known and loved by all lovers of the truth, and has never ceased to expose error in all its phases, and to contend for the

truth, whether men will hear or forbear. I might go on and write many things, and give many reasons why we should support the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and not permit it to fail of publication. If we permit it to fail for want of pecuniary support, we will be sorry when it is too late. I do not believe for one instant that any of the brethren who are led by the Spirit of Christ would like to see its publication cease, yet their very course is destroying it, without any thought on their part. Let us then throw off this apathy and bestir ourselves for each other's good and the glory of God. We are a peculiar people, separate from all others, in a spiritual sense, and profess to be one people, of one heart and one mind, and yet are supporting disturbing elements, to our own destruction. It is hard for me to say these things, yet I only say what I see and feel, without any feeling but that of love and a deep interest in the brethren, that we may not be divided, but show to the world that we are one and indivisible, and manifest that we are united by the strong ties of that peculiar love. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Let us all with one accord come to the support of our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and not let it fail for want of the support of the brethren, when our enemies will say, Where is your God now? These Old Baptists will now soon be gone.

Dear brethren, I have written more than I intended, but I feel stirred up on this subject; and I do not think it is merely to show mine opinion, but from some inward feeling which I cannot describe; yet I know that it will be according to the "will of God."

Yours, hoping in God,
MILTON DANCE.

POMEROY, Wash. Ter., Dec. 25, 1885.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Having to make a remittance for brother Hubbard, I will write you a few lines, and if in your judgment it is advisable, give them a place in some corner of our family paper.

In the past few months I have observed a spirit of investigation manifested relative to church order, and in the articles written and published there are some expressions that are new to me, one of which I will mention, namely, that a majority cannot exclude an unruly member. Now to this I cannot assent, in a broad and unrestricted sense; but if restricted to a sense within the bounds of the order of God's house, then it is all right. Our dear Lord gave his followers a new commandment, and when it is observed strictly there will be no minorities in his house, but the members will be as one, seeing eye to eye, and will be able to judge righteous judgment; for by that rule of perfect love every lust and carnal wish will be kept in subjection, and the rule as laid down in Matthew xviii. will be observed in its true sense, or in its spiritual import. But,

on the other hand, I would remark that according to the rules of decorum as adopted by all the churches with which I am acquainted, the majority rule does prevail in the exclusion of unruly members, for the reason, as I understand, that the flesh is weak, and through that weakness a very unruly member may retain his or her identity with the church, and thereby be a stumbling-block to others, and a stench in the nostrils of our God, as were the sacrifices of Israel under the law, when they went whoring after the idols of other nations, and worshiped the creature more than the Creator. But lest some one should be misled by the foregoing, I will say a few things in relation to the gospel rule in Matthew xviii. It will be observed that our blessed Lord admonishes in the first part of this chapter to by all means receive the little ones of the flock, and not to despise them, for they are very precious in his sight; a fit exhortation to preface such an important rule for our observance. We find just preceding this very important rule the following pertinent language. After speaking of the sheep that had gone astray, Jesus says, "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."—Verse 14. "Moreover," &c. Space does not permit me to quote. But all are required to first go alone; and if the offending one will not hear thee, then take one or two more, for the reasons given. It is needless to enlarge, for all living members must surely see the spirit required in the fulfilling of the requirements of this rule; and I am persuaded that this rule cannot be complied with in any other way than by the fulfilling of the new commandment. See John xv. 12. Brethren, I know it is a strait place for the old man, and it is the narrow way; but it is the way of peace, and no wild beast goes there. I am persuaded that if we cannot walk in that strait gate and narrow way, we have forgotten that we have been purged from our sins; and that we in that purging ate the passover with bitter herbs and unleavened bread; and that we were driven out at midnight, the first-born having been killed by the destroying angel. Beloved, we should remember these things when our brother trespasses against us, and not forget that we have been delivered with a high hand and an outstretched arm.

What is here presented is not desired to produce controversy or strife, but if God will, to promote the peace of Zion throughout all her borders; and as such I submit it to my brethren, in the hope of a better resurrection by the power of an endless life.

A. H. HAGANS.

[We can say no more clearly than was said in our article on page 225, last volume, that the law of Christ is all the rule for the guidance of his church. If the church is governed by that law there can be no majority and minority in the church.—ED.]

GENEVA Co., Ala., Dec. 30, 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Your blank supplement to the SIGNS reminds me that my subscription expires with this month, and I am sorry to say that at present I shall be unable to add any new name to your list, owing to distance of post-office. Our mail grows old before it reaches us, many times. I do hope that all your present subscribers may feel it their duty to sustain you in the publication of the dear SIGNS, by paying their dues and renewing for another year. My dear, scattered friends, how can we do without it? Are we not more than a hundred fold repaid in the perusal of its well filled columns, when we hear the pure language of Canaan proclaiming from all parts of the land a finished salvation through the meritorious blood of the dear, dying Lamb of God? What a glorious thought! And then when the Lord enables the little ones to tell of the way they have been led about and instructed, and delivered from that great burden of condemnation and guilt, and a new song put into their mouth, even praise to his great name, how our hearts go out in love to them. As we read, we turn to the obituaries, and there read of the triumphant death of the dear saints, how the good Lord has sustained them as he so gently leads them down into the cold river of death; and as dear Bessie Durand said, with the radiance of heaven beaming in their departing spirits. How it softens our grief, and we are made to say, with one of old, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name," for his goodness and mercy to the children of men. I repeat it, How can we do without the dear SIGNS? The columns are well filled with words of gifted ones, to whom the Lord gives wisdom from above to expound the deep mysteries of his kingdom; and as we read do we not feast in the midst of our enemies, as we are permitted to sit quietly down and read of the way the Lord is bringing in the outcasts of Israel, opening their blind eyes, circumcising their hearts, and enabling them to behold the beauty of his kingdom and talk of his power? Then to hear the poor, afflicted ones telling of the sustaining grace that is so mercifully bestowed upon them in their long and tedious afflictions; and then to hear the aged soldiers of the cross, who have been long on the road, having turned neither to the right nor left, but have stood like an iron wall in the midst of their enemies, proclaiming salvation by grace alone, with no Babel towers or help of man. Do not these things, my friends, that we hear from all parts of the land, feed, clothe and heal the poor in Zion?

I will close, hoping that you, dear editors, may be spared during the year 1886, to wield your pens in defense of the truth; and may he bestow upon you the gift of expounding the deep mysteries of his kingdom, is the sincere desire of

N. A. MEEKS.

MANCHESTER, Iowa, Jan. 5, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE—HIGHLY ESTEEMED FOR YOUR LABOR OF LOVE:—As time has brought us to the commencement of another year, under circumstances of mercy and favor, we are reminded of our obligations to almighty God for favors in the past. When I came to look over the long list of obituaries I was brought to stop and to wonder why I was spared, while so many of the dear family of our Father are called to rest; but ah! they were prepared to go home, while I am left to fill up the measure of my days. My desire and prayer is that God will give me grace, and keep me the few remaining days of time, for they cannot be many, according to the common course of nature. I am almost seventy-nine. But my greatest desire is, whether my days be few or many, that they may be spent in the fear and love of God. My wife, aged eighty-two, joins me in the above; also our daughter, sister Eldredge.

Now, dear brethren, I want to say a few words in regard to sustaining our family correspondence. We all know how it is and how it always has been. The truth has always been at a discount with all sects except the Old Baptists, who have always most tenaciously clung to it. And why? Because it is their meat, drink and life. They have always stood firm on the Rock (not on Peter), contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, that is, salvation by grace; not of works, but in and through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dear brethren, I hardly know what to say; but I must say that in reading the remarks of the editors in closing the fifty-third volume my feelings were touched with the deepest sympathy for our old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have had some of those periodicals spoken of sent to me. I did peruse them, but I did not relish them. Their bread was quite stale, and their meat somewhat tainted, and the savor bad to my taste; but, brethren, I must confess my peculiarities. We are commanded to be of one heart and of one mind, all working together, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has stood the test through many trying and severe contests, and has gladdened many a sad heart. O how many times have we been shut up, cast down, despondent, cold and indifferent, ready to give up in despair, when along came the SIGNS. How eagerly we grasp it, and our eye drops on the communication of some brother or sister, and they tell our feelings better than we can. O how it does cheer our desponding hearts to know that we are in the same path, which leads to the celestial city. Dear brethren, let us stand by and hold up the hands of our brethren until the battle is over.

S. P. MOSHIER.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Jan. 26, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I feel like writing a little for your interesting paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES,

having been a reader of it from the first volume. Nearly all the old correspondents have passed away, but new names appear, who tell us the same good news. I cannot write like them, but I am glad to read their able communications of love and fellowship. Blessed indeed is the ear that hears and the heart that understands these things. Does not the paper make us acquainted and bind us together as one family, from east to west, from north to south, the poor and the rich, the weak and the strong, the learned and the unlearned? Is it not truly wonderful that Elder G. Beebe should have been raised up for such an important work, from such a small beginning? He made it the business of his life, and has left on record words of silver and letters of gold. And I would that our dear brethren, the present editors, might travel far and near, as did their father, to visit the aged preachers, and have them come and see us; also to solicit the able writers to send on their welcome communications to be published in the SIGNS. They come all the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast. I cannot write their names, but you know who they are. Their words feed the hungry, strengthen the poor, and comfort those that mourn. Give me the good old SIGNS. It speaks a pure language, and I hope it will be sustained. We have many new writers, such as Wm. R. Welborn and Abbie Coddington, and others that are very interesting; but the most of the names are well-trying and faithful brethren and sisters. May each one take a new interest in the welfare of the paper. And when the time shall come for our beloved editors to lay down their pens, who knows but what some younger Elder Beebe, of a third or fourth generation, may be harnessed for the battle and shod with the preparation of the gospel, to comfort those who shall come after us? I hope to take it as long as I live.

Now I will close this imperfect scribble, and leave it with you to correct mistakes.

Yours in hope,

M. CAREY.

HINDSBURG, N. Y., Jan. 6, 1886.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I find it is time to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1886, and for such purpose I inclose two dollars. I cannot consent to see it forsaken in this day of "Lo here" and "Lo there." I have patronized it for forty years or more. It meets my approval. The world is filled with religious novels. I see not the words of Jesus in them agreeable to the record he has left us for our guide in this present evil world. It makes me think of "Legions" in olden time, in the country of the Gadarenes.

Do with this as you please.

N. P. RHODES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1886.

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

EZEKIEL XXXIII. 11.

DEAR BROTHER:—I would like to have your views on the words, "The Lord does not delight in the death of any; but rather all would turn unto him and live." I heard a man quote this as Scripture, but I do not know where it is. Yours in hope,
M. ROBINSON.

SCHUYLER COUNTY, N. Y.

R E P L Y .

"SAY unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

As is the custom of the advocates of error, the man who made the quotation cited by our dear brother, perverted the language of inspiration in the letter as well as in the application and import. The expression above quoted from Ezekiel is as near as any Scripture to the words submitted by brother Robinson. In commenting upon this text it will be appropriate to refer to other portions of Scripture which are often wrested to yield apparent support to the false doctrines of will-worshipping idolaters. In the earliest recorded religious devotions there was manifested a conflict between the principle of the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God and that which represents him as subject to be influenced by the actions or wishes of his creatures. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord." This clearly represents all that religion which originates in the polluted heart of sinful man. In it was expressed the dependence of all who seek acceptance with God in their own merits. By this offering he claimed ability to conciliate the offended justice of God with the fruits produced by his toil from the cursed earth. This involved the same doctrine which the old serpent taught to Eve, that God is not sovereign, but that his word may be proved false by the disobedience of man. In the same way every form of false doctrine which has ever been devised is founded upon the denial of the infinite perfection of divine sovereignty. Indeed, if this barrier could be broken there would be nothing to prove to the saints that their salvation is complete in Christ Jesus. But the certain fulfillment of the whole purpose of God in the bringing of his redeemed to the ultimate glory of his presence, is assured in the offering of Abel's bleeding lamb, whose blood proclaimed the atoning sacrifice of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—John i. 29. It was not by any superior wisdom or merit in himself that Abel offered this more excellent sacrifice, but it was alone "by faith," which is exclusively "the gift of God."—Heb. xi. 4; Ephesians ii. 8.

Divine sovereignty is as manifest in the acceptance of Abel's offering, as its denial is glaring in the sacrifice of Cain. These two worshipers are representatives of all the religion which has ever been in the world; the one is the production of a sin-cursed earth, the other is the fruit of the Spirit of God, which dwells in those who are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. Throughout the Scriptures the contrast is presented between these two opposite systems of religion, and what is said of each system is true in its every development. As the whole testimony of inspiration is defining the certain victory of the saints through the faith which is in Christ, evidently any deduction from a detached expression must be erroneous if it conflicts with that truth.

By reading carefully the prophecy of Ezekiel, it will be seen that there could have been no such book written without the absolute certainty of future events. It must be plain to consistent reason that no event could be positively foretold unless it was certainly appointed; and as nothing short of infinite power could certainly appoint, declare and bring to pass future events, it necessarily follows that all events are appointed by the unlimited sovereignty of God, which precisely agrees with the divine record. "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." "Whatever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places."—Psalm xxxiii. 11; cxxxv. 6. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isa. xlvi. 9-11. Indeed there could be no certainty in anything without the absolute appointment of all things. Finite minds cannot comprehend the perfect order which regulates the revolutions of the stars in their courses, and guides the mote which floats unseen in the sunbeam; but all is directed "according to the purpose of him who WORKETH ALL THINGS after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. In this unfailling control of all things is the assurance to the heirs of promise that God will certainly fulfill his immutable counsel in their final and everlasting triumph over every enemy, and that he will not fail to give the victory to every one who has been made to hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. Without this unchangeable foundation there is no sure refuge for any sinner even in the sweet promise of divine grace; since if all is not fixed

and certain, it might be that something not appointed should defeat the purpose of God in regard to salvation. This legitimate sequence from the denial of the absolute predestination of all things is too glaringly blasphemous to be admitted by any who fear God. But there is no middle ground between the doctrine of divine sovereignty as declared by inspiration, and the theory of infidelity which attributes all events to chance, without any controlling will of God. Hence it is plain that no interpretation of Scripture can be correct if it implies that the will of God is defeated, or that his purpose has failed to come to pass. This fact will apply to every attempt to wrest the Scriptures to the support of error. If opposers of the truth could succeed in finding any contradiction in the Bible, it would invalidate all the testimony of inspiration, and leave no revelation of the divine will. But as "he that believeth hath the witness in himself," the subjects of salvation are not left to be overcome with such false reasoning.

Since it is clear that the text under consideration does not teach that God was compelled to submit to disappointment in the case of the house of Israel, to whom this message was sent, it may be profitable to examine the word to know what is the true import of the solemn assertion. The house of Israel, to whom this word was to be spoken, were under a covenant which separated them from all other nations, and in the making of that covenant they had no part. It was given exclusively to them, and required their implicit obedience. They were often reprov'd for disobedience, and they were punished as no others were. So the Lord said to them, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. They murmured against the Lord, just as carnal reason now murmurs, charging that "The way of the Lord is not equal." And in the verse preceding the text they say, "If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?" It is in reply to this murmuring that the Lord God sends the message in the text. The wicked is the Israelite who fails to observe every requirement of the law which God gave them, and their sin against that covenant brought upon them the curse of that law; and all the consequent calamities involved were temporal. So all the blessings promised to the obedient Israelite pertained to this world. No life could be given by that law. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law."—Galatians iii. 21. While in obedience to that legal covenant the Israelite was blessed with earthly favor, he was not relieved from that death which passed upon all men in that they all have sinned in the one man by whom sin entered into the world.—Romans v. 12. Nor

was it by disobedience to that Mosaic law that they became subject to death, for death had reigned before that law was given. In the approval of that law the Israelites lived, enjoying all the blessings promised in it; under its condemnation they received the punishment assigned, which was death to all their peculiar privileges. In this they are typical of the spiritual Israel, who "live" in obedience and "die" in disobedience to the law of Christ.—Rom. viii. 13. Yet, as no penalty of the law of Moses could break the relationship by which the Israelite was connected with Abraham naturally, so nothing can separate the saints from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, even though in their experience they die daily. "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." It is only when entirely cut off from all self-dependence that the life of Christ is manifest in his redeemed people. When they rely upon any merit in themselves they die to the comfort and rest which is their heritage in Christ; and when they depart from implicit trust and obedience to the law of their God, he will visit their transgressions with the rod and their iniquities with stripes, which will be death to their enjoyment spiritually, as the extreme penalty of the Mosaic law was literal death to the natural Israelite. Yet even in this severe display of divine justice toward his people their eternal life in Christ is not forfeited or lost, as the Lord says in that same everlasting covenant, "Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me."—Psalm lxxxix. 33-36. As this covenant is confirmed from eternity by the oath of God, it is evident that its certain fulfillment cannot be defeated by the entrance of sin and death into the world in time. So Paul judges, "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."—Galatians iii. 17.

In the solemn declaration of the Lord which is so forcibly recorded in our text, the truth is stated which silences all carnal objections to the sovereign government of God. The question in the preceding verse is substantially the same with that in Romans ix. 19, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" And this rebellious question includes all the wicked opposition of the sinful mind against the infinite sovereignty and justice of God. To this the Lord God replies in the words under consideration. Abstractly considered, the pleasure of God is neither increased nor di-

minated by any events of time, whether such as we call good or evil. When expressions which imply such emotions in him are used in the Scriptures, they always refer to the things specified as consistent or inconsistent with his revealed will. The immutability of God is not destroyed by anything which ever has or can come to pass. If this foundation could be destroyed the hope of every saint must perish, for this is the reason assigned by inspiration for their preservation. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. All the deceitful workings of Satan from the beginning have been directed to hide this truth from those whose faith he assails; for while they hold this as settled and established, all his fiery darts are quenched and fall harmless at the feet of the tempted ones. The will of God as revealed in his commandments is the only standard of righteousness given to his creatures. Obedience to that will is life to them, and disobedience is death. So in the day when Adam ate the fruit of the forbidden tree he died, and no effort of his could recover the life of divine approval which he then lost. Sin reigns in its servants with such despotic dominion that they cannot even desire to be free from its power. Hence, the Lord declares them already blessed who hunger and thirst after righteousness.—Matt. v. 6. Yet we are not authorized to say that God takes pleasure in the death of the wicked. He has given permission to none of his creatures to violate his law. Yet the wickedness of men is included in the determinate counsel of his will; and all the wrath of man he restrains, except as it shall show forth his own praise. No man or devil ever did sin from a desire to praise God, or to fulfill his pleasure. Yet in the wonderful display of divine wisdom and power, the wickedness of Cain and Pharaoh, of Judas Iscariot and Herod, was as essential to the development of the glory of God as was the obedience of faith in Abel and Moses, and in the chosen disciples of our Lord. Neither in the obedience of the saints nor in the wickedness of sinners is God brought under any obligation to his creatures. He is infinitely glorious in holiness in himself. Nothing can be added to his perfection; nor can he suffer loss by the existence of sin. Therefore there is no room for the wicked to charge their death to the arbitrary pleasure of the Lord God. And in evidence of their voluntary sinfulness the Lord calls upon Israel in our text now to turn from their way and live. Their way is the way of sin, and it is "a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." They claim that they have power to turn from their way, and the Lord challenges them to prove their power by actually turning; and this appeal is enforced by the closing question, "Why will ye die, O house

of Israel?" By reference to Jeremiah xiii. 23, it will be seen that there was no possibility that the wicked should make themselves righteous, for God there says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."

A parallel expression is used in this prophecy, xviii. 31, 32: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed: and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." It will hardly be claimed by the most zealous worshippers that it is in the power of the sinner to make for himself "a new heart and a new spirit," however ready they may be to assert their power to cast away their transgressions. Yet they may pervert the scriptural declaration by explaining it as merely figurative language. While it is not our purpose to argue against the manifest blindness of those who present such an explanation, to them who are taught of God their need of "a new heart and a new spirit," we are sure there will be no difficulty in showing the utter impossibility of any sinner even casting away from him his transgressions. They know that sin has reigned in them unto death, and they have experienced their helplessness to cast away its heavy chain. Their hope is in the grace of God, which alone bringeth salvation. They have seen an end of all perfection in the revelation that the commandment of God is exceeding broad.—Psalm cxix. 96. To them it is evident that instead of having power to turn themselves, or make a new heart and a new spirit in themselves, they are without strength to comply with any condition whatever. Therefore they see that there is no hope for them in any works of their own. If but to produce one good thought were the price of their salvation from eternal death, they know they are as hopelessly lost as if it were required of them to create a world. To this state of utter destitution must every sinner be reduced before he is in the condition to receive that salvation which is by grace alone, "not of works, lest any man should boast." Then the promise speaks to him as recorded Psalm cii. 16-18: "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." As long as the sinner can claim one particle of merit in himself there is no word of comfort in the Bible for him. Self-righteousness must be perfect and pure, or the justice of God condemns the man who trusts in it. There is no provision of mercy in the law. It can accept nothing less than its broad demand

of perfect obedience. Hence the law concludes all under death, justly condemned, and hopelessly buried in sin. In this wretched state they are not *in danger of being lost*, but they are already lost, condemned and dead. With neither will nor strength to release themselves from this fearfully miserable condition, not only natural Israel but all the children of Adam are dead in sin. If their deliverance depended on themselves they could have no hope. Every word of the revealed perfection of God but displays in living light the inflexible justice of that condemnation which abides upon them. Well may they sink in utter despair.

After showing the true condition of his chosen people as lost in sin, and "by nature children of wrath, even as others," the gracious Lord proclaims his thoughts of peace toward them in the revelation of that new and living way whereby they shall be made holy in his sight. After stating explicitly that it is alone for the sake of his holy name that he will take them from among the heathen and gather them out of all countries and bring them into their own land, the Lord says, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."—Ezekiel xxxvi. 25-28. This wonderful work of sovereign grace is attested in the personal experience of every subject of that salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and so every one is taught of the Lord and made a witness experimentally of the work of God in salvation. So the gracious promise is fulfilled to his ransomed people where he says, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."—Isaiah lxii. 3.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

MCCALL'S CREEK, Miss., Jan. 8, 1886.

I WOULD like to read Elder John Stipp's views (or those of any other brother who may have light on the subject) on John v. 28, 29, either privately or through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

D. McDONALD.

DECEMBER 20, 1885.

I WOULD be glad if Elder Wm. J. Purington would give the original in English of John iii. 8. I am told here that this verse was not properly rendered.

B. A. BEASLEY.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

PURSUANT to previous appointment, a council of ministers and brethren met on Tuesday, 26th inst., at the Forest Grove meeting house, near Parsonsburg, Wicomico Co., Md., for the purpose of assisting in the organization of a church at that place. A place of worship was erected here some years ago for the convenience of the Baptist families who resided in the vicinity. They were connected with the Little Creek, Salisbury, Nassaongo and Indiantown Churches, all at some distance, but all belonging to the Salisbury Association. Elders T. M. Poulson, John W. Timmons and E. Rittenhouse were present, and messengers were in attendance from all the aboved named churches.

The exercises were introduced by singing, and a discourse from Isa. lvi. 5. "Even unto them will I give in my house and within my walls a name and a place," &c.

The council then organized by the appointment of Elder E. Rittenhouse Moderator, and brother D. J. Staton Clerk.

Letters of dismission and recommendation were presented by ten members from Indiantown, two from Nassaongo and six from Little Creek. The letters were read and found to be satisfactory.

A church covenant was then presented and read, together with a brief summary or declaration of faith, and were accepted and unanimously adopted, and signed by the organizing members.

They then proceeded to the election of officers. Brother Joshua Beathard was appointed Clerk, and brethren Elisha Hastings, Joseph Parsons and Leven W. Hastings were unanimously chosen deacons.

The Moderator then in behalf of the council recognized them as a regularly constituted, sound and orderly gospel church, by extending to the officers the right hand of fellowship.

The new church takes the name of FOREST GROVE, and will ask admission to the Salisbury Association.

Elder John Timmons was called to the pastoral charge and accepted, agreeing to meet them for preaching the second Sunday in every month.

A large and solemn congregation was in attendance to witness the proceedings.

There are still other members in the vicinity who will unite with the new church.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.

D. J. STATON, Clerk.

JANUARY 28, 1885.

MARRIAGES.

NEAR New Church, Va., Jan. 1, 1886, by Elder T. M. Poulson, Mr. Sylvester Taylor and Miss Alicia Thornton, both of Accomac County, Va.

BY the same, Jan. 13, 1886, near New Church, Va., Mr. Wm. J. Justice and Miss Mary A. Small, both of Lemont, Accomac Co., Va.

BY the same, Jan. 20, 1886, near New Church, Va., Mr. Wm. Chesser and Miss Clara Winder, both of Accomac County, Va.

JAN. 13, 1886, by Elder William J. Purington, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Tenbrook Stout, of Holmdel, and Miss Rebecca P. Cubberley, of Washington, both of New Jersey.

JAN. 20, 1886, by the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Enos S. Titus, of West Amwell, and Miss Mary F. Weart, of Hopewell, both of N. J.

IN North Berwick Maine, at the parsonage, Dec. 29, 1885, by Elder Wm. Quint, Mr. Alonzo Goodridge, of Berwick, Maine, and Miss Susan J. Hurd, of North Berwick.

DECEMBER 23, 1885, by Elder P. D. Gold, at the residence of Mr. J. J. Jacksons, in the town of Wilson, North Carolina, Mr. R. S. Sykes and Miss Nannie L. Langley.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—April 14, 1885, at her son-in-law's home, near Pocomoke City, Md., **Kitty Martin**, aged a little upward of eighty years. Sister Martin was left a widow with three small children, but by her diligence and care and the goodness of God she reared them all with much honor and credit to themselves and herself, one of them being a member of the same church with her, and another seeming to be a humble inquirer. Sister Martin was the last one of a large family to go down. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Messongo, Accomac Co., Va., by the late Elder Thomas Watters, in 1843, and lived and died in the triumphs of faith. She left two sons and one daughter, and quite a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, with the church, to mourn; but they sorrow not as those who have no hope.

On the sixteenth her remains were taken to the meeting house where her membership was, and the writer tried to preach a discourse from the words, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ." Her remains were then laid in the graveyard at said place, to await the Archangel's voice, when the dead shall arise.

ALSO,

DIED—Nov. 7, 1885, little **George West**, at the home of his father, brother Wm. West, near Snow Hill, Md. George was a smart and very industrious little boy, possessing as nearly the qualities of a man as I ever saw, and bid fair to be a comfort to his parents and an honor to himself. But with all that friends and skillful physicians could do, death bid defiance to all. His disease was typhoid fever, complicated with other diseases. While in life we are in the midst of death. This was very trying to brother and sister West, but we assure them that God knows best. His age was nearly eleven years. His sickness lasted about one week. His remains were taken to the meeting house at Snow Hill on the next day, when the writer tried to comfort the sorrowing friends from the words, "And we know that all things work together for good," &c. Brother and sister West have our sympathy.

ALSO,

DIED—Near New Church, Va., Jan. 17, 1886, **Hetty N. Byrd**, wife of Wm. T. Byrd, aged fifty-six years lacking one month and seventeen days. She had been in declining health for some time, and her disease was not really known.

Sister Byrd was baptized in fellowship with the Old School Baptist Church at Messongo, Va., May 17, 1874, by the writer. She was one of those epistles that could be seen and read by all men. It could be seen as a companion, as a mother, and as an ornament in the church. She was as firm as a rock. She was as free from confidence in self as any one can be. If any one ever had reason to believe that all is well, the family and friends have in this case. She had a very entertaining and attractive manner, like sister Georgiana, her daughter, and had so little confidence in herself that she frequently said to me, "I began to think that you had lost all confidence in me, and that was the reason why you had not come sooner." It was a trying case to the families and to the church. She seemed to be the very life of the families, and a precious light in the church. O what a great thing it is that our fellowship is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; therefore it still remains firm. Why God, who is love, has so afflicted this family, we cannot tell, having taken within one year and a few days the two older daughters, and now the mother. But we believe it is all for good. We are finite and short of comprehension. We feel to say, Lord, bid our murmuring cease, and give us grace for this our hour of trial.

The body of our dear sister was taken the next day to the meeting house at Messongo, when a discourse was preached by the writer from the words, "Behold, I shew you a mystery," &c., to a large congregation of sorrowing friends. She leaves a sorrowing companion, two daughters and five sons, with the church, to mourn their loss of a good companion, a devoted mother, and a sister and companion in the fellowship of the gospel.

We would say to the heartbroken companion and the disconsolate children, that they have the watchcare of a merciful God, and also our heartfelt sympathies.

T. M. POULSON.

NEW CHURCH, Accomac Co., Va.

Mrs. Iola Topping, wife of Elder D. W. Topping, and daughter of Joel and Matilda Smithwick, was born near Williamstown, Martin Co., N. C., January 13, 1855, and died October 12, 1885.

Mrs. Topping was a lady of rare qualities and great accomplishments. She was endowed with many christian virtues and noble traits of character. She was educated at the Murfreesboro Female Institute, under Prof. McDowel, where she made many friends; and should any of her school-mates, and especially her class-mates, read this obituary, they will shed tears to know that one so lovely has passed from earth. She was married to Elder D. W. Topping, who is so well known among the Baptists of North Carolina, by her uncle, Elder Clayton More, September 22, 1875. She bore him four children, but only two survive her, Annie Laura and Nella Isolene.

Mrs. Topping did all in her power to make the Baptists feel at home while under her kind and hospitable roof. Her home was a real home for the Baptists. She never made an open confession of religion, but we have great reason to believe she had the love of God in her heart. The writer has often heard her speak concerning religion, and her desire was to be united with the church; but complaining of unworthiness, she stood back. Nothing pleased her better than to be in company with Baptists, and she was ever ready to aid her loving husband on to his appointments and also accompany him when she could. For a long time she was greatly afflicted, but she bore her afflictions without a murmur, and seemed to be aware that her stay on earth was not long, and would often sing, "A few more days on earth to spend," &c.

On the morning of the 12th she called her husband to her bed and said, "Try to take care of the children," and sank back in death without a groan or struggle. Thus passed from earth one of the most lovely of women, a good mother and a devoted wife. We tenderly sympathize with Elder Topping in the loss of such a precious jewel. He has a host of friends and relatives to mourn with him. He is left with two little orphans, but they are well cared for by their grandmother Smithwick.

ALSO,

I CANNOT close this notice without mentioning the death of brother Topping's little son, **Joel Ira Topping**. He was usually bright one morning, and was taken with a congestive chill, and his grandmother, anxious to keep him warm, covered his hands. He said to her, "Grandma, let me have my hands uncovered, for I will not live long," and in a few moments slapped his little hands together, with an angel's smile on his face, and dropped into the arms of Jesus, in his seventh year.

A FRIEND.

DEAR BRETHREN, BEEBE:—Please publish the notice of the death of my dear mother-in-law, **Mrs. Rebecca Jones**, who died of abscess of the lungs, Dec. 28, 1885, at her home in DuBois, Clearfield Co., Pa. Her maiden name was Slawson. When quite young she became the wife of Curtis Beard, son of James C. and Lorena Beard, formerly of Orange County, N. Y., by whom she had seven children. She was left a widow before she was middle aged, and then married Nathaniel C. Jones, who survives her. She leaves four children, my husband being one of the number, besides her husband, brothers and sisters, and many relatives and friends, to miss her pleasant company. She has been a member of the Chemung Old School Baptist church many years, and a devoted one. All who knew her could testify to the fact that she was an excellent woman, with a fine christian character. She was never forward in spiritual converse, but ever firm, very charitable, possessing that kind that thinketh no evil; was teachable and mild, in fact she possessed excellent qualities, and

was loved by all her friends and acquaintances. In a letter written to me a few days previous to her death, while she was still around the house, she expressed a knowledge that death was very near; but she was cheerful, and her letter was filled with love for her children and friends, and expressions of the goodness of God and of her desire for gratitude to him for all his mercies. She was well accustomed to disappointments and adverse circumstances, but was enabled by divine grace to patiently endure to the end. We have lost a valuable friend and mother; but her conflict is over and she is fully released from the fetters of earth, no more to go out from the presence of the Lord. May we feel to acknowledge the goodness of the Lord even in affliction.

Yours in bonds of love,

WATIE A. BEARD.

ATHENS, Pa., Jan. 29, 1886.

AT her residence in Jersey City, N. J., after an illness of five days with pneumonia, **Abbie H. Wickham** departed this life, surviving her husband, the late James E. Wickham, but a few days, he having died on New Year's morning.

Mrs. Wickham was born at Howell's Depot, N. Y., Oct. 12, 1837, and was a daughter of Archibald and Elizabeth Hoyt. Three brothers and four sisters survive her. She had been in feeble health for some time, and worn out with care and watching at the bedside of her husband, fell an easy prey to the insidious disease to which she succumbed.

For nearly thirty years she had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church at New Vernon, having been baptized in their fellowship by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. While of late years she had not been a regular attendant at the Old School meetings, she frequently expressed to the friends who surrounded her bedside, her belief in the power of Jesus to save. Her funeral, which was held on Saturday, Jan. 9, from her late residence, was attended by a large number of friends and relatives, the services being conducted by Mr. James Boyd Brady, who had officiated at the funeral of her husband five days previously.

Mrs. Wickham bore with patience her severe sufferings, and said she was ready to go whenever the Lord called her. May he in whom she placed her faith comfort those who mourn for her and give them submission to his will.

"It is the Lord, enthroned in light,
Whose claims are all divine;
Who has an undisputed right
To govern me and mine."

ARTHUR D. LOUD.

DIED—At his home in New Interest District, Randolph Co., W. Va., Nov. 30, 1885, **Elder David P. Murphy**, after an illness of a few weeks, aged eighty years and four months. He joined Hebron Church January 31, 1835, and has been preaching forty-nine years. He was pastor of Leading Creek Church over thirty-one years, with the writer of this notice. Brother Murphy was a faithful minister, standing firm in the doctrine of the apostles, contending for the order of the church, till he fell.

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,

From which none ever wake to weep."

He longed for the time to come, that he might depart and dwell at home. He has left many brethren and sisters to mourn their loss, which is his eternal gain. His funeral was attended by Elder Stephen D. Lewis, and a very appropriate discourse was preached from the text, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," &c. His remains were laid to rest in the silent tomb, to await the summons from on high, when the trumpet of God shall sound, and the sleeping saints shall be called to meet the Lord in the air.

"Then shall I see, and hear, and know,
All I desire or wish below,
And every power find sweet employ,
In that eternal world of joy."

Done by order of the church, at her meeting for business, December 25, 1885.

J. B. CROSS, Mod.

H. CHENOWETH, Clerk.

BY request I send you for insertion in the SIGNS the obituary of brother **Neil D. Lillies**, Aldborough, Ontario, who departed this life on the 25th of March, 1885, after a long illness, borne with patience and resignation. He was taken with severe hemorrhage of the lungs on the last day of February, 1884, and never fully recovered, but continued to decline till death came and released him from his sufferings. He leaves a widow and two small children to mourn their loss, besides father, mother, brothers and sisters, and numerous relatives. He was of very quiet and unassuming manners. He was received into the fellowship of the church at our meeting held in Ekfrid in June, 1883, and baptized by me. His last words to his sorrowing relatives were, "The Lord can bless you all if it is his will. Amen." He used to quote quite often all through his sickness, Jeremiah xxx. Our brother very calmly fell asleep, to awake no more until the sound of the great trumpet shall awake all the dead. I spoke on the occasion of his funeral, on the 27th of March, from 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8, to a large and attentive audience.

Yours in tribulation,

WM. POLLARD.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—It is my painful duty to write for publication the obituary of my dear mother, **Fannie E. Burns**, who was born April 13, 1832, in Perry County, Alabama. She moved with her parents, Terry and Nancy Dalton, to Marshall County, Miss., in the year 1836, and thence to Tishoming County, in the year 1853, where she and father were united in marriage. She died December 14, 1885, aged fifty-three years, eight months and one day.

Mother professed a hope in Christ and joined the church at Sardis, Alcorn Co., Miss., on Saturday before the first Sunday in August (if I mistake not), 1868, and was baptized by Elder W. H. Riddle. Her last hours on earth were peaceful and calm, and she passed away from the cares, toils and anxieties of this world without a struggle, and sank in death as calmly as an infant falling into slumber upon its mother's bosom.

LUMMIE A. BURNS.

BOONEVILLE, Miss., Jan. 29, 1886.

My dear mother, **Deborah Dillon**, died January 5, 1886. She fell asleep in Jesus' arms, without a struggle. Her departure was very sudden. She went to bed as well as common, but called me about twelve o'clock, and died at one o'clock. She was an Old School Baptist in belief, and was baptized when about sixteen years old. She lived a christian life, and her house was a welcome home for all the Baptists. Her age was eighty-seven years and eighteen days.

JOSEPHINE DILLON.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—About two weeks ago, in some very cold weather, I filled a few religious appointments, and my throat became so painfully sore as to disable me from eating, sleeping or working. I blistered the outside surface with croton oil and obtained considerable relief; but the blister still remains. I have also had for some weeks on my right hand a boil and blister, rendering it almost impossible for me to write. But for these afflictions the manuscript of the History would have been in your hands. There are but three or four days work on the table of contents yet to be done, and if spared in usual health, and providentially enabled to do so, I shall earnestly labor to complete and send you the manuscript by the last of next week—expressing it from this place next Thursday or Friday.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., Feb. 5, 1886.

[If brother Hassell is enabled to send the manuscript as anticipated in the above letter, we shall be able to announce in our next issue that the History is in press.—Ed.]

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Solomon K Crowley 2, John Brickey 2, H H Ratliff 2.—Total \$6 00.

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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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 1886, 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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Dowell, Edwards Co., Kan., or this office.

CHURCH HISTORY NOTICE.

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

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

Signs of the Times.

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

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1886. NO. 5.

POETRY.

JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING.

DOES rayless night press like a pall
Upon thy troubled spirit?
And dost thou bid farewell to all
The joys thou didst inherit?
List to the promise sweet and sure,
The light will soon be dawning:
Sorrow may for a night endure;
Joy cometh in the morning.

Through all that weary watch of thine,
Thy sad tears ceaseless falling;
"Was ever anguish like to mine?"
Thy better heart is calling.

Thou canst not see the stars, yet still,
Undim'd for age, they're shining;
And heaven-born hope, thy grief to still,
Is her charm'd garlands twining.

Grief's night is darkest just before
Immortal joy's bright dawning:
Sorrow may for a night endure;
Joy cometh in the morning.

Thy weary watch thou still dost keep,
All thoughts of resting scorning;
Counting the long hours as they creep,
And longing for the morning.

O words of heavenly promise sure!
The day will soon be dawning;
Weeping may for a night endure;
Joy cometh in the morning.

And O! when faith is lost to sight,
'Mid heaven's unclouded morning,
How wilt thou bless the weary night,
Before the glorious dawning.

PSALM CXLIII. 6.

O! WHEN shall my mind cease to roam
O'er mountains and valleys of thought,
That led me still farther from home,
And nothing but trouble has brought?
If Zion's my place of abode,
Let me in her suburbs have place,
Than dwell with the strangers to God,
Though held in their warmest embrace.

Dear Savior, O give me to know
Myself more and more, and to see
Much goodness towards me to flow,
And feel that it cometh from thee.

My heart is so hard, and so prone
To evil besetments and sin,
That when I would come near thy throne,
I hardly know where to begin.

For days, and for months, and for years,
I walked in the broad ways of death,
Securely, not troubled with fears,
Though breathing a poisonous breath.

In love with the riches of earth,
I gave them my thoughts night and day,
Not dreaming my soul had a worth,
Till taught by the Spirit to pray.

The world, so bewitching before,
Then seemed to be empty and vain,
While heaven appeared as a store
Of beauties again and again.

I thought that I never should roam
Again in the ways I had left,
That led me so far from my home,
And had me my comforts bereft.

But now I am farther away
Than ever from joys I once knew;
For when I endeavor to pray,
There's nothing appears to my view.

The pleasures of sin I eschew,
And heavenly comforts are gone;
When shall I my journey renew,
That leads to my heavenly home?

O break through these clouds of despair,
And shine away darkness and gloom,
And free me from trouble and care,
And bring me to heaven, my home.

THOMAS COLE.
ROYALTON, Ohio, Feb. 2, 1886.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I thank you for so promptly replying to my inquiry concerning the letter mailed to you the 11th ult., informing me that it did not reach you, which I regret very much, because the money is lost, and it also causes such an *hiatus* in the communication on "Predestination." At our post-office I am informed that said letter was forwarded the next mail after I handed it to the clerk; but it is impossible to trace it out so as to find it. As to that portion of the communication, not having retained a copy, I cannot reproduce it *verbatim*, but can give the substance, which I now feel that I ought to do. "And from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." The word "counsel" ends "sel," not "cil;" and ending as it does shows that it was not an assembly to give advice, but the purpose already determined. Why be so particular concerning two letters? Because it is absolutely necessary; for leaving out an "h" once, at the passages of Jordan, caused forty and two thousand of the Ephraimites to fall; therefore while dwelling upon the awfully momentous counsel of our God, as recorded in the Scriptures, we cannot be too careful of the orthography of every word. We need not fear, while dwelling upon the things declared to be predestinated by an unalterable decree, to give to every word its just meaning; and if we fear and love God we shall desire to do so. Now was it according to the purpose of God for sin to enter into the world, or did it happen so by chance? The writer remembers some forty years ago hearing an Arminian preacher say, "If wicked men had not crucified Christ, the millennium would then begun." When that was uttered, peculiar sensations took hold upon me, and mentally I had to say, "You poor wretch! you do not know what you are talking about." Another of that class of preachers said, when pressed closely in an argument, that "God did not know what Adam and Eve would do when left in the garden, any more than the literal father knows what his son and daughter will do when he leaves them; and it was an after thought with God to prepare a Savior." These two circumstances have been referred to in order to show what men will say when so pressed with Scripture testi-

mony that they cannot do otherwise, and there have been positions assumed recently savoring strongly of just such heresy; and it certainly appears to me, if we would only stop and consider, that we should be more careful, for Job said, "When I consider, I am afraid of him." Elihu (he is my God himself) said of Jehovah, "He giveth no account of any of his matters." Dear reader, when you hear caviling about God's purposes, do not forget the words of Elihu. I would that all of us would read carefully, sincerely and prayerfully the last ten chapters of the book of Job; for therein are declarations concerning the will, purpose and power of Jehovah that all the subtle metaphysicians on earth can no more explain away or overthrow than they can pluck the stars from the firmament of heaven. Nebuchadnezzar, which signifies in English, "tears and groans of judgment," was driven "from men" and had his dwelling "with the beasts of the field;" and he had to remain until seven times passed over him, and was made to "know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." And what did he learn in "that school?" We will hear what he says: "At the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" That earthly monarch was taught the doctrine of foreordination, foreknowledge and absolute predestination, and that our heavenly King is the God of purpose, will and power.

In the matter we are about to approach may our God control the thoughts, direct the pen, and enable a worm of the dust to pen down truth corroborated by divine testimony. It was either according to the will of God that sin should enter into the world, and death by sin, or it was not, for it must be one or the other; and if the entering of sin into the world was against the will of God, the inspired apostle was in error when he said of God, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." But we may rest assured that the entrance of sin into the world was

in the purpose of God. "I know," says one, "that sin is in the world, but then it was not the intention of God that Adam and Eve should transgress." Where did you obtain that statement from, my brother or friend? You have no authority for it in the Scriptures whatever. "Well, I do not think it consistent that God would give a command that he knew would be transgressed." What have we poor, finite mortals to do with that "secret of Jehovah?" It has already been quoted in this communication what our God says about our thoughts and about his, therefore we shall not repeat it. Do we not behold the two opposites in the visible creation, such as light and darkness, heat and cold, land and water, summer and winter, good and evil, black and white, salt and fresh, the innocent lamb and the blood-thirsty wolf, the harmless dove and the rapacious vulture? The contrast might be extended very far, but sufficient has been brought forward to show the important truth; and the I Am says, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." I cannot feel to take the time nor occupy the space in this communication to refute the comments I saw a short time since on this awfully sublime language of Jehovah, for they were not only antisciptural, but were really puerile. We are informed by an inspired apostle that "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." "If you take such broad ground relative to the purpose of God in all things, will you not represent him the author of sin?" No assuming any position in this matter, but adhering to divine testimony. The expression, "author of sin," is one of the most absurd, antisciptural phrases ever used by mortal man concerning Jehovah. Because a faithful, devoted believer and follower of Christ contends for the absolute sovereignty of God, sustaining the same by the written word of God, why is it said, If things are thus and so, God is the author of sin? Does it not look something like attempting to give a solution of that part of God's mystery which is too profound for angelic wisdom to explain, when mortals in the plenitude of their carnal wisdom attempt, as they term it, to clear the character of God from what men call sin? But because the record in the Bible declares things are thus, are we justified in attempting to explain it away or alter the plain construction? He who

knows how (remember it is Jehovah's how) to reserve the ungodly to the day of judgment to be punished, knows how to introduce sin into the world and not be the author of it. (I hope I am speaking with reverence.) O how careful we ought to be, and not attempt to compare our wisdom with that of Jehovah, or attempt to measure strength with the Infinite. "Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?"

It was the will, pleasure and purpose of God to form that worm of the dust called man, and breathe "into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul;" also to give him a prohibitory command, the transgressing of which justly brought death and damnation upon his then unborn progeny; for as said the apostle, "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." As there is so much caviling concerning the terms "vital unity," we will be careful of this word "passed," and see whether the unborn progeny of Adam were in vital unity in their Adamic and natural life. The verbs "passed" and "sinned" are in the past tense, showing the action completed; and the English verb "to pass" is from the Greek verb *dierchomai*, and signifies to go entirely through; therefore all were embraced. I should not want to be the person to attempt to argue away the vital unity of Adam and his posterity with that passage of Scripture before me. Where were the tribe of Levi when they paid tithes? or to be more concise, Levi himself? He paid tithes in Abraham; "for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him." I have been thus particular, for it will be used to sustain what is about to follow. Was there a tempter ready to seduce our earthly head, Adam? The Scripture reads thus, "Now the serpent was more subtle [Hebrew *arum*, crafty] than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." Was not the serpent created and made? So says the Scripture. "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Whether the archadversary approached our first parents in the literal serpent or snake, affects not the question before us, for he approached them with a lie in his mouth, declaring that what God had pronounced upon them if they transgressed should not come to pass; but they, or the woman, listened to his deceitful charms and yielded to the temptation, thereby incurring the wrath of God, received in full the penalty annexed to the restriction. Now was it in the purpose of God that such transgression should come to pass, or was it a casual circumstance? All orthodox or genuine Baptists will admit, we presume, that sin must enter into the world in order that grace might abound, or that the

blessed Redeemer might be manifested in the flesh, satisfy the justice of God, and redeem the church; if otherwise, how could a fountain be "opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness?" Question: "Could not a fountain have been opened for sin and uncleanness if man had not transgressed?" No; for had there been no transgression, there would have been no sin and uncleanness; also, it was in exact harmony with the purpose of God for it to be just as it has taken place. David by the Spirit said, "With thee is the fountain of life." If it was by divine appointment that sin should enter into the world, the channel through which it was to flow must have been ordained of God. Now if God knows how to reserve the ungodly unto the day of judgment to be punished, does he not know how to introduce sin into the world and not be the author of it? My brethren, let us beware how we indulge in the expression, "author of sin;" for sin's being introduced into the world is one of the hidden things of God, which has been brought to pass according to the divine arrangement.

Now concerning death passing upon all the progeny of Adam, and the fountain being opened to the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem, some things connected therewith are of such importance that we dare not pass over them hastily. The inspired apostle said of Adam, "Who is the figure of him that was to come." Also, that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." The word "figure," applied to Adam, means exactly what it says, for it is from the Greek *typos*, type, impression; now therefore we will see what is said about the matter of Adam and Eve in the second chapter of Genesis. Objection is made that the expression "vital union" is not in the Bible; neither are the expressions "human nature," "human offering," &c. The word "human" is not in the Bible; and many other expressions used are not recorded in the Bible. Neither is the word "union;" but the word "unity" is, and it has a very different meaning from the word "union." "Unity" not only means one numerically, but one in essence, or is the same; and prefixing the word "vital" before "unity" means that there is a life or living unity (not union); for it is from *vita*, life. Now we will see whether such a momentous truth as life unity or vital unity of Adam's progeny did exist in him or did not; for development is a very different word in meaning from existence. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep [he was not dead] to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made [Hebrew *builded*] he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." The man

was Ish and the woman Isha, or in plain English the woe-man, or the man-ess. I certainly cannot envy the man or men who attempt to explain away the vital unity existing and subsisting between Adam and all his then unborn posterity, for it can no more be done than mortal man can blot out the sun in heaven; and because of that vital unity was why death passed upon all men. The apostle says, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam (was made) a quickening Spirit. * * * The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." Nothing can be plainer than these declarations are; two men, and two heads. And what is said concerning the second man, the Lord from heaven? "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Also, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." No mortal can show from Scripture testimony how death passed upon all men in Adam separate from vital unity; neither can any one show from divine testimony how many could be made righteous by the obedience of Christ separate from vital or life unity. As to saying their flesh and bones were in that life unity in eternity, I am yet to hear any one say so, for such a charge is "begging" the argument surely; but as it regards the vessels of mercy, there will be no miscarriage in giving that life to them, neither will there be one of them lost or left out. I am aware that we are told that the spirit cannot be born of the Spirit; but who should know best, poor, frail mortals, or the Lord Jesus Christ? He says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." There, my brethren, is where inspiration has fixed the matter, and how dare any one attempt to change it? I have felt it necessary to be thus particular concerning the two headships, or the two men.

The spiritually enlightened child of God sometimes hardly knows which should receive the greater degree of admiration, the remedy or the disease; for says the truly contrite and broken-hearted sinner, "Who ever would have known the riches of God's grace had it not been for transgression?" According to Scripture, man was the proper subject for the serpent's wiles to be practiced upon; and man either possessed the inclination to listen to his device, or the devil was empowered to impart the same. Be that as it may, we see that there was an upright, innocent man, and a deceitful, malicious serpent; and the combination of these two elements or dispositions has caused all the calamity amongst the family of man from that day to the present time. Now the grave question arises, Is Satan self-existent or a created being? The abominable heresy of contending for a self-existent adversary has caused much sorrow and

commotion amongst God's dear children. If self-existent, then he is independent; but there is not one passage in the Bible sustaining such an heresy. But if created and made, as is declared in Genesis, then he is to fulfill a design; and the Scriptures plainly and positively show that wicked men and devils are environed by almighty power, and consequently their acts are limited according to God's will. Now because Satan possessed a malicious, deceitful disposition, averse to God's law, and man an upright, innocent nature, and the weaker being tempted of the stronger and yielding thereto, thereby bringing sin into the world, causing that sable mantle of gloom to be cast over this earth and all that pertains to it, shall we dare to accuse God in this mysterious transaction of being the author of sin? Supposing a steam engine had a very intricate machine attached to it, and the inventor should say to all, "Touch it not, lest ye be destroyed," and a man should attempt to manage it, contrary to the express command of the architect, and in so doing should be destroyed; would it be just to accuse the inventor of the machine as being a murderer? We find by careful observation that it requires in many instances a combination of elements to produce a result. For instance: the storm for the watering of the earth and the nourishing of the vegetation is the result of wind, clouds and water combined; and the awful storm of sin, resulting from transgression, was just as necessary for the development of the church of Jesus Christ as the storm of the natural elements is for the maturing of the vegetation upon the face of the earth. After the serpent beguiled our first parents he received his doom, which was, "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." The counsel of our God stands in dooming the serpent. When the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, Where art thou? he said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." We can see that Adam used fourteen words (leaving out the supplement) for an apology, and three words for acknowledgment; but that is about like all apologies, fourteen to three. I close this branch of the subject by quoting the following, "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? 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."

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 3, 1886.

STATE ROAD, N. C., Jan. 20, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—I again take my pen in my hand to give to your readers more of my travails here in this world of sin and sorrow; and while I make the attempt, my system trembles for the cause's sake; for the cause of my Jesus is more precious to me than tried gold. Then the question arises, Can such a poor creature as I am write, and not harm the cause of my Jesus? But there seems to be an irresistible constraint for me to write, therefore I will begin with my last published letter, which closed in speaking of the impressive sermon preached by Elder Caudell. Now, on the strength of that sermon I was greatly built up, for I thought all fear had departed from me but the fear of God, which is the fruit of the love of God, which I thought never would depart from me, but would be in me a well of water springing up into eternal life, peace and happiness. Now my strength seemed to consist of victorious faith in Jesus as my only refuge from all the storms of sin and Satan. At this time all my doubts and fears (which were so great) were suddenly removed from my mind, under the sound of this sermon, and my soul greatly feasted upon this fragrant season of Jesus' love, and the joy in his praise was unspeakable.

"Infinite power and boundless grace
In him unite their rays;
You that have seen his lovely face,
Can you forbear his praise?"

So I feasted a day or two in the light of Jesus' countenance. Then darkness began to close in upon me, and my hope, which had been almost (apparently) changed into sight, began to grow dim, and like a burning lamp almost went out, seemingly. I began to doubt and fear greatly that I was deceived and had deceived the little church at Rock Spring. Then would I say within myself, O how horrible is my condition! Then I would be driven into despondency, where I lay for some little time, not knowing what to do; for I could not take the Bible into my sin-polluted hands, as I thought, feeling so wicked. And I was afraid to go to prayer, for it seemed as though some one was following me, saying, You depraved wretch and rebel, would you be so daring as to get down on your sinful knees and take as holy a thing as God's name into your sin-polluted mouth, and roll it about with your sin-defiled tongue? I would answer in my mind, No, by no means; for I fear that God would smite me down to a terrible hell. "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Finally I concluded to make the attempt to offer a prayer. One night I was weeping because I could not weep, mourning on the account of my awful condition, when I arose and went some distance from the house, feeling dreadful as I went; but just as I was thinking of getting down on my knees, behold, a light shined around me, and it seemed as though

this light was filled with voices of the most melodious singing that I ever heard, and it seemed like this singing was praises unto God. It did not seem like I was in nature, for I felt as though my soul was in eternal bliss. Brethren, saints of the most high God, O that I could find language to portray unto you my happy feelings in this one special visitation of the holy Comforter to my poor soul. This heavenly vision did not last long, I suppose, though I cannot tell how long it lasted, for time was not with my mind during this heavenly season. When I came back to nature, I went on toward the house, greatly rejoicing in God my Savior. Then came into my mind baptism, and O how I did want to be baptized. I thought, How long I will have to wait. Can I wait until the appointed day comes to hand when I am to be baptized? This season lasted me for several days, but my way soon began to darken up gradually as I passed on. The third Sunday in June, 1878, began to draw nigh, which was the time that had been appointed for my baptism, and O how I dreaded the hour; for I greatly feared at times that I was not worthy, and my fear was greatly awakened because of the great solemnity of the awful thought of the glorious burial which was close at hand. Then I would wonder whether I was worthy to come to the grave of Jesus Christ and there be buried like him beneath the yielding waves. Finally the time came that I must set out on the long journey of about eighteen or twenty miles to meet Elder Caudell, at Mitchel's River, where he was to immerse me. My poverty was so great that I did not have a change of raiment, but brother York had promised me his clothes to be baptized in; so I went by brother York's house, received the clothing and kept on my journey, and arrived at my old grandmother's place at night, and tarried all night. The next morning we went to meeting, and Elder Caudell preached from these words, "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." At this sermon (which I believe was from heaven) the whole faculties of my soul and mind did quake, by reason of the power of God, and my flesh trembled over me, because of the glory of God, who is the God of peace, as in the churches of the saints, which is love indeed. After preaching, Elder Caudell marched to the water, but I did not start right away; for notwithstanding my feelings while preaching was going on, I could not shed a tear, and I almost shuddered at the fearful thought of being baptized; for I thought, If I am not worthy, O what a dreadful consequence it will be with me! But my courage was strengthened and I followed on after the crowd. When I reached the river side I found that Elder Caudell had made preparations for me, and was singing. He took me by the hand

and led me down into the water, and as soon as my feet entered the water I felt a spirit of divine innocence fill my whole being, apparently, and immediately my hard, strong heart was melted, and my eyes gushed full of tears and ran most freely down my cheeks. When Elder Caudell had laid me under the yielding waves, while under the water I had a view that I cannot comprehend, and it has ever been past my description; but I believe it was a view of heaven and immortal glory. And when he raised me up out of the water my feelings were those which I cannot wholly describe. I felt as innocent as a little infant; yes, just as innocent as innocent can be. I felt perfectly sanctified and happy. I believe that that dove-like Spirit descended from heaven into my poor soul, and thus blessed me in the discharge of my duty in following the meek and holy Jesus; for the light of God's glory did shine in and around my soul so brightly that this body seemed for a few minutes as though it were dead. I felt as helpless as a little infant, and as harmless as harmless can be, and as light as a feather. I had no idea that I would ever commit another sin while I lived on this earth. But alas! how sadly mistaken I was. Now I would just say that I had never seen any one baptized until I was led down into the water and laid beneath the yielding waves, and raised up out of it; but the action was performed just as I viewed it. I left the water and set out for home, and went greatly rejoicing on my way. My father being at home, under the hand of affliction, and being at a considerable distance from him, I made haste toward home, greatly rejoicing in Jesus, my eternal refuge, and thinking that when I arrived at home I could tell my father that I would not exchange the fulfillment of the duty of being baptized for the whole world. But while on my way, after I had traveled a considerable distance, and the sun was near the horizon, the tempter met me and began to tempt me most heavily with grievous temptations, by saying or suggesting to me that I was deceived, and that the glory of God had not rested upon me as I had thought; for said Satan, If it had, and you had been happy from above, you would have shouted with a loud voice like most professors do when they get happy. Having learned that it was customary among all sects in this country, and, as far as I knew, everywhere else, when people become happy, to go nearly deranged, and to shout and scream most fearfully, I was greatly afflicted for a few miles of my journey, even until about sundown, and probably a little after. But thanks and glory be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; for God suffered me to be perplexed but a short time with such temptations. While I was walking along, being greatly perplexed in my mind with the above suggestions, it seemed as though I heard a voice of the sweetest melody, which passed through my feelings with inexpress-

ible calmness, saying, "Fear not; for behold, I am with thee alway, even unto the end." Then was my joy very great. I went on my way rejoicing, and arrived at brother York's late at night. I delivered to him his clothing which I was baptized in, thanking him for his kindness to me, a poor, poverty-stricken boy. I tarried all night with him, and told him and sister York, his wife, of all God's dealings with me while discharging my long-desired duty in being baptized, and they seemed to greatly rejoice with me that night. Next morning I arrived home early, but was greatly fatigued with my long journey. I passed on in ups and downs, for my joy seemed to be very great at times, and then at other times I would be plunged into great and solid fears, which would often make me wonder to myself whether my experience was a true one or not. I would sometimes think my experience was different from any other person; for said I, There is not any one else that has to go through as many troubles, trials and temptations as I do. But when I would converse with others, I could witness with them in many things. But my time for a considerable length was mostly filled up with great distress, for my trials were very severe. There would arise many horrible temptations, which time and space will not admit of naming, and I will pass on. But I would just say that in all those temptations I always found my soul in a flame to know the way that leads to heaven and immortal glory; therefore it seemed that nothing could beat me off from this mourning and seeking the way of life, for my integrity seemed to be steadfast in the love of Jesus. I gradually passed out of this fit of temptations, but the question about my experience did so trouble me that I felt at times as if the very strength of my body had been taken away by the force and power of the suggestions of the tempter; for he would suggest that I was not traveling the christian's road, else I would not have such a rugged road; for said he, "The christians all live a happy life." And he also did tempt me with all manner of superstitious thoughts. But notwithstanding all these temptations of superstition, I had long before been killed to all notions of a superstitious nature, for I was reared up from a child to believe in all the ignominious notions, that is, of a superstitious nature, such as squirrels running in or across before us, when traveling in a certain direction, as being a sign of some future trouble; and hundreds of other such frivolous notions. But the light of the glorious Spirit of God had banished all such notions far away from me. Still the devil tried to tempt me to believe in many things of a superstitious nature. I passed on in all the foolish imaginations of the carnal mind. O how vain are the thoughts of man! And while I continued in this dreadful condition of the world's distraction, great and sudden terrors would fall upon my wild and perverse mind

with great and horrible shakings. Then would the tempter be thrown out of my carnal mind, and the carnal mind would be completely subjugated. For the thought would come to me, Not the will of the carnal mind, but the will of the spiritual mind, must be done, which is the mind of Christ. Then would the Spirit of God begin to testify that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. So my carnal nature was clad in deep sorrow and heavy sadness, while my soul and spiritual nature was clad in great rejoicing in God my Savior. My soul seemed to be filled with unspeakable gladness, and my feelings did remind me of the coming forth of the spring season, when everything seems to be full of joy and newness of life, like the merriment of the singing of birds. Now I rested in Jesus for awhile. Then my soul feasted upon these, and many like precious words of inspiration, "For whom he did foreknow [in Christ], 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 [thus] predestinate [to be conformed to his Son Jesus], them he also called [with holy calling]; and whom he [thus] called, them he also justified [by the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus to them]; and whom he justified, them he also glorified" in Christ. While in this peaceful state of mind I began to think of the new doctrine which I had lately heard, and which I had been informed of; for I had been informed by nearly every brother or sister I talked with, that there was not a person in the whole country that believed as I did. Said they, "The Primitive Baptists do not believe as you do;" for they would say, "We, the Primitive Baptists, believe in the foreknowledge of God; but we yet believe that there is a chance for all men and women to be saved. And you [they would say] believe in the foreknowledge of God, and that God in his foreknowledge did choose and predestinate a few individuals to felicity, and did predestinate and foreordain all the balance of Adam's race to eternal damnation." To this I gave my sanction. But my friends begged me to keep this notion of predestination to myself; for said they, "This sort of a notion is looked upon as being worse than the worst sort of infidelity by almost everybody." Now this seemed to greatly weaken my little hope, but still it did not quiet my anxious mind, for my soul did yearn for the cause of truth. But I had determined to live in quietude and have no strife with man. But this I could not do, for the cause of truth bore upon my mind most heavily, and these words would often come into my mind with the rush of power, even like the rushing of a mighty wind, saying, "I will yet show you what great things you shall suffer for my name's sake." Though as yet I did not know the meaning of these things, yet they were for my good. For we do know that all

things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. I passed on in many severe trials, for God had manifested to me that I should preach his everlasting gospel. Still I could not believe that I ever would yield to such an impression. But God did begin to show unto me his power in compelling a man to preach the gospel; he did begin to not only teach me his compelling power, but to teach me the divine principles of the gospel in the whole plan of salvation; and furthermore he taught me that I was one of his chosen vessels to tell it to the people. The very thought of standing before a gainsaying world to speak as a mouth for God did make me quake and tremble. But O the mighty power which did impress me at times to speak as a mouth for God. The greatness of this compulsive power became almost continual, and it was so dreadful to my soul that I would often betake myself to the groves by night, and would be out in the dark hollows and caverns at midnight hours, and would hide in the thickets at daytime, to beseech God in solemn and most earnest prayer that he would remove this awful and powerful impression from my mind, and put it upon some one else. I would select certain young men whom I thought would suit for a preacher far better than myself, and would beseech God to select one of those young men to fill my place. I would say, "O Lord, send any one else instead of poor, weak me." For I thought any man on earth would better fill the place of a preacher than myself. I traveled in great sadness, and almost every breath was a prayer. But all my prayers and groanings availed nothing, for while at prayer great and powerful impressions would arise in my mind, when alone in the groves and thickets, insomuch that I could not forbear breaking forth in loud acclamations to God for those great insights of the gospel mysteries. I would also be so carried away at times that I would begin to speak loudly concerning Jesus and the great plan of salvation; for the compelling power of God upon me to speak to the people concerning his Christ and glory of his kingdom seemed so great, as if there were no equal to it. And when I would go to meeting and see the ways of men and women, how they were lifted up in the great vanities of the carnal mind, the great pride of the people, and the wickedness of the world, and the much idolatry that was carried on among the people, it would almost break my heart to see the truth thus trampled, and no one among the people to defend it, nor one to rebuke the people for their wickedness and rebellion against their Creator. Then I could feel something rising in my breast, saying, "O Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do. But not my will, but thine be done." Then my whole soul and mind would run so full of desire to speak that I could hardly refrain from crying out at the very top of my voice, my very

flesh would tremble all over, and my bones seemed as though they would shake to pieces. But when I would get away from meeting, and my impressions grew lighter, then I would look back over my times of greatest impressions and think, O how foolish I was in thinking that I must preach; for I could not think that I could ever speak to the people, for I could not, as I thought, even stand up and face a congregation, let alone speak to them. I thought that my having no education, and having read the Bible but little, and having never known anything about the ways of the world, but appeared to the world a fool, that if I got up to speak I would make such a failure that the world would laugh me to scorn for being a poor, unlearned youth, an outcast of the earth, and perfectly worthless in the sight of the world. They would not hear me even if I could speak. Then I would cry again, "O Lord, send some one else; for behold, O Lord, my infirmities, and behold my uncircumcised tongue; for when I meet my best acquaintances in the road I cannot know how to address or congratulate them. Then how much less would I know what to say to them in a preaching manner." But what would be the glorious answer of great Jehovah to all my complaints and excuses? "Behold, I, the Lord, will be a mouth unto thee; for behold, I am with thee always, even unto the end. Go and preach my gospel to all I send thee to, baptizing them who bring forth fruits meet for repentance, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." Then, in the consideration of these heavenly promises, my soul did rejoice with great rejoicing, and said, "Blessed be the name of God our Father forever and ever. Amen."

So I will close this long letter, hoping that notwithstanding its imperfections it will find grace in the eyes of you, dear editors of the SIGNS.

Your little brother,

WM. R. WELBORN.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., Dec. 23, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—When you wrote on the subject of the rich man and Lazarus, you said you would like to hear from some one else; therefore I will submit to your better judgment what I trust the Lord has given me. I sincerely hope the Lord will guide my mind, as I know I am nothing, and less than nothing. This is the language of the Savior, and is so spoken that the world cannot understand it. It belongs to the generation of Jesus Christ. So in Matthew i. 1 it is written, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ." "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God." " whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." There is a very important lesson taught us in this parable, if we can only know the mystery that is contained in it. The parable is recorded Luke xvi. I will not quote it all, as there is so much, but will quote as I come to it.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." I may be wrong, yet I think the rich man refers to the condition the church is sometimes found in, and represents her carnal nature, not her spiritual nature, as I think the figure of a woman is used to present her when in her proper condition, walking in all the ordinances of her Husband blameless. Hence the apostle wrote to the church at Corinth, first Corinthians iii., "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." "Are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" The text reads, "A certain rich man." "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" I think I have witnessed what is shown in this, and with deep sorrow also. We are just like the children of Israel: when the Lord prospered them they became exalted, and forgot where their dependence was. As you said in your article, "purple and fine linen" signify royalty; so I understand it. The lords in the old country were considered better than other people. It is true that sometimes a church is blessed until it concludes it is a little above the others, which are poor and weak in numbers. An association, or a church, or an individual member, can and does get puffed up of the fleshly mind. What applies to one applies to the other. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."—Prov. xvi.

"Fared sumptuously every day." We very frequently meet brethren to whom the Lord has been pleased to give great stores of earthly goods, so that they fare "sumptuously every day." Solomon says, "Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God."

"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores." Ah, yes, here is one now before us in a sad condition—a "beggar." No one wants to be a beggar. See him as he comes along the highway, or in the city, in his rags. Who would be a beggar if he could help it? You, brethren, blessed of God, faring sumptuously every day, think how kind and merciful the Lord has been to you. How would you like to exchange places with the beggar? Do you not pity the beggar? I know you do. This beggar represents the poor minister of the gospel. Now notice the language, "who was laid." He did not go and lie down at the rich man's gate, but "was laid." Now listen to Paul, "For necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"—1 Cor. ix. 16. The Savior said, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."—Acts ix. 16. Again, Paul says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord," &c.—Eph. iv. 1. There is no prospect of this kind of prisoner getting away. Prisoners of men do escape, but the prisoner of the Lord

cannot. Yes, indeed, brethren, it was not left to Lazarus whether he would be a beggar or not; neither was he consulted as to whether he would lie at the gate of the rich man, for it says, "was laid." The Lord sometimes tries our faith, and lays a Lazarus at the gate of the very ablest church, as much as to say, Do you believe what the Bible teaches, and what the church has always believed, that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise," &c.? Now, if they are walking as men, just listen to what they say: "We will not open our gate to this little preacher; we must have an able man. He will do for that little church away up yonder in the corner, back in that woody country. There are but few members there, and but a small congregation, and he will do for them. But we are an able body, and rich in finance, and intellectual; and a great many of the outsiders are educated, and they are very much interested also. If we take him in [this little Lazarus], and he preaches for us, they will not come. If we had an able minister they would attend, and they would join, too. Never mind this insignificant, uneducated one; we will not call him, but we will call the one they all want to hear, and then our church will prosper." My brethren, do you see any manism in this? Is there a church anywhere in this sad condition? Be careful and watchful, for "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."—Psalm xcvi. "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." For if we try to steady the ark, his judgments will fall upon us. "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." So be watchful, brethren, or some one will be slain, and die, and be buried.

"Full of sores." I think this may refer to his perplexities, as it does to the afflictions of all the people of God; yet more particularly, in this case, to his financial troubles, as will be seen further on.

"Desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table." Natural food is for the strengthening of the natural body. When we are completely exhausted we desire something to eat, so that we may go on in our different kinds of labor. It is also true that when we are nearly exhausted in our pilgrimage here in this vale of tears, we desire to be fed with that manna which comes down from above. When like Elijah we find a cake baked on the coals, we go in the strength of that meat a forty days journey in the wilderness. It is not spiritual food desired here. Lazarus realizes the "woe is me if I preach not the gospel." But O! the "sores." He feels so much duty resting upon him at home that he says, How can I go? He looks around and sees the "rich man," his wealthy brethren. Ah, yes, luxury, extravagance and waste upon every hand. Money is hoarded up for children to quarrel over, and often to be the cause of their ruin. These crumbs

refer to the small amount it would take from each one to enable the minister which God has laid at their gate to go in the discharge of his duty. To-morrow is "Christmas." There is enough spent foolishly in celebrating this day to relieve the wants, to a great extent, of many of the suffering ones of God. Well did the Savior say, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." They worship the day, and neglect the Savior. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—Matt. xxv. 40.

"Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." Dogs refer to those who are not members of the church; hence it is said in the Revelation, "Without are dogs," &c. It is not said that they cured his sores, but "came and licked his sores;" that is, relieved the pain for a time. Some sores are large and some are small. I think this refers especially to his debts. He becomes involved, one way and another, in his struggle to live; hence he owes several persons. Now we hear him say, If I were only out of debt, what would I give! O those big debts! If I could only pay them off, how happy I would be. All the time the language of the apostle is ringing in his ears, "Owe no man anything." No wonder he is in so much misery. Well, he meets one who is not a member of the visible church, and that one feels sorry for him, and lets him have the use of enough money to pay the most pressing debts; and thus his sores are "licked" and eased for a time.

"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried." It is not said that Lazarus was buried. If the general idea were correct, it ought to have read that they were both buried. Many people think that natural death is spoken of here. If it were so, the language would have been that they were both buried. Death is a separation, a removal from one place to another; so the beggar was taken away from the rich man's gate. "Gate" is the entrance into a place or city. Abraham is a type of the Savior. Now, Lazarus is taken away from the gate of those brethren where the Lord laid him. There he had lain in the rain, sleet, snow, the night and gloom, and looked toward those to whom God had given him, there to lie and suffer through the long, weary, lonely hours of sorrow, and many times to think of the brethren whom he loved so tenderly, and would have died for; and yet they were so careless of him. So he is taken away, and "carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Hence he was given to other brethren, who were not "walking as men," and they received him, and opened their gate to him, and their hearts also, and he was in "Abraham's bosom;" yes, in the very bosom of Jesus. "The rich man also died, and was buried." He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the

eth to the wind shall reap the whirlwind. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." "For to be carnally minded is death." Therefore, after having used the means God had given him, in satisfying the desires of the flesh, and after feasting on the rich food found in the church of Jesus, he is separated from the ministry. I want to say here that a preacher who would be burdensome to his brethren who are not able to take care of him, or one that does not think enough of his brethren to share their burdens with them, giving his assistance in every way, has not a great deal of human sympathy. The apostle Paul says, "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain," &c. Any wealthy brother who is unwilling to assist the poor preacher who is struggling for life in this vale of tears, I fear has not enough religion to keep such a wretch as I am straight. "And was buried," completely swallowed up of earthly possessions, overcome by the earthly mind. The respect, and even worship, for some preachers, and the trampling of others under foot, is of the flesh; yes, is the doctrine of "Jezebel." Brethren, I am not writing this for pastime, but for the good of my precious brethren, whom I do not want to see fall, as the children of Israel did in the wilderness, because of disobedience. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." "I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts." So the rich man died; yes, the Lord says, "I will kill her children." They were rich in two ways; in finance and in supplies of spiritual food. I hear one say, while they are feasting, "Do you know what has become of that beggar at the gate?" "No; and I do not care."

"And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." When I am separated from my brethren, and have no company but unbelievers, I am in hell. Now he is separated from the ministry, and has not been to meeting for a long time. How reckless we become; everything torments us; nothing goes right; fretted at the least cross; we find no satisfaction anywhere; hence we are in hell. Now he lifts up his eyes. Ah, yes; he is beginning to realize his condition. A short time since he was so grand. "We are an able body," they said. How the judgment of God has fallen upon them! "Seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." "We did not think Lazarus was worthy our notice, but Jesus has taken him away off yonder; and to our great astonishment those brethren have taken him in through their gate, and into their hearts, and here we are destitute. O! were we ever in such a condition

before?" Now they begin to cry, "Father Abraham, send Lazarus." Almost every breath they draw is, "Lord, send us a preacher. O for one drop of water to cool our tongues."

"That he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Yes, send the least one, "the tip of his finger;" we can put up with any kind now. It does not make any difference about the style, nor the broken language, nor the awkward gestures. It has been so long since we heard a gospel sermon, if he is so small that he only compares with the others as the tip of the finger to the body, send him to us. We know we used to have rivers of living water. "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." But now we are entirely without. O for a little preacher. O that Jesus would only send one little one. How sad the answer, and how solemn: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." "Thy lifetime." That is, before you lived after the flesh, when you used to go to meeting and enjoy the preaching; but in your ingratitude you shut your gate upon the one the Lord laid at it. I will not enlarge. I only write this for the benefit of my brethren. These are examples for us. It does look hard to us, when he begged so very piteously, that the Savior did not send a preacher to them. Brethren, remember the language of our blessed Jesus to his disciples, "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet."—Matt. x. 11-14. "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."—Proverbs i. 26. Sometimes it is the case that, because we neglect those whom God gives us, not only a church has her candlestick removed, but an association is destroyed.

"Beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed." This shows clearly the judgment of God. The great Jehovah has fixed it so that they cannot pass. It may be that this means that notwithstanding a short time since they had so much of earthly goods that they were wrapped in them, now, after being deprived of the ministry, the Lord has taken away all their wealth. When the Lord takes hold of us to punish, he tears down in a hurry. Hannah said, "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich."—1 Samuel ii. 6, 7.

"Then he said, I pray thee there-

fore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." There is no child of God, when he feels the afflicting hand of the Lord, but would express the same desire that is expressed here.

"Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." What do Moses and the prophets say? "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." "They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods." Paul says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament." This shows that the ability of the ministry is of the Lord, and man is not to be praised for it. The work is done by the Lord; hence it is said, "The Lord added unto the church daily such as should be saved."

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." If they will not believe the Bible, they will not believe one who has been an eye-witness to these sad occurrences. It is very probable they would say, He does not know what he is talking about, or he would like for us to call him.

The Savior concludes this parable by saying, "It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." Be thankful, brethren, in these sad times, if the Lord has given you a minister at all. Do not back-bite and devour one another. Some one may say, This is a strange way for one to write who believes in absolute predestination. The last expression of the Savior proves the truth of this doctrine. "It is impossible but that offenses will come," &c. It was predestinated that I should write this poor scribble, and I trust it is in the purpose of God that some one may be benefited by it. If so, unto the King immortal, invisible, eternal, be all the praise. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

May the Lord bless you all, and sustain us by his grace, is the prayer of your poor, little brother, if one at all.

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

P. S.—Since writing the above article I have been advised by one of my best friends that it might injure me to have it published as coming from me. I do sincerely hope that I appreciate the advice of my friends; yet as I am not seeking favor with any one at the expense of truth, I

desire my brethren editors to publish my article. If the truth, or a faithful exposition of any part of Scripture, as shown to us by the Lord, hurts me or any one else, I cannot help it.

I. R. G.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., Jan. 7, 1886.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS:—

In looking over the index of the last volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I find that my name has appeared but few times in its columns in the last twelve months. Well, for this I feel that I have nothing to regret, feeling that I could have added little or nothing to the richly laden messages with which the last volume is filled. As I think of the superior ability of those whose messages come to the household of faith, bearing the sweet odors, even my heart is touched upon some tender chord; and with gratitude, thanksgiving and praise, with a sweet song of delight, I say, "Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices." O yes, more than this: "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon."—Cant. iv. 13-15. Right now my heart is made to swell with an invocation for the prosperity of our family medium, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; for it is sometimes through this medium that I learn that the north wind has awakened and the south wind has blown upon a garden or a tree away over about Hopewell, New Jersey, or about Southampton, Pennsylvania, or Carrollton, Kentucky, or it may be on the storm-beaten, pain-racked, wind-shaken, afflicted sister, Mary Parker, of Ohio, who is a stranger to me in the flesh, but I trust not so in the Spirit, from which the sweet odors of those rich spices flow out. It is "a fountain of gardens," and yet is but one garden. I hear my Beloved saying, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse [sweet relations]: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey." The comb is but the cell in which the sweet is deposited. "I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." O with what exhilarating feeling and heavenly delight we trace the beautiful similitude as brought to view in christian experience. "A garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." Enraptured heavenly vision! The corn of wheat falling into the ground, the treasure hid in a field, this treasure in an earthen vessel, trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, [“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,”] and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Poor, little, trembling child, trace back in your experience to where you

were first convinced of sin, of righteousness and judgment. This was the beginning with you, both of fear and wisdom. You saw yourself all over sin-defiled, vile and wretched, and looked to be hurled from the presence of God and the glory of his power. You did not know then, perhaps, that his power was at work in you to do his will. Were you not "afraid?" and did you not then feel, "How dreadful is this place?" Here is life and light made manifest; but perhaps you did not know it then, because you were "afraid." Now begins with you a manifestation of what the light reveals, and a fulfillment of that prophecy "written aforetime" for your learning, "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. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." The prophet, tracing on, says, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?" What majestic power, glory and wisdom are here exhibited to one thus beholding, to one thus gathered, to one thus borne, to one thus gently led. The gentleness of that leading of the blind, it would seem, was enough to ever quell the rebellious nature; but ah! we find to our sorrow that it is not. The question, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord?" &c., does seem enough to ever keep poor, vain mortals from endeavoring to direct the onward march of him who "cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength," "mighty to save;" but it is not. Sometimes poor, vain mortals begin to argue in this way: If we could just have such and such a preacher at our yearly meeting, our church would be refreshed and Zion built up. I know such and such a person that loves to hear this preacher and that preacher, and if we could just get him here I think such and such persons would talk to the church. Well, your preacher comes and goes, and nothing has been done, but to leave you in confusion of face and disappointed. Yea, more; perhaps you are more rebellious, for it is when the Lord builds up Zion that he appears in his glory. For "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?" Let vain, vile mortals tremble at hearing words of such awful and meaning import. Let us mark well, and behold with our eyes, and hear with our ears, all that the Lord hath said unto us concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof; and keep the charge of his holy things, and never attempt to set keepers of his charge in his sanctuary for ourselves. God "both will bring to

light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." How easy it is for us to be conformed to this world when we begin to walk after the flesh. The preachers get lifted up, and sometimes they begin to think that they are very important factors in accelerating the work of God and giving direction to his Spirit; but their own secret counsel, when not directed by the Spirit of the Lord, will bring them into confusion, and will also bring confusion upon those who follow their pernicious ways. O that the Lord's servants could always be clothed with the humility of the eminent and inspired apostle, who would come, though clothed with inspired authority, as a servant, and say, "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, [he does not go outside, but 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." "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" No room for boasting here. No big I and little you. No, no. As a servant, this holy, eminent man comes, declaring, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." He was not even ashamed to acknowledge that he was a prisoner. Hear him: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord [not a prisoner to his slavish pride, but the prisoner of the Lord. There is something humiliating in being a prisoner], beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." This language has a deeper and far more reaching meaning than the common vocations of life. One may be called by the grace of God, being a thief, like the one on the cross, or a robber, or a murderer, or a ward politician, diving into all the political slums so common about cities, or given to all the political chicanery, strategy and sophistry so common in the latter days. Must he still keep up that, and walk worthy, by doing what his hands find to do in this the vocation of his life? No. One may be called with the vocation of ministering to the saints; then let him wait on his ministry, and do it with the ability that God giveth; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation. For "we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Hence the apostle goes on and says that we must walk worthy the vocation (I have only mentioned a few) "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." "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" seems to be the keynote of all this last exhortation. It does seem to be the leading, primary, fundamental principle, or one of them, at least, and a very important one, of church organization; for where there is no unity there can be no peace, and *vice versa*. So first of all we should labor (endeavor) for this unity (then keep it) in each separate church organization; and peace will always certainly ensue. This will then certainly commend itself to the brotherhood, extending to earth's remotest bounds, to all gospel, order-loving brethren. And thus is brought to view the "one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." What a grand and glorious subject, and how inseparable are they who heed the humble beseeching of the apostle, linked together. No wonder the apostle, in approaching the point to deliver this admonition, should call the saints' attention to the glorious mystery of their being "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." And, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Here is unity; yes, union, vital and eternal. To this one body, permeated by the meek, humble, loving, long-suffering Spirit of the blessed Master, who was meek and lowly in heart, God has given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, "for the perfecting of the saints [not to make saints], for the work of the ministry [not to make ministers], for the edifying of the body of Christ [not to make Christ a body; for as the body hath many members, and all the members are one body, so also is 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." Here we see the importance of maintaining a oneness of mind and heart in church organization. Love and sweet fellowship reign supreme there. Brethren are subject one to another walking together in love. The King yet reigns there, the princes yet rule there, and woe to the man who invades her sacred precincts; for the munition of rocks is the place of her defense, and underneath are the everlasting arms. To this cause, dear brethren, I have devoted my life since, as I trust, I have been called to the work of the ministry; and having obtained help of God I continue unto this day, and desire the prayers of the dear saints, that I may

finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord.

Brethren Beebe, I have written these rambling thoughts hurriedly, submitting them to your better judgment as to whether they shall go any further than yourself. I am frequently asked why I do not write oftener for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and I received a communication some time ago from you, brother William, saying that you would like for my name to appear oftener in our valuable paper. I do certainly desire its prosperity, and am delighted with the ability with which it is conducted. With an earnest prayer for the peace, unity, prosperity and welfare of Zion, I will close. More anon.

Your brother in tribulation and sorrow, yet with the blessed hope of immortality,

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan. 6, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—As we have been permitted to enter another new year, I feel to add my little testimony of the goodness of God to me and mine; and while I try to write a few scattering thoughts may it be his holy will to fill my poor heart with the Word which in the beginning was the Word, and was with God, and was God. Now, my dear brethren and sisters, if one so unworthy may address you with this familiar name, which is often so dear to me; and I hope that through rich and reigning grace I have been led to know some of its sweetness, which is such a wonderful comfort to the poor pilgrims while they sojourn here below. The SIGNS comes to us richly laden with the gospel of the Son of God. The writers for its columns show that they are taught of God, for they all speak the language of Canaan. While reading the first of January number I felt a prompting to talk a little with those who are of like precious faith; but, dear kindred, I want to tell how terribly Satan has harrassed me while I attempt to write, suggesting evil thoughts, trying to break me off from what I desire to do, until I have feared I would give up. But there is something that I cling to, a stay or staff to hold me up; and I feel now to praise God's holy name that the cloud which has darkened my vision is parted and rolled back, and I can say feelingly, "Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee; for thou alone art my rock, my fortress and high tower, into which the weary run and are safe." Dear brethren and sisters, when I look back over all the way that I trust the Lord has led me, I am left to wonder and admire the greatness and goodness of our covenant-keeping God; for he says "to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." What a precious truth, my dear kindred. It is all of God from first to last. No wonder that at times we weep for

joy, and our heart is so full of love that it sings the high praises of the King in Zion, the lips giving utterance. Let the heavens declare his handiwork, and the stars shout aloud for joy. Then why should we fear? I believe the fear comes from our sinful corrupt nature, there is so much vileness about us; and while we are left to look at ourselves for goodness, we fear and tremble. There is a filial fear in the heart of every heaven-born son and daughter of Zion; but that is not a slavish fear. No. It is a desire not to offend one of the little ones, nor in any way bring a reproach upon the holy profession that we have made before many witnesses, having been judged by the judges in Israel, the church, and welcomed by them to all their joys and sorrows; putting on Christ by being baptized after the pattern of our dear Redeemer, which is so clearly left on record for our learning, so that a wayfaring man, though a fool, may not err therein. We have been brought to know long ere this that it is only when we are led by the Spirit of Christ to contemplate some of the hidden mysteries of the plan of salvation, of redemption, of election, of the sovereignty of God, and his absolute predestination of all things, that we can see or know one word of it. It is hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. We read that man by searching cannot find out God, for great is the mystery of godliness. "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The sweet words of the poet fill my heart with love and praise:

"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."

Since I laid this by to rest a little, I have read the editorial. It seems as if I could enter into some of the feelings of our brethren, whose labors must be great, and no doubt are often perplexing. I know it must be so. My desire is that they may be sustained. I am glad to see the firmness with which you stand in the great work that is before you. Love and good will and kind forbearance are clearly shown, and may each one of the patrons likewise manifest the same good spirit. The Lord is taking his loved ones home. Many who were made so very dear to us have now entered the portals of immortal glory. One of our little band, since our meeting in October, has gone. We enjoyed his conversation. He told his experience while many of our dear friends sat and listened. It was brother Boice. Thirteen years ago last November he and his companion were baptized by Elder S. H. Durand. Our brother was then seventy-two years old. His last visit with us leaves a very tender feeling, for he felt joyful, and said several times, "O, I feel so good. I have enjoyed the meeting so much." The Lord, if it is his holy will, can fill all the vacant seats. I could speak of many others, but will forbear. We know not how soon our time will come. I

have thought much of death for some time past. I cannot have fears about how it may be with me. The Lord has brought me safe thus far, and I believe he will never leave me; for he will verify his promise, that not one for whom Christ died shall be left behind. In looking over the past few years of my life I find it is not with me as I had hoped it would be. I had hoped that as I grew older, and my cares lessened, my mind would be more on spiritual things; but alas! it is not so. I find that I cling more closely to earth and the things of time. I learn more of the gloomy darkness that years ago I did not realize, when it pleased the Lord to revive his work in the hearts of his hidden ones in this part of the land, and bring them to the fold, with believers to live and to die. They were all brought as lambs, and it was a time long to be remembered. But this experience is for my good. I can now realize more fully what my brethren have passed through. I believed what they said, but I could not enter into their feelings as I can now. I find that as this house of clay begins to crumble, the strength of body and mind both feel the effect of its dissolution. Yet at times by faith I have a glimpse of the promised land, and believe that ere long I shall see the new Jerusalem, but not with mortal eyes or powers. Although I can never understand the depth or the greatness of the wonderful doctrine of the Bible, still I have an assurance by faith, I hope, that it is so. I have felt glad many times when some little controversies were ended, and I am pleased with the course that our brethren editors have taken. It is, I believe, for the peace and harmony of all lovers of truth.

I will not weary you, neither do I expect to instruct others; but I feel free to speak to the household of faith of what the Lord has done for me. I hope to remember our family paper, the SIGNS, once a year, as long as it pleases the Lord to give me strength to do so. We are greatly satisfied with our dear brother's (B. Bundy) preaching. We believe it is of the Lord, and to the comfort of the little flock. I was much gratified to have a visit from Elder S. H. Durand in November. It seemed good to hear his voice once more, proclaiming the riches of grace. We are enjoying the union and fellowship which is alone with the true followers of God. I submit this to your better judgment.

From your sister in hope,

CHRISTIANNA L. FRENCH.

CHESTER, Mason Co., Ky.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—In this day of declension from steadfastness in the gospel, and more or less of a manifest disposition to go back to the fleshpots of Egypt (the manners and customs of the world), it is a comfort to know that there are some of the successors to the fathers who are maintaining the ancient landmarks, and wielding "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," with the same ability as did the ancient worthies, who spent their lives in defending the truth of

God against all foes, whether within or without. I therefore rejoice to see the doctrine which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES advocated nearly thirty years ago by its former editor, advocated now by his sons. Truly it can be said,

"We are traveling home to God,
In the way our fathers trod;
They are happy now, and we
Soon their happiness shall see."

In the doctrine you have advocated I fully concur, so far as I have understood it. Indeed I cannot think that the generality of the brethren do not realize the importance of sustaining a medium of correspondence which will not compromise the truth of our God, even to save its own existence. If I should see the editors manifest that kind of a spirit, I certainly would have no use for it any more. I am now nearly half a century old, and I can see more clearly the necessity of having the tried heralds of the cross brought near to each other, as we are through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by understanding each other's views. I well recollect the first time I visited the east. I felt like I had met many of the veterans of the cross before, being so familiar with their names through that medium. There are but few of them still living who were correspondents at that time. It is certainly a fact taught in my experience, that we know not the value of a blessing until we are deprived of it; and so we will not realize what a blessing the SIGNS is until we are once deprived of it. And as Old School Baptists are an honest people in their dealings (or ought to be), I cannot see how they can take the paper for years and not pay for it. It is as much a violation of the divine rule as the breaking of any one of the commandments, being commanded to "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." Do we show our love when we do not pay our debts? Most certainly not. And it is our duty above all to attend to the order of the Lord's house. I know there is a complaint of hard times all over the land; but are we following the divine command in our living? Are we not more expensive in our dress and our living (fine dinners, &c.,) than we ought to be? Simplicity becomes the household of faith, both in their living and worship. Pride and vanity do not mix well with the religion of Christ and his holy apostles. The more pride and vanity we manifest, the further we are from the perfect rule. I believe the time will come (when we shall have been sifted as wheat) when the children of God will appreciate the privilege more than they now do, of worshiping God in spirit. Does not the prophet speak of the days that shall come when God shall send a famine in the land? "Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and the young men faint for thirst."—Amos viii. 11-13. There

seems to be a scarcity of the true ministering servants of God, and those we have are not appreciated in some places as I think they ought to be. For when God sends them of his own choosing, they will accomplish the work he has for them to do; but not being according to our choosing, we are looking out for some one that will be more acceptable to the masses. There is one result always when we take the matter into our own hands, and that is confusion, and it may be division.

I hope, dear brethren, that you will continue to publish our paper as you have done in the past, with an eye single to the glory of God. O may our God preserve us from unreasonable and wicked men, keep us unto his heavenly kingdom, enable his servants to see eye to eye, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, enable his children to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and present us all to himself unblamable and unreprouvable, for Jesus' sake.

I am, as ever, I hope, a fellow-laborer in the gospel vineyard.

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

OAKTON, Va., Jan. 27, 1886.

DEAR SISTER WHITE:—I will try and drop you a few lines, hoping that by the blessing of God you are much better, and able to be up and sit by the fire. I am thinking of you a greater part of the time. It is like a panorama before me. All the brethren and sisters are before me all the time. Why is it so? Is it because I love them more than other people? I hope so. Jesus saith, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And we are to love each other as he has loved us. Then shall we be his disciples. How are we to do so? For we read that love is of God; for God is love. Then surely it must be that God has shed abroad his love in our hearts. For we read that the carnal mind is enmity against God, so there can be no love there. If it is pure, undefiled love, it must come from God; it cannot come from any other source. I know I do not love the world as I love God's people. If they write or talk and give God all the glory of their salvation, then I feel that we are one in Christ Jesus. We read that they shall all be taught of the Lord. And if all have been taught in the school of Christ, they will all have one language. I was reading some old letters, one of brother White's, one of sister White's, one of brother Benny White's, and one of sister Miller's, and I enjoyed them all so much. It was quite a treat, I assure you, for I hear nothing here except Sunday School reading or songs. But they are not the songs of Zion, but the strange language of Ashdod. Bless the Lord, he is graciously pleased to grant me some tokens of his love to cheer me on my way, so that I am not alone; for I trust that God is with me to comfort me sometimes. And I hope that you and brother White get daily visits from Zion's King, and are enabled to say with the apostle, "For I reckon that the sufferings of

this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." A few days of suffering here, or it may be years, and then it will be done forever. Then we shall praise God, not only that he had an elect people, but that through grace we were numbered with them. Praise the Lord, O my soul, for his mercy endureth forever.

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

How it makes my heart rejoice to hear the lambs bleating around the fold. Yea, bless the Lord, he has yet seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal. And if some have gone astray, he will bring them out; for he will send hunters and fishers to look them up; not one shall be lost. Christ will have all his purchase, not one will be left in Egypt. How great the love and mercy of God, to stoop so low as to pick up such a hell-deserving wretch as me. And now, in the forty-sixth year of my rebellious meanderings and shortcomings, he has not cast me off. It must be because he has loved me with an everlasting love; therefore with an everlasting love he keeps drawing me. He says, he hates putting away. It is because his mercy fails not that I am not consumed. Yes, I long at times to put off this tabernacle; not that I would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. O what a glorious day for the righteous, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

RICHARD BASTOE.

[Written the day before his death.
See obituary on page 59.—ED.]

RISINGS, Neb., Jan. 1, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As it is time for me to send in my remittance for our beloved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I have thought I would try and write you a few lines in regard to my hope, and ask you if this is a good hope through grace. We read of some that have no changes, and the Scriptures declare that such fear not God. This Scripture has comforted me many times, for I find I am full of changes; but most of the time I am in darkness, doubt and fear. Sometimes I feel nothing of the Spirit's work in my heart, and then I fear the Lord has forsaken me. "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favor-

able no more? 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." "I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer." But the Lord says, "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." "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." These Scriptures have been very comforting to me, and assure me that the Lord will be with me through all the changing scenes of life, whether in the dark or in the light. Whether my Savior shows his smiling face, or hides himself from my view, his love is the same. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." I sometimes have such a longing desire for the presence of God my Savior, and at the same time have such a sense of the vanity of all earthly things, that I feel to say with the poet,

"Tell me no more of earthly toys,
Of sinful mirth and carnal joys,
The things I loved before."

No; these things used to please me well, but they cannot any more. I want Jesus to manifest himself to me as he does not unto the world.

"Let me but view my Savior's face,
And feel his animating grace,
And I desire no more."

I find we may sink very low, but a view of the Savior's face will raise us up, and cause us to rejoice in his dear name, and we say, He is "the chiefest among ten thousand." "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious." He is precious to us because he has saved us from (not in) our sins, and because he has manifested himself to us as our Savior; and we feel to say,

"Poor, weak and worthless though I am,
I have a rich, almighty Friend.
Jesus, the Savior, is his name;
He freely loves, and without end."

Will Elder Beebe please give his views on Solomon's Song v. 2? "I sleep, but my heart waketh," &c.

Your unworthy brother,

SAMUEL HEWITT.

WAVERLY, Iowa.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find two dollars, for which please send the SIGNS another year. I feel most of my time useless to myself and to everybody else. Could I feel that one thing I could say on this great and exhaustless subject would be to the dear children of God what I hope theirs are to me, then I would take courage and write, for I would feel that I did wrong in keeping silence. If I shall utter one word which is comforting to any of God's dear children, give God the glory. Could I write and express my feelings as dear

sister Yeoman has for me in her last letter, I would gladly do so.

The Lord has seen fit to visit me often with his chastening rod, which has cast me down, and caused me to let go of the things of this world. I know I needed every one, though so bitter to bear, and it has caused me to greatly fear his mighty power. If I could, gladly would I say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." But I do not. I daily fear I murmur at his dealings, yet I feel that he knows what I need far better than I know. God overrules all things for the good of his chosen people; and if I am one, however weak, I am needed to make up the number. I have none of our order here to talk with. An "evangelist" has been here, who was paid twenty-five dollars a week to convert souls; and his followers feel well paid, for it is said that he converted many hard cases. O, dear brethren, I was made to feel glad, if not thankful, that I have been kept from following after such idolatry. We have plenty of such kind of man-made religion; but what I love to hear is Christ and him crucified, who is the way, the truth and the life. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. If I serve any, such a God I do want to serve, who is wholly independent of the help of poor, weak man. The SIGNS and my Bible contain all the preaching I have; and I do feel that I enjoy them, especially some of the editorials, and many letters of the able writers. I feel to say, Write on. I would not occupy room, but keep silent, and let those occupy who are capable. I hope we may hear more from brother Welborn. O what wonders grace can do! Our dear and afflicted sister Parker, I have had one of her precious letters, but have not heard from her in a great while, and I fear she is unable to write; but in her afflictions the Lord she loves and humbly serves is with her, and has often proved to her that as her days, so shall her strength be.

Remember me in your prayers to our Father in heaven, that he

"Will meet me in the vale of death
When his decree demands my breath;
May his sweet Spirit me supply
When nature sinks and flesh must die."

A. SHEPHERD.

TUSKALOOSA, Ala., Jan. 6, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find money order for the amount I am due you, six dollars, for sending to me so promptly our truly esteemed paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Please accept thanks and my very best wishes. I do hope you may be spared for many years, and that the kind and efficient brethren and sisters may still be prompted to send forth their able communications to cheer and comfort the lonely little ones who are unfortunately so situated that they cannot hear the gospel. To such you can have no idea what a source of comfort such a messenger as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES proves to be. I am sorry to say that brother H. J. Redd, of Northport, Alabama, is in a

very bad condition. His health has been bad now for over twelve months, and for two months he has been confined to his bed almost entirely. He is truly to be pitied. His nervous system is shattered, his digestion is gone, and he can scarcely sleep day or night. He wishes the brethren to pray for him. I do sympathize with him and his family, for I believe him to be a good christian. Please excuse me for consuming your valuable time, but I feel so much interest in brother R. that I cannot help speaking of him, when I know he holds such a warm affection for you. Allow me to again thank you for your kindness in sending me the SIGNS so promptly.

In hope of a glorious resurrection,
I am yours, &c.,

F. M. TURNER.

PLATTSBURG, Miss., Dec. 24, 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel that I must send on my remittance for my paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I cannot very well do without it. It always comes to me richly laden with good news, and contains the most of the preaching I have in this country. I feel at times very lonely, for there is not any Old School preaching in this part of the country. We have all the isms of the day preached here, but they are no food for me. We often feel to rejoice that grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, and that life is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. O how we do rejoice that truth is mighty and must prevail. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." I wish to send my love to all who love the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and particularly to the dear brethren and sisters who write so ably and comfortingly. Although total strangers in the flesh, I hope and believe that all are born of the same Spirit. I hope all the dear brethren and sisters will continue to write. Inclosed find two dollars for the continuation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for my wife, M. S. Richardson.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
A. J. RICHARDSON.

BELFAIR MILLS, Va., Jan. 1, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose you five dollars and fifty cents, for which I wish two of the Imitation Morocco Hymn Books, small type, and two dollars to pay for the SIGNS for 1886. I wish I could send you some new subscribers, and am sorry indeed to hear your subscribers have fallen away so. Brother Beebe, I think the editorial on "Predestination" worth the subscription price of the paper. It was a feast to me. I felt to rejoice indeed in the belief of the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, and to know that neither wicked men nor devils can change one of God's plans. May this new year bring you prosperity both spiritually and temporally, is the wish of your sister in hope,

C. M. JOHNSON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1886.

THE CHURCH HISTORY MANUSCRIPT RECEIVED.

WE have now in our office the manuscript of the Church History, which makes nearly twice as much as we anticipated. To get the whole matter into one book we will have to run it in brevier, the sized type in which obituaries are printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and then the book will make, as near as we can now estimate it, from eight hundred to one thousand pages; reading matter six and three-fourths inches in length, and four and one-eighth inches in width. This will make the book probably the largest history ever published in this country for the money, being equal to what generally sells for from six to eight dollars. To complete this work it will take us from six to eight months. We assure the subscribers that we are as anxious to get the work done as they are to have it completed, and if possible we will shorten the time mentioned above. The work now is mostly of a mechanical nature, and the time necessary for its completion can be calculated with more certainty than can the composing and compiling. We will keep subscribers informed as the work progresses by publishing from time to time just how far the work is advanced. To run the book in long primer, as at first proposed, would make from sixteen hundred to two thousand pages, which would necessitate running it in two volumes, and that would make it too expensive for many of the subscribers. We are actually crowding two large books into one, and selling that at half-price.

MERCY AND TRUTH.

"MERCY and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."—Psalm lxxxv. 10.

All the trials, temptations and sorrows which it is given the saints to endure in their earthly sojourn, are in the wisdom of God appointed for the good of the tried ones, and for the manifestation of the glory of God as revealed in Christ Jesus. In the clouds and darkness of the things which are seen by natural reason, it has pleased God to hide from finite scrutiny the gracious purpose for which he has created all things, and this impenetrable darkness is as unsearchable to the natural mind of his saints as it is to wicked men and devils. Every lover of Jesus is as unable as was Peter to understand why they cannot at once follow their Lord to death and eternal glory.—See John xiii. 36-38. It is by the Spirit revealed alone to the faith of those who are born of God that the way in which infinite love has given them to suffer with Jesus is the right way for their own instruction in righteousness and growth in grace. This revelation is to natural reason as thick darkness as was the pillar of fire to the Egyptians at the Red Sea.

—Ex. xiv. 20. The best system of religion which reason can comprehend represents the salvation of sinners as the triumph of mercy and compassion, and the defeat of truth and righteousness. In accordance with this natural principle all false theories are built upon the basis of supposed changes in the will of God; for no created intelligence can devise a way in which God is just in justifying sinners. It is easy for reason to grasp the thought that infinite love and mercy should desire the salvation of sinners; but only they who are taught of God can see the justice of that salvation according to the immutable purpose of God, by which the objects of eternal love were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.—Eph. i. 4. This great mystery of godliness is revealed in the manifestation of Christ Jesus as Head of his body, the church, including all the members of his body for whom he gave his life, from righteous Abel to the latest recipient of the knowledge of that grace which bringeth salvation. Beyond the blessed number of the subjects of this divine teaching no efforts of men or angels can communicate this living truth; for the Lord has declared that this knowledge is life eternal, and that to him exclusively is given power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him.—John xvii. 2.

It is not our purpose to attempt to show to the comprehension of the carnal mind how it is that sinners are justified freely by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Every one who has been taught the justice of God in his condemnation, and seen the exceeding riches of his grace in giving life and righteousness to the guilty, has been led to hope in that salvation as an infinite mystery. No explanation of this mystery has ever been revealed but that which was declared by our dear Redeemer himself when he 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 25, 26. In every genuine experience of the work of the Spirit this revelation of the sovereignty of grace must be taught. Without it there could be no hope for the conscious sinner. Indeed all the sinner's hope rests upon this revelation of the satisfaction of divine justice in the one offering of Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. This foundation cannot be destroyed, and therefore the trembling ones who have fled for refuge to lay hold on this hope set before them can never lose that good hope through grace, which as an anchor sure and steadfast holds them securely. It is not by reason of their being in themselves worthy to receive divine favor that they are thus safely kept by the

power of God. All their merit is in their strong Redeemer, who says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." The unspeakable riches of grace embodied in this living assurance never fails to bring heavenly comfort and support to every saved sinner to whom it is shown by the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, neither knoweth him. It is not necessary that they shall be able to understand all that is written in the inspired record of the testimony of Jesus. They rejoice in the manifestation of his grace, by which he has delivered each of them from the burden of conscious sin; and they can glorify him as their Deliverer, even though they do not see the whole principle of the way in which justice has been satisfied. They know that they have received deliverance, though they may not be able to tell the way in which it came to them. The poor, blind beggar could not discuss with the Pharisees their sabbatic questions, or if it was a sin to open his eyes, but he could say, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."—John ix. 25. So, every one in whom Christ Jesus is revealed as the hope of salvation knows that he sees things which were once hidden from his sight, and loves things which were not loved before this change was wrought in him. Even though the first manifestation of grace may have been in infancy, as with Samuel, Jeremiah and John the Baptist, they know by bitter experience that their natural heart or carnal mind is still enmity against God. This produces continual warfare within; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that they cannot do the things that they would. The living principle of love to God produces in them hunger and thirst after righteousness, and this causes sin to be a burden and distress to them. None can bear this internal evidence but those who are led by the Spirit of God; for it is impossible that the carnal mind should hate sin, however much it may desire to escape the just condemnation which is the necessary consequence of sin. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil."—Proverbs xvi. 6. There is no revelation of iniquity being purged by mercy without truth. It is revealed in the experience of every saint that truth is an essential perfection of God; and it is for this cause that he is compelled to give up all hope of acceptance by merit of his own, since he knows the sentence of divine justice is recorded against him as a guilty sinner. Despairingly he cries for mercy, but he sees even in that prayer the sin of rebellion against the holiness and truth of God. When his prayer becomes sin in his sight, and the last ray of hope has been shut out by conscious sin, then he is prepared to receive the revelation of divine truth and justice in extending mercy to the justly con-

demned sinner. In the miracle of love and mercy by which he is saved from his sins is revealed the mystery of grace by which he receives unre-served justification from all things from which none could be justified by slavish obedience to the law of Moses.—Acts xiii. 39. Herein is the wonderful character of the Redeemer displayed, in that he has not only delivered his people from that death under which their sin had justly placed them, but he has saved them from their sins by which they were consigned to that condemnation.

In the first view of the law of sin and death, as it is shown to be the embodiment of strictly perfect truth and righteousness, there is no place for mercy and peace to appear. Justice can grant no forgiveness of sin, for divine truth has declared, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." This flaming sword which turns every way keeps the way of the tree of life, thus cutting off all hope of relief for the sinner. With the prophet he may well ask, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah vi. 6-8. To the conscious sinner this appeal is unanswerable. He knows that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good," and that he is "carnal, sold under sin." Thus hopelessly condemned by the righteousness which is written in the law, there is no way of peace known to him, for eternal truth forbids the entrance of mercy. In the terrible gloom of this thick cloud is heard the awful thunder of just vengeance demanding the life of the sinner, and he is compelled to own the sentence just and true; for righteousness and truth cannot allow the entrance of mercy and peace. This is not merely an abstract lesson learned from parental teaching; it is living, burning truth, known and felt in the very inmost being of the quickened sinner. To him now there can be no deeper mystery than that declared in our text; and when in the revelation of Jesus Christ as the end of the law for righteousness to him he sees this truth displayed, it is a glorious exhibition of infinite wisdom and love which exceeds all other mysteries, and transcends the utmost stretch of his comprehension. As the guilt of all his sins is forever purged away by the atoning blood of Jesus, and the pardoning voice of infinite love and divine compassion comes from the sovereign lips of that dear Redeemer who bore his sins in his own body on the tree, sweet mercy flows in a resistless torrent of almighty grace, and

heavenly truth attests the righteousness of that perfect peace which buries him in the baptism of infinite love.

This gracious meeting together of mercy and truth, and the perfect agreement of righteousness and peace, is not any poetic fancy of the psalmist. It is that peace which God the Lord will speak to his people and to his saints. Here is an important point for them to observe in this declaration. There is no condition prescribed to be fulfilled by them to whom this peace is spoken. It is positively declared that he will speak peace to them; and with the promise he gives the admonition, "But let them not turn again to folly." This is in harmony with the declaration of Paul, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans viii. 1. They who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God; and they are not their own, that they should walk after the flesh, or "turn again to folly." There is a particular provision for them even in disobedience, however, for in the new and everlasting covenant it is written, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips."—Psalm lxxxix. 30-34. Living children of God know the solemn weight of this admonition, for they have learned by experience that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. x. 31. He will chasten his saints in their disobedience as surely as he will save them from their sins by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. If in the sure provision of grace for the salvation of the redeemed people of God there appears to any one a reason for continuing in sin, the evidence is that the love of sin yet reigns in the heart of that one who could thus turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. However such may deceive themselves and their fellow-men by a fair appearance and a show of godliness, their profession will be exposed in the terrible trial which shall manifest the very secret thoughts of all hearts.

The time when this declaration in the text shall be fulfilled is when the salvation of God shall be "nigh them that fear him." This must refer to the exhibition of that salvation to them, since the saints are all kept by the power of God, and secured in his immutable purpose of grace even from before the foundation of the world. No changing scenes of time have any effect upon the eternal dwelling in God of all his saints; but in their experience in their earthly sojourn they often feel to doubt the protecting presence of their God, and ask in their darkness, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favor-

able no more? 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?"—Psa. lxxvii. 7-9. In such times they feel the need of the assurance that his salvation is nigh them, and that assurance is given in the fear of the Lord which is in their heart. When they have this testimony of Jesus ministered unto them by the Holy Spirit they realize indeed that glory does "dwell in our land." That glory is in the Lord alone, and the more fully it is revealed in the saints the less they can find in themselves in which to glory. Indeed, the rapturous sight of the Lord in his glory caused Isaiah to cry, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." This revelation caused Daniel to retain no strength; and when John saw him he fell at his feet as dead. The effect of the revelation is the same in all who are enlightened by his grace. This is a mark set by the Spirit of truth upon the children of promise; and it is in clear contrast with the effect of the spirit of falsehood, whose deluded followers are filled with pride and self-confidence just in proportion to their blindness in error. So says the proverb, "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident." It is the safest place in the experience of the saint when he is so weak that he cannot help himself, so poor that he must pray for daily bread, so blind that he must be guided entirely by the leading hand of God, and so destitute that he does not even know what to pray for. It may be that even the true child of God is liable to act the part of the fool in this proverb, and to smite with the fist of wickedness such as fail to render to him the deference to which he lays claim. In such a course the saint would certainly turn again to folly; and if any professed follower of Christ can pursue such a course without receiving the chastening rod, there is room to doubt the genuineness of his profession. The trembling little one who fears the Lord will ever find more trouble with his own evil heart than with the errors or faults of others. As his little hope rests in the mercy of God, it is of vital interest to him to know that there is no conflict between that mercy and the eternal truth of God, which is manifest as springing up out of the new earth, wherein dwelleth the righteousness which looks down from the heaven of the fullness of joy in the presence of our God; and this one whose only trust is in the sure mercy of the everlasting covenant will find his pleasures forevermore at the right hand of his Lord, that is, in obedience to the law of the King in Zion.

In the closing expression of the text there is suggested a fact in the practical experience of the saints. Taking the law of the King of saints

as the standard of righteousness in his kingdom, the observance of all his injunctions is inseparable from the experience of peace in the answer of a good conscience toward God. Thus they have kissed each other in the divine harmony which characterizes the gospel kingdom. Every perfection of the eternal God is displayed in infinite glory in the complete salvation of all his people from sin and death, as it is revealed in the triumphant grace that is in the dying and risen Jesus. To him be glory evermore. Amen.

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We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

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SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

MARRIAGES.

DEC. 30, 1885, by Elder John W. Timmons, at his residence near Pittsville, Mr. Elijah Parsons and Miss Georgia Farlow, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, Jan. 5, 1886, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Josiah Johnson and Miss Emma E. Shockley, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, Jan. 27, 1886, at the residence of Mr. John Hamblen, near Pittsville, Mr. Isaac J. F. Beauchamp and Minnie E. McCabe, both of Wicomico County, Md.

ON Feb. 17, 1886, by Elder William J. Purington, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Morgan D. Blackwell and Miss Carrie E. Drake, both of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request of our dear mother, Sarah E. Spurr, I now undertake to write her obituary. Mother was born near Lexington, Fayette Co., Ky., Jan. 9, 1829, and died April 9, 1885. At the age of fifteen years she professed religion and united with Cain Run Church, and was baptized by Elder Louis Adkins. The hymn that was sung at that time ("Not ashamed of Christ"), she had two Old School Baptists to sing for her while she was sick, and she said it carried her back fifty years, to the water's edge. She was married to W. P. Spurr (her maiden name being Higgins) Oct. 27, 1842, by Elder Thomas P. Dudley. After living in Kentucky for some time, they moved to Missouri, and while there she had no opportunity to enjoy church privileges, for there were none of her denomination there. When they moved back to Lexington the Cain Run Church had split, so she united with Georgetown Church. She remained a member of that church until she came to California in 1853. When the church was organized in Santa Rosa, by Elder Owens, she united with it and has been a member ever since of the same, although they have had no church meetings for a good many years. Mother had not been well for twenty-five or thirty years, suffering from a complication of diseases, and within the last eight years she has been troubled with a cough. The past winter she suffered more than any one realized. On the seventh of last February she had a slight stroke of paralysis, caused by the slight rupture of a blood vessel on the brain, and that by her cough: for previous to that time she had coughed almost incessantly for three days and nights. On the ninth she had another light stroke, and with the constant care of a physician, her children and a good nurse, it was impossible for her to rally. The first four weeks she would eat and take stimulants, but for the remainder of her sickness she never took more than two or three teaspoonfuls of tea or milk a day, and no stimulants whatever. She lived just two months and two days. The first weeks of her sickness were happy moments to us; for though the organs of speech were partially paralyzed, there were times when she could talk as plain as ever, and then her one great subject would be the good and loving Savior. O how happy she was when she thought she was dying. Her constant prayer was that she might be released from her suffering body; and no wonder, for her life has been full of trouble and trials. If she had not had her loving Savior to lean upon, I was afraid she would have faltered under the burden long ago. During the last four weeks of her sickness her mind wandered. She told me to tell you that she had taken the SIGNS for over twenty-five years, and that she had been an Old School Baptist for over fifty years, whether she was a Christian or not; also, that her sole dependence was in her Savior, who died to save his people. She often repeated,

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

Also Psalm xxiii. I never saw any one so unselfish as she was. Her constant thoughts were for the welfare of others. She raised a family of five, one boy and four girls, all of whom are married and settled in California. They were all with her during her sickness, which seemed to be a source of great pleasure to her.

Her remains were, on April 11, laid at rest in the St. Helena Cemetery.

M. L. YORK.

By request I send a notice of the death of our dear brother, John Deffenbaugh, who died at his residence in Sugar Creek Township, Putnam County, Ohio, January 11, 1886, aged seventy-nine years, two months and nineteen days. He was born in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, October 26, 1806, and was married to Miss Anna Parshul on June 24, 1829. They were both baptized by Elder John Thomas (Elder Wm. Brownfield was pastor), in the fellowship of McLellandtown Church, soon after they were married. The above named church was a member of the Redstone Association. From there they moved and settled near Lancaster, Ohio, and from there to Putnam County, in the

year 1835. They were both received by letters into the Sugar Creek Church, in the year 1843. He served the church as deacon and clerk from 1846 to within a short time of his death. His wife bore to him nine children, eight of whom are living. Sister Deffenbaugh died March 17, 1875, leaving her husband, eight children, the church, and a large circle of acquaintances, to mourn the loss. She was a kind and affectionate mother, a dutiful wife, and was highly esteemed by all who knew her. Brother Deffenbaugh was married the second time, on May 27, 1879, to Mrs. Mary A. Alspach, of Van Wert County, who survives him.

The Putnam County Sentinel gives the following account of him:

"Shortly after he became a resident of Putnam County he was elected Justice of the Peace, a position he held for twenty-seven successive years. He was County Commissioner six years, and County Auditor four years. In the year 1831 he joined the Old School Baptist Church, and lived and died in that faith. He was an upright and faithful Christian man, and was loved and respected by all who knew him. He died leaving to his friends a bright evidence of acceptance with his Savior."

A few hours before he died, when he had become so weak that he could not talk much, he made signs for pencil and paper, and wrote the following:

"In the year 1831 I received a hope, and was baptized, and I have never entirely lost that hope, although I have had a great many ups and downs since."

The funeral services took place on January 16, 1886, at the Ottawa River Church. The funeral discourse was preached by Elder S. Seitz, followed with some remarks by the writer, to a large concourse of friends from far and near.

Sister Deffenbaugh has lost a very kind and affectionate husband and companion, the children an indulgent and tender-hearted father, and the church has lost a sound, uncompromising brother. But we mourn not as those that have no hope, for our loss is his eternal gain.

J. G. FORD.

RUSHMORE, Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I am sad, and my heart is filled with gloom, for God, in his inscrutable providence, has called my dear wife from the cares of this life.

Emeline Cordelia Starr departed this life Dec. 11, 1885, at our home near Maysfield, Milam Co., Texas. Her disease was pneumonia, with other troubles. She sent for me on the morning of Dec. 1, and when I came in she said she was in great distress and would never be any better. She expressed herself as being willing to die, and said she had but one thing to dread, and that was in leaving me and her children. I asked her if she was sure she would be better off, and her answer was, "Yes; I have had a hope for fourteen years that I would, and now I feel like I can say, I know it." This was the fifth day of her sickness. She passed away as one falling asleep, without a struggle.

She was the daughter of William and Melissa Whitaker. She was born in Newton County, Georgia, March 23, 1849. We were married by Joseph L. Purington, Dec. 17, 1868. She was baptized by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, in the fellowship of Shoal Creek Church, Newton County, Georgia, on the fourth Sunday in August, 1874, since which time, until she fell asleep, she has contended for the faith once delivered to the saints. She made no compromise with error, and I have often been strengthened by her firmness in the doctrine of salvation by grace, without the least mixture of works. Her place at the meetings of the saints was never vacant, unless providentially hindered, inclemency of weather being no excuse for her, as many know. She was a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was a kind and affectionate wife. I lived with her sixteen years, eleven months and twenty-six days, and she never gave me a cross word in that time. She was a devoted mother, and was loved by all who knew her. She leaves a father, mother, one sister, and four brothers, with a number of relatives and friends, in Georgia; also one sister, seven children and a

poor, despondent husband, with a number of friends, in Texas. We mourn our loss, but not as those who have no hope. O that God in mercy may sanctify this sore bereavement to our good and his own glory, and may the supplications of God's people ascend for us in our lonely condition.

Yours in affliction,

J. P. STARR.

MAYSFIELD, Texas.

It is my sad duty to tell of the death of Richard Bastoe, a member of the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax County, Virginia. He was born in England, June 22, 1807, left there May 7, 1827, and landed in New York City June 25, same year. I found in his Bible recorded, "Forty-five days passage. All well."

Brother Bastoe was not known to be sick, and suffered, perhaps, not over two hours. His son, with whom he lived, told me that he spent all the day before his death in writing a letter to my wife, which letter he intended finishing the next day. But on that day, at twenty minutes past eight o'clock in the morning, he was a dead man. The letter I will inclose, and ask that it be published. Brother Bastoe never finished it according to his purpose; but had he written a thousand years he would not, nor could not, have made a more awfully sublime finish. It is to me, and I am sure it will appear so to the saints, because it is apparent that God closed this letter. God directed the pen to the end. The perfection of God's work is clearly seen in these his last words on earth. Truly his heart was inditing a good matter. I wish all would read at least the closing portion of his letter. It will be seen that he closed with the last verse but one of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. That one I took for a text on the funeral occasion, thinking it was the one to expound to the saints yet left. What solemn importance is given to these words by the background the apostle has so beautifully painted.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 4, 1886.

[See communication on page 56.—ED.]

By request of the bereaved family I send for publication in the SIGNS the notice of the departure of our dear and beloved sister Campbell from this world of sorrow, which occurred on Dec. 22, 1885, at the home of her father, in Utica, N. Y., aged thirty-one years, six months and fifteen days. Sister Campbell was the wife of our dear brother, Elder Wm. Campbell, and daughter of brother J. W. Alexander, of Utica. She was confined Dec. 8, which, because of a complication of diseases setting in, terminated in death at the above date. She was married to brother Campbell about a year ago. The exact time of her connection with the Ebenezer Church, of Utica, I cannot state, but judge it to have been about ten years ago. Her walk in the church and before the world was according to the gospel rule. Her steadfastness in the doctrine and order of the church was admirable, and she prized the company of brethren and sisters above all others, and was blessed of the Lord with more than ordinary knowledge of his word, which made her a shining light in our midst. Her only hope for salvation was alone by grace, without works, which made her dear to all who knew her. Her mind was clear and her hope strong to the last, and she was enabled to talk sweetly of her precious Redeemer but a short time before she passed over the river. The Savior was pleased to minister peace to her like a river, to which she responded,

"O to sit at his feet,
And the story complete,
And the Savior of sinners adore."

The blow falls heavily upon our dear brother Campbell, whose present worldly happiness is sadly eclipsed, as also is the family of her dear parents. But none of them can mourn as those who have no hope; for

Her passing spirit gently fled,
Sustained by grace divine;
O may such grace on us be shed,
And make our end like thine.

Her funeral was attended at her home, Dec. 26, when the writer tried to speak comfortingly to the afflicted. She leaves father and

mother, one sister, her dear afflicted companion, and a little motherless son, a few weeks old. May the Lord in mercy grant grace equal to their sorrow, and make all to feel an humble submission to his sovereign will.

B. BUNDY.
OTEGO, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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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TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—From the liberal manner in which the subscribers have responded to my request, I am glad to be able to inform the brethren that, with the permission of providence, the publication of the Church History at no very distant date is now assured. Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, our oldest publishing house in the United States, have the contract to publish the book. I hope that all the remaining subscribers, who have not yet remitted the amount of the subscription (two dollars per copy), will at an early day send on the proper amount, in postal order or registered letter to the brethren Beebe, so that the latter may issue the whole edition of three thousand copies at one time.

Yours in love,
SYLVESTER HASSELL.

Signs of the Times.

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

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1886.

NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SCIO, Linn Co., Oregon, Jan. 30, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to communicate a few thoughts through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES this morning, for the consideration of the readers of our valuable family periodical, upon the all-important subject of regeneration, or the new birth. I find by reading the last few numbers of the SIGNS that my views differ from the brethren who of late have written upon that subject. Now, unless I have greatly misunderstood the senior editor of the SIGNS, and Elders T. P. Dudley, J. F. Johnson, Samuel Trott, and others who have gone home and have received their eternal inheritance in glory, I hold to-day the same views they contended so ably for through the pages of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will now give my views in as brief a manner as I am capable of doing upon that important subject, for the consideration of the brethren; and if they should deem my views unscriptural, I hope they in the spirit of meekness will endeavor to set me right, as it is written, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—Jas. v. 19, 20.

I was reading the Circular Letter of the Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri last night. Now, upon the whole I consider it an excellent letter, very comforting and consoling, and well calculated to edify the children of God, and also very appropriate as a Corresponding Circular Letter; but nevertheless there is one expression in it that I do not think will bear a scriptural investigation, but perhaps the writer did not intend to be understood as I have understood his meaning. The writer says, "That which is unsearchable cannot be searched, and that which is past finding out cannot be found out. But God reveals them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. It is not the flesh quickened, for Paul says there is no good thing in the flesh. And further, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." The writer has misapplied this last quotation; it has no reference whatever to regeneration or the second birth. If the writer had continued the quotation a little further, the reader could at once have seen that the apostle

was treating on election and predestination, and not on regeneration. "These are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8. This promise runs thus, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this."—Psalm xxii. 30, 31. There was a generation promised to Christ in a covenant as old as the ancients of eternity, and secured to him by the oath of the eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is written, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us," &c.—Heb. vi. 17, 18. These under the appellation of Jacob are Christ's portion by gift of the Father; "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."—Deut. xxxii. 9. These were reckoned his children, in distinction from the rest of mankind, when as yet they were not even born a natural birth, but as before quoted from Psalm xxii., a people that shall be born. These by Paul were called the children of promise, to distinguish them from the children of the flesh, such as Esau, Ishmael, Pharisees and Sadducees; and has no reference whatever to regeneration concerning the old man and the new man, the outer man and the inner man, &c. The same thing is intended by the apostle in the same chapter under the figure of the potter and the clay. He says, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"—Romans ix. 21-24. Now here are set forth two sets or classes of vessels, made by the same potter, and of the same lump of clay; are they empty vessels? I think not. The one set represents the whole family of God, and the other set represents the whole family of the wicked one. The vessels of mercy are filled with the Spirit of Christ;

not by nature, but by grace. The other vessels are filled even to overflowing with the spirit of the devil, as Christ hath said to the Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Paul saith, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 Cor. xiii. 5. Before I proceed further I will inquire, Do not these clay vessels represent our corporal bodies? I think they surely do. Paul saith, "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. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Cor. iv. 6, 7. Again, "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? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. Furthermore, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you," &c.—2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. "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."—Rom. xii. 1. Now, my dearly beloved strange brother, please tell me how brethren can present their bodies a living sacrifice if they are not quickened bodies and made alive? They being by nature dead in sin, how could they present them to God holy and acceptable? Would it not be unreasonable service? Again, "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 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," &c.—1 Peter i. 14-20. All these quotations apply to the old Adam man, and to no other. The last Adam man was never called from the north, south, east or west—was never called out of darkness into the marvelous light of Christ. The last Adam was the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit; as it is written, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit," or a life-giving Spirit. This life thus given is eternal life, that the last Adam gives to his sheep. Again, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh [take notice, it is all flesh; I want to be particular here], that he [Christ] should give eternal life to as many [of all flesh, *i. e.*, of all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples that dwell upon the whole earth] as the Father hath given him." Now, my beloved brother, how can eternal life be given to the fleshly man and not quicken or give life to that man? The Adamic man most assuredly is the partaker of the divine nature, as Peter hath said, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."—2 Peter i. 4. Not that the flesh is in any sense changed from mortal to divine; but a new life, begotten of God, is born within the old Adamic man of sin, and it is a holy life, and counteracts the evil propensities of the old or outer man of sin. Thus every sinner that is born again is the partaker of two whole natures. The first birth brought forth a corrupt, sinful nature; the second birth brought forth a holy, divine nature. Both natures (or men, if you please) dwell (not peaceably) together in the same clay dwelling house or tabernacle, and are continually at war with each other; there is a continual strife between them. The apostle saith, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly [*i. e.*, entirely]; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. v. 23. If the body is not quickened and made spiritually alive, how can it be sanctified or set apart unto every good work? It must be the Adamic man that is called out of darkness; as it is written, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter ii. 9. "For ye

were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."—Eph. v. 8. It would have been impossible for them to walk as children of light unless they had both life and light in them, which must have been wrought in them by the quickening Spirit. "Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." I might go on and quote Scripture after Scripture to show that it is the sinner that is quickened, the Adamic man, and not the soul of man in distinction from the body; and it remains a truth that "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Cor. iv. 7. Now the question comes, What is the soul of man? Webster says it is "the spiritual and immortal part of man." But that is an erroneous definition of the word. The word *soul* in Scripture language has two meanings. First, as in Genesis ii. 7, "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." That is, he became a living person, a living man. He was formed into man before God breathed into his nostrils, but he had no life. He could neither see, hear, feel, breathe, talk nor walk. In that state, if the Lord had brought unto him the cattle and beasts of the field to see what Adam would call them, he could not have called them anything, for he had no knowledge of temporal things, nor even of his own being; but when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life he became a living man; but this was only temporal life, and gave him only a knowledge of earthly things. When God brought unto him the cattle, he had knowledge sufficient to give them names significant of their natures; but he in that life had no knowledge of things beyond this world. Then this can mean nothing less than that God quickened Adam; *i. e.*, gave life to the body he had previously formed of the dust of the ground. If Adam was ever born of the Spirit, which I believe he was, that same earthly body was quickened again into life eternal, or spiritual life, and now Adam was in possession of two lives; first, temporal life, which gave him a knowledge of temporal things; secondly, spiritual and eternal life, which gave him a knowledge of spiritual and eternal things. Now I will say that there is a time for every child of Adam from that day to this to be quickened into temporal life; so in like manner every child of the first Adam was given in covenant to the second or last Adam as his inheritance. There is a time, a set time, too, when each individual one has been, and shall be quickened into spiritual and eternal life. Said Christ, "I give unto them eternal life," &c. And Peter applies the same meaning to the word *soul*.

Speaking of the deluge he says, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls [persons or people] were saved by water."—1 Peter iii. 20. Now we will look after the other meaning. We will first notice the case of the widow woman's son, whom Elijah restored to life. Elijah took her son "out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again." The meaning of which is, let this child's life come into him again.—1 Kings xvii. 19-21; Lev. iv. "If a soul sin." That is, a person sin. I will quote one more passage where the soul means life, and pass on. "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath; and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni; but his father called him Benjamin."—Gen. xxxv. 16-18.

Now in order to illustrate, we will take Saul of Tarsus. The first notice we have of him in the Bible was at the stoning of Stephen. We read that he was then consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him; or as he himself says, "I gave my voice against him." Again, "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison." The next account we have of him, he was "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, and went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." Here we have a picture of him in a state of nature, body, soul and spirit, thoughts, words and actions, consolidated and united together, to commit one of the most atrocious crimes that sinful nature is capable of committing. "And as he journeyed he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." "And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." "And Saul arose from the earth: and when his eyes were opened he saw no man:

and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." But paper fails me. Suffice it to say that he was baptized by Ananias. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. What a sudden and wonderful revolution! What caused this wonderful revolution? Why, Saul of Tarsus is born again; he is made partaker of the divine nature. Before, he had a carnal mind; he has now a spiritual mind: not the carnal mind made or changed to a spiritual mind. No. The carnal mind remains a carnal mind still. Now, brethren, dearly beloved for Christ's sake, I have written the foregoing as my dying testimony to what I conscientiously believe to be the truth on this important subject. Now we all know that the body is one, but composed of many members, and all those members are composed of flesh and bones; and all those members were once going in the way of sin and iniquity; and now they are going in the way of holiness. What caused this? Was it not quickening grace? The fleshly mouth of Paul was once breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Jesus; now by the same mouth he is proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. Temporal life causes the body to perform temporal actions, and spiritual life causes the same body to perform spiritual actions, which is clearly exemplified in the case of Saul of Tarsus; and in the absence of either life, the body is incapable of acting at all, as also exemplified in the case of Adam. Now let us hear what the apostle saith concerning himself. He says, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20. When Paul said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," he had reference to his fleshly nature independent of grace, as is clearly seen; for in that chapter he was contrasting nature with grace. For he was still in the possession of all things that the first birth gave him, as pertaining to nature. So, as I have already said, he was in possession of two whole natures: a fleshly nature and also a spiritual nature: a sinful nature and a holy nature. Grace never changed the carnal mind of man. It is still a carnal mind, and will be till we die. This is my experience, and it is also a Bible truth. But grace created another mind within the same tenement of clay. I repeat, Paul said, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." O what a contrast! Paul was not living this life in the flesh when he gave his voice against Stephen, and was making havoc of the church of Christ, and breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. He was then living the life of the old Adam in the flesh; but now he is living the life of Christ in the same flesh, which is eternal life, and was Christ in him the hope of glory. And with the same mouth that he was then breathing out threatenings and slaughter, he is now proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ.

I have extended this article far beyond my intention, but it is at your disposal, brethren editors.

Your brother in hope of immortality.

JOHN STIPP.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Feb. 17, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel this morning like writing you a sort of miscellaneous letter about several reflections that are resting upon my mind.

Among my earliest recollections is that of seeing and reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My parents always took it, and it was always looked for; and it was their Sunday reading, together with the Bible. I began to read it as soon as I began to read any books or papers. I always believed that it contended for the truth of God. As a child I did not think that I had any christian experience, but I hoped to have some day. I believed that those who wrote for the SIGNS knew the truth, and were in the favor of God. Much, perhaps most, or what was written seemed very wonderful and mysterious to me; but this I attributed to my ignorance and lack of christian experience. At first I recollect reading chiefly the narrations of experience which the SIGNS contained. Sermons or expositions of deep Scripture texts seemed beyond me; but narrations of what men and women had felt, it seemed to me I could to some extent comprehend, though I had not experienced the same. I can well recall how eagerly I used to read these narrations to see if in anything I had felt the same. I do not think I was yet ten years of age when I would do this. Much I knew I had not felt, but sometimes there would be a word that I could say of myself. I do not think that any one knew of these childish impressions. I did not think of mentioning them, and should have shrank from doing so.

The name of Elder Gilbert Beebe was with us a household word. I regarded him with reverence akin to awe, as a man who lived near to God, and whose face shone as did that of Moses when he came forth from communion with God. I have never lost that feeling of reverence. Afterward it was mingled with love. And even if in after years I thought that he had been mistaken in anything which he said or did, I never ceased to feel that love and reverence, or to believe that his one desire was to know and do the will of God. I recollect well the first and last times I saw him. The first time was at North Berwick, Maine, twenty-two years ago last September, where and when I was baptized; and the last time was at the Salisbury Association at Fishing Creek, the October before he died. I never felt myself equal to him in anything, and never thought that I could ever be. I recollect that his words encouraged me to ask a home with the church, that after I was received he came to me and gave me his hand and called me brother, and that he stood by the water when the next morning I was baptized. O what an undeserved privilege it seemed to me to have the fellowship of Elder Quint, who baptized me, and of Elder Beebe!

When Elder Beebe died I had great fears for the future of the SIGNS. What would be its course, and would it maintain its ability, were serious

questions with me; but I want to say that I have been fully satisfied, and that my fears were groundless. I think that the subject matter of the SIGNS could not be improved. An editor has a very hard position. It is very easy for those who read the paper at home to criticise the management; but let those who criticise try it themselves, and I am sure that in a few weeks they will be "sadder and wiser men." Of course I think it is all right and proper to offer suggestions which may seem advisable; but the editor is on the inside, and knows better all the difficulties than those outside can. I believe that the present editors, while claiming to be nothing but fallible men, yet desire to do all to the glory of God.

The chief doctrinal views held by the SIGNS, which were published in the original prospectus, I have always believed and rejoiced in, and do still. I have not felt like departing from them in the least; not because they were published in that prospectus, but because these views seem to me wholly scriptural. I believed those things when I was baptized. There has not been an hour when I have not believed them since; and for more than twenty years I have tried to preach them as being involved in the substance of every christian experience. That God is eternal and self-existent, and the only eternal and self-existent being, seems to me to be essential to my belief in him as God at all. All other things or beings began to be; he never began to be. All other things and beings owe their existence to a higher creative power, and are creatures; he alone is Creator. The heavens and earth are the beginning of his creation; for "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." That Deity is also omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, must necessarily be so, or else he cannot be the upholder and ruler of the universe. That he is unchangeable, the Scriptures plainly declare; and if unchangeable in one of his attributes, then he must be unchangeable in all. Unchangeable in knowledge, in purpose, in love. He knows therefore nothing to-day that he did not know before he had created anything; he purposes nothing to-day that he has not always purposed; he loves nothing to-day but what he loved in eternity, even before it began to be; for that which is created, once did not exist.

I have rejoiced also to believe the incomprehensible mystery of the three that bear record in heaven, which three are one. I have never known how three are one, and one three; but it is revealed as being a fact, and I receive it, simply confessing my ignorance of how it can be. Is there any greater mystery here than there is in this, "The Word was with God, and the Word was God?" Both ideas are declared by the Spirit, but how it is so is left unexplained; and our finite minds could not grasp it even if it were explained. This is the way I have always felt and still feel about these things. I can believe these things, though I cannot comprehend

them, just as I can believe in eternity, though I cannot take the first step toward comprehending it.

There has never been a day since I first hoped that the truth was precious to me that I have not most earnestly believed that Jehovah must have foreknown all events, including all worlds and beings and things, all words and thoughts and actions of men and angels and devils. If this be not so, then he must know some things to-day that he did not know yesterday, and by consequence his purposes must also be often changing; and this to me seems to destroy the very being of Deity. Every prophecy is a proof of his foreknowledge. The election of men and women to eternal glory is a proof of his foreknowledge, since he could not have known that such persons should ever exist unless he had also known all the chain of circumstances that gave rise to their birth into the world; and likewise the things that he foreknew must take place. If they do not take place, then (I speak with reverence) his foreknowledge was mere guesswork, and he did not foreknow them at all; and this is absolute predestination, as I view the word predestination. Every argument that lies against predestination, also lies against foreknowledge. Both must stand or fall together. Every argument that lies against the predestination of one evil act, lies equally against the predestination of every evil act, and also against the foreknowledge of God, and against his unchangeability of knowledge and purpose. I frankly confess that I cannot reason out and harmonize every difficulty that seems to arise against this doctrine from what the Scriptures teach concerning sin and the punishment of sin; but all these difficulties lie against my belief of his foreknowledge and unchangeability—equally with his predestination. The Scriptures do testify that Jehovah did predestinate some wicked acts, and did condemn men for those very acts which he had determined before to be done.—See here Romans ix. I repeat that there is mystery here that I cannot reason out. Paul himself did not attempt to reason it out in Romans ix.; and when men said, "Why does God find fault with Pharaoh for doing what God had raised him up to do?" Paul simply accuses them of replying against God, and declares that the creature has no right to demand reasons of his Creator. Here in a special instance we have a universal rule applied. It seems to me that God's unchangeability, foreknowledge and predestination must stand or fall together in all cases, as well as in this of Pharaoh.

I have believed with all my heart the doctrine of the personal, unconditional election of some of mankind to salvation; and this election was purely of the will of God. This election was embraced in the eternal purpose which he purposed with himself ere time was. It was the choice of some sinners in distinction from other sinners to be saved, and the

only reason was because it seemed good in his sight; it was his will. This should answer every question and silence every objection. This is my hope, that he chose me and before ordained me to be saved. He foresaw no good in me save such as he himself in carrying on this work of redemption should create in me. As the result of this election, and in full harmony with it, I can rejoice to know and preach that he provided for his chosen a perfect atonement, by which all their sins are washed away, so that nothing can ever be laid to their charge again; and then he sends his Spirit to quicken the dead sinner for whom Jesus has died, and make him alive to God. O how glorious that this work is always effectual! "He speaks, and it is done." These he keeps by his power, and their bodies he raises up at the end, and they are surely glorified forever at his right hand. These things have been the joy of my heart and the life of all my ministry, and they seem just as precious to me still.

Dear brethren, I have written you a rambling sort of a letter, but it has come from my heart. I hope it may reach some other heart.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The following letter, and extracts from a second letter, I send you for publication in the SIGNS. As I have been preparing them I have wondered why I have not sent them before, that others might be comforted by the relation of her exercises as I have been. But want of time, and a hesitancy in reference to publishing private letters, prevent me. I seldom send a letter except from those whom I feel sure would not venture to write directly for publication. To those who feel at liberty to write for publication their thoughts and feelings concerning the precious things of Jesus, I would say, as others have said, write on. It will be for the comfort of some of the Lord's hungry poor. To those more timid ones who shrink at the very thought of writing, I would say, when the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, write or speak of those things that are so dear to you, to any one to whom you can feel free to communicate them. It will do your soul good to tell of the goodness and mercy of God, and you cannot tell to what other timid, trembling one your little story may come with sweet comfort. Sister McColl is a widowed daughter-in-law of the late Elder Thomas McColl. I saw her last Wednesday. Her health is at present so poor that she does not go out of the house; but she is sweetly favored in her soul with liberty in heavenly things. May the Lord be pleased to be manifestly with her, and all his waiting ones, while here in this world of pain and sorrow, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake.

Your brother in Christ,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, Aug. 12, 1884.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS SAVIOUR:—I feel that I would like to write a letter to you, as you requested me to when you were here. I do know that I am a poor, ignorant creature at best, but humbly hope that the dear Lord has taught me to feel that I am a sinner, and if saved, that it is by his precious grace; for I know that I cannot think one good thought of myself. Since I was very young I had serious thoughts about death and eternity, feeling that there must be some change wrought in me to prepare me to die, but I knew not what it was. When a thunder-storm would arise and the clouds grow dark, O what fears would arise in my mind lest the Lord would cut me off and cast me where there was no hope; and many times in my sleep I would dream that death was very near, and I was not prepared to meet a holy God; and how I would pray to God to have mercy on me, and save my soul from everlasting woe. But these convictions were of short duration. I loved sin and took pleasure in it. It was not the sin that I hated, but the punishment due to sin that I feared; for I loved gay and vain company, and would cheerfully take part in vain amusements till I was about eighteen years of age. A dear aunt with whom I lived was received as a candidate for baptism. O how bad I felt! I felt that she was saved and I was lost; that I could only be with her in time, and would be forever parted when death came. I could no longer take pleasure in the company I once loved and delighted in. It drew near the twenty-fourth of May, and I had many fears about it. I feared that I might be left to serve the enemy of my soul. This Scripture was very much on my mind, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." O what a trial it was to my mind! I did not wish my young companions to think I had any serious impressions, or that I was getting religious, as they might say I did not wish to go with them to any place of amusement. I feared some one would ask me to go, for I felt I had not courage enough to say I would not go; but I felt if I went I might never seek for mercy. What a sad state I felt to be in: "Ye cannot serve two masters." I was wicked enough to wish that I would get sick, or that I might get some good excuse to stay at home. You see what a wretched, proud nature I had. The day came for a public celebration in honor of the Queen, a day never to be forgotten by me; but the dear Lord in mercy gave me grace to overcome, and I felt it good to be at home, even if reproached for his name. I hope the Lord made me willing, with Moses of old, to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Time passed on, and I had many trials to encounter. One morning on arising from bed that passage in Hebrews came to my mind, "That which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." O how

wretched I felt! I cannot describe my feelings. It seemed that I bore nothing but briars and thorns, and that I deserved the wrath of God. I felt sin to be exceeding sinful. Some comfort was received from these words, "I will never leave nor forsake thee," as they seemed to come with power to my mind; but I felt that such promises were for the children of God, and I feared I was not one of them. I was in trouble both day and night, feeling to be such a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. My sins rose like mountains before me, and I could truly say that

"If my soul were sent to hell,
His righteous law approves it well."

I was in so much trouble that my health failed, and I was laid on a sick bed. These words gave me some encouragement,

"Resign to me a willing heart,
And I will give you rest."

"Take up my yoke, and learn of me,
A meek and lowly mind;
And then your weary, troubled soul
Repose and peace shall find."

Though I felt a little encouraged by these words, yet I felt that I could not resign or give my heart to the Lord, or think one good thought if it were to save my soul from everlasting woe. I was surely made to stand still and see the salvation of God; for he came skipping over the mountains and leaping over the hills of my sins, and spoke these words of comfort to my soul, "I was wounded for your transgressions; I was bruised for your iniquities; the chastisement of your peace was laid upon him; and by his stripes you are healed." I felt then that I could die safely and willingly, and would rather die than live in this world to sin; for I knew I could not live here without sinning.

In a short time my health began to improve, and I got well, more trials to endure. I felt that I could tell to all around what a dear Savior I had found; but before they came home from meeting, as it was on a Sunday, the enemy began to suggest that I was not sure that such a blessed promise was for me, so much so that I feared to tell it lest I was deceived, and I did not desire to deceive the children of God. But as I have already said, I got well, more trials to endure. I was at a sewing bee a short time after, and in the evening all the young folks were going to have a good time at the school-house, where there was a large swing. They insisted that I should go. I made every excuse that I thought I could, and then after all went with them; and not only went, but for a few moments enjoyed myself with the swing. In a short time I left with a few others, but O what a sad place I had come to when I got home. I was afraid to bend my knees in prayer before God. Then these words took fast hold of my mind, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the

Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." I thought there was no hope for me now. I think that was the hardest trial I ever endured. I thought I had put him to an open shame. What I passed through for ten days I can never express. I felt it to be an unpardonable sin, and that there was no more hope of mercy, when the dear Lord was pleased to bring these words with power to my mind,

"Although his arm is strong to smite,
'Tis also strong to save."

O how thankful I felt that there was a way for my escape; for I felt as if I was shut up in an iron cage, but now I thought the Lord would have mercy and appear for me. But for months I traveled in darkness, darkness that might be felt. The language of my soul was,

"'Tis true that to be gracious the Lord forgotten bath,
And that his tender mercy he hath shut up in his wrath."

At length the time to favor my soul came, and these blessed words were applied, "Though the mountains depart, and the hills be removed, yet my kindness shall not depart from thee." O Lord, is it possible thou canst love such a sinful wretch as I am? The words seemed to come in answer, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." I was filled with joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing fled away. I did, I hope, sing with the spirit and with the understanding

"To him who saved the souls of men,
And washed them in his blood."

I thought then that I would never doubt again; and I think I never did doubt but that I had a good hope but a few minutes at one time. I do not say that I had no fears, but I could not give up my hope. Some few months after I told my experience to the church at Lobo, as some of the old members there wished me to, but was not baptized, as there was no Elder or pastor there. So I remained over a year, till I could stop no longer, for I felt a desire to be baptized; so I came to the church in Ekfrid with a feeling sense of unworthiness. I did feel it to be a great trial to come to the church, for fear I would at any time do something that would disgrace the cause I so dearly loved; for I looked upon the church as the excellent of the earth. One day, being very much perplexed, wondering whether I should come to the church or not, these words came to me with comfort, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

It is fourteen years last June since I was baptized. You and Elder Hassell were present when I came before the church to tell them what I hope the Lord has done for me. I have written a good deal, but have not told the half. I have many trials and troubles to contend with, and expect I will have while in this vale of sorrow; but our Savior tells us to be of good cheer, for he has overcome the world. I have been quite sick since you were here in May. I felt

many times that my time was short, at least that I could not live very long; but I make great mistakes, for I do not know what the will of the Lord is. I desire to wait all my appointed time. When I was very sick I felt a calmness in my mind. I felt it to be a great favor to be reconciled to the will of God, if it would be his will to take me from time. I did not wish to go, nor yet to remain in this world, nor did I desire any will but his; but O how many fears I have had since I got better—though I am not very well yet—that I would not be reconciled to his will if he were to call me soon to leave my little boy. He seems so dear to me, and binds my heart to this world. I know the dear Lord can take care of him without my poor aid. I felt so much afraid that I would not be reconciled to his will that I wished in my heart that the dear children of God would pray for me, when something seemed to say in my mind, "He maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." How precious that seemed to my mind. It was worth more than the prayers of all the saints, though I believe it is right to pray for one another.

I must draw this imperfect letter to a close. I am afraid you will have some trouble in reading it. I have tried to tell you something of what I hope is a work of grace in my poor soul, if I know what a work of grace is; if not, O how awfully I am deceived. But I hope I am not deceived in so great a matter. I hope this will find yourself, your wife and child and sister Bessie in good health, if it is the dear Lord's will. The brethren and friends here are well. My little boy is well. Do you think of coming to the Lobo meeting in October? I did wish so much you would come this way from Ekfrid; but it was a pleasant meeting. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I hope you will kindly overlook all mistakes.

Yours in the best of bonds,
SARAH ANN MCCOLL.

WALLACETOWN, Ontario, April 14, 1885.

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS CHRIST:—When we parted at Duart you wished me to write to you. I will begin and tell you some of my thoughts. Before going to the meeting I had very many questionings in my own mind. Why did I want to go to the meeting, knowing that I could not stand much exposure to cold? I asked myself, Is it to see my friends? and a great many such questions. I could answer, No; but could hardly tell what my motive was, when something seemed to say in me that I wanted to go to hear Christ exalted a Prince and a Savior. Then I could say, Yes, that is my greatest desire. The weather being fine on Friday I went, and a most pleasant meeting it was to me. I think I never was more favored with a hearing ear. During the whole meeting it seemed like one continual feast to my poor soul. On Sunday, at communion time, I felt that I

would rather remain in the meeting house and have the blessed enjoyment that I had then, than to go anywhere for dinner; but I went with you to Mr. Blue's, where I had a very pleasant time. Monday I had a good time in hearing. I could truly say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Then I took sick as you stopped preaching, and felt quite miserable when I got on the train, and soon got worse, so that they wished to remove me from the train at the next station. Sister McIntyre said to me that she was afraid I would not stand to reach Dutton. "Well," I said, "I never could go in a better time;" for I felt quite willing to go. In a short time I got so bad that they thought me dying; indeed I thought myself that the messenger had come, and that I would soon be before the great white throne above, where I could praise him without ceasing, who has done such great things for poor, unworthy me. I think I may say, with the apostle, "Whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell." There was something more than I can express. It was a joy unspeakable and full of glory. O how precious these words were, "My flesh and my heart fail; but the Lord is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." I recovered soon after being taken out of the car, and was taken to the house of sister Lilly, who was received that same day, where I remained till the following Saturday, when I was brought home. I have been in bed a good deal of the time since, but am now able to go out of doors a little, and hope to be able to attend the meeting here the first of May, if it is the dear Lord's will. But, my dear brother, the enemy of my soul's peace tried to destroy it by whispering in my mind that it was only excitement, and something I could of myself produce when in a weak state of body. But I felt confident it was not, and told him it was not excitement, nor was it anything that I or he could produce, so it must be of the Lord. Another of his wicked insinuations was, If you sleep [for I felt heavy and sleepy] you will lose all your enjoyment; which filled me with fear for a short time. But I was soon relieved with the sweet thought that it was the dear Lord who kept me, and that I was not in danger of falling out of his hand although I would sleep, for he neither slumbers nor sleeps. Then I got along very nicely till one Sunday morning, when I awoke from a dream, and was filled with fear, and darkness enshrouded my mind the most part of the day. In the afternoon I took a very weak, faint spell; indeed, I felt to be sinking in body and mind. I was not entirely without hope, but was in darkness that might be felt. Then these blessed words came,

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is forever mine."

I felt that I could answer, Yes, Jesus did once upon me shine, and Jesus is forever mine. I was so strengthened that I said to those who stood by, "I

am better now." O how sweet when the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings, and disperses the dark clouds!

Yours in christian love and fellowship,

SARAH ANN McCOLL.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Jan. 5, 1886.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—Your letter, expressing the emotions of your soul, has fully satisfied me that you are one of the loved and elect of God, for none but God's people ever experience the exercises of soul that you have been made to prove. I have been writing a few lines to your sister Bertha, and as my thoughts turned toward you at the same time, there was raised up in my remembrance a portion of the holy Scriptures, from which I have lately tried to preach, and I thought how suitable it would be if the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, would open it up to your comfort and edification. The Scripture to which I allude is found in 2 Samuel xv. 25, 26. "And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city. If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation. But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth unto him." This was a time of great trial to David. His son Absalom, by his fair speeches, had stolen away the hearts of the men of Israel, and had caused himself to be made king. And David, for fear of his own life, and the lives of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, was obliged to flee from the city, from the face of his son. Who can tell the anguish of his heart, to think that Absalom, his dearly loved son, should thus rise up against him, and seek to wrest the throne and kingdom of Israel away? How cruel this was on the part of Absalom, and how exceeding bitter it must have been to the soul of David, can in some measure be seen in the language of his lacerated heart, when upon the death of his son he cried out, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would to God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Another bitter ingredient in David's cup was the ingratitude of the one whom he calls "mine old familiar friends," and of the tribes of Israel who had revolted from under him. But far more bitter and heavier was the chastening hand of the Lord upon him. David had been guilty of the murder of Uriah, and of adultery with Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, on which account all this had now befallen him. The Lord is a faithful, covenant-keeping God. He will visit the transgressions of his people with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; but his loving-kindness he will not take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Can we not in many ways see that we have been made to feel the chastening hand of the Lord? We have been brought humble and contrite at the feet of the Lord, and there we have confessed with sighs and tears all our

sinfulness and unworthiness. If we, dear sister, have in any measure been thus dealt with, then it is an evident token of our sonship, and that God thus dealeth with us as with sons.—Hebrews xii. 5-12. Our Father has said, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—Rev. iii. 19, 20. When it has been our bitter lot to be under the hidings of the Father's face, we have been ready from our anguished hearts to cry out, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? 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?" It is recorded of God's people, "Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them."—Isaiah xxvi. 16. Has it not been so with us? Thus the Lord in his love chastens his loved ones, and with his chastening hand he knocks, saying, "Open to me."—Solomon's Song v. 2.

But let us take a glimpse at David. He is driven by the rebellion of Absalom from his throne, and from Jerusalem, as an outcast. He now has to wander from the place where the God of Israel was pleased to record his name. David can abide there no longer, but by the chastening providence in sorrow he wanders from the city of God. The Levites and the priests took the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and would have followed him, but David forbade them, and commanded them to carry back the ark of God into the city. Jerusalem was the resting place of the ark of the covenant.—2 Chron. vi. 41. There was the place of its abode. And David said, "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation." In the midst of all his deep distress, hope and confidence are raised up in his soul. His trust is not in an arm of flesh, not in the six hundred men that still clave to him, valiant though they be; not in any creature remedy; but, "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord." Is this not the very experience of all who are taught of the Lord? When the Holy Spirit was pleased to quicken us, and revealed to us our sinfulness, and made us feel our utter destitution of righteousness, we at length were brought to look to and to hope alone in the favor of God. It is comforting and strengthening when by the Spirit we are able to look back and trace what we have hoped were the gracious dealings of the God of mercy in the beginning of our way, where God began with us. It was all of grace from first to last that we were enabled to hope in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and to believe our sins were forgiven. We were, and still are, so unworthy that grace alone can reach our case. How often have

we in spirit cried unto the Lord, "Remember me with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people." Since our first knowledge of and hope in the salvation of Jesus, there have been seasons of darkness and deadness. We have been unmindful of the sweet goodness and mercy of the Lord. The world and its alluring vanities, O what deceitful traps! How soon, unless kept by the power of God, do the cares, the snares, the things of the world, prey upon us, until we seem to be engulfed and swallowed up in worldly mindedness. There is many a "by-path meadow" alongside the right way, and unless we are favored of the Lord to take heed to our steps according to his word, we soon turn aside and wander therein, and find to our soul's distress that woe upon woe is our portion therein. Where are now those seasons of sweet communion with the Lord, those happy moments that we have felt in the precious knowledge that our sins were forgiven, wherein we delighted to think of Jesus, to feel his surpassing love, and our hearts burned with loving desire after him, who is indeed the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely? O how refreshing have been those hours, when we have been indulged to find access unto the throne of grace, and there hold communion with the Lord. There we poured out all our trouble, all our trials, all our needs; there we wept over our sinful condition, and besought the Lord to be very gracious unto us, to keep us, and to reveal himself more and more to us. There were songs of sweetest melody in our hearts to the God of our salvation, and we could not then believe that we ever should grieve the Lord, and so ungrateful prove as to depart from the living God.—Heb. iii. 12. In wandering from the good way (Jer. vi. 16) we began neglecting the reading of the Scriptures, over which in our happy times, when the light of the Lord shined upon us, we pored with pleasure, and many a sweet morsel we found to the delight of our souls. Our visits to the King became less frequent; the things of the world and the vanities of our fleshly nature began to engross our time; many a feeling of disquietude came over us, and sharp reproofs entered into our reins.—Lamentations iii. 13. At length we seemed to sink in a state of indifference and deadness in spiritual things, and when we remembered God we were troubled. O what a cloud came over us! and a deep, deep sigh would be crushed forth from our heart. O what a vile sinner I am! This I have deeply felt. I have no stones to throw at David or any one. Such wickedness has been discovered in my heart that I have been ready to sink in despair, and even have been tempted to take my own life. When the Holy Spirit gives us a glimpse of the wretched state into which we have wandered, then like poor David it seemed we were outcasts from Jerusalem. We felt we were no longer favored with a home among the citizens of the city of God. Poor,

miserable outcasts. Where are those peaceful hours we once enjoyed? Distressing doubts and tormenting unbelief flowed in. How could we dare to hope that we were the children of God? What evidence had we? If we were of the number of the loved and redeemed of the Lord, would we, could we, be so sinful? We tried to pray, but we feared God had forsaken us, that he had hidden himself and was wroth; and in measure we have felt what one of old has recorded; "Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer."—Lam. iii. 8; Job xxx. 20. The Lord covered himself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through. "When he hideth himself, who can behold him, whether it be done against a nation or against a man only?"—Job xxxiv. 29. How helpless we are to roll back the dark clouds that veil the God of our salvation from view. All is now darkness and sadness to the poor, chastened child of God, when Jesus no longer he sees. Terrible are the assaults of the adversary, the devil, during the "small moment" (Isaiah liv. 7, 8) wherein the Lord is pleased to withdraw and to withhold his comfortable and consoling presence from us. We, like Job, go "mourning without the sun." Yes, when the long-suffering and compassionate Lord will heal our backslidings, our hearts are made to feel most bitterly the sad condition we are in. We mourn over our ways and loathe ourselves in our own sight (Ezek. xx. 43), and sigh for the beloved Jesus. We long for his appearing. O that the Lord would shine upon my poor soul again! But O how wicked I have been! How shamefully I have treated the Redeemer! How I have abused the loving-kindness of Jesus! How shameful has been my part! I can never forgive myself. O! will the Lord forgive me? How can I hope that Jesus loves me now? If I were a child of God, would I ever have so fallen and come into such a wretched, destitute state? And if I were one of the loved and chosen of God, would not the Lord hear my bitter cries and come to my relief? O that he would say unto my soul, "I am thy salvation." When by the grace of God we are constrained to return unto the Lord, from whom in our hearts we have basely revolted, we are led to see the utter vanity of all earthly pleasures and of all the lusts of the flesh. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," cries out the chastened child of God. Nothing can satisfy, nothing can fill the aching void I now feel. Nothing can supply the place of Jesus and the sense of his pardoning, redeeming love. David said, "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord." But what is there in me that the Lord can view with favor? What delight can the Lord take in such a sinful worm? How can I think the Lord will look upon me with favor? We are led to feel our nothingness and helplessness; that all creature remedies can avail us nothing; that nothing but the rich and abounding grace of God can

assuage our sorrowful condition and raise us up from the dunghill. In the beginning, where the Lord began to teach us, the grace of God was the treasury from which alone must come all our desire; and now again in our trouble all our expectation, all that we hope for, must come from the pure, unadulterated favor of the most high God. There is a little hope which springs up, "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord." "Who can tell?" Perhaps he will smile upon me again; perhaps he will give me a place again experimentally among the living in Jerusalem, and show me the good of his chosen ones. In the multitude of such thoughts we find a little comfort, which the God of all comfort with his own tender, loving hand has mixed in with the bitters of our bitter cup. It is like what Ezra calls, "For a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, * * * to give us a little reviving in our bondage."—Ezra ix. 8. The "little space" during which the sunlight shined in its reviving rays is soon past, and dark clouds of unbelief shut out again the soul-refreshing light of the reconciling countenance of our God, and we wonder over our wretched and forlorn condition, and fears will arise that there is no mercy and love from the Lord in store for us. "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord." "If;" but shall I ever? How can it be? "If." Ah, then all would be well with me. I know the Lord can do all things, but will he be gracious to me? "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again." He is able to drive away every dark and tempestuous cloud, to put to flight all my adversaries, to silence all accusations, to quench each fiery dart, to pardon all my transgressions, to wash me from all my defilements, and to present me to himself without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Then I should be holy, and unblamable, and unreprouvable in his sight. But can we hope the Lord will do this? Yes, my dear sister, he will. For the Lord speaks in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, saying, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you. And I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion."—Jer. iii. 14. And has not the Lord said, "He hateth putting away?" The marriage covenant of Christ and his church is thus recorded: "I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord."—Hosea ii. 19, 20. O Jesus! beloved, incomparable Husband! am I, a poor sinner, thus wedded to thee? "Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."—Isaiah lxii. 4. "For the Lord will not cast off forever; but though he

cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies."—Lam. iii. 31, 32. It was David who could sing, "He restoreth my soul."

Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is forever mine.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,

I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,

I'll never, no never, no never, forsake."

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him. His love no variation knows. Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it. O what a wonderful record has the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of the apostle Paul, given in the eighth chapter of Romans. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Though our sins, our enemies, doubts and fears and unbelief abound, grace doth much more abound, and grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.—Rom. v. 21. And though we are chastened sore, though our conflicts be sharp, though clouds and darkness at times overwhelm us, the Lord will never deliver any of the objects of his everlasting love over unto eternal death.—Psalm cxviii. 18. He has said, "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 upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—Isaiah liv. 7, 8. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The Lord brings back the captivity of his people.—Psalm cxxvi. And the blessed Jesus said, "Go and shew John again." And in Gen. xxxv. 9, it is written, "God appeared unto Jacob again." He is in one mind, and who can turn him?—Job. xxiii. 13. "He will rest in his love."—Eph. iii. 17. He changes not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.—Mal. iii. 6. Yet have we not, notwithstanding all that is recorded in the Scriptures of the sure mercies of the eternal God, been so cast down, so discouraged, so filled with unbelief, the temptations of the enemy so incessantly preying upon us, and our own villainess so feelingly apparent, that we have been "ready to halt," to sink down in despondency, to give it all up? But we could not, because God will never give us up. He is our strong refuge, and will perfect all the good pleasure of his will concerning

us. And though like poor, rebellious Jonah we have been in the deep, in the belly of hell, yet even there his hand did lead us, and his right hand uphold us.—Psalm cxxxix. 10. And we have said, "Yet will I look again toward the holy temple."—Jonah ii. 4.

"How oft, deceived by self and pride,
Has my poor heart been turned aside;
And, Jonah-like, has fled from thee,
Till thou hast looked again on me.

Ah, bring a wretched wanderer home,
To thy dear bosom let me come;
And tell thee all my grief and pain,
And wait, and look, and look again."

"If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again."

This sheet of paper is very nearly filled up, and I will not at present write any more upon this subject. My heart's desire to the Lord is, that he will graciously appear in your behalf again and again, in his tender love, and cause you to rejoice in his great name.

I am, I hope, your brother in Jesus.
FRED. W. KEENE.

THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT.

"For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."—2 Cor. iii. 6.

In word, and in the Holy Ghost.—1 Thess. i. 5.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—For some years past I have written but seldom for the SIGNS; not because I do not feel a continued interest in its prosperity, but because the paper has been continually filled by brethren and sisters more able to instruct and edify its readers than I, and also on account of my age and my private correspondence, as also my labors in the ministry. Now, at the request of dear brethren and sisters in many places for me to write something for your columns, I shall attempt to do so upon the subject named above.

Two prominent and very important truths are taught in the Scriptures, namely, that no man in his natural state does know, or can know and comprehend the truths of the Bible, while in that state; and that it is by the operation of the Spirit of God. Notwithstanding the great number of houses of worship, theological schools and religious societies established in our country, yet I candidly believe that infidelity is on the increase so far as my observation extends. Not that a great many are not making nominal professions of religion, and spending large sums of money ostensibly for the support of religion; for it is true that thousands are professing religion under the *great revivalists* of our times, and thousands of dollars are contributed to the cause of their religion. But it is truly disgusting, and even alarming to an humble child of God, who loves and fears his great name, to hear the blasphemy of such renowned revivalists, and to see what numbers are embracing their delusions and following their pernicious ways. They invariably teach that men can by their natural faculties comprehend the things of God; that religion is obtained by the exercise of and through the *five natural senses*; that

Christ is offering them salvation upon the condition of their willingness to accept it. One who is followed by thousands said to the multitude one night, "You may all have eternal life before you leave for home. Christ is here, and has eternal life to give, and wants to give it away, is anxious for you to have it; who will have it! who will have it!! who will have it!!!?" Another says to his audience, "I want you to come to Jesus [to the altar], the church wants you to come, Christ wants you to come, God wants you to come; but the truth is, the sinner *will not*, and God [with emphasis] *cannot*." Yet multitudes are following such men, and receiving such religion through the *five senses*. I will give but one more example of blasphemy by quoting the language of a revivalist, addressed to a church in a thriving city in this country: "I want the members to begin to pray for a revival; I want you to pray zealously, to pray earnestly, to pray fervently, yea, *pour the red-hot shot in the ear of Jehovah*, and he is bound to give us a revival." Such a god as his must be harder to wake up than Baal was.—1 Kings. xviii. 27. Such presumption and blasphemy being tolerated, endorsed and supported by thousands of otherwise intelligent people, demonstrate the truth of inspiration, that people "shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Tim. iv. 4. But there is another class of teachers, and they are numerous, and many of them men of fine talents and respectability in civil society, who quote much from the written word, and contend for its literal application to all men, and that by its precepts being obeyed by the sinner, he may obtain eternal life. They contend that all rational men and women may and can understand and obey it, and thus be saved. This very common and natural view of unregenerate men, and taught by scientific teachers from theological schools, rejects the work of the Spirit of God in quickening and enlightening the sinner, and denies its necessity in understanding the Scriptures; but unless human nature is now different from and better than it was in the days of Christ and the apostles, the matter is forever settled by their infallible testimony. "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. This ought to settle it. But again: "No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him."—Luke x. 22. This language of the Son of God should forever silence all letter preachers. But again: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven," that Jesus is the Christ.—Matt. xvi. 17. That a knowledge of the letter of the Scriptures alone can enable a natural man to understand, know and believe the things of the king

dom of God, and love them, is utterly impossible, and that these spiritual and precious things are only known by those born of and taught by the Spirit is abundantly taught and established by the following passages of holy writ, and those who wish may read and ponder them. See John iii. 3; vi. 44; xvii. 3; Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. ii. 10; 2 Cor. iii. 3; Gal. i. 11, 12; Eph. i. 18-20; ii. 1; 1 Thess. i. 5; Heb. viii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 2; 1 John v. 1, 20. The foregoing citations are but a tithe of what might be adduced to prove that a man must be taught by the Spirit to be enabled to know the things of God. All our acceptable works of obedience and all the good fruits we bear are from the Spirit of God. See Isa. xxvi. 12; Gal. v. 22, 23; Eph. ii. 10; Titus ii. 12. These solemn, sacred and precious truths are experimental with the child of God. He was once blind, but now he sees. He was once darkness, but now is light in the Lord; was a hater of God, but now loves him. Jesus was once to him without beauty, but now he is the chiefest among ten thousand. Once he could not claim a single promise, but now, when faith is given, he can say, "And when I read his sacred word, I call each promise mine."

The subject is but opened, but I am out of paper. May the Lord bless the SIGNS, its editors and patrons.

Your brother in hope,
I. N. VANMETER.
MACOMB, Ill., Feb. 12, 1886.

DECKERTOWN, N. J., Dec. 23, 1885.

TO THE MIDDLETOWN & WALL-KILL CHURCH—DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—The year is fast passing away, yet many who are in the enjoyment of health to-day, will ere its close be numbered with the silent dead. How long it may please our heavenly Father to spare my unprofitable life is known only to himself.

"Plagues and death around me fly;
Till he bids I cannot die."

It is really necessary for me to write to some one of you, and I feel as if what I would say to one I would say to all. With many sincere thanks for your kindness to me, I will, with the help of Elijah's God, who is the God I desire to worship, attempt to address you.

Many say that only early impressions and associations cause people to adhere so closely to what is so far behind the times. My parents never restricted me in regard to my religious belief, but taught me that God alone was the Creator of the heavens and the earth, with all their contending elements, as well as the fashioner of our bodies and the preserver of our lives.

Many think that Elijah was not fed by ravens, as we are informed in the Scriptures, but by some roving band that was encamped near him. I learned a little piece of poetry, when a child, which I have not yet forgotten; and as it has been my lot to pass through some trying scenes since then, I will just note it, as I have often felt forcibly the truth expressed therein.

"'Twas by the brook Elijah lived;
His food from ravens he received;
The water there his drink supplied,
Until at length the brook was dried.
The prophet, by the Lord then sent,
Unto a widow woman went;
He found her with her little son;
Her stock of food was almost gone.

Alas! said she, I've naught to give;
I and my child not long can live;
A little meal and oil have I;
When that is gone we both must die.

Fear not, good Elijah cried;
The Lord will for you both provide;
Give first to me; let faith prevail;
Neither thy meal nor oil shall fail.

She did so, and they always fed;
For every day she made them bread;
Yet still did in her barrel find
That meal was always left behind.

Thus can the Lord his people feed,
In times of famine and of need;
To him then let his needy cry;
He will their every need supply."

What great faith had the widow, to believe what Elijah told her. But it was at the command of the Lord he went; and no one need fear to move at his command, as neither his purpose nor his promises ever fail. The widow was, notwithstanding her scanty store, to bake a little cake for him first, and after that make for herself and her son. After much had been verified in regard to what the Lord had told Elijah, the son sickened and died, and the prophet feared that evil had been brought upon the widow on his account. But this was not so, as the Lord heard his prayer, and the child was restored to his mother. Many look upon those suffering with pain and affliction in any way, as being sinners above their fellows, and that on that account they are visited with the judgments of the Lord, and that it is an evidence that he no longer remembers them in mercy. The psalmist says, "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."—Psalm xix. 8-10. I can assure you, my dear brethren and sisters, I feel that all my trials are, and have been, blessings in disguise; and although I am constantly suffering excruciating pain, I can say, and also feel its truth,

"Not all the pains that e'er I bore,
Shall spoil my future peace;
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please."

I have not written half I desired to, but you will accept this for the present, with my love and fellowship. I will write again shortly if I can.

Your sister, as I hope, in Christ our Redeemer.

HARRIET LEWIS.

SILVER CLIFF, Colorado, Feb., 1886.

WM. J. PURINGTON—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I would that I could take you by the hand, for I feel that your God is my God. I want you to know that there is one poor, weak worm of the dust, living among the "Rockies" of the west,

deprived of the society of those "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," that believes that sublime truth advocated by you through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, "Absolute predestination of all things." Take from me this doctrine or truth, and you destroy all my hope of eternal bliss at the right hand of God. Knowing the bitter opposition against this, to me, glorious and sublime truth, and that, too, among many of the household of faith, I feel that I must say to you that I believe it from the very depths of my soul. And not only this, but the much despised doctrine, "eternal union," as it is called, is but one and the same truth. Have we not a "Thus saith the Lord" for this truth? "I have loved thee with an everlasting love."—Jer. xxxi. 3. Ah, but says some scholar, "Everlasting does not mean eternal." I shall not argue that it does, for I never studied grammar for a single day in my life. But all will admit that all the attributes of the great Jehovah have existed as long as God has existed. "God is love."—1 John iv. 8. And "We love him [God] because he first loved us." When did God begin to love us? In the beginning of time? O no! Love being one of the divine attributes of Jehovah, that love is co-equal with God. Then this love being eternal, the object loved must also be eternal. Some one may say, The object of this eternal love was Christ alone. Admit he was. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. iii. 17. "Beloved," greatly loved, loved above all others. This is what I understand to be the meaning of the word "beloved." "For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—John xvii. 24. These are the words of Jesus, and is sufficient testimony that it is not a time love, but eternal. Paul, in speaking of this "beloved Son," to his Colossian brethren, declares him to be the "Image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature." "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. And he is the head of the body, the church."—Colossians i. 15-18. Now, my dear brother, I confess that from this testimony alone I am unable to separate this great, eternal love from God and call it a time love. And if that love was not centered upon God's people in eternity, it was centered upon their Head, God's only begotten Son. Then I conclude that so long as the living Head has existed, the body has existed. This being true, is it not then an "eternal union?" I know that many of the Baptists of our order object to the word "union" being used. Some years ago I was asked by some of my brethren to not say union, but "relationship." But the word union, I think, conveys my idea better; for union means, connected

as one; not separated. There may be things united in this time world, and then separated again; but I firmly believe it as impossible for Christ (the Head) and his body (the church) to be separated, as it is to separate two drops of water, when mingled or united as one drop. I do not wish you to understand, when I try to show that Christ, the Head, did exist with God, the Father, ere time began, and that the church, his body, are inseparable, that the members of his body existed in flesh and blood eternally, but spiritually. But there is a period that it seems we might use the word relationship. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."—Heb. ii. 14. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."—Eph. v. 30. This period must have been when "He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham."

And now, dear brother, I will stop writing, ere I weary you. When I read your article in the SIGNS, I exclaimed aloud, There is one Baptist at least that believes with me this grand and glorious truth, the predestination of all things; and I felt that I must give you my testimony of the truth. And I have, in much weakness, endeavored to give you briefly some of the testimony that causes me to believe and rejoice in the equally (to me) glorious truth of eternal union. Now, dear brother, I pray you, if I have taken an erroneous view of the word of truth, that you will point out the error. Nothing but the truth will do you and me, or any other poor, fellow-mortal, any good. May the Comforter, whom Jesus said he would send, lead us into all truth, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

J. H. YEOMAN.

DECEMBER 20, 1885.

I WOULD be glad if Elder Wm. J. Purington would give the original in English of John iii. 8. I am told here that this verse was not properly rendered.

B. A. BEASELEY.

REPLY.

As my friend appears to ask for real information, and not to gratify a carnal curiosity, nor to cavil with the written word of the New Testament, I feel to comply with his request. The verse reads thus: "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." While the verse is thus rendered to make the language sound euphonious and prevent tautology, yet the glorious truth of the absolute sovereignty and almighty power of Jehovah in the spiritual birth is still clearly and forcibly held forth; but it is the only place recorded in the New Testament where the word *pneuma* is rendered wind; therefore is an *hyperbation*; for the same word is rendered spirit two hundred and sixty-nine times in the New Testament. The word that represents literal wind is *anemos*, and is recorded twenty-eight times in the New Testament, and not rendered

spirit in any case. Now be it remembered that the literal rendering will not change the glorious truth of absolute sovereignty. "The Spirit breatheth where he willeth, and thou givest ear to the voice of him, but canst not know how he cometh and where he goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The last clause now becomes corroborative and affirmative, instead of a comparison. You will notice he, in the masculine gender, is used instead of the neuter pronoun it; but as *pneuma* was rendered wind, the pronoun must be in the neuter gender; but the Holy Ghost, which is God (see Acts v. 1-10), is always spoken of in the masculine gender; for said Immanuel, "But the Comforter, (which is) the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in [not separate from] my name, HE shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Now we will refer to a passage where there is a glorious comparison concerning the power of the Spirit. "And when the day of pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound [echos, report] from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty [anemos] wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit [*pneuma*] gave them utterance." In the prophecy of Isaiah the declaration is, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it." In this quotation we have the word bloweth, so there can be no mistake with the lover of Bible truth that the word bloweth has precisely the same meaning as willeth, or breatheth. Our precious Redeemer said to the disciples again, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Therefore we can see that the words breathed, bloweth, willeth, and others of similar import, when used to predicate any act of our God, set forth his absolute, uncontrollable, almighty power.

My friend, I have complied with your request, but I do not want you to think that I am not satisfied with the Scriptures as we now have them; for I am; but at times I am so dark in my mind, and deplore the speculating and theorizing so much in the professed Old School Baptist denomination, that I feel almost discouraged, and often think I will write no more for publication.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Feb. 18, 1886.

P. S.—Perhaps it is not amiss to add a few remarks in order that no misunderstanding may arise. To my friend I would say, that the only safe way to arrive at the real meaning of the letter of the Scriptures is by carefully comparing Scripture with Scripture, and not by detaching fragments

and putting them together to prove a certain erroneous position. As an illustration of that, I now refer to a circumstance which occurred some twenty years ago, and it was as follows. What was brought forward was entirely unsought for by me; but a man, who was considered an "educated person," but a zealous Arminian Baptist, said he could show from Scripture that the sinner had to begin the work, and his Scripture was the following: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve. If the Lord be God, serve him; or if Baal, then serve him." Said I, "Sir, you are a professed teacher in Israel, but never commit yourself with such an absurdity again; for you have chosen some words uttered by Joshua, and some brought forth by Elijah; and by that same rule anything can be proven. Now I will fix one for you, and see how that will sound: 'Judas departed, and went and hanged himself: go and do thou likewise.' Now, sir, all I have brought forward is recorded in the New Testament." Some twenty brethren and sisters heard the talk, and after that the Arminian was silent.

My friend, whenever in writing a communication I refer to the original word, it is not to be "pedantic," but to show that it is as strong or stronger in meaning in many cases than in our English tongue; for whenever there is an attempt to change the present reading of the Scriptures, the beauty is marred very much. Now I will bring one or two more examples, in this reply, to show the force of the words; but they do not sound so pleasantly as they do as now rendered; but it does not change the meaning. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." Literally, hath "uncovered" them, &c., which sounds not so pleasantly as the word revealed; but their meaning is exactly the same. Also, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Literally, "drag;" for it is from *helkuo*, and our English word is from *traho*, to drag. All carnal or Arminian teachers "play" upon the words of the Scriptures whenever they possibly can, as the word draw; for they tell us it means "drawing at, wooing, beseeching," &c. But when they are met and told that the real meaning is drag, then they cry out, "O! arbitrary, forcing sinners to heaven," &c. But they who are born again and taught by the Spirit do not desire to trifle with the written word of God. I forbear dwelling longer upon the subject. The editorial in the SIGNS for the 15th inst. is excellent.

W. J. P.

PALESTINE, Texas, Feb. 21, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR AND MUCH ESTEEMED BRETHREN, AS I HOPE, FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—I write to let you know that I am yet living, and enjoying a reasonable portion of health, for which I hope I am thankful. This will also show that I have not forgotten you. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES comes to me regularly, full of that which I enjoy

very much, and I want you to continue it to me until I become dissatisfied, or see that I cannot pay for it, and then I will let you know.

Dear brethren, so far as I understand, I heartily indorse what is published in our medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am just in receipt of the number for February 15, and I should think very strange of any one in possession of the Spirit of Christ, to take issue with it. Still I know it is not pleasant to carnal reason, or the carnal mind, which we all have. This I find, brethren, that some dear brethren do not readily understand or receive, that they who have the Spirit of Christ, at the same time have a mind which is enmity against God. Again, in speaking of what is written in the SIGNS, I want to tell you that I enjoy what is written by brother John Stipp, and by brother F. A. Chick, and also the travel of brother C. A. Buck. Now, dear brethren, if these things be so, how is it that some dear brethren to whom I have written privately, and that for information, and expected them to reply by private letter, have exposed my blunders through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? Now, why all this? I think it is because I was not able to explain myself, or they were not able to understand me. I did mean this, that according to the flesh we are all the children of Adam, and in Christ Jesus we are all one according to the Spirit. I meant furthermore this, that God already has his children, and has already saved his people; also that God's people are a complete people, and that all God has saved with an everlasting salvation is what God chose in his Son before the foundation of the world.

May God in his love and mercy sustain you as editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and may the dear brethren and sisters continue to write for its columns. May we all be enabled by the grace of God to keep our bodies under, and bring them into subjection, and finally be brought off more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us. Amen.

U. J. BELL.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Feb. 15, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Will you please say through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that for some time past my health has been such that I could neither read nor write but very little. A part of my sickness being nervous heart troubles, it affects my heart immediately to steadily set my eyes on paper, either to read or to write. On this account I have failed to keep up with my correspondence, which I regret very much, as this has been a great source of comfort to me in all my afflictions; and in this I feel that I am denied one of the greatest blessings of my life. Among the kind letters I have received are one each from brethren Buck and Dixon, of New Brunswick, one from Elder I. N. Newkirk, of W. T., one from Elder Wilson Housel, of

New Jersey, one from sister M. Helling, of Paterson, N. J., and one from a brother in Michigan, whose name I cannot remember. I wish to assure the writers of these that I highly appreciate their kind expressions of love and fellowship, and I trust that they will indulge me and continue to write to me, although I may not be able to reply. My health at present is somewhat improved. I have been out of bed about three weeks, and am able to partially watch over my worldly interests, though not able to do manual labor. I have endeavored to preach three or four times since I got out of bed, and am already receiving invitations and solicitations on every hand, but I am not able to go. There are a few brethren and sisters here, and we meet together for worship nearly every Sunday. We have agreed upon articles of faith, and expect to submit ourselves to the action of a presbytery on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in this month, the Lord willing.

Yours in love,

H. J. REDD.

DEVIZES, Kansas, Jan. 19, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please excuse a stranger for writing to you, as I live out here in the far west; however, not so far but what the Lord has found me, and has taken away my stony heart, and given me a heart of flesh. I can find nothing here but a sect of Free Willers, with which I cannot unite. I am hungering and thirsting after righteousness and free grace. I know the sound of it, as my relation is cast with the Old School Baptists. The Lord has visited me. As I live in an isolated place, and am poor, I would say that if this should meet the eye of any of the Lord's dear children anywhere out this way, do please write to me, for I am as a sparrow alone in the wilderness.

Yours in love,

GEORGE HOUGHAM.

LAFAYETTE, Texas, Jan. 26, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS. I have been edified very much by the very many precious pieces that are written by the brethren and sisters. Your editorials are all excellent. That old brother, H. Cox; I am so much edified by his plain teaching. I hope the brethren and sisters will continue to write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the comfort and edification of those who cannot write.

I remain yours in gospel bonds,

M. K. VINES.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

MY correspondents will please address me until the first of May, care of Elder J. T. Moore, Georgetown, Kentucky. A telegram can be sent me there.

WM. M. SMOOT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1886.

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

REDEMPTION.

WILL brother Beebe please give his views through the SIGNS on Galatians iv. 4, 5, especially on verse five? Are not all the descendants of Adam under the law? Your compliance will oblige an

INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

R E P L Y .

"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."

In this text is very manifest the importance of observing the connection in which the words of inspiration are used; for there is as much perversion of the Scriptures by misapplying them as by changing their language. When the Lord speaks to his chosen nation of Israel, his word does not apply to the nations of heathen by whom Israel was surrounded. And what is said of his spiritual people does not apply to those who have not the Spirit of Christ and are none of his.—Romans viii. 9. It is only necessary to read the preceding context to see that the subjects of redemption are a specified people whom the apostle includes with himself as that seed of Abraham to whom the promises were made, "which is Christ." This is very definitely stated in the chapter preceding our text, especially in verses 9, 14 and 29. It is to be remembered that the whole epistle is one letter, the division into chapters and verses being the work of uninspired men. This division often obscures the true meaning of the original text, by seeming to begin a new paragraph sometimes in the midst of a sentence, and often breaking a continuous statement or argument. A careful observance of the subject and general aim of the recorded word will show the literal meaning. The essential truth can only be known as the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, shall take of the things of Jesus and show it unto every individual saint. While even those who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given to them, are dependent upon the immediate power of that Spirit for the manifestation of this testimony of Jesus in the Scriptures, there is a sweet enjoyment in familiarity with the written word when intelligently read. So the Bereans were commended for their noble conduct in searching the Scriptures daily.—Acts xvii. 11.

The first clause of the text submitted by our "Inquirer" is not reconcilable to any doctrine of chance; it necessarily implies the certainly fixed "purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." There must have been an appointed time which was fully come at the very instant here designated.

All the powers of darkness could not delay the coming of the Son of God one moment beyond that time. All the efforts, prayers and earnest longings of the saints could not hasten his advent. Not until that time did God send forth his Son; nor was anything left to chance with regard to his being sent forth. He took not the nature or form of angels, but came just where they were whom he came to redeem, was "made of a woman, made under the law." To grasp this wonderful truth it must be considered that this glorious One who was thus sent forth is the Word which in the beginning was with God and in the beginning was God. In the statement that he was made under the law it is evident that he was not under that law previous to the time when he was thus "sent forth." Only in this sense is it true of our Lord that he was "made of a woman, made under the law," or "made flesh," or "made to be sin."—John i. 14; 2 Cor. v. 21. Even in the depth of his suffering, and when he sunk under the burden of all the sins of his people which he bore in his own body on the tree, he did not cease to be the mighty God, though he displayed the infinity of his might by putting on all the weakness of mortality; and although being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 7, 8. The inspired record nowhere says that he laid aside his eternal power and Godhead when he was made flesh. On the contrary, Paul in stating the great mystery of godliness expressly declares that "God was manifest in the flesh," and "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."—See 1 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 19. Devils and inanimate nature, even the winds and seas, confessed his divine authority and power. We have referred to this eternal truth of the sovereignty of our Lord to show to our "Inquirer" the manifest falsehood of any system which asserts that our Redeemer failed to save as many as were recorded in the election of his grace, which includes all his own sheep, that is, "the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."—Ephesians i. 23.

"To redeem them that were under the law." Whatever these words imply, there could have been no failure in its accomplishment, for it was declared in prophecy, "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. It must be evident to those who receive the testimony of the Scriptures that he did fulfill the work which he came to do, and he says that work was "to save that which was lost." That was both the will of the Redeemer and of him that sent him.—See Matt. xviii. 11, 14; John xvii. 24. Therefore to deny the complete salvation of one of those whom he came to save, is to say that the will of God is not done. But this will not be admitted by any of those who know God and have eternal life. Therefore let us look for the real significance of the expression in this verse. First, it is important to consider the word "redeem." This word differs from the word *purchase*, in that it expresses the previous right of the redeemer to the property redeemed. One may purchase that in which he had no property before that purchase; but nothing can be redeemed without the right of possession in the redeemer. A flock of sheep may be held for trespass, and their owner by paying the damages involved may redeem them; but another man might pay ten times the amount of the damages and yet obtain no title to the sheep. They can be redeemed only by their rightful owner. So the gracious Son of God was sent forth, "made of a woman, made under the law;" not to purchase a people or sheep, but to "save his people from their sins," to "ransom them from the power of the grave, to redeem them from death."

Our "Inquirer" asks, "Were not all the descendants of Adam under the law?" Unquestionably all the unborn family of Adam in their father sinned, and death came justly upon all of them. They whom God hath chosen and blessed in our Lord Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, "were by nature the children of wrath, EVEN AS OTHERS."—Eph. i. 4; ii. 3. The rich mercy of God alone has made the heirs of salvation to differ from those who find in this world all the satisfaction for which they seek. This truth of the sovereignty of divine grace in the salvation of sinners is the stumbling-stone where the natural man always takes offense. All professed christians admit that salvation is by grace; but not even the natural reason and carnal mind of the saints can consent that grace is sovereign without the attraction of merit in the subjects of salvation. Here the tempter finds an easy way to disturb the peace of the saints, calling to their mind their own unworthiness and sin, and urging this as evidence against their hope. But the answer of faith is that faithful saying, "That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—1 Tim. i. 15. Not only Paul, but every subject of that salvation can claim to be chief of sinners; and as such all are hopelessly

lost under the law of sin and death. In this is revealed the glory of that grace which was in our Lord Jesus, that he came "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." This is the miracle of redemption, that they who are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," who were lost in Adam, their natural head, are saved in Christ, their spiritual Head, in whom they have eternal life. While this state of condemnation is the condition of all the redeemed people of God in their earthly relation, and they are only made by grace to differ from the vilest enemy to God, the law to which the text refers we understand to be the legal covenant as given exclusively to national Israel. Our Lord Jesus must fulfill all that was written in that law to redeem those of his people who were under that law; for he said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."—Matthew v. 18. The chosen people who were under that law could never fulfill its rigorous demands; therefore their Redeemer must be made under that law to redeem those who were held under its heavy bondage. He did render all honor to that law, and then nailed it to his cross, with all the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us.—Col. ii. 13-15. Some Jewish disciples were so entangled with that yoke of bondage that they supposed the Gentiles must be brought under the law of Moses in order that they might be saved; and all conditional systems of religion rest upon the same erroneous foundation, which is the denial of divine grace as the only way of salvation. See the refutation of this theory in the whole of this epistle; especially notice the third to the fifth chapters. A correct understanding of the word "redeem" will obviate the difficulty which seems to perplex our "Inquirer." While all the family of Adam are alike under the law of sin and death, and under its curse, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus they only are delivered from that bondage and curse who were given to him in the everlasting covenant before the world was created. Every one of them is included in the redemption wrought out by the Son of God. He saw them as the purchase of his blood, and is satisfied with the perfect salvation of them for whom he died, as it was declared of him in the prophecy already quoted. None could be redeemed by him but those who were his own by the gift of God before they were involved in sin. He was not sent to obtain a people who were not already his own; but the determinate counsel or predestination of God was declared by the angel who announced his name to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people

from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. If he failed to save one of his people, or if he saved one who was not his, this glorious name is not rightfully his. But his own testimony is left on record, saying, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled."—John xvii. 12. They whom he redeemed were his own sheep while they were wandering in sin; they were chosen in him before they were created in Adam, and it was by virtue of this eternal life which was given them in Christ that he justly could redeem them. Neither in the law which Adam transgressed in the garden, nor in the Sinai law, was there any provision for the acceptance of any substitute in the place of the sinner. The essential requirement of all the law is, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." However willing an innocent angel might be to suffer in the place of the sinner, justice could not accept a substitute. In releasing the guilty and punishing the innocent a double crime would be committed. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord."—Prov. xvii. 15. Hence it is evident that the life which was laid down by our gracious Redeemer was the life of all whom he redeemed. This agrees with the record, for "this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12. All those who received this eternal life in the Son were redeemed from the curse and dominion of the law when he satisfied the law in laying down his life for them. So Paul records the decision of the supreme court of heaven when he says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. Justice demands no more than the death of the sinner; therefore the law is satisfied on the part of all sinners whose life is in Christ. Now it is manifested that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." He has not saved sinners from the curse of the law, and left them under its dominion; but he has redeemed his Israel from under the law, and his purpose in this is "that we might receive the adoption."

The worshipers of free-will salvation may distort this text to make it imply that the work of the Son of God only resulted in offering an opportunity to all sinners to choose to be adopted as sons of God, or to refuse to receive that adoption. If this were true, and the choice were indeed left to the sinner, the result would be the total failure of the whole work of the Lord Jesus; since the judgment of the infallible God is on record, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand,

and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."—Psalm xiv. 2, 3. But the sovereign grace of God secures the salvation of his people; for to them it is written, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 13. The whole object of all the revealed work of God, from the creation of the heaven and the earth to the end of time, is the fulfillment of that great purpose of his grace in which he chose his saints in Christ before the foundation of the world, "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. 5, 6. Here those whom God has ordained to receive the adoption are clearly specified. There could be no failure of one of those included with Paul in this precious "us" to be manifested as a subject of this gracious "adoption of sons." Their just condemnation in their natural relation to Adam presented a barrier forbidding the possible fulfillment of this purpose by any way which finite wisdom could devise; but while with men it is impossible, with God all things are possible. In the experience of the saints this impossibility is revealed; and the miracle of its accomplishment in the manifestation of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus is the theme of that new song which fills eternity with the praise of God and the Lamb.

The evident object of the whole connection of the text under consideration is to present the difference between the condition of a servant, under legal bondage, and a free born son and heir of God, receiving by birthright all the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, who is thus manifested as the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth. In proof of this wonderful display of divine grace to the saints, the verse following our text refers to the abiding evidence of the Spirit of his Son which God has sent forth into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. This crying never can arise from any heart unless that Spirit dwells therein. It is not recorded in the inspired word that they who have received this Spirit are made free from the conflict of the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for in every subject of salvation "these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. The seal of the Spirit is unerringly set upon every sinner in whose heart arises that cry, "Abba, Father." His tongue may not dare to speak that name; but it is not possible that the cry by the indwelling Spirit in the heart shall ever cease. It is the foundation of the hope of every saint; for it expresses their vital unity with Jesus the only Son of God, by which alone any sin-

ner can call God his Father, or can be justified. The peculiar form of expression indicates the intense earnestness of the cry; as *Abba* is the Chaldaic word signifying *Father*, the same as the Greek word which is here translated *Father*, the repetition expressing the importance of this truth. Every subject of divine grace has this witness in himself, although the reason of the natural mind cannot receive its spiritual testimony.

Our Redeemer having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances and fulfilled the law in its utmost demand against his elect people, there is nothing to forbid our now receiving the adoption of sons. In Christ the relationship of all his members is a living unity with himself. In this sense no adoption is needed to constitute them heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. The adoption is defined by Paul to be "the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. This we could not receive without being first delivered from condemnation under the holy law of God. The church is his body, which he redeemed by the sacrifice of himself. Every member of that body is delivered by the Father from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son.—Col. i. 13. Although this deliverance is already accomplished in our Lord, it is not revealed in the heirs of salvation while they are subject to vanity in the body of this death. Hence, now, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."—2 Cor. v. 4. It is in this translation that they receive the Spirit of the Son of God, which marks them as elect vessels of mercy, "whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption." Those who have the seal of that Spirit are redeemed from under the law, and there is no evidence that any others are so redeemed; though God is able to give that witness to them who may now be vile persecutors of the saints and blind opposers of the truth. The genuine work of the Spirit in the heart of a sinner never fails to show him his utterly lost condition, so that he is made to cry for the sovereign mercy of God, which is revealed only in Jesus Christ; therefore, the embodiment of the prayer of every sensible sinner is the cry, "ABBA, FATHER."

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

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

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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

THE CHURCH HISTORY MANUSCRIPT RECEIVED.

WE have now in our office the manuscript of the Church History, which makes nearly twice as much as we anticipated. To get the whole matter into one book we will have to run it in brier, the sized type in which obituaries are printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and then the book will make, as near as we can now estimate it, from eight hundred to one thousand pages; reading matter six and three-fourths inches in length, and four and one-eighth inches in width. This will make the book probably the largest history ever published in this country for the money, being equal to what generally sells for from six to eight dollars. To complete this work it will take us from six to eight months. We assure the subscribers that we are as anxious to get the work done as they are to have it completed, and if possible we will shorten the time mentioned above. The work now is mostly of a mechanical nature, and the time necessary for its completion can be calculated with more certainty than can the composing and compiling. We will keep subscribers informed as the work progresses by publishing from time to time just how far the work is advanced. To run the book in long primer, as at first proposed, would make from sixteen hundred to two thousand pages, which would necessitate running it in two volumes, and that would make it too expensive for many of the subscribers. We are actually crowding two large books into one, and selling that at half-price.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

WILL brother H. Cox, of Kentucky, please give his views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Luke xix. 10? What was lost, where and how? This text seems to be controverted by some in this country. By complying you will oblige your brother, I hope.

WILL brother F. A. Chick tell us when the God of heaven set up his kingdom on earth? Has it yet been set up? And if set up during the incarnation of the Savior, how did Abel, Enoch and others, who lived antecedent to his incarnation, get into it actually?

Yours in love,

D. S. BUNCH.

GURDON, Ark., Feb. 27, 1886.

INFORMATION WANTED.

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

Josiah Van Buskirk, formerly of Fillmore, Mo.

IF any reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES can inform me where I can get the "Life of Elder Wilson Thompson," they will confer a great favor on me by so doing. My post-office is Caledonia, Washington Co., Mo.

WM. G. HOWARD.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

This work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in-cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order, by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

MARRIAGES.

In North Berwick, Maine, by Elder Wm. Quint, Feb. 10, 1886, Mr. Frank C. Hayes and Miss Thersa H. Craig, both of Berwick, Maine.

On Feb. 25, 1886, at the residence of the bride's parents, by Elder Wm. J. Parington, James V. Duffield and Miss Ocey W. Ege, both of Montgomery, New Jersey.

FEB. 17, 1886, by Elder John W. Timmons, at his residence near Pittsville, Md., Mr. Joshua B. Leonard and Miss Lanny E. Adkins, both of Wicomico County, Md.

By the same, Feb. 21, 1886, at the residence of Mr. Elijah Parker, near Pittsville, Mr. Joshua D. Parsons and Miss Laura A. Collins, both of Wicomico County, Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Cora Belle Seitz, the subject of this notice, was born in Bloom township, Seneca County, Ohio, October 20, 1862, and died January 13, 1886, aged twenty-three years, two months and twenty-four days. She was the only daughter of Daniel and Barbary Seitz. She was spasmodically and nervously afflicted for about eleven years, which made her a constant care to her parents. All was done for her that medical science possibly could do, but all to no avail. She possessed a superior intellect and was a christian lady of more than ordinary ability. She was admirably refined in her taste and manners, gentle and courteous to all her friends, remarkably sensitive as to right and wrong, benevolent, kind and social to a fault, sympathetic in her deportment, and often would give vent to her feelings when occasions were presented. She was passionately fond of the ideal, coupled with sublimity, a strong desire to see and understand the beauties of nature and the unseen future of the celestial world of glory.

To the sorrow stricken family it is a comfort to know that she received a hope in

Christ about eight years ago last November, and was baptized by Elder L. B. Sherwood, and joined the Regular Baptist Church of Honey Creek, of which she was an honorable and interesting member until her death. Her funeral was preached by Elder Lewis Thomas, from 1 Cor. 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, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." The discourse was an able one, and all who heard it must have felt its force, and especially it was of great comfort to the mourning friends. A few days before her death she told the family that she could not get well, and longed for death to relieve her of her suffering. She very systematically made all the arrangements for her funeral, which were carried out by the bereaved family as near as possible. She had a wonderful presentiment of the glory world the day before her death. She seemed to fall into a sleep for several hours, and after she awoke she called her mother and said, "O, ma, I saw my Savior, and he put a pair of wings on me, and wants me to come to that happy, happy land." She said, "I see the angels flying all around this room. It is full of angels. O can't you see them, ma?" She bade the family and all her young friends and associates that came to see her farewell. She sweetly sang the hymn to her cousin, "Pass me not, O gentle Savior," and thus her mind was all engrossed with the heavenly and rapturous visions of the eternal world of glory before she passed away. Blind skeptics might here learn a lesson if they had eyes to see.

DEAR BROTHER:—Again the painful duty rests upon me to prepare the obituary notice of another of our household. My youngest sister, **Maggie E. Ensor**, passed away from earth, on Friday morning, July 31, 1885, aged eighteen years lacking two months and twenty-five days. Her disease was that dreadful destroyer of human life, consumption. She had been gradually failing since February, but was only confined to her bed a few days. Maggie was possessed with a bright social and friendly disposition, which had endeared her to many. I never heard her express herself in regard to spiritual things, but we are not without some evidence that for her to die was gain. It was my privilege to be with her the last two months of her sickness, and I never saw one more quiet and submissive than she. Two days before she passed away, she turned to me and said, "Lila, the doctor says I have got to leave you, but I am not afraid to die, and I hope the time will soon come." I replied as best I could. She then said, "I have never had a bad ache or pain, but hope the time will not be long." In a few brief hours the summons came and nipped the fair bud just ready to bloom. Elder Chick spoke words of comfort to a large assembly of sympathizing relatives and friends on the following Sunday, from the words found in Lam. iii. 24-26. We laid the fair form in her last resting place beside three dear ones that had gone before. Dear brethren, pray for us, that we that remain may have strength given us to bear these sad afflictions. May they serve as lessons to wean us from the vanities of life and set our affections on things above.

Her soul has fled this mortal lot,
To soar amid the skies,
And left a blank to mark the spot
Where death has claimed his prize.

Her charming words no longer cheer
A parent's fervent heart;
Sisters and brothers cease to share
The joys her smiles impart.

Consoling proof of final rest
Should quiet every sigh;
Her dying words a hope expressed
Of peace with God on high.

LILA ENSOR.

COCKEYSVILLE, Md., Feb. 23, 1886.

DIED—In Shelby County, Tenn., Nov. 23, 1885, our beloved old brother, **John R. Pearson**. He was born in Christian County, Kentucky, June 17, 1806, emigrated to Fayette County, Tenn., in 1827, professed a hope in Jesus and joined the Primitive Baptist

Church at Hopewell, and was baptized Dec. 25, 1831. He was chosen clerk of the church soon afterward, and served in that capacity until the church dissolved. Then he with sixteen others were constituted into a church at Shiloh, near Mt. Pleasant, Mississippi. He was chosen clerk there and served ten or twelve years. He then took a letter and joined the church at Concord and served there as clerk until the church dissolved. In 1860 he united with the church at Mt. Pisgah and served them as clerk until 1867. Then he moved to Marshall County, Miss., and united with the church at Shiloh again. In 1872 he was ordained deacon and served in that capacity until he became too old and feeble. His health was failing for several years; was almost entirely helpless for two years before he died, and a short time previous fell and received a severe hurt. His first marriage was Oct. 20, 1840, and his second Sept. 23, 1854. He was a good husband, a kind father, an obliging neighbor, and in a very high degree a worthy citizen. He leaves two daughters in Shelby County, Tenn., and one in Ashly County, Ark., together with grandchildren and many of the household of God to mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope, for we believe that our loss is his gain.

From our ever loving brother in the love of the truth,

A. TOMLIN.

LACEY, Ark.

THE death of **Catharine Allen Dickerman**, the wife of A. B. Dickerman, for more than half a century a resident of this vicinity, which occurred on Saturday, January 30, has filled the hearts of many friends with more than ordinary grief. Born in Wallingford, Ct., February 23, 1808, she had almost reached the venerable old age of seventy-eight years. She was married at New Haven, Ct., in April, 1830, and with her life's companion came to Tompkins County, N. Y., in 1833, and settled in the neighborhood, which has ever since been her home. For nearly ten years Mrs. Dickerman has been an invalid, confined for the most part to her house, where she patiently endured sufferings from which the angel of death has at last brought her a sweet release. She was in every sense of the word a true and noble woman, a trusting and devoted friend, a consistent christian, whose religion, rising beyond a mere belief, became the every day practice of her beautiful life. To the husband she has left she was a wise and faithful counsellor, a tender and loving wife; to the children whom she reared, she was the true and perfect mother, fulfilling the highest destiny of woman in the holiest relation of life.

The funeral service was conducted from her late residence this afternoon by Elder A. St. John, of Watkins, N. Y.

OUR little grandson, **Millard F. Jefferson**, departed this mortal life at the home of his parents, in the city of Albany, N. Y., on the morning of November 17, 1885, aged six years, ten months and sixteen days. I arrived home from a visit on the sixteenth, and he died at twenty minutes before eight o'clock the following morning. He was very glad to see me, and said, "Come and lay down close by me. I am going to die." He said to his mother in the morning, "What day of the month is it?" She replied, "The seventeenth, dear." He said, "Well, I am going on the seventeenth." He was a great sufferer. He called us to his bedside and kissed us good-by, and said, "Please, Jesus, please come and take me home." He was a truthful boy, and no one knew him but to love him. His mother says he sang, as long as he was able, the verses,

"Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;
I want thee forever to live in my soul;
Break down every idol, cast out every foe;
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Lord Jesus, thou seest I patiently wait;
Come now, and within me a new heart create;
To those that have sought thee thou never saidst, No;
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

MRS. A. M. JEFFERSON.

(From the Trumansburg Sentinel.)

THE death of **Catharine Allen Dickerman**, the wife of A. B. Dickerman, for more than half a century a resident of this vicinity, which occurred on Saturday, January 30, has filled the hearts of many friends with more than ordinary grief.

Born at Wallingford, Conn., February 23, 1808, she had almost reached the venerable age of seventy-eight years. She was married at New Haven, Conn., in April, 1830, and with her life's companion, came to this county in 1833 and settled in the neighborhood which has ever since been her home.

For nearly ten years Mrs. Dickerman has been an invalid, confined for the most part to her home, where she patiently endured sufferings from which the angel of death has at last brought her a sweet release.

She was in every sense of the word a true and noble woman, a trusting and devoted friend, a consistent christian, whose religion rising beyond a mere belief became the every day practice of her beautiful life. To the husband she has left she was a wise counsellor, a tender and a loving wife; to the children whom she reared she was the true and perfect mother, fulfilling the highest destiny of woman in the holiest relation of life.

The funeral service was conducted from her late residence, on Tuesday, by Elder A. St. John, of Watkins, N. Y.

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Feb. 11, 1886, **Miss Vesta O. Ramsdall**, aged fifty-five years and four months. For years she has been an invalid, but for months before she died she was confined to her bed and room. Within that time she was with her sister, Mrs. J. C. Hays, where she was kindly cared for. She was very patient, although she was at times a great sufferer. But when death came to her relief she died without a struggle. She never made an open profession of her hope in Christ, but it was very evident that she was a child of God. I had a long talk with her while she was sick, and I never heard any one talk that gave any better evidence that they were poor in spirit, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness, than she did. She then asked for my light on that portion of God's word found in the fourteenth chapter of John, "In my Father's house are many mansions," &c. I expounded the same the best that I could, and she seemed satisfied.

At her funeral I preached to a large gathering of people from the same Scripture. She has left an aged father, brothers and sisters, and many other relatives, to mourn.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DIED—At her home near Occoquan, Jan. 6, 1886, **Mrs. Sophia Clark**. The deceased was a friend of the Primitive Baptists, and a lady of a kind and hospitable disposition. She was sick but a few days, and her death was quite unexpected to her family, who have the sympathy of this community in their bereavement. A large congregation of sorrowing and sympathizing relatives and friends attended her funeral on the 8th ult. The text used upon the occasion is recorded in 2 Corinthians iv. 17, 18. The deceased leaves her husband and several children to mourn her departure. May the bereavement be sanctified to their good.

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Feb., 1886.

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, Jan. 12, 1886, **Mrs. Hannah Bennet**, aged almost eighty years. She never made an open profession of her faith in Christ, but I was told at her funeral that she received a hope in Christ years ago. The large number of relatives and friends that attended her funeral, and the tears that were shed by many of them, spoke plainly that she had been one that they all loved and respected highly, and in her death they had met with a great loss. Many people attended her funeral, and I preached to them from Matt. v. 6. She has left her husband, over eighty years old, three children, one sister, and many other relatives, to mourn.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Wm B Ennist 2.—Total \$2 00.

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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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 1886, 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 address he may desire; but in all cases the FULL AMOUNT OF CASH MUST ACCOMPANY THE ORDERS.

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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.

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LOOK TO YOUR DATES.

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

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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 of the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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Address J. B. HARDY,
Dowell, Edwards Co., Kan., or this office.

CHURCH HISTORY NOTICE.

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

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

Signs of the Times.

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

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1886.

NO. 7.

POETRY.

GOD!

A POEM, BY DERZHAVIN, A RUSSIAN GENTLEMAN, BORN IN 1763.

O THOU eternal One, whose presence bright
All space doth occupy, all nations guide;
Unchanged through all time's devastating
flight,

Thou only God: there is no God beside.
Being above all beings; three in one;
Whom none can comprehend, and none ex-
plore;
Who fillest existence with thyself alone;
Embracing all, supporting, ruling o'er;
Being whom we call God, and know no
more.

In its sublime research, philosophy
May measure out the ocean deep, may
count

The sands or the sun's rays; but God! for thee
There is no weight nor measure. None can
mount

Up to thy mysteries. Reason's brightest
spark,

Though kindled by thy light, in vain would
try

To trace thy counsels indefinite and dark.
And thought is lost ere thought can soar
so high

Even like past moments in eternity.

Thou from primeval nothingness didst call
First chaos, then existence. Lord, on thee
Eternity had its foundation. All

Sprang forth from thee: of light, joy, har-
mony,

Sole original; all life, all beauty, thine.

Thy word created all, and doth create.

Thy splendor fills all space with rays divine.

Thou art, and wert, and shall be, glorious,
great,

Light-giving, life-sustaining Potentate.

Thy chains the unmeasured universe sur-
round;

Upheld by thee, by thee inspired with
breath.

Thou the beginning with the end hast bound,
And beautifully mingled life and death.

As sparks mount upward from the fiery blaze,
So suns are born, so worlds springs forth
from thee.

And as the spangles in the sunny rays
Shine round the silver snow, the pageantry
O heavens bright army glitters in thy
praise.

A million torches, lighted by thy hand,
Wander unwearied through the blue abyss;
They own thy power, accomplish thy com-
mand;

All gay with life, all eloquent with bliss!
What shall we call them? Piles of crystal
light,

A glorious company of golden streams,
Lamps of celestial ether burning bright,
Suns lighting systems with their joyous
beams?

But thou to these art as the noon to night.

Yet as a drop of water in the sea
All this magnificence in thee is lost.
What are ten thousand worlds compared to
thee?

And what am I then? Heaven's unnum-
bered host,

Though multiplied by myriads, and arrayed
In thee all the glory of sublimest thought,
Is but an atom in the balance weighed
Against thy greatness—is a cipher brought
Against infinity. What am I then? Naught!
Naught! But the effulgence of thy light di-
vine,

Pervading worlds, hath reached my bosom
too.

Yes, in my spirit doth thy Spirit shine,
As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew.
Naught! But I live, and on hope's pinions
fly

Eager toward thy presence; for in thee
I live, and breathe, and dwell, aspiring high,
Even to the throne of thy divinity.

I am, O God, and surely thou must be.

Thou art directing, guiding all. Thou art.
Direct my understanding then to thee;
Control my spirit, guide my wandering heart.

Though but an atom midst immensity,
Still I am something, fashioned by thy hand.

I hold a middle rank 'twixt heaven and
earth,

On the last verge of mortal being stand
Close to the realms where angels have their
birth,

Just on the boundaries of spirit-land.

The chain of being is complete in me;
In me is matter's last gradation lost;
And the next is Spirit—Deity!

And the next is Spirit—Deity!

CORRESPONDENCE.

OCCOQUAN, Va., March 5, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR
BRETHREN:—We are standing upon

the verge of a great conflict for truth
that must eventually shake the Prim-

itive Baptist denomination through-
out the length and breadth of our
land. It is not wise that we should

turn from the evidence continually
crowding upon us that show the
necessity for this conflict, this gospel

shaking, in order "that those things
which cannot be shaken may remain."

I have been thinking of the present
condition of the church, of the need

of firmness in her ministry, and of
the long and faithful labors of the

SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I take my
pen to write of these things, know-

ing, I trust, that the Lord alone can
guide us in the great work of truth,
and fill the heart with a gospel

message. The inspiration of the
psalmist must be the inspiration of

every gospel message, wherein he
says, "My heart is inditing a good
matter: I speak of the things which

I have made touching the King;
my tongue is the pen of a ready
writer." The church of the living

God is the object of his love, his
peculiar treasure, and his all-seeing
eye is upon everything relating to it.

All of her changes are in his hand.
"My times are in thy hand," says
the psalmist. There is a need be

for each and every event and change
through which she passes. We will
not allow the idea that these things

are merely permitted, but hold that
they are predestinated for the good of
the church and the glory of God.

Some attempt to draw the line be-
tween things that relate to the church
and the things that pertain to the
world, claiming that the first are
predestinated, and the last, or much

of it, permitted. This idea ignores
entirely the fact that this world, with
all that relates to it, was created for

the good pleasure of its omnipotent
and all-wise Creator, for the lifting

of Jesus on high and the manifesta-
tion of his glory. There is no cir-
cumstance, however large or small it

may seem to be, but what is directly
or remotely connected with this
object. Every minutia in all the

realms of time to its utmost bounds
is interwoven in the network of God's
eternal purpose of good to Israel.

"All things work together for good
to them that love God." What if
this is incomprehensible to our natural

mind? Are not "his ways past find-
ing out?" The times of coldness and
of zeal, of trial and of comfort, of

conflict and of rest, are in his hands.
No storm has ever lowered upon the
horizon about us, no thunderbolt has

riven there undirected by an omni-
potent hand.

"In the midst of the storm, in the midst of
the gloom,
Fear not, trembling ones, it is I."

There is no entrance into blessed,
peaceful rest aside from him, no rays
of sunshine to brighten our path that

fall unbidden upon it. In this
blessed assurance we calmly face the
coming storm. Our trust is in God.

Our sufficiency is of him. So sure as
there is a need be for it, so certain
will we see a firm and uncompromis-

ing ministry of the word. They
may be, and are now, few and far be-
tween, but they are a mighty host in

the impregnable power of their God.
"I heard," says Ezekiel, "the noise
of their wings, like the noise of great

waters, as the voice of the Almighty,
the voice of speech, as the noise of
an host." "Lo, I am with you

always," says the blessed Redeemer,
"even unto the end of the world."
"The chariots of God are twenty

thousand, even thousands of angels:
the Lord is among them, as in Sinai,
in the holy place."—Psalm lxxiii. 17.

Clothed in heavenly power the min-
isters of the cross are held as stars
in the right hand of him who walketh

in the midst of the seven golden
candlesticks. A messenger from the
throne with the word of God in

his heart and upon his lips is a
mighty host. "Go," said the Lord
to Elijah, "anoint Hazael to be king

over Syria. * * * And Elisha
* * * prophet in thy room." No
earthly armies or influence were at

the prophet's command. A poor and
helpless wanderer upon earth, friend-
less and faint, he stands before the

Lord at Mt. Horeb, and receives the
divine command. In a sense of
weariness and infinite loneliness he

came to this mountain, fleeing for
refuge from the face of Ahab and his
wicked queen. In an agony of soul

he pours forth his heart in humble,
fervent prayer to God. Truly all the
world seems against him. "The

children of Israel have forsaken thy
covenant, thrown down thine altars,
and slain thy prophets with the

sword; and I, even I only, am left,
and they seek my life to take it
away." Weary, faint and helpless,

he falls beneath the burden upon
him, but falls at the feet of his God.
Suddenly the mountain becomes

ablaze with the eternal presence.
The Lord shows the discouraged and
weary prophet the wonders of his

power. A great and strong wind
rends the mountains, and breaks in
pieces the "rocks before the Lord."

In holy power the Lord speaks to
sustain and encourage the prophet,
to grant him renewed zeal. What

are kings, queens, kingdoms and
earthly powers to the prophet now?
The Lord shall "dash them in pieces

like a potter's vessel." Yes, and
"whole worlds to death, and make
them when he please." He goes

forth from and in the presence of his
God to fulfill the divine command.
True, no earthly army or power ac-

company him, but why does Ahab,
Jezebel and others tremble at his ap-
proach? What is there in his name

to make kings tremble upon their
thrones and all Israel stand in awe
at his approach? He comes as a

messenger from "the great white
throne" of eternity, and Ahab and
others read in his countenance their

impending doom. His eye does not
pity, his hand must not spare. "And
Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth,

what the Lord saith unto me, that
will I speak." This must be the in-
spiration of every gospel message,

"What the Lord saith." What if
the world frowns upon and endeavors
to trample the preacher beneath its

feet, and even Israel dislikes to hear.
What cares he for the frowns or
smiles of men? "I have made thee

this day a defenced city, and an iron
pillar and brazen walls against the
whole land. * * * And they

shall fight against thee, but they
shall not prevail against thee; for I
am with thee, saith the Lord, to de-

liver thee." We have heard of, and
many of us have witnessed the
ability with which the Lord clothed

his ministers in the years that are
past, through which they have
been able to withstand the attacks

made against them. Through floods
of misrepresentation and false ac-
cusation they have borne the banner

of eternal truth until called from the

field of conflict to enter forever the portals of rest. Truth takes no backward steps. The ministry of the word will not be defenceless. Their God will clothe them with power to resist all attacks, fill their mouths with arguments, and grant them wisdom "from above," spoken of as "pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." Each ministerial gift has its proper place. Some see with more clearness and can proclaim with greater ability the doctrine of God our Savior. One should not find fault with another because that other can see with more clearness and is better able to expound the deep things of salvation. In other words, a minister or any other lover of the truth should not say a point of doctrine is not to be seen simply because he cannot see it. Sometimes I hear preaching, I will not say from whence it cometh, nor will I undertake to locate the preacher, though he may have a nominal standing among us, whether called to the work or not, God knoweth; but the lack in the preaching is not so much in what is said as in what is not said. It is not "savory meat" such as Isaac loves. I do not like preaching that turns in every direction. It is altogether too liberal. Nor do I like a ministerial track pointing in every direction, or too far on the other side. The Scripture speaks of straight paths for our feet. Then the saints have straight feet to walk in them, not leaning a little one side. Ezekiel speaks of the "living creatures" going "straight forward, * * * and they turned not when they went." Brethren, plow with a steady hand. True, it is not pleasant to plow among traditional roots, or to strike an obstinate stump. Call for the mattock. Do not undertake to chop with a borrowed axe, especially if it is too heavy. Above all else do not go out in Saul's armor. From the lofty towers of Zion we look first abroad upon the scenes of earth. What a heart-rending, sickening sight! Corruption permeates every avenue of its social, political and religious life. Incurable ulcers arising from a corrupt nature fester as breeding places for innumerable crimes. True, this is not always seen openly. The earthly eye cannot behold the mystery of iniquity. Ezekiel speaks of the wonderful manner through which he beheld "the seat of the image of jealousy." It was revealed to him. These things were hidden from outward sight, but as he dug deeper in the wall he beheld greater abominations. To the outward eye it has now a fair appearance. John speaks of a beast that had "two horns like a lamb." How well pleased the world is with itself and its wonderful works! How well pleased Jezebel must have been with herself as she "painted her face * * * and looked out at a window."—2 Kings ix. 30. The corruptions of earth gilded over with a brazen religion, its boasted enlightenment and mortal

wisdom must ever deceive the deluded votaries of earth; but no such deceptive appearance can deceive the ministry of that God whose piercing eye looks into the secret thoughts of every heart, and whose spirit reveals to his children the deep things of eternity. By the way, I notice that a new "galley boat" has just been launched from the workshops of New England upon the waters of Babylon. This boat has various names; like the chameleon it can change its color to suit the locality or surroundings. In some places it is called prohibition, in other places local option, temperance, &c. It is the same craft, however, with the occupants looking one way and the boat going another. The rowmen have received special training in the temples of Babylon, and the authors are well qualified from its theological schools to play some didos upon the waters of Babylon. Great things are claimed for this new craft, especially when its builders remember the success of the old one called Abolitionism, which has so recently arrayed section against section, filled the land with fraternal strife and bloodshed, and trampled upon the rights and liberties of the people; this great American juggernaut, before which so many have fallen, and whose path is strewn with the graves of its victims. Woe be unto the lovers of truth who are seduced by the false pretensions of the new "galley boat" of Babylon to "Walk into my parlor, says the spider to the fly." Woe be unto them! True, their eyes may be looking in the direction of moral improvement, but this boat bears them swiftly from it. In this direction they may continue to look until the boat strikes the Rock of eternal truth, to be dashed to pieces forever. This boat can never enter the crystal river of eternal truth. Gospel light shall expose its lying devices and make bare its deceptive pretences. I would remark here that the immoderate use of spirituous liquor finds not the shadow of refuge in what I have written. The Bible condemns the abuse and not the use of the fruit of the vine, of the field, or of the flock. The children of God are not to be "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." Has it occurred to you, inquiring child of grace, that the Lord of life and glory himself could not enter this new "prohibition party"? Its principles forbid it. But he lived in an old-fashioned age, you remember. We are now living, we are told, in an enlightened age. There are giants upon earth. Solomon's wisdom is nothing. Men are wiser than the blessed Redeemer and his apostles. Wisdom indeed! I say wisdom. This is an age of infidelity and blasphemy. Fools (the kind that Solomon referred to in Prov. xxvi. 12) are the shining lights of earth. Mr. Talmage against Mr.

Ingersoll; Mr. Ingersoll against Mr. Talmage. Wonderful men! wonderful wisdom! "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth," the Reverend Doctors of this world's divinity and wisdom. But to you, child of grace, the solemn warning of the apostle is addressed, "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ."—Eph. iv. These expressions are true of the present age, with all of its boasted enlightenment. With special reference to such an age as the one in which we live, Paul writes to Timothy, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. * * * Now as Jaunes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all, as theirs also was."—2 Tim. iii. What a clear picture of the present day! Now amid this gross darkness and fearful wickedness the inspired apostle warns the ministers of to-day through the solemn charge to Timothy: "I charge thee, therefore, 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." How solemn is his language. He then speaks of its effect among those who profess to love the truth. After referring to the condition of the ungodly races of earth, and especially the religion that grows out of the reasoning of worldly wisdom and prudence, in the language already quoted from the third chapter, he speaks of many of the professed followers of the Lamb. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Tim. iv. Child of grace, read not this solemn language with indifference. Pass it not lightly by. Ye heralds of the cross! ye watchmen in the towers of Zion! to you in holy solemnity comes the closing expression: "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

But I pass now to speak briefly of the faithful labor of the SIGNS. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES! What fond recollections cluster around the name! Memory turns to other days when friends were few and foes were many. We turn the faded pages of volumes that are old, and of those of recent years, and they tell of the faithfulness and devotion of a membership that have gone to their long, eternal home. We pause here and there at some familiar name, and can almost see the cherished form and hear the living words of eternal truth that fell from his lips. We sadly turn the pages of the obituary department, and read again the precious evidences of love and esteem in memory of those that are gone. An age that is past again comes before us. We read with no earthly eye of their conflict and rest in the "path of the just." They have toiled as we are now toiling along the weary way of life, amid perils of different forms and names; yes, and "perils among false brethren." They have reached the end of their mortal pilgrimage, and have entered forever the portals of rest. In a dark and terrible day, when the shadows of error darkened the horizon of Zion, and the armies of antichrist were expecting her destruction, the SIGNS went forth, we can see plainly now, from the Master's hand. The Lord has sustained it. It has been, and is yet, a paper of truth, and as long as truth is its armor it must prevail. May it continue to go forth, a thunderbolt of war and a son of consolation. Again we look from the lofty towers of Zion and behold now a sublime and imposing spectacle. "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." The army of the Lord in battle array! "The shout of a king is among them." "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel."—Num. xxiii. "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as the gardens by the river's side."—Num. xxiv. 6. The inspired penman, in the twelfth chapter of his letter to the Hebrews, encouraging and admonishing the saints, speaking of the things of which I have been writing, and referring especially to the fact that the Lord God omnipotent, by his mighty power, would shake his church from time to time in order that all soft or loose material should be thrown out, uses the following sublime and positive language. "But ye are come unto Mt. Zion, 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 if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth; 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: for our God is a consuming fire." Solemn, important words! May we have faith to receive them in an honest heart, to cling with undying devotion to the doctrine and order of the cross, remembering that while in the world we "shall have tribulation." "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Yours to serve in gospel bonds,
WM. M. SMOOT.

SOME THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS.

SOMETIMES as I sit down to write on spiritual subjects I will be seriously checked by such questions as these: What do you know of this subject more than any natural man may know? Have you anything to say that is not the result of your own study? Are you sure that what you are going to write is a truth that has been revealed to you in your own experience? Has it been proven in your own heart? Has it helped you, saved you, made you free? Have you tasted it, handled it, felt it as a living power within you? Such inquiries often come into my mind when I am about to arise before the people to try to preach the gospel, and sometimes I am almost stopped by them. For I know that unless that which I speak has come unto me, "not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," I can only speak in the letter, and cannot be unto the elect a minister "of the Spirit which giveth life." I know that if I have only what I have attained by study to speak, however clear the letter of sound doctrine, I shall be but a hypocrite as I stand before the people of God; and if they do not see this at once, they will feel in their souls the lack of spiritual nourishment and building up, however much their feelings may be gratified, and instead of being as a watered garden they will become as a dry and parched land. O how often I have cried to the Lord under the heavy pressure of such questionings and fears, that he would not let me come before his dear people in my own strength and wisdom, but that he would take away what was of myself, and leave only his own message to speak to them; that he would give me some assurance of the word in my heart and mind being from him, and that he

would make me willing to speak with a stammering tongue, if it was his will; to be nothing in myself, that his word and name might have all the praise, and that it might appear "that the excellency of the power is of God and not of man." Sometimes I have been made to feel a little of such willing submission to the will of God in my spirit.

What strange conflicts and sore experiences the ministers of Christ must pass through. They feel that the work to which they are called is beyond the sufficiency of any man. They feel that there is a divine power and authority in the word which they preach; but how poor and little and weak and unworthy they feel in themselves. Earthen vessels! That in some measure describes them as they feel themselves to be when they are brought face to face with that wonderful work of preaching the gospel. An earthen vessel! When broken its value is gone. It is good only to hold the treasure. Its material is of no value otherwise. And one vessel is no better than another. How helpless they all are! Strange that one should ever be lifted up with pride and self-sufficiency when he is so utterly helpless. The earthen vessel may stand before a thirsty multitude filled with cool, delicious water, but it can never of itself give one of them a single drop to keep him from perishing of thirst. There must be the will and hand of another to lift and move it before the refreshing treasure can be poured out to the thirsty soul. But whenever there is an earthen vessel so filled, there will be the Hand to cause it to give forth the precious word of truth; and at such times the word will come in power and with authority, and will be witnessed to as a teaching and comforting word in the believer's soul.

To preach is not merely to give the views and opinions of the one who speaks. His views as a man are no better than those of any other who can study with the same degree of mental power. He was not sent to preach because of any peculiar intellectual strength, or readiness in speech, or persuasive power. He is likely to be backward in these respects, and will certainly be so in his own estimation. He is not sent to give the Lord's people his views of gospel truth merely. That he could have done as well before he was called to this great work. Nor are they brought together in the assembly of the saints to hear the results of his study. But like the company at the house of Cornelius when Peter came there, they are all before God to hear of this servant all that is commanded him of God. The public administration of the word is an ordinance of God to feed his people, and nothing can take its place.

I HAVE been thinking of the peculiar conflict that a christian experiences. A natural man may talk about a warfare, but what he characterizes as such is very different from that which is felt by a child of God. The

warfare as he regards it is the effort of a man to overcome the passions and lusts that may oppose his doing what he believes God has commanded him to do, in which he has to struggle hard and fight against allurements and temptations in the world, but is finally successful. Religious literature is full of talk about this kind of warfare, and often those who apparently contend strongly for the doctrine of salvation by grace present no other kind of conflict. They will talk of the power that one has when with a fixed and steady purpose he sets about his work, and will flatter those whom they address with a belief in that power; and yet they will insist so strongly that it is all of grace that any is able to overcome, that for a time they will deceive the truly exercised soul. But they fail to describe what he experiences; and how often he is brought into great trouble through such teaching when he finds that he can never accomplish the good that he desires. He sees that they can do the things that they would, and they say it is by grace they do them. But he cannot do the things that he would, and so finally concludes that he cannot have known the grace of God. They can get so that their words will be free from vanity and pride, and their actions be right and holy; but he cannot think one good thought in the sight of a holy God, nor speak one pure word, nor do one holy act. He redoubles his efforts, but in vain. His life is pure in the sight of men, it is very likely; for he will have such a hatred of evil and sin that he turns from it with loathing. But while his heart is full of vanity and evil he cannot see his life as anything but hateful in the sight of God; for he loathes himself for his sinfulness. He is thankful that he is kept from outbreking sin, but he counts it as a special mercy, and not as anything to his credit. He cannot do the things he would. He would do good, but evil is present with him. How to perform that which is good he finds not. And so in this kind of a warfare he is never victorious, and those who teach it in this way are miserable comforters to him.

But when faith is exercised in this poor soul he realizes the victory in a very different way from that presented by these teachers. He, by this faith, looks away from himself and all his sins and corruptions to Jesus, who is revealed to him as his righteousness. While he has this view of the dear Savior, his sins and infirmities do not trouble and oppress him, for they have been borne in his sacred body on the cross, and he experiences the power of that redemption. He now feels a purity and holiness as the power of that dear name of Jesus is in his heart. He is taken from all false trust in himself, and from depending upon his own righteousness, which is but filthy rags; and so by faith his heart is purified. Now "the accuser of the brethren, who accuses them day and night before God," brings up his sins and vileness and

the pollution of his heart before him, and perhaps for a time he can see nothing in himself but the flesh which lusts against the spirit; and losing sight of the ground of his hope he may be tempted to think that he has no right to entertain a hope. The enemy accuses well, and there is enough of iniquity in any one hour of his life to appear to sustain the accusation. It may be that by some transgression fresh guilt has been brought upon his conscience, and the cries of the poor, trembling soul for mercy do not seem to be heard, and the enemy roars against him that he is lost. But "when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Here is the warfare: the devil on the one side, and Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, on the other. You cannot do the things that you would, says the enemy, but you do the things you would not, and so you are not a child of God. But faith enables us to answer by the Spirit, Although I cannot do the things that I would, Jesus has done them for me, and it is he who has made me desire to do them, and has wrought them in me by faith, and so his works are mine. It is an unspeakable blessing that I would do that which is right, and that I hate the evil that I do, and I am unspeakably blessed in the assurance that Jesus has blotted out my transgressions and forgiven my sins and is my righteousness. So get thee behind me, Satan, for I am saved in Jesus. It is true that my thoughts and words and deeds are all impure and unholy, and if judged by them I would be forever separated from the presence of a holy God, and consigned to everlasting punishment. But my dear Redeemer gives me his own sweet thoughts and holy desires to fill my soul with a pure delight while they are there, and gives me his own precious and holy words to speak, and his own blessed good works to walk in, and his own dear, fragrant name, full of righteousness and all perfection, as my own in which to appear before the Father. He has loved me with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness has drawn me, and has shed abroad his love in my heart. Thus the Spirit lifts up the sword, which is the word of God, in our behalf, and we are victorious, not over our sinful self, but over the enemy in spite of our sinful self. This is the victory which overcomes the world, even our faith; and as we thus feel our standing secure upon the Rock, we sing the new song of praise to his most blessed name, and shout in holy triumph from the top of the mountains of his holiness.

The warfare that the natural man talks about is surface work. They gain victories over their lusts and passions, foes which they never hated, and they are to be credited with the victory. A child of God is enabled by grace to keep under his body; a Pharisee does the same in his own strength. This is their religion. But they know nothing of

being utterly broken down and covered with shame and self-loathing in the sight of a holy God, and then of being raised up by the power of reigning grace above all their sins, and in tender contrition and humble thankfulness joining in the song of praise to the name of Jesus. They do not know the sweetness of forgiveness, the preciousness of the blood that cleanseth from all sin, the riches of the love of God in the poor, broken heart, that makes it whole again.

To this poor creature who daily feels his corruption, who "has the sentence of death in himself that he should not trust in himself, but in God who raiseth the dead," how sweet and how highly prized is the truth. It is of unspeakable value. The exceeding great and precious promises are the wine that was given to him when he was heavy of heart, and the strong, pure doctrine of God our Savior is the strong drink that was given him when he was ready to perish, of which he drank and forgot his poverty and remembered his misery no more.—Prov. xxxi. 16. He can never again bear any tincture of human works or creature merit of any kind whatever. However it may be colored to appear like the wine of good doctrine, he will at once detect and reject it.

How GOOD and comforting is the truth that the love of God to each of the elect is an everlasting love. That love to each of them was as great and deep and strong before the world began as it shall be when the redeemed soul is enjoying the fullness of it in heaven. It is a boundless sea, whose fullness can never be increased or diminished.

I HAVE seen an assertion that the elect of God do not become sheep until they believe. Having seen this sentiment repeated and insisted upon, and believing that an important principle of truth is involved, I feel like taking notice of it. It is not as believers that the Lord's people are called sheep, but as the elect of God, whether in belief or unbelief. They are as distinctly called sheep in the Scriptures while in their unquickened state as they are when they have heard his voice and followed him. "Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."—1 Peter ii. 25. "I lay down my life for the sheep." "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice."—John x. 15, 16. In each of the above portions of Scripture the figure of sheep is used to designate the elect while they are yet in their sins; and in the first quotation they are spoken of as such before they fell in Adam. A very slight attention to the language will show that there can be no other understanding allowed. Some confusion of mind may result from confounding different figures and forms of expression used in the Scriptures to designate the people of God, which each

have their distinct purpose, expressing different things concerning them. When the elect are said to have been dead in trespasses and sins, they are not called "dead sheep." The same condition is expressed in the use of the figure by speaking of them as "scattered in the cloudy and dark day," "gone astray;" but some part of the infinite truth concerning them is expressed in the one form which the other is not intended to express. So with the expression, "And were by nature children of wrath, even as others." The figure of sheep is not used here, and it would be as much folly to attempt to apply it for the purpose of argument as to apply it when they are spoken of as being "planted," as being "rooted in love." As trees they are "planted" and "rooted" and "bear fruit;" as sheep they are "gathered" and tenderly "carried" and "fed" in green pastures; as men and women they are described in different conditions, as "dead," "dead in sin," "dead to sin," "dead to the world;" and as "alive," also, in various conditions: "alive to the law," "alive unto God," "alive in Christ," "alive from the dead." The figure of sheep is not used for the purpose of expressing these things.

When all nations are gathered before the Son of man, seated on the throne of his glory, which took place before that generation passed away, and will continue through all the gospel dispensation (Matt. xxiv. 34), is there anything to distinguish those who are called sheep from the others in the sight of men, until they are separated one from the other by him? But to him they are as distinct before as after the separation; and the very figure shows the distinction to have been absolute from the beginning. It is not a distinction that exists in their nature, for in that we are told they are all alike; but it is thus that the election of God is in this place expressed. The elect are called sheep not after they believe, but before, to show the love and tender care that has ever been given them by the great Shepherd from everlasting, and through all their wanderings and transgressions. As sheep he loved them and valued them as much when in their sins, scattered upon the dark mountains, as before they fell in Adam, or as when they shall all be with him in glory. Their sins he hates, but them he ever loves. To speak of one as being a goat to-day and a sheep to-morrow takes away all the beauty and comfort from the figure, and leaves it really without meaning. Our Lord said to some, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep."—John x. 26. He knew them, as he knew from the beginning that Judas was a devil, and he was the only one that could ever speak with authority in that matter. But he expressed a truth which is to be received with solemn reverence and fear. Those who are not of his sheep will never believe on him.

AS SOON as one begins to tamper with the doctrine of God our Savior,

to endeavor to explain it in a way that will make it less offensive to the natural mind, it at once loses its sweet savor, and becomes valueless to the dear children of God. In the hands and from the lips of such teachers it ceases to be the doctrine of God our Savior. The carnal mind will never be anything but enmity against God, and whenever any of the precious truth of God is so presented as to be received and relished by those who have not the love of God in their hearts, we may know that it has been turned into a lie. I do not know but that the Lord's servants may sometimes be left to themselves so far, for a time, as to be more influenced by the fear of men than by the fear of God. In such a state of mind they will think more of how to arrange a subject to please men, than of how faithfully to declare the truth in the fear of God, with an eye single to his glory, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, leaving the result with him. It seems to me that I have seen of late on the part of some writers in different Primitive Baptist publications a disposition to soften or explain away what are considered by natural men to be hard features in the doctrine of election and predestination, for fear some may think hard of the Lord, and may say, "Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" or, "Then we may continue in sin." Some of the dear servants of God will at times, through a very tender care and anxiety for the weak little ones of the flock, show a mistaken tenderness and caution in handling the doctrine. If one is weak in reference to any point of the blessed truth, it is a great mistake to avoid that truth simply on that account, or to keep back a part for fear of hurting him. The truth can never hurt one who has the life of God in his soul. The letter of truth spoken in a carnal, contentious spirit, is not food; but the truth spoken in love by him who has felt the power of it, is healing, nourishing, strengthening. When the truth is fed as milk it has all the elements that it has when fed as strong meat; nothing is left out. But it is explained in the light of experience to those who are as babes in understanding, and so comes as milk, easy to be digested.

When the deep power of the truth is felt in the heart of the servant of God, he will hardly feel like reasoning with men who cavil at it, and say, If that is true, then the Lord is inconsistent, unjust, arbitrary, and has no cause to find fault with sinners. With the love of God in his heart, and a solemn regard for the honor and glory of his sovereign majesty, he will feel like using to them the language of the apostle, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

A minister may speak sharply to people, may bring up before them a

long list of misdoings, may charge them with much that is evil, and they will receive it as an evidence of great faithfulness and zeal on his part, and will regard him as worthy of praise for his fearlessness in the performance of his duty, if he only gives them to understand that he regards them as having power to make the necessary corrections and reformations to set them right. If he arranges so that this is implied by the absence of any contrary assertion, they will receive a good deal of apparently severe rebukes from him, and will like it. But let him in plain simplicity declare the doctrine that God has an elect people, for whom alone Christ died; that them he loved with an everlasting love, and gave them all spiritual blessings in Christ before the world began; that to them righteousness is imputed without works; that the creature has no more power to cease to do evil and learn to do well than the Ethiopian has to change his skin, or the leopard his spots; that there is no good works but what the Lord works in his people, and gives them power by his Spirit to work out; that he works his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; that he "declared [not merely knew] the end from the beginning;" that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: let the servant of God thus declare the truth, and he and his teachings will be at once rejected by the carnal professors, as they rejected his Lord and Master.

I AM sorry to learn that there is some disagreement among Old Baptists in some parts of the country in regard to the doctrine of foreordination and predestination, causing trouble in at least two or three churches. I am glad that the brethren in the churches and associations that I am favored to visit, in different sections of the country, are generally "of one mind and one judgment" in regard to these, as well as in other important points of doctrine; and I desire that unity and peace might prevail throughout all the churches of God. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I know but very few personally, in all my wide acquaintance among the brethren, who do not believe that all events were foreordained by the Lord, and that nothing can transpire which is contrary to his eternal purpose. The saints generally feel to tread with reverent care upon such mysterious and holy ground, and to speak of such inscrutable things with solemn attention to the form of sound words which they find in the Scriptures. Sometimes we find one very fearful lest in some way he might imply that God is the author of sin, the very thought of which is abhorrent to a spiritual mind. Some opposers of the doctrine of predestination will insist that such a conclusion necessarily follows a belief in that doctrine. But they are wrong in this, and the assertion is a reckless one. God cannot be the author of sin, for

sin is a transgression of law, and God's will is his only law, and that he always does; therefore whatever he does and whatever he ordains shall be done cannot be sin or evil in him, although it may be sin in the one by whom it is accomplished, as in the crucifixion of Christ. All acknowledge that the Lord placed man under law, knowing that he would transgress it; that he had power, but not the will, to have prevented his fall. It necessarily follows that the fall of man was according to the purpose of God, and that all its sad consequences, as well as the salvation of his people from them, were embraced in that purpose, or in other words were foreordained. And yet man is a sinner, justly condemned, however human wisdom may reason to the contrary. The purpose of God is infinite in wisdom, but it is not necessary that we should understand it. But because we cannot understand it, nor reconcile it with our limited reason, we are not, therefore, at liberty to deny it, or try to explain away plain declarations of Scripture; nor have we any right to ask, "Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will?"—Rom. ix. 19. The foreordination of all things is clearly according to the teaching of the Scriptures, and according to the infinite character of God, and only in the predestinating God of the Bible can there be ground for absolute trust and eternal confidence.

I am glad that the SIGNS continues steadfast in the doctrine which it held when its publication began more than fifty-three years ago. There have been great changes in the world and in the visible church; but there has been no change in the truth of God, nor in the order of his house. Nor has there been any change in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a medium of correspondence for the saints of God. Its contents are generally clear in doctrine, and richly experimental. There are other Old Baptist publications which I believe to be useful to those who read them, and I hope they will increase in usefulness. But none of them have ever yet taken the place of the SIGNS, nor do I think they will do so. I wish the prosperity of any such publication, so far as it is sound in the faith, if the Lord will; not for the temporal advantage to its publishers, but for the spiritual benefit of the afflicted family of God. But the SIGNS was a kind of "family paper" before any of them were in existence. I remember of applying that term to it in a communication nearly twenty years ago, and I feel the same about it now. Its circulation is more general than any other. Its past volumes, all of which I have, contain a wonderful history of the church and brethren for more than half a century, and are a rich mine of experimental truth. And as it was dear to our fathers in the past generation for the truth it contained and defended, for the varied and sweet experiences it published, for the acquaintance it gave the dear kindred in Christ with each other all over our land, and for the

sake of its dear, faithful and devoted editor, Elder Gilbert Beebe, and as it is dear to us, their children, in this generation, for like reasons, so may it continue deservedly dear to the scattered members of the family of God in the generations to come.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Feb. 24, 1886.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Jan. 30, 1886.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:—God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.—1 Cor. i. 9. This fellowship unto which the glorious Lord in his love has called you, embraces this, that you be made to know the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.—Phil. iii. 10. It is delightful to our souls to realize our oneness with the blessed Redeemer in his glory and triumphal joy over sin, death, and all the powers of hell. But in order thus experimentally to reign with Christ, those that are led of the Spirit of God are brought into the vale of tribulation and temptation. Here we suffer with Christ; and as Jesus by his own eternal Godhead was sustained and delivered from the lowest hell, and in his triumphant resurrection and ascension entered into his glory (Luke xxiv. 26), and reigns on high, our Savior God, so shall all the ransomed of the Lord, by the love and power of the Almighty, come through and out of great tribulation (Rev. vii. 16), and shall reign in life, in eternal glory, with Jesus the Lamb. Even now, while here in the body of conflict we stay, by faith of the operation of God we rejoice in, and to our soul's comfort sweetly realize something of "the power of his resurrection" (Phil. iii. 20), raising us above sin, and the curse of the law, and all our sorrows, and every foe, to sit with our beloved Immanuel in heavenly places.—Eph. ii. 6.

I was glad to receive a few lines from you, which bear witness that the Holy Ghost has graciously led you into "the things of Jesus Christ." I will now, dear sister, try and pen a few thoughts in continuance of what was the subject of my last letter.

"And the King said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city. If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation."—2 Sam. xv. "He will shew me it"—the ark of God. This was very dear to David, and that which he delighted to behold. But now, like the poor publican, he was too unworthy to look upon the ark. It seems as though it was as if David had said, I am so sinful, I have so deeply sinned, and the hand of the Lord has gone out against me, I am not fit to dwell in Jerusalem. I am not fit to have the ark of God go with me. I am too vile. The Lord's displeasure is justly manifest against me. It is not for me to look upon the ark of God. I am too impure. How can I hope that I am blessed with an interest in the ark? But,

"If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again," he will restore me, he will give me an entrance again into the city of God, and he will shew me the ark, and then shall my longing, chastened soul feast upon, and he will shew me his habitation.

What is there in this ark of God so precious to David? Just that which is so precious and desirable to all the lambs of Christ's fold, and the weaklings in faith, who long to lay hold of life by Christ's death; who fain would believe him, and in their best room would gladly receive him, but fear to presume. Yea, and precious to the strong in faith too. The ark of the covenant which Jehovah commanded Moses to make was of shittim wood (Exod. xxv. 10), overlaid round about with pure gold; wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat.—Heb. ix. 4, 5. Here was what the Lord calls "my place."—Hosea v. 15. Here was the place of his rest.—Psalm cxxxii. 8; 2 Chron. vi. 41. Here it was that the God of Israel said, "I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim, which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."—Exod. xxv. 22. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the tables of stone, with the law written thereon with the finger of God (Exod. xxxii. 15, 16), and saw the tribes of Israel worshipping the golden calf, his "anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands and brake them beneath the mount." But when he descended the second time, instead of the angry countenance, the skin of his face shone so brightly that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold his face. His countenance was full of gladness, for God had instructed him to make an ark of shittim wood, and to put the tables of the law therein; not the broken ones, but the complete and entire; and thus in the ark they were ever kept in their entirety. What do we see in all this but Jesus? He is the Ark of the covenant. In him is the unbroken law. He cried unto God the Father, "Thy law is within my heart."—Psalm xl. 8. In the body prepared for him he magnified the law and made it honorable. He went to the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. O how precious is the righteousness which is by Jesus Christ! In him the redeemed are clothed with unspotted comeliness and robed in the wrought gold obedience of Jesus. Who shall condemn? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?—Psalm xlv. 13; Rom. viii. 33. Our beloved Redeemer has said, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."—Song of Solomon iv. 7; Eph. v. 27. Thy beauty is perfect through my comeliness which I put upon thee.—Ezek. xvi. 14; Psalm

xlv. 11. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law."—Rom. iii. 31. Not one jot or tittle was destroyed, but all the demands of the law Jesus (the Surety of a better testament) satisfied in his own obedience, even unto death. All its requirements and penalties exacted of the dear Redeemer (who was made under the law for the sake of his people) found full payment at our bleeding Surety's hand. Jesus established the law. In him, our Ark, the law is found entire and wanting nothing. He magnified the law and made it honorable.

Then again, dear sister, in the ark was "the golden pot that had manna." This is Jesus. He is the true bread, the bread of life. Jesus said, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—John vi. "This is the hidden manna."—Rev. ii. 17. Jesus is the food of his people; in him is all their nourishment.

"Immortal honors rest on Jesus' head,
My God, my Portion and my living Bread;
In him I live, upon him cast my care;
He saves from death, destruction and despair."

There was also in the ark of the covenant "Aaron's rod that budded."—Num. xvii. 8. Thus it was declared that Aaron was called of God to the office of the priesthood.—Heb. v. 4. Jesus is the High Priest of our profession. The Son of God being the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, was made flesh; and is consecrated forevermore.—Heb. vii. 28. "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."—Psalm cx. He is our compassionate High Priest, and ever liveth to make intercession for us.

We have thus taken a little glimpse of the ark. And David said, "Carry back the ark of God into the city. If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again and shew me both it and his habitation." This was not a natural sight, that could afford no relief, nor put joy and melody in his heart. Indeed with his natural eyes the ark of God could not be seen; it ever dwelt within the veil; and even when carried about it was covered from the sight of the people. But David says, "The Lord will shew me the ark." It was that sight that his soul longed for. Jonah, when in the belly of the whale, said, "I will look again toward thy holy temple." The religious world might think he was crazy, thus to speak. How could he in the belly of the fish tell which was north or south, or east or west? How could he tell in what direction lay Jerusalem? But not only does he say this, but more wonderful still, and O how exceedingly precious and full of comfort.

"When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came in unto thee, unto thine holy temple." The unspeakable and glorious mystery of this will always be hidden from the wise and prudent, but is a matter of most gracious revelation experienced in the heart of those who are "taught of the Lord." And though the Scribes and Pharisees and all the children of the bond woman may make mock of such things, nothing will satisfy the elect of God but to experience what the dear Lord Jesus promised should be the inheritance of his people, that "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."—John xv. 13, 14. It is the people of God who experimentally know the truth of the doctrine that the Holy Spirit has spoken by the apostle Paul. "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. How often, dear friend, have we felt our utter inability to see a single word in the Scriptures to the comfort of our souls; and all our natural understanding and mere letter knowledge advantageth us nothing to reveal to us our interest in the atonement of Jesus Christ the Lamb of God. "The Lord will shew me the ark." This is what we long for, to see what the natural eyes of Aaron never saw, even though he went within the veil and looked upon the uncovered ark of the covenant. And until the Lord does shew unto the poor sinner the ark, and will give him that good hope through grace which is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil, he cannot see; so that which he realizes under divine teaching declares the falsehood of all the popular religion, which has blasphemously taken to itself the name of Christian, wherein is taught that the knowledge of salvation and of Christ is within the grasp of the will and power of man. When the Lord is pleased to show us by faith the Ark of the covenant, O what glorious things are discovered therein, to the eternal praise of the everlasting God. Though, like poor, chastened David, we feel to be immersed in transgressions, and in bitterness of soul mourn over our iniquities, and feel the condemnation and chastisement of the Lord to be justly our portion, yet when the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, takes of the things of Jesus and shews them unto us, we experience what is declared in the thirtieth Psalm, "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and guided me with gladness." For in Jesus, the Ark of the covenant, is the law unbroken and entire. In him I am found complete.—Col. ii. 10.

"The terrors of law and of God,
With me can have nothing to do;
My Savior's obedience and blood,
Hide all my transgressions from view."

If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will shew me the Ark, and there, at the blood-sprinkled mercy seat, I shall be indulged to hold communion with the God of Israel. Now, while his chastening hand is upon me, I cannot answer him one in a thousand (Job ix. 3), but then I would come even to his seat; I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me. Will he plead against me with his great power? No, but he would put strength in me.—Job xxiii. There I shall find a Daysman, even Jesus, the Mediator, my great High Priest, and in his obedience and suffering and blood, in his resurrection and ascension, would all my sins be blotted out; and though they are more than the hairs of mine head, and red like crimson, I should then be "whiter than snow," and without blame before the glorious throne of God.—Psalm li. 7; Col. i. 22; Rev. xvi. 5; Jude 24. Like the poor leper, the Lord's people often feel to have all confidence in the ability of the Lord to do for them all that they need. They do not doubt the abundance of his mercy and grace, but will the glorious and holy God bestow his royal bounty upon me, such a vile, wretched, loathsome sinner? "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."—Luke v. 12.

Not only did David speak of the Lord shewing him the ark, but also "his habitation." "The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it."—Psalm cxxxii. Jerusalem was the city where the Lord was pleased to record his name, and here Solomon built the temple. In both the tabernacle and the temple the invisible God was pleased to give a visible manifestation of his presence, in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. O how wonderful was this! Well might Solomon exclaim, "Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded."—1 Kings viii. 27. It was in the house of the Lord that David longed to dwell, "to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple."—Psalm xxvii. 4. Just notice a few things that were in the place of the habitation of the Most High. Evening and morning a lamb without blemish was slain, and its blood shed.—Exod. xxix. 39. There was always blood flowing. The bodies of the beasts slain were burnt upon the altar of burnt offering. A fire incessantly burned; it was the holy fire that God sent down from heaven.—Lev. ix. 24; 2 Chron. vii. 1; Lev. vi. 12, 13. There were always fragrant fumes of burnt incense in the temple, "a perpetual incense before the Lord."—Exod. xxx. 8. There was always

bread in God's house (Exod. xxv. 30), and the priests were ever in attendance, accomplishing the service of God (Lev. vi. 9-13), while upon the whole the continual light of the golden candlestick shone with gracious beams.—Exod. xxvii. 20. These were some of the things in the habitation of God. The continual service of the priests, the ever-flowing blood, perpetual incense, constant bread and ceaseless illumination. Truly "blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."—Psalm lxxv. 4. Well might David delight in the thought that the Lord would shew him "his habitation." Here at the entrance he would find the priesthood and the blood. How suited to the condition of the guilty, polluted sinner. The high priests under the types and shadows of the law of good things to come could have compassion on the ignorant and them that were out of the way.—Heb. v. 2. And Jesus, our Melchisedec, who bare our sins and carried our sorrows, is our compassionate High Priest, and is touched with the feelings of our infirmities.—Heb. iv. 15. He will in no wise cast out (John vi. 37), but is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him.—Heb. vii. 25. Then there is a precious blood of the Lamb without blemish and without spot, to make atonement, to reconcile us unto God, shed for the remission of sins. And his sins, which are remitted through the precious blood of Christ, are remembered no more forever.—Heb. viii. 10-18. Then there is the sacrifice consumed by the everlasting fire upon the altar of burnt offering, denoting the justice and judgment of our God, who is a consuming fire.—Isaiah xxxiii. 14; Heb. xii. 29. Jesus is our sacrifice of sweet smelling savor unto God the Father.—Eph. v. 2. In Jesus all the claims of eternal justice are satisfied. Then the "perpetual incense," signifying the prevailing intercession of the dear Savior for poor transgressions.—Isaiah liii. 12; Heb. vii. 25; Revelation viii. 3, 4. The shew bread is there also for food. The Lord will supply and sustain his poor with bread. And the golden candlestick with its ever shining light, without which all would be obscurity, and we would be unable to see or be comforted and satisfied in the beauty of the habitation of our God. What can be the meaning of the golden candlestick? The Holy Ghost by the mouth of the prophet Zechariah has declared this to be the signification: "Not by might, nor by power; but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Every one taught of the Lord knows this to be true. We need the Holy Spirit to illuminate us (Heb. x. 32) and to shew us the things of Christ.—John xvi. 15. Then it is that we can say, "In thy light shall we see light." "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."—2 Cor. iv. 6. When God will shew us poor sinners "his habitation," we feel we can dwell with God, and the language of our hearts is in sweetest unity with the speech of him whom our soul loveth. "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth."—Psalm xxvi. 8. "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord." How very soon it was manifest that abounding grace abounded to poor, adulterous David. His very speech and behavior indicated the grace of God. "But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I; let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." Waiting upon the Lord and resigned to his pleasure, he went forth out of Jerusalem. "And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered; and he went barefoot, and the people that was with him covered every man his head; and they went up, weeping as they went up." In all this David was made to know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. This same path was that wherein Jesus walked. After the supper, "when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives."—Mark xiv. 26. Jesus entered the garden of Gethsemane. O what unspeakable sorrows did Jesus suffer for his church! When David was come to the top of the mount he worshiped God. From mount Olivet Jesus, our Head, triumphantly ascended to heaven.—Acts i. 12. So David by the grace of God was humbled; to him was given a contrite heart, and he was led with weeping through the vale of Gethsemane, and ascended the mount, at the top of which he was enabled to worship God in spirit and in truth. It was thus manifest that he was one of the favored ones in whom the Lord delighted.—Isaiah lxii. 4. "The election hath obtained it." The Lord in his own time brought back David to Jerusalem, gave the kingdom to him again, shewed him the ark of the covenant and the places of his habitation; and the Lord put this in his mouth, "The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer; the God of my Rock; in him will I trust. He is my Shield, and the Horn of my salvation, my high Tower, and my Refuge, my Savior. Thou savest me from violence, &c.—2 Sam. xxii.

What I have tried to write is, I hope, concerning the Lord's people and his gracious dealing with them. Happy are we if among the number of the chosen family of the Lord God of Israel. It will be ours ever to prove the love and faithfulness of the unchanging God; and when time shall end, we shall with all the redeemed appear with Christ in glory. Eternity alone will reveal the glory of the eternal God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in the salvation of such poor, sinful worms as we now feel ourselves to be. With love to you in the Lord Jesus Christ, I am, I hope, your brother and companion in the pathway of tribulation.

FRED. W. KEENE.

ELDER WILLIAM J. PURINGTON—DEAR FRIEND:—I read your last letters published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with interest, and I cannot see how any candid person, can argue against the principles set forth therein; but there are some points on the subject of election that I cannot exactly understand. If I have a correct view of the teaching of the Scriptures, no one can have any real desire for spiritual life except the Spirit of God abide in such an one. The Bible says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Is there any declaration in the Bible to show why God has thus chosen a few of his creatures to enjoy a glorious eternity of praise and adoration, while so many are left in sin and darkness? Do we, like Naaman, the leper, have the power to accept or reject the salvation through Christ? You will undoubtedly be surprised to receive these questions from me; but I have heard so many theories on this subject that I am utterly confounded, and now it is impossible for me to settle my mind on this matter. I have very imperfectly stated some of these inquiries, and, if it will not trespass too much upon your valuable time, I should be glad to hear from you regarding the matter.

JAMES E. HUBBARD.

R E P L Y .

AS A number have made similar requests, my dear friend, I am now inclined to write a brief reply, and have the same published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; for then, in answering one, it will answer all. As to your first question, "Is there any declaration in the Bible to show why the Lord has thus chosen?" &c. The why is declared when the immaculate Son of God thanked the Father concerning the awfully momentous subject; for "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

All the investigation and research of finite beings, either men or angels, can never find any other reason than that which was given by the Son of God as already quoted, which is, "It seemed good in thy sight." Again, said Jesus, "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." Also, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." A sufficient number of declarations have been quoted, which were uttered by the dear Redeemer while God incarnate, to show that eternal, personal and unconditional election is according to the purpose of God "which he hath purposed in himself;" and there, my dear friend, you, I and all the rest of mankind have to leave the mystery of our Creator, God.

Your next question is, "Do we,

like Naaman, the leper, have the power to accept or reject the salvation of God through Christ?" I expect, my friend, that you have heard Arminians comment on that subject concerning the leprosy of Naaman; and instead of his having a choice, he had finally to go just where Elisha told him to go in the first direction given him, which was, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean." It seemed too humiliating to the "captain of the host of the king of Syria" to go and wash in Jordan seven times; for he "was wroth;" and he could not be healed until he obeyed; yet he said, "Are not Abana and Parpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage." Did Elisha give him any choice? No; but no cleansing was to take place until he washed in Jordan. To take the case of Naaman to prove, or attempt to prove, that leprous sinners can accept or reject salvation through choice, is extorting the divine record in the strictest sense of that word. When you have an opportunity, read carefully the fifth chapter of Second Kings, and there you will find exactly what Naaman had to do, and obey "the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." And read in Luke iv. 16-29, and see what the dear Redeemer said about the matter, and then you will see that instead of Naaman having a choice, he was singled out as God's choice, and the prophet was specially sent to him; and when that glorious doctrine of election was clearly set forth by Jesus, "All they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way." Therefore, instead of Naaman representing the carnal theory of man's choice, he represents the special and absolute choice of our God; and as it filled those cringing hypocrites with rage in that day, so when the doctrine of election is clearly, faithfully and righteously set forth, carnal teachers show precisely the same spirit. But alas! rage is blind, and prejudice distorts the most positive declarations of Scripture.

You say, "I have heard so many theories on this subject that I am utterly confounded." I do not much wonder, my friend, that you are confounded, if you have been listening to the carnal theories of men; for those Babel-builders have nothing but a "confounded" language; for said our God, "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." Now Babel-builders are numerous; but they have as little success in converting the world, as they term it, as the ancient Babel-builders did with their

tower. In the case of the ancient Babel-builders, "the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, and they left off to build the city." To-day modern Babel-builders are scattered over nearly all this globe, but they have not yet left off building their idolatrous city; but the time will certainly come when their attempts will cease. But now they are saying "one to another, Go to, let us make brick [have more institutions], and burn them thoroughly [educate our young men so that they will have more zeal in the cause, and we will soon succeed]. And they had brick for stone [carnal theories for grace], and slime had they for mortar" [mental training for spiritual teaching, and the carnal mind for the new man].

Now, my dear young friend, having had many years of experience, I feel somewhat prepared to give you my advice, and that is, Turn a deaf ear, as much as possible, to the carnal theories of natural men, who have no understanding of spiritual things; and, as you have leisure, carefully read the Scriptures, and compare Scripture with Scripture, and see what the letter of the word teaches, and not take what this man says or that one argues, unless sustained by a positive "Thus saith the Lord;" and may Israel's God keep you from being ensnared by the subtlety of vain man, and lead you by his Spirit into the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and you be enabled by grace to ascribe unto him honor, majesty, dominion and power in the salvation of lost and ruined sinners.

From your true friend and well-wisher,

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

CHESTER, Ky., Jan. 26, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—The Lord willing, I will drop you a few lines, in order to turn my thoughts from the subject that is uppermost in my mind, which is, the languishing state of Zion. Lukewarmness, which is neither cold nor hot, is a very bad state; for unless repentance (which is a turning away) shall be experienced, we will be spewed out of his mouth. While in this way we say, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." In this condition "wolves" are apt to creep in, to divide and devour the flock. But it is not on this subject I thought I would write.

My text is the parable of our Lord which is recorded in Matthew xiii. 33. "The kingdom of God is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." In the first place that in which the leaven was hid was meal. It was all alike, for it was all meal. Now, in all ages of the world the people of God have been one people. All are alike; no difference in them from Abel down to the present time; hence they are all "meal." Also, their worship has been the same, arising from the Spirit of God in them. And although it was in outward signs and ceremonies, and in those types and shadows they

worshiped God, differing not in form from those who worshiped after the law of a carnal commandment, they had the law of God in their heart, and God reigned there. Hence it was all "hid" from the eyes of the ungodly. Cain could not see why it was that his brother's offering was accepted and his rejected. The ungodly world could not see why Noah knew there was going to be a flood upon the earth, nor why Daniel should be preserved in the den of lions, nor how he could tell the king his dream, with the interpretation thereof. Nor could the Jews tell how Elijah, Elisha and all the prophets of the Lord could know the truth, while Ahab's prophets knew nothing of it. It was all "hid." We now have the "meal." There were "three measures" of it. The three dispensations. The antediluvian, the prophetic and the gospel being three complete measures. Now, the leaven was hid until the whole was leavened. The kingdom of God having therefore no visible form, was certainly effectually hid. And when the kingdom of God put on its visible form and was fully organized and set up on the day of pentecost, it was no longer hid. Hence the "whole" must have been leavened or quickened prior to that time. Hence the apostle says, "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, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." So there being only one body, and Christ the Head of that body, all the members were quickened with him, the Head. Now, after Christ had set up his kingdom on earth in its visible form, in the place of being "hid," it is like a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. No carnal men know it; hence they said, "These men are drunken with new wine." Persecution has followed the church in all ages, trying to exterminate her. Her history is therefore for many centuries recorded in blood which is ineffaceable, for "a time and times and the dividing of time" could not continue one moment beyond the set time of our God, and devils incarnate could not inflict one pain more than was for the glory of God. Persecution, however, is still following the church, in a milder form, but none the less bitter or relentless. But, thank God, he still preserves her, and will unto the end; for he will never leave himself without a witness; not simply an oral defender, but in bearing in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Then as Satan can and does transform himself into (having the appearance of) an angel of light, we should not marvel (be surprised) if his ministers transform themselves as the ministers of righteousness. Then they may come preaching the truth, (to a certain extent) in unrighteousness, and even so far as to the comfort of some of God's people. Yet they are not, and cannot be, partakers of the afflictions of the gospel. The afflic-

tions of the gospel are certainly to be realized in a faithful proclamation, which the ministers of Satan cannot learn. Hence the apostle in giving the evidences of his being one of the ministers of Christ, takes a very different view of the matter than any minister of Satan would or could. He says, speaking of others, "Are they ministers of Christ? I more. In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews I received five times forty stripes save one, thrice I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day was I in the deep, in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils of the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness." So none of the false teachers will endure these trials and tribulations, but choose their own field of labor, where none of these trials are to be endured. Often, I have no doubt, the brethren turned against the apostle, when he did not do as their carnal desire dictated. Hence he asks them, "Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" Again, on another occasion he says, "At my first answer no man stood with me." There is one consolation with it all, that we are hastening on to the end of our days; and O that I may be so highly blessed as to say truthfully when the summons shall come, "I have fought a good fight. I have kept the faith." I know that we shall persevere through grace unto eternal glory, if we are his. I daily realize that his grace is alone sufficient to make me stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Then, my brethren, if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. There is the pattern, and ours shall be like his. As his body that was crucified and buried was raised up, as evidenced by the hole in his side and the prints of the nails, so shall our vile bodies be quickened from the dead. Now, as there was no resurrection before the coming of Christ, of all the bodies of the saints that fell asleep during the four thousand years of the world, and then many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves and appeared in the holy city unto many (witnesses by revelation), so I believe that in the end of this time state will there be a resurrection both of the just and unjust, and those which slept in Jesus will God bring with him, in spirit. We shall not all sleep (some shall be alive and remain unto the coming of our Lord Jesus), 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 rise, and we shall be caught up with them to meet our Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

I remain, as ever, yours to serve,
J. H. WALLINGFORD.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 15, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I asked permission to send this letter from sister Florence Ely to you for publication. In reply she says: "I wrote it only as a private letter, not intending it for publication, and could hardly tell after I sent it why I had written. I thought it would look as though I was trying to make some one take notice of me; but it was only because it seemed easy to write to you. To follow my own wishes I would say, Do not send it. But there are some things in the editorial of the last SIGNS (January 1), where it speaks of the communications, that it is not always from the best written articles that some little one receives the most comfort; but in those where they find their own feelings expressed; and this I know to be the case with me. Therefore you may do as you think best. I would be glad to send it if I could write as good as others do."

It is comparatively very few of the rich experimental letters of dear kindred in Christ, so highly prized by me, that I have asked liberty to publish. But I do love to see such in the SIGNS. The more of these little communications that speak of the daily exercises of the brethren and sisters there are in a paper, the more it has for me the relish of a conference meeting, which of all meetings I love the best. The pleasantest place for me is where the members of the family of God are speaking with each other of his dealings with them. And when they cannot meet in person, how good it is, how helpful and comforting, to read of each other's hopes and fears, trials and joys, through the columns of our paper.

Your brother in christian love,
SILAS H. DURAND.

WELLSBORO, Pa., Dec. 17, 1885.

ELDER DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I have thought for a long time of writing to you, but have not had the courage; yet I have felt that I ought to write. You remember talking to me when I attended a meeting at Grover, but I could not talk to you. I was not satisfied, and I may not succeed any better with my pen than with my tongue. I will try to tell you some of what I think has been my christian experience, if I have one.

I cannot point to any time when I first thought on religious subjects, but as long ago as I remember I disliked to have any one speak to me about my feelings concerning God or death, or as to what would become of me; not that I feared death and did not wish to speak of it, as much as it was that I did not feel troubled about it as much as any one would think I should be. I attended different meetings, and if asked which I liked the best I would say I could not see much difference. But I think I could

see more than I would own; at least there is difference enough now. I continued in this way till about the time of my dear father's death. I cannot forget the feeling that came over me that night; that God had such power, yet was kind and tender. We were having a thunder storm, and the thunder broke and rolled away softly, and this thought came, God pities you, and has softened the voice of the thunder to show it, and I became calmer. After this my trouble began to increase, and I soon attended the meeting at Grover. You asked me something of my feelings, and if I liked such preaching. I could not say much, but said I always liked the preaching of the Old School Baptists. You quoted this, "Blessed are they that know the joyful sound." I thought of these things all the way home and for a long time after. It did seem that there was a joyful sound in the preaching when it was of the power and wisdom of God; but had one a right to claim a blessing that was not one of his children? I could see no evidence that I was one. I was troubled to think that I had said something that might deceive you in my case. I had confidence in the power of Jesus' blood, but was I one for whom it was shed? All my thoughts and feelings I thought were just of my own making, and not the work of the Lord, and so would amount to nothing. O for some evidence on which I could depend! It was my continual desire that if it was the Lord he would show me plainly. At last, as I was asking, these words came to me, "It is I, be not afraid." I was made to believe it was the Lord, although I am so doubting that I have since thought that I was mistaken. If I felt a little hope these thoughts would come: You have heard others tell such feelings, or have read them in an experience, and are trying to make yourself believe you feel such things; that is all there is of it. My mind was now drawn to the subject of baptism. I believed it a duty of a child of God, but I thought if I should be baptized and was not one, it would be the worst sin I could commit. I asked to be shown the right way, and these words came in answer, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I felt that it was my desire to obey, and I went to the church. I told them but little, but they received me, and I was baptized at our May meeting by Elder William Campbell. I do not feel that I have grown any better, nor do I expect to; but I do not think I should be satisfied if I had not joined the church. I enjoy our meetings very much; also the SIGNS. When I thought of writing to you some time ago I wanted to ask you to write on the subject of the resurrection, as there has been so much said about our friends that are dead; that they are waiting to welcome us, and we should know each other in heaven. I thought about it a good deal, but since then there have been some pieces in the SIGNS that have relieved my mind

some. But I suppose it does not matter whether we understand that or not. It is enough to know that when Jesus appears we, if his children, shall be like him. I must close.

May you for years be given strength to proclaim salvation through Jesus, is the wish of your little sister in hope,

FLORENCE ELY.

THE VINE AND ITS BRANCHES.

THE bond of union existing between our dear Savior and his chosen flock is inseparable and indissoluble. As the huge rock imbedded in the mountain is a component part of that mountain, so is the spiritual life of the saint an embodiment of the life of him who redeemed us from under the law of sin and death. It is therefore one life; and that life within us is the crucified and risen Lord, which is Christ within us the hope of glory. In John i. 4 we read, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." The saint then is the recipient of light, and there is only one source whence that light is to be obtained, and unto him who received it, it is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In another place we read that our life is hid with Christ in God. Hidden from what? Why, from all else except that which pertaineth to the kingdom of our glorious Lord; from the world, the flesh, the devil, &c. Again, in the sacred record we read the words which fell from our dear Savior's lips in answer to the murmuring Jews. "I am that bread of life," &c. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." And, "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." What a glorious hope for the burdened child of God while he is passing through the wilderness of this world. "Hath eternal life." Not that he may or will have it at some future time, but hath it already. When we feel to hope that we through the rich grace and mercy of God are enabled to partake of that flesh and drink of that spilt blood from the heights of Calvary, we are without doubt at that moment in possession of the precious heavenly gift of eternal and everlasting life. In John xv. 5 he says, "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." A branch cut from the vine immediately enters into decay, and its day for bringing forth fruit is past. The church of Christ is his body; it is perfect in all its parts; and we know that not one iota can be taken from nor one particle added to that perfect body by the puny arm of man or by any of his schemes or devices. In the sixth verse of the same chapter he says, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the

fire, and they are burned." And so from time to time we witness within ourselves (being unfruitful) the work of the pruning hook, cutting us off as the branch from the comfort and enjoyment and sweet consolation of the precious promises of our Lord and Master. Thus we become withered and cold in a spiritual sense, subject to fleshly lusts, following after other gods; and men gather us, teaching us for doctrines their own commandments. Coals of fire are heaped upon us, and we are burned. And then, dear child of God, after passing through the fiery furnace of affliction, and coming up from the very depths of the slough of despond, do we not realize and rejoice in the wisdom and knowledge and wonderful love of God? At such a time doubts are dispelled, the lately overcast sky is clear and cloudless, the Sun of Righteousness shines in and illuminates our hearts, and then we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. In the same connection Christ also says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." In the experience of the saint he sees the necessity of much purging. He shudders at his own depravity, realizes his own weakness, and shrinks from his own fleshly appetite and worldly tendency; and yet he is conscious that he cannot by his own worldly efforts purge himself; nor is it required of him. "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it," &c. He not only does the pruning, but he also does the purging. Of ourselves we can do nothing. All our strength and all our fruitfulness cometh from him, and to him we would render all the praise. When we attempt to contemplate the perfection of God's work in the creation of all things, we are lost in wonder and amazement, because our finite minds cannot grasp the greatness of that perfect work. But in our contemplation, from a spiritual standpoint, we know that the creation and formation, from vast worlds to the tiniest insect, was for the carrying out of God's eternal purpose; that he knew the end from the beginning, and that all was done for his own glory. Therefore not a sparrow falleth to the ground without his knowledge, nor without his divine appointment. When the children of Israel were in Egyptian bondage Pharaoh did not harden his own heart against them; but it is recorded that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Abraham did not of his own natural accord take his only son Isaac and place him upon the altar for sacrifice, but God in his wisdom moved him to the act as an exemplification of his great faith. Can any of the branches of that heavenly Vine say or think that they have engrafted themselves upon that vine, and thereby become component parts thereof, or through any human means they have become engrafted? The Vine and branches were perfect and complete before the foundation of

the world, and they (the branches) only become manifest in God's appointed time, when he manifests himself in the flesh. To admit the perfection of God, we must admit the absolute predestination of all things. The wind bloweth where it listeth, but not by chance; the mighty moving power is in him who made all worlds and every creature to be subservient to his will. The poor, benighted, trembling sinner has no hope, no anchor, no support, as long as he clings to the chance of saving himself by the work of his own hands. He gropes in the dark for that which he finds not. But when the last prop is taken from under his feet, and he finds nothing to which his hands may cling, he finds himself sinking into the bottomless pit, with the cry upon his lips, "Lord, save, or I perish." When he is raised up by the everlasting arms, with the Sun of Righteousness in glorious radiance shining in his soul, then, and only then, can he see the way and plan of salvation plain before him; only then can he know that it is by God's eternal decree and by his matchless grace that he is saved. Then only can he sing,

"Hail, sovereign grace, that first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man;
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,
That gave my soul a hiding place."

Dear brethren Beebe, I hope I have been constrained to write through love for the saints, and for their welfare and comfort, as we travel together in spirit, though apart in body, through these low grounds of sorrow and tribulation.

Yours in a precious hope,
B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

CAMDEN, Ark., Feb. 9, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find eight dollars, for which give credit on subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We cannot think of doing without the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It comes laden with truth (not truths), from which there is great consolation. If I was anything I would write more. Brother Purington, on Absolute Predestination, is fully endorsed by these little, few subscribers.

A. W. BACCHUS.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

WILL Elder L. B. Hanover please give his views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Solomon's Song viii. 8?

ALEXANDER JOYNER.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

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

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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., APRIL 1, 1886.

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

SOLOMON'S SONG V. 2.

"I SLEEP, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night."

In compliance with the request of brother S. Hewitt, on page 56, we submit some remarks on this portion of the inspired Song of Songs which is Solomon's, claiming for them no higher consideration than they may secure as being in harmony with the revelation given of the testimony of Jesus which is written in the Scriptures and in the experience of those who are led by the Spirit of God.

In examining the verse to which our brother refers, it is essential to observe the connection in which it is written; for it would be manifestly a perversion of the words spoken if they should be misapplied. This whole Song is made up of a conversation in songs between the beloved Redeemer and the redeemed church, who is designated by him as his love. In some of these songs Jesus speaks to his chosen bride in terms of endearment and assurance, and again she replies in expressions of devotion and confidence. The conscious unworthiness of the subjects of redeeming grace is confessed by her, while the infinite love of her Redeemer maketh her "all fair," and eternal truth declares to her, "There is no spot in thee." In the immediate preceding context the bride is described as a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters and streams from Lebanon; and the Lord commands the north wind (of cold adversity) and the south wind (of soothing comfort) to blow upon this garden, with the design "that the spices thereof may flow out." To this command the bride replies in continuance of the same metaphor, "Let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." This is the last recorded prayer of the church in the Revelation as signified to John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." In the experience of every saint the same prayer wells up evermore in his heart, and the longing can never be satisfied without his presence; for in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand (that is, in his approval) there are pleasures forevermore.—Psa. xvi. 11. Hence the same people who look for him with this earnest desire are they unto whom he shall "appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."—Heb. ix. 28. To this earnest prayer the loving Lord replies in the cheering announcement of the fact that he is already come into his garden; and this is specially addressed to his own elect bride, whom he calls, "My sister, my spouse." This would seem

fully to answer her petition; but he does not stop with the mere announcement of his presence, for which she had prayed; he tells *how* he has come; not simply that in the fullness of his divine power he has accomplished all the work of satisfying the infinite demands of justice which were written in the holy law of God, and which were all against his church. All this indeed he did, but beyond all that was written in that law, he made effectual intercession for the transgressors when he came and bare the sins of many. His one offering forever perfected all them whose sins he bore; and they have received not only the remission of sins, but, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," he enables them to "declare his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."—Rom. iii. 24-26. In this great work the righteousness of the Redeemer is gloriously displayed and his power shines in perfect triumph over sin and death; but something still beyond this is requisite for the security of his redeemed people. Not only has he redeemed them from the condemnation which rested upon them as transgressors of that law whose penalty was death; but he has so perfectly delivered them that they are no more under the law, and therefore cannot again come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life.—John v. 24. In thus making his people free from that law whose fiery sentence was against them, their Redeemer brought near his righteousness, which is given to them, and in which every one of them is made righteous as he is righteous. This was not a mere servile obedience to the law as written on tables of stone; it was that perfect righteousness which is in the Lord Jesus as the holy one of God, and which exceeds the legal righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees as the heavens are higher than the earth. In bringing this spotless and infinite righteousness to satisfy the holy law the Perfect Man says, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."—Psa. xl. 8. And when he came in the flesh he said: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."—John iv. 34. In treading alone the winepress of divine indignation when all the sins of his people were laid on him, he not only gathered the pleasant spice of gratified love to his elect bride, but he just as freely received those cruel stripes with which his people are healed; thus the bitter myrrh was gathered with his spice, he ate his honeycomb with his honey, and drank his wine with his milk. In consideration of this he justly commands his friends to eat, and his beloved to drink abundantly of that bread which came down from heaven (which is the flesh of Jesus); and of that rich wine (which is his precious blood), which is shed for many for the remission of sins.—See Matt.

xxvi. 26-29; John vi. 53-58. This is the "feast of fat things full of marrow," and of "wines on the lees well refined," to which the heavenly Bridegroom calls his ransomed bride, without the requirement of any condition on her part.

To this amazing provision of eternal love there would seem to be but one possible reply, which should be the most unreserved gratitude and joy; but the drowsy bride, as if half unconsciously, says, "I sleep." The display of divine grace which is attested by the pierced hands and thorn-crowned head of her heavenly Lover, has not sufficed to break the deathlike stupor by which her affections are restrained, as she dreamily mutters this indifferent answer to the call of her Lord. Yet, stupefied as she is, that voice has power to stir her heart, so that it waketh. She is conscious that "It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh," and cannot shut out the earnest appeal of that loved voice. She has rejoiced to hear that voice in times past, and it has ever brought peace and comfort to her. This does not apply to the first manifestation of mercy to the conscious sinner. When that voice of the Son of God is heard by the dead sinner, there is no possibility that the hearer should fail to live.—John v. 25. The life-giving voice of God never returns without fulfilling all the purpose for which it is sent forth; and that word which Jesus speaks to them who are dead, quickens whom he will. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them: even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."—John v. 21. The bars of death and the grave cannot arrest that living and life-giving word. The dead live when Jesus speaks. The text expresses the condition of the living subject of divine grace who has fallen into that listless state wherein the very truth that he was purged from his old sins is forgotten.—2 Peter i. 9. Even in this stupid condition the power of that voice stirs the heart of the subject of grace, so that sleep is broken; and, as stated in the case of the sleepy bride, there is an earnest desire to find him whom their soul loveth. When that voice said, "Open to me," although there were plenty of excuses in the natural mind, they could not lull the heart to continued sleep. The heart forces the sleepy bride to rise and open to her Beloved. Now, she is indeed troubled, for her Beloved is gone. We know of no better way to express this than to refer every saint to his own experience; for the whole experience of the saints from the beginning to the end of time is but the experience of every one who is led by the Spirit of God. When the voice of your Redeemer has roused you from your carnal lethargy, and you have opened to his knocking by attention to his commandments, how often have you found it but a dull and lifeless formality, whether it was

in prayer, in hearing the word of truth, or in visiting the assemblies of the saints. Yet you longed for the presence of your Lord, and could not be satisfied in his absence. Encompassed by clouds and darkness, which hid from your view the gracious presence of your Lord, you realized the anxiety described in this song, which caused you like the spouse to seek him whom your soul loveth. But now you found how vain are all creature efforts to draw near the hidden glory of our Lord Jesus, "Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords."—1 Tim. vi. 15. It is evident that this truth is unknown to those who talk of "finding the Lord," as if the dead sinner must fulfill that condition in order to be made alive and receive immortality. Even those who are led by the Spirit require continually to be taught their entire helplessness in this particular; and this is the reason of their repeated disappointments when they seek him. They may indeed discern the fragrance of his divine hand in the way of obedience, typified by "the handles of the lock," but his presence alone can make even these sacred odors satisfactory to the seeking soul.

The expression in the text presents the Beloved as appealing for admission to his own house, while his sleepy spouse but dreamily hears and recognizes his voice. This metaphor is continued in the following verses of this song. It is not the design of these figurative expressions that they should be construed as literal statements, and they must be viewed in their connection in order to express the truth to be conveyed. The word of the Lord is often heard by his saints "knocking." They recognize the voice, but are frequently too sleepy to obey his word. So he says to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." In this text it is the voice of Jesus that knocks; that is, as the literal knocking of one standing at the door is his call to the inmate of the house for admission, so the voice of Jesus knocks in every commandment which he has given to his people, and it is only when they hear his voice and open the door by obedience that he comes in and holds personal communion with them in giving them the "answer of a good conscience toward God."

The language of this appeal forbids its application to any other character but the very elect bride of the Beloved. He does not make a general call upon any one who may be kind enough to hear his word; it is only one whom he claims as his own by all the tender names specified, to whom he speaks and who can obey him in hearing his voice. She is his "sister," and this near relationship can only result from native unity of

parentage; hence there must be a higher birth than nature could afford which manifests the church of his redeemed as the sister of her Lord; and this is only revealed in their "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. She is his "love." This must imply election; for love must freely choose its object. That choice is "from the beginning."—2 Thess. ii. 13. It was fixed "before the foundation of the world," not that we should be saved in our sins, but "that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 4. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."—1 John iv. 10. The evidence of this to us consists in the fact that "We loved him, because he first loved us." She is his "dove," his "undefiled," being led by that Holy Spirit whose revelation in bodily shape as a dove attested to John the Baptist the identity of the Lamb of God.—John i. 33. But this undefiled character is not in our own works or will; it is exclusively the gift of our precious Redeemer, whose blood "cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John i. 7. This can be said by none but those who sing that "new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. v. 9, 10. Even opposers of the doctrine of particular election will hardly claim that any one who is finally lost is by the blood of Jesus cleansed from all sin. Neither will any who fear God deny that all who are cleansed from sin in that sacred fountain, are saved with that "eternal salvation to all that obey him," of which Christ became the author when he learned obedience and was made perfect through sufferings.—Heb. v. 9. All the force of this pathetic appeal would be lost if addressed to one who had not the love of God dwelling in him. If he knows not the preciousness of the name of Jesus, he cares not that his law is disregarded and his commandment is disobeyed. But to one who loves the Lord his law is perfect, and when his words are found they are as delightful food to the hungry, and as cold water to the thirsty. It cannot be that the closing expressions of the text represent the Lord, who has all power in his hands, as being unable to obtain admittance to the heart of a sinner, nor yet that he cannot command the affection of his people. Because he first loved us, even when we were dead in sins, that love was shed abroad in our hearts by his Spirit, and therefore we love him; but his voice speaking unto us in his commandments often finds us sleepy and "dull of hearing," so that it is well represented as one seeking

in vain to attract our attention, even until his "head is filled with dew," and his "locks with the drops of the night." Much meaning attaches to these expressions as compared with their use in other figurative illustrations. The dew is first mentioned in the blessing of Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 28), and it is often spoken of in the Old Testament Scriptures, but not once in the New Testament. It was one of the blessings of the night dispensation; but as in nature it is exhaled in the light of the rising sun, so in this day in which the Lord has made that night blessing disappear under the blazing glory of the Sun of Righteousness. The same is true in the experience of the saints. After they have once seen Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness unto them, they no more need "the drops of the night" for their comfort and growth in grace. In other words, after they have been made free from the law, they need not seek further evidence from those legal requirements which were the glory of the night. "After that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"—Gal. iv. 9.

THE CHURCH HISTORY IN PRESS.

IN OUR last notice of the Church History, we promised to keep our subscribers informed as to how the work was progressing, and we now have the pleasure of stating that before this notice reaches them we will probably have over one hundred pages in type, and the work advancing at the rate of over fifty pages a week.

Some of the subscribers may have become a little impatient at the delay in the preparation of the manuscript, but to all such we will say, that when they get their book they will be surprised that brother Hassell completed so vast a work in so short a time. The work shows an immense amount of labor and research, and is systematized in the most complete style. This history is not a book to be read and then laid aside, but it will be of as much value to its owner after he has had it for years, as when he first got it; and appreciating the fact that after reading, it will be desired for frequent reference, Elder Hassell has compiled a complete table of contents, which together with the index, will make it a most valuable book for that purpose.

BACK NUMBERS.

WE HAVE now discontinued the sending of back numbers to the first of the volume to new subscribers unless especially ordered. We still have quite a number of copies of each number of the present volume on hand, and will supply them when desired. One advantage in having a subscription begin with the volume is, that when the last number is received, with the index, you have a complete book.

MARRIAGES.

BY Elder Uriah Trumbo, at the residence of the bride's parents, near Rushmore, Putnam County, Ohio, Mr. David E. Mericle and Miss Amanda A. Ford, all of the abovenamed place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Death has again visited us and wrought further desolation in our little family circle. My daughter-in-law, Mrs. Lottie A. Rittenhouse, died on Tuesday morning, March 9th, in the twenty-third year of her age. She was the daughter of Mr. Jonathan A. Beathard, of Quantico, Md., and was married to my son John about seventeen months ago, since which time she has resided here. Her call to a knowledge and love of the truth dates back to her childhood. She spoke of a sermon she heard, to the truth of which she could bear witness, when not more than eleven or twelve years old. Baptist preaching was very rare in that neighborhood. But from the date I speak of there was no other preaching for her. There were no Baptists in the family, and the places where Baptist preaching might be heard were distant and difficult to reach. The first time I met her she sought an introduction, and then asked me earnestly to visit that neighborhood and preach for them. This was at a week day meeting, in wintry weather, and she was alone some twenty miles from home. A few months afterward I again met with her on the way to a Baptist meeting. She was again alone. She would be among entire strangers where she was going. Her brother had taken her to the cars, a journey of fifteen miles. With all this effort and perseverance, months would pass between her opportunities to get to any preaching appointments. Without sympathy or encouragement of brethren and sisters in the family or in the neighborhood, and no preaching appointments or church meetings any where near, the difficulties and discouragement a girl of sixteen must encounter, may readily be conjectured. During these lonely and tedious months I understand that she was so intent upon reading the Bible, even after the family retired at night, as to give her parents some uneasiness in regard to her health. After making a visit to brother George Lowe and conferring with him in regard to her exercises, she wrote to me, signifying a desire to be admitted to the ordinances and fellowship of the church. The place where she went she was an entire stranger, not even knowing the road. It was Little Creek, about fifteen miles from her home, and where she was kindly received, and where she remained a faithful, loved and loving member until called away by death. She lived to see the entire family, parents, brothers and sisters, all in sincere sympathy religiously with her. They have the consolation now, in this hour of affliction, that the world did not give and cannot take away. Her death was sudden and the circumstances peculiarly distressing. She was attacked with convulsions, from which she did not regain consciousness. From the first attack she lived three days and a few hours. Why must it be so? Why should not such plants be left to bloom awhile in the garden? A few hours before the terrible shock came upon us, and while we as yet had no reason to think of trouble near, my daughter penned the following lines from some author for her tablet. It would seem that the gloomy shadow of the event was already felt.

“Smooth the braids of her silken hair
Over her queenly brow with care;
Gather the robe in a final fold
Around the form that will not grow old;
Lay on her bosom, pure as snow,
The fairest, sweetest flowers that blow;
Kiss her and leave her, your heart's delight;
In dreamless peace she will sleep to-night.
A shadowy gleam of life-light lies
Around the lids of her slumbering eyes;
And her lips are closed, as in fond delay
Of the loving words she had yet to say;
But her gentle heart forgot to beat,
And from dainty hands to dainty feet
She is strangely quiet, cold and white;
The fever is gone; she will sleep to-night.
Put by her work and her empty chair;
Fold up the garments she used to wear;

Let down the curtains and close the door;
She will need the gairish light no more.
For the task assigned her under the sun
Is finished now and the guerdon won;
Tenderly kiss her, put out the light,
And leave her alone; she will sleep to-night.”

E. RITTENHOUSE.
STATE ROAD, Del., March 17, 1886.

It has become my painful duty to write for publication in the SIGNS the obituary of our father Benjamin Greeland, who departed this life at his residence in Wells Valley, Fulton Co., Pa., January 4, 1886, it being his birthday. He had reached the advanced age of seventy-nine years. Like a shock of corn fully ripe, he fell asleep, nevermore to awake until raised by the same omnipotent power in which he had trusted for time and eternity. He was born in Trough Creek Valley, Huntingdon Co., Pa., Jan. 4, 1807, and was married to Rebecca Myerly March 18, 1830, who still survives; also six daughters and two sons, one son having preceded him to the grave five years ago; besides many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, neighbors and friends, with the church of which he was a faithful member until his death, to mourn their loss. One year before his death he was suddenly stricken down with paralysis, from which we thought he never would recover, being confined to his bed for several months. But it pleased the Lord to raise him up again and spare him to us for awhile. During all his sickness he never murmured or complained, being perfectly resigned to the will of the Lord. My husband and I went home to spent Christmas with them. While there I thought his mind seemed brighter and clearer than usual. When leaving, I bid him good-by. He looked up at me and smiled, thanking me for coming to see them, saying, “We are always so glad to have our children come home to see us.” How little did I think then that those were the last words I should ever hear from those lips. In one short week a messenger came, telling us that father was no more. He had been suddenly stricken down with pneumonia, and in a few days was called away. As I stood by his lifeless form, so peaceful and calm in death, I could scarcely realize that he was no more. He seemed like he was in a quiet sleep. Yes,

“Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep;
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes.”

All the family were permitted to be with him in his last hours except one daughter residing in Illinois, and myself. He seemed to suffer but little, and died like one going in a calm sleep. He spoke frequently during his sickness of going home. He was naturally of a kind and mild disposition, always ready and willing to lend a helping hand to those who were in trouble or distress. He was a kind husband and an affectionate father. From my earliest recollection father's house was a home for the Baptists, and in the year 1861 he and mother together were baptized in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church. Shortly after, he was chosen and set apart to the office of deacon, and served the church of Wells Valley faithfully until his death. His seat in the church was never vacant unless providentially hindered. He was devoted to the cause of Christ, firm and unwavering, looking forward for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Savior. He was a contributor to the SIGNS for many years, and took great delight in reading it.

His funeral was attended at his residence, where a numerous assemblage of friends gathered to pay the last tribute of love and respect. The funeral services were conducted by Elder Thomas Rose, the text used on the occasion being Romans viii. 29, 30. The hymn selected was 1220, Beebe's Collection. We mourn our loss, but not as those without hope. May God in mercy sanctify this sore bereavement to our good. It grieves us sorely to see those that 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 the prayer of your sister in hope.

ANNIE R. McCLELLAN.
RAINSBURG, Pa., March 10, 1886.

Julia A. Tipton was born April 14, 1820, in Muskingum County, Ohio, and died Friday, Feb. 26, 1886, at 4.45 a. m., in Plum Creek, Nebraska, aged sixty-five years, ten months and twelve days.

The funeral services were held at the residence at 2 p. m., Saturday, and were conducted by F. R. Worting, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, he having been with her very frequently during her sickness. The exercises consisted of reading of Scriptures, singing, prayer and a few appropriate remarks. The remains were interred in Evergreen Cemetery.

Her father, Henry Tunis, was born in New Jersey, and moved from there to Ohio, where he married Elizabeth Brady. After their marriage they settled on a farm seven miles north of Zanesville, Muskingum County, when that whole reigon was an unbroken forest. There were four children, three daughters and one son, the latter of whom still resides on the old homestead.

Although always of a frail constitution, she was endowed with wonderful vitality, and survived both of her more robust sisters. Her parents were both members of the Old School Baptist Church.

On Dec. 29, 1836, she was united in marriage to Thomas Tipton, at the family residence, by Elder Amos Mix, a minister of the Old School Baptist Church. It will be seen that if she had lived until the twenty-ninth of next December she would have been married half a century.

Nearly forty years ago she and father united with the Old School Baptist Church known as “Falls of Licking,” and were baptized by Elder John Crabtree.

At the time of the late war they moved to Summit, Ill., when a Baptist Church was organized, to which she gave the name Pleasant Grove, and with which society both united, their membership still remaining there. They afterward removed to Indiana, and in 1872 came to this county.

She leaves three children, as follows: Mrs. D. E. Sawin, Amity, Indiana; Mrs. E. T. Norris, Blue Hill, Nebraska; J. M. Tipton, Plum Creek, Nebraska. The oldest daughter, Mrs. M. J. Somerville, died in Blue Hill, Neb., in May, 1884.

While speaking one day with my wife in regard to her prolonged sufferings, she said, “I have often longed to be released from my sufferings and taken to my rest, but if it be the Almighty's will that I shall remain here and suffer, it is all right.” Only a few days before she died she said, “I am ready and willing to go at any time, only I wish that I might be spared suffering while I remain.” A day or two before the end came, when the writer was present, she uttered, in the midst of her anguish of physical suffering, the following fervent petition: “Lord, have mercy upon me, and give me patience to endure.” As long as I can remember, her Bible was her constant companion and source of comfort. For several years previous to her last illness the greater portion of her time was spent in reading the Bible and the SIGNS. She loved the holy Scriptures above all other books, and next to it she loved to read and reread the articles in the SIGNS. She was an unshaken believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptist Church, and her simple, pure, strong faith and consistent life won for her the admiration of all christian people who knew her. O may we who are left behind to tread this lower pathway yet a little while longer, follow in her footsteps; and as we one by one drop silently away, may it be only to be united with her in the realms of immortal bliss, where there are no farewells, no sighs, no tears.

J. M. TIPTON.

DIED—At her residence in Rutland, Lasalle Co., Ill., Sept. 14, 1885, sister Sarah Moulds, wife of deacon John Moulds Sr., being seventy-three years, eight months and twenty-two days old. Sister Moulds was born in England, Dec. 26, 1811, came to America in the spring of 1853, lived awhile in the state of Michigan, and moved with her husband and family to Illinois in the fall of 1855. They were permitted to live together fifty-five years, being married in 1830. There were born unto them fifteen children (nine sons and six daughters); eight sons and two daughters survive her. She joined Salem

Church of Predestinarian Baptists, in Marshall Co., Ill., in the year 1860, and remained a consistent and orderly member until the summons came that called her from the suffering and trouble of this life, to joy and everlasting rest with her Savior. She was as firm a believer as ever I met in predestination and the overruling power of God in all things. A common saying with her was, “Well, if it is the Lord's will to be so, it will; but if it is not, we can't help it.” She was blessed with that reconciliation which comes alone by a living faith and trust in him who doeth all things well. Her disease was typhoid fever, and after suffering about two weeks she realized that

“Soon the joyful news will come,
Child, your Father calls, come home.”

Our dear aged brother feels very lonely, being deprived of her company, which had been a comfort and solace to him so long; and in making the request for me to write a notice of her death, he said, “Say that she was a good wife, and a good mother to her children.” May he feel that perfect resignation which will enable him to say, “Not my will, but thine be done.” “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” We feel a desire that brother Moulds may be spared awhile yet, as he is gifted in prayer and exhortation, and is a great help to the little church.

JOHN DOWNEY.

VARNA, Illinois.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in the city of Baltimore, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (19th), 1886, and continue three days.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May (26th), 1886, and continue the two following days.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Washington, South River, Middlesex Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (2d), 1886, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (9th), 1886, and continue three days.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (16th), 1886, and continue three days.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

This work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order,

by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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 1886, 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.

Any person who is not now a subscriber, by sending his remittance in addition to the new ones he sends, can have the same advantage of these rates; but his own subscription must not be counted as one of the new subscribers.

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 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.

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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.

Our assortment of the small books embraces First Quality, Turkey Morocco, full gilt, very handsome, \$2 75 single copy, or per dozen, \$30 00.

Imitation Morocco, Elegant style, single copy, \$1 75; per dozen, \$18 00.

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At the above prices we shall require cash to accompany the orders.

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Blue, Marbled Edge.....	1 50
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Books of the large size ordered for pulpit use, and having the name of the church written on the cover, will be supplied at half price.

"THE EDITORIALS,"

FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES,

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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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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 of the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

Plain Cloth Binding.....	\$1 25
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Will be sent to any address, post paid, on receipt of price, \$1 00 Address,

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Signs of the Times.

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

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1886.

NO. 8.

POETRY.

MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND.

I NEED not care
If days to come be dark or fair;
If the sweet summer brings delight,
Or bitter winter chills the air.

No thought of mine
Can penetrate the deep design
That forms afar, through buds and bloom,
The purple clusters of the vine.

I do not know
The subtle secret of the snow,
That hides away the violets
Till April teaches them to blow.

Enough for me
Their tender loveliness to see,
Assured that little things and large
Fulfill God's purpose equally.

How this is planned,
I may not understand;
I am content, my God, to know
That all my times are in thy hand.

Whatever share
Of loss, or loneliness, or care,
Falls to my lot, it cannot be
More than thy will for me to bear.

And none the less,
Whatever sweet thing come to bless
And gladden me, thou art its source,
The sender of my happiness.

Add this to me,
With other gracious gifts so free,
That I may never turn my face
In an evil hour from thee.

Nor on the sand
Of shifting faith and feeling stand,
But wake and sleep with equal trust,
Knowing my times are in thy hand.

PSALM LXXVII.

IN my sorrow I cried unto God with my voice,
And he heard me, and made my poor heart to
rejoice;
And now of his love and his mercy I'll sing,
And speak of the glory of Jesus my King.

Mine eyes were held waking; my soul full
of grief,
All comfort refuses, and all hope of relief;
I consider the days that are passed, and the
years
When the Lord by his presence subdued all
my fears.

I called to remembrance my song in the
night,
When the favor of God filled my soul with
delight;
I communed with my heart of his wonders of
grace,
And my spirit made diligent search for his
face.

Has the Lord in his anger forgotten poor me?
His tender compassion no more shall I see?
Are his mercies clean gone? will his favor no
more

To me the sweet joys of salvation restore?

Then a glorious light sweetly dawned on my
heart,
Which bade all my fears in a moment depart;
'Twas the light of the knowledge of Jesus,
that Friend
Who, having once loved his own, loves to
the end.

And I said, My infirmity causes this fear;
But now from all doubtings my soul shall be
clear:
For I will remember thy wonders of old,
And the years of thy right hand again shall
behold.

How sweet to recall thy past mercies to mind,
The light of thy face that upon me hath
shined;
And unspeakably sweet, while I think on
thy name,
To remember that thou art forever the same.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., March, 1886.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, Feb. 28, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I see
in the SIGNS for February 15, 1886,
the following:

"MCCALL'S CREEK, Miss., Jan. 8, 1886.

I would like to read Elder John Stipp's
views (or those of any other brother who
may have light on the subject) on John v.
28, 29, either privately or through the SIGNS
OF THE TIMES.

D. McDONALD."

By your permission, brethren
Beebe, I will endeavor to give such
views as I have on the proposed
Scripture, but not to the exclusion of
other brethren writing their views
upon the same text of Scripture.
The proposed text reads thus:
"Marvel not at this, for the hour is
coming in the which all that are in the
graves shall hear his voice, and shall
come forth; they that have done
good, unto the resurrection of life;
and they that have done evil, unto
the resurrection of damnation." The
New Revision renders the wording
somewhat different, but retaining the
same meaning, thus: "Marvel not at
this, for the hour cometh in the which
all that are in the tombs shall hear
his voice, and shall come forth; they
that have done good, unto the resur-
rection of life; and they that have
done ill, unto the resurrection of
judgment." The latter is more in ac-
cordance with the apostle to the
Hebrews, ix. 27, 28, "And as it is ap-
pointed unto men once to die, but
after this the *judgment*, so Christ was
once offered to bear the sins of many:
and unto them that look for him
shall he appear the second time, with-
out sin unto salvation." It will not
be denied by any that the word resur-
rection is a Bible word of frequent
occurrence; neither do I presume
that any one who believes the inspi-
ration of the Scriptures will deny
that the proposed text of Scripture
has direct reference to the resurrec-
tion. I once thought that the sub-
ject of the resurrection and the man-
ner of the resurrection were so plainly
set forth in the Scriptures that there
was no room left for a quibble by any
one who professedly believed that the
Scriptures were given by inspiration
of God. I know that the Sadducees
denied that there was a resurrection,
but they also denied that there were
either angels or spirits. But they
were more excusable (not having the
New Testament Scriptures) than
modern Sadducees. Also, Paul
speaks of some "who concerning the
truth have erred, saying that the resur-
rection is past already, and over-
throw the faith of some."—2 Tim. i.
18. O, brethren, let us beware lest
we also, like Hymeneus and Philetus,

overthrow the faith of some; for
there are some among us now who
say that the resurrection is past
already; and there are others who
deny there being any resurrection at
all, and blasphemously say, "If God
created millions of human beings,
and knew when he created them that
two-thirds of them would go to hell,
he is an unjust God." "Now," said
he, "suppose there was a well fifty
feet deep yonder on that side of the
house, and there were five children
in that well, and there was a brush
heap burning on the other side of the
house, and I with a full knowledge
that if I would draw the children out
of the well that three out of the five
would run into the fire and be burned
up, and with this knowledge I would
let down a rope and draw them out
of the well, would I not be unjust and
guilty of the murder of these chil-
dren? And would God be more
unjust than I would be?" At that
time the church was in a prosperous
condition; but he presented a letter
to the church in full fellowship from
an Old School Baptist Church in
Missouri, was received, and became
their pastor; and the consequence
was, the candlestick was soon re-
moved, the church dissolved, and
there is no church there to this day,
and their pastor is dead. He was
considered sound on all points of
doctrine except the resurrection of
the dead, and spoke with consider-
able ability on other points. These
things I write to warn churches to
take heed what kind of preachers
they choose for their pastors. Now
at this present time there is a dis-
agreement among the brethren con-
cerning the manner of the resurrec-
tion, as has been carried on to some
extent through the SIGNS OF THE
TIMES of late. Some contend that
in the resurrection the same mortal
body that is buried and returns to
dust will in the resurrection be raised
up again by virtue of Christ's resur-
rection, immortal, incorruptible, spir-
itual and glorified; and others con-
tend that the same mortal body that
is buried is never raised again, but
that an incorruptible, immortal, spir-
itual and glorified body grows out of
that mortal body; the same as a
corn of wheat that is buried in the
earth is never raised up out of the
earth, but dies, and remains buried
in the earth; but other grain grows
out of that one grain. Now, breth-
ren, if this is a true representation or
figure of the resurrection, then one
mortal body that is buried in the
earth will in the resurrection produce
a hundred or more mortal bodies;
because one grain of wheat that fall-

eth into the earth will at the harvest
produce a hundred or more grains of
wheat precisely like and of the same
nature of the grain that is sown.
But Paul did not use that figure after
that fashion. Paul saith, "But some
will say, How are the dead raised
up? and with what body do they
come? Thou fool, that which thou
sowest is not quickened except it
die." No; quickening signifieth giv-
ing life to dead matter. Hence man
must be dead in sin, or he cannot be
quickened into spiritual life. In like
manner, man must become corpore-
ally dead, or he cannot be quickened
and rise from the dead in the resur-
rection. "And that which thou sow-
est, thou sowest not that body that
shall be." That body that shall be,
will be a spiritual body; and Paul
saith, "It is sown a natural body, it
is raised a spiritual body." Mind,
the apostle does not say, It is sown a
natural body, and a spiritual body
shall grow out of it. But the identi-
cal same body that was sown a nat-
ural body, shall in the resurrection of
the just, be raised a spiritual body.
"But God giveth it a body as it hath
pleased him, and to every seed his
own body." "That which thou sow-
est, thou sowest not that body that
shall be, but bare grain." The word
bare is an adjective, which signifies,
naked; destitute; mere; raw. Then
it would read, Thou sowest mere
grain; it may chance of wheat, or of
some other grain. That is, if thou
sowest wheat, thou shalt also reap
wheat, and not barley; for God giv-
eth to every seed his own body; that
is, of the same kind and nature of
the bare grain which thou sowest.
But not so in the resurrection. The
body which is sown at death is a
mortal, earthly, corruptible, sinful
body. But the apostle, speaking of
death and the resurrection, saith,
"It is sown in corruption, it is raised
in incorruption." Here are two pro-
nouns, each referring to the same
noun (the body) as its antecedent.
That is, the same it that is sown in
corruption at death, will at the resur-
rection be raised in incorruption.
"It is sown in dishonor, it is raised
in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is
raised in power: it is sown a natural
body, it is raised a spiritual body."
"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh
and blood cannot inherit the kingdom
of God; neither doth corruption in-
herit incorruption." But when this
mortal flesh shall in the resurrection
be changed to immortal, and this
corruptible shall be changed to incor-
ruptible, then shall every vessel of
mercy be fully prepared in that flesh
to see God, and enjoy the full fru-

ition of eternal glory. The apostle adds, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed [both the dead and the living], 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." The identical body shall be changed. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Now if the dead rise not, may not the grave claim an eternal victory over the dead? But, dearly beloved brethren, let us praise God that our highly exalted King, Jesus, by his resurrection gained an eternal victory over death, hell and the grave, in behalf of every heir of promise.

We will now come more directly to the proposed text. "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." These words were spoken by the Lord Jesus to unbelieving Jews, who were persecuting him because he healed the impotent man on the Sabbath day, who had an infirmity thirty and eight years, lying at the pool of Bethesda. Commencing at verse 21, he says, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. 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. * * * Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Paul believed these words of the Savior; for he saith in his defense before Felix, the Roman governor, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets; and

have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts xxiv. 14, 15. But, strange to say, there are some even among us who deny the resurrection, both of the just and unjust; and not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God, these limit his ability to accomplish the resurrection of the dead, saying, "How could God raise the dead? If a lion were to kill a man, and eat a part of him, then a tiger would come along and eat another part, and a leopard another part, and a wolf would eat the balance, it would be impossible for that man to be raised, seeing his flesh had become transmigrated into the flesh of the lion, the tiger, the leopard and the wolf; and in the resurrection there would be a being in part lion, tiger, leopard and wolf." Now this in substance I read in a book years ago. Such carnal reasoning is wickedness in the extreme, and worse than Atheism. Well might Paul say to such, "Thou fool!" We do not believe that the risen body will be in the likeness of the body that was sown or buried, but it will be raised in the complete image and likeness of the glorified body of the Lord Jesus Christ. He who formed man of the dust of the ground at first, a natural man, cannot he raise and transform the same dust into a spiritual man, no matter how many changes it may have undergone? Whether eaten of wild beasts or of worms, it is all the same. "For the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." Whether their graves are in the midst of the mighty ocean, and their bodies are eaten of fishes and sea serpents, or upon dry land, and eaten of wild beasts or of worms, all, all shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; for it is so declared by him who has all power both in heaven and in earth, and says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." It is plainly set forth that the apostles preached Christ and the resurrection. As Paul saith, "Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain: yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."—1 Cor. xv. 11-26. Here the apostle has clearly

borne witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and set it forth as a sure pledge of the resurrection of all the saints after the manner and likeness of his resurrection; and has shown conclusively that if the saints rise not, that Christ is not risen; and if Christ be not risen, our justification can never be obtained; we must inevitably die in a state of condemnation, under the wrath of God. For the apostle saith elsewhere that Christ was delivered for our offenses, and *raised again for our justification*. When we get outside of the book of inspiration we wander among the dark mountains of mere imagination, and lose ourselves in the rubbish of human invention. Dear brethren, this is a mysterious, though very important subject: let us not speculate. Why not take the Scriptures as they read? They are sufficiently plain on this subject. Christ saith emphatically, "For the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his [Christ's] voice, and shall come forth." Do you believe it? I do with all my heart. I believe it is the identical body that is sown in weakness at death, that shall (using the words of Christ) "come forth" at the resurrection; or as the apostle saith, be raised in power.

Now, my dear brother Durand, please bear with an ignorant old man, when I tell you that I cannot comprehend your meaning on the subject of the resurrection of the dead. You say, "If the resurrection of the body of our dear Savior is an example, showing the manner of the resurrection of his people, then their bodies must be put into graves and come forth again uncorrupted. But it is not in that way that he is the first fruits of them that slept. The figure which both Christ and the apostle have employed in declaring this wonderful mystery is a corn of wheat falling into the ground. In the resurrection of Christ he brought forth much fruit. In the experience of that resurrection by his people at his coming, the apostle has said, 'Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may change of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.' That poor, weak, mortal, corruptible body which is sown in the moment when life leaves it, is not the body that shall be. That grain of wheat, that vile body, is not lifted out of the ground, although it is the subject of the resurrection or change." Now, my dear brother, shall I understand you by the expression, "That grain of wheat, that vile body, is not lifted out of the ground," to mean that our vile bodies when buried at death will not be raised up from the earth at the resurrection? If so, it would be a denial of the resurrection entire. My dear brother, we should be careful and not construe a bare figure so as to conflict with that which it is intended to represent. I do not understand that the bodies which are sown in corruption shall remain in the earth after the resur-

rection, and an incorruptible body grow out of the body of corruption, the same as a stock of wheat would grow out of a grain of wheat. Such an idea would be no resurrection at all. But if we sow wheat, we will not reap barley; and if we sow barley, at harvest we shall not reap wheat. Now, using this as a figure of the resurrection, it would of necessity follow that if we sow corruption at death, at harvest, or the resurrection, we would also reap corruption. For Paul saith, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Gal. vi. 7, 8. Now the figure of the sowing of grain will not represent the resurrection in every particular. For if we sow bare or temporal grain, we do not expect to reap spiritual grain; but when we at death sow our temporal bodies, we hope to be raised again spiritual bodies. And I think the Scriptures teach in plain language that the natural body that is sown in death is the identical body that at the resurrection will be raised a spiritual body. I am at a loss to know what language the apostle could have used to set forth this joyful truth more plainly and forcibly than that which he used in 1 Corinthians xv. Now, my dear brother Durand, I do not want to be troublesome, but I hope you will have patience to bear with an old sinner who is standing, as it were, upon the brink of the grave, while he further undertakes to review some of your expressions. You say, "I do not at this time understand that our Savior's body was a spiritual body when it came out of the tomb. It was the same body, unchanged in any way, that was laid there." Now, my dear brother, we read, "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, *when the doors were shut* where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side."—John xx. 19, 20. I suppose the doors were barred. Again, "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet."—John xxiv. 36-40. Now compare this Scripture with 1 John i. 1, 2. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and *our hands have handled, of the Word of life*; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that

eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." Now, my dear brother, are you prepared to say that the Word of life was a mere natural body, because the apostles saw it with their eyes and handled it with their hands? He was the Word of God made flesh; not natural, but spiritual flesh. That flesh never lost its identity. It is the same flesh to-day that it was when nailed to the cross, and will be the same flesh to all eternity. It is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."—Heb. xiii. 8. The same apostle argues thus: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."—Heb. i. 8-12. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him [not the nature, but] 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 his people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."—Heb. ii. 16-18. Again, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness [that is, in appearance or image] 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. 3, 4. Man in his creation was made in the image and likeness of God, as it is written, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him," &c.—Gen. i. 26, 27. Now if the former quotations have proved that Christ was a natural man, these latter quotations would prove that man in his creation was a spiritual man, which neither you nor I are willing to admit. Man in his generation is a natural, sinful, corruptible and corrupted man; but in regeneration he is a spiritual, righteous and holy man, as it is written, "That ye 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 [the image or likeness of] God is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Eph. iv. 22-24. I cannot find with-

in the lids of the Bible where either

Word of life that the apostles handled with their hands. Now, was that

Word of life merely natural, or was it spiritual? If natural, it could only impart natural life. But Jesus himself certainly knew what he himself was, and he saith, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give you is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—John vi. 51. Now, I ask you, Can this flesh, which came down from heaven, be other than spiritual flesh? Again, he saith, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."—John iii. 13. Again we read, "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up, far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."—Eph. iv. 8-10. Now, at the birth of Jesus, there were wise men who came from the east to Jerusalem, and inquired, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." And again, when brought before Pilate, the Roman governor, who asked him, "Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Jesus had said before, "My kingdom is not of this world." "But now is my kingdom not from hence?" Therefore it must have been a spiritual kingdom, and required a spiritual king to reign over it. Consequently Jesus, the king eternal, was born a spiritual king over a spiritual realm, and required no change. His glorification made no change in his heavenly personage. He laid his glory by when he came from heaven to earth, in like manner as we lay by our raiment when we retire to take rest in sleep. And when he ascended he received again the same glory he laid by, and his heavenly personage underwent no change whatever. Hence his prayer to his heavenly Father, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—John xvii. 5. "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light," &c.—Matt. xvii. 1, 2. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will

perform this."—Isa. ix. 6, 7. Now, my dear brother, this is the characteristic of the child born and of the son given; in a word, of "the holy child Jesus." Can this be a natural child born, and changed to spiritual after his ascension to glory? Surely he was born a spiritual child. His was a miraculous conception, and not after the common order of conception. And I believe that in that miraculous conception the seed of David was spiritualized. I cannot believe that the flesh of Jesus Christ was natural flesh, because it was not begotten after the order of nature. The angel said to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."—Luke i. 35. This is an incomprehensive mystery, beyond the conception of a finite mind; but shall we say, It is not true, because we cannot understand it? We cannot comprehend eternity; but shall we say there is no eternity? Our finite minds will fix upon a period when eternity began, and when it will end; yet we know it cannot be. Also concerning infinite space, we may stretch our finite minds to their utmost, and look onward and onward, and fancy that there must be an end to space somewhere. And shall we say there is an end because we cannot comprehend how space can be without an end? Then we should let mystery remain a mystery, and receive the word of inspiration, and profit by it.

I submit the foregoing, brethren Beebe, to you for your disposal, and if published, then to the readers of the SIGNS generally, and to brethren D. McDonald and S. H. Durand specially, and for the consideration of all.

Yours in hope of the resurrection of the dead,

JOHN STIPP.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Feb. 19, 1886.

EXTRACTS from letters of sister Edna A. Ferguson continued. Her next letter was dated, Delaplane, Va., March 6, 1877. She says:

"Dear Brother:—Your excellent and highly appreciated letter was received Feb. 18th. I always feel the desire to say something in return, but really my letters are so little, I fear whenever I make the attempt that you will become weary with my talk. I love to get your letters; they cheer and build me up. The correspondence is very pleasant to me, and also instructive, if I could get rid of the feeling that I am trespassing on your time and patience. I certainly do excuse haste and brevity, for I know that your time is much taken up, and more profitably than in writing to me. Still I do love so much to hear from the younger brethren, and learn of their travel in this barren wilderness of sin. And although I am old and have been traveling this way, I hope, for many years, a poor, dependent little one; still I feel that the younger ones can and do instruct me

in every letter that I receive from their hands. This makes me love to receive them. You can easily imagine how poor and disconsolate one feels living alone, separated from the household all the long, weary weeks of winter, thinking at times that surely no one feels as I do, that all is dark, while the desire all the time is to hear from those whose hope the Lord is. When a letter is brought us from some brother or sister of the same family, O how cheering it is, and how eagerly we peruse its contents to find some word of comfort dropped from their pen, which encourages the poor, downcast ones, so that they are ready to say in their hearts, 'Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him,' and, 'though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.'

"My dear brother, we shall never be able to tell the joys and sorrows, or the much disquietude we feel, the heart yearnings after holiness, the sense of sin in all we do or say, having no control over the corruption and depravity in which sin has placed us, and often terrible forebodings of mind and distressing conflicts which so much beset us by the way. But there is a calm and sure retreat at times for the believer in Christ. O how calm and delightful, if only for a few moments, when all this tumult of soul is quieted by a word from him who can say, 'Peace, be still,' and who gives rest to the weary.

'We travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on every hand;
But Jesus guides us through the vale;
The christian's hope can never fail.'

It can never fail, because founded on the Rock of eternal ages; and not all the storms which we as christians are called upon to pass through can ever rob us of that inheritance which is in reserve for all the heirs of promise. O what consolation the poor, sensible sinner finds in the sovereignty of God, the great Creator and Preserver of all things. The smallest insect that wings its way through the air is under his control.

"Dear brother, I am sometimes made to feel awfully at the expressions made by that idolatrous people who live around me, against the doctrine of God our Savior. They often say, 'If God saves you and not me, I will meet him at the bar and tell him to his face that he is an unjust God.' Their language is too awful and full of blasphemy to repeat; yet it is what they say. We have many such creatures around us, who profess to preach the gospel. I never hear them, but hear directly from them. They are poor, blind creatures, I know, who have no fear of God before their eyes. But such society I have no use for. The world is full of such, and the world loves its own. O have we not great reason to praise and adore the Most High for teaching us the better way, and for still keeping us from such terrible wicked ways? else we should have been found with them fighting against the supreme Ruler of heaven and earth.

"Dear brother, this part of your

letter struck me with great force. You say, 'Do we not sometimes dwell too much upon our doubts and fears? Do we not sometimes get to feeling that we ought to be cast down all the time, and so refuse to see the bright side and rejoice in it? O how hard it is, you say, to understand the workings of the deceitful human heart!' Now this I have often thought, and often must plead guilty of it for myself. Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and God has given me to trust in his great name; yet I seem to doubt his word and promise. This looks like ingratitude indeed. And this I have thought also, God must be weary of such continual complaint from those he has done so much for. Instead of praise, complaint is heard. I heard Elder Beebe once say that these doubtful feelings are encouraged and nursed by many of the saints, which is wrong. Now if this is so, and it is wrong, I desire greatly to be right, and be not faithless, but believing. The Savior said to his disciples, 'Wherefore did ye doubt, O ye of little faith?' I have thought my doubts are in consequence of my inbred corruption; and yet I know that it is light which makes manifest the wicked heart, and if we have light it has been given us of God. When we mourn on account of our great depravity, and are in great heaviness through manifold temptations, this is because we have life. The dead cannot mourn nor feel. This makes your words true, that we ought to rejoice that we have life, and praise him from whom all blessings flow. He alone can bring the dead to life. The life of the head runs through all the body. The Savior says, 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' There is so much to cheer the poor, needy children, if at times they were not so full of unbelief; yet our hope remains; we cannot give it up. 'The righteous shall hold on his way.'

"Dear brother, I am a mystery to myself, and everything seems wrapped in profound mystery, and remains so until revealed. We cannot search it out; it must be given to us."

Under date of Delaplaine, April 16, 1877, sister Ferguson writes again:

"Dear brother:—If I know my wicked, deceitful heart, I love the people of God, and delight to hear them speak of the kingdom of Christ, and tell of the power which belongs to him who controls the subjects of that kingdom. You speak of the words which came into your mind, 'No man by searching can find out God.' This we believe to be a solemn truth. This, I trust, you and I know by experience. O how long we were trying to find out him who holds us in his hands! All our searching was in vain. Not one ray of light could we search out. We found it could only be by revelation. Flesh and blood cannot reveal him. 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of

him that runneth, but of God, that showeth mercy.' It remains the same glorious truth all the journey through. Not one thing could we know except by revelation. How true your remark, 'Those who know him best cannot boast over those who know him least, for they have not made their greater advances by searching.'

"How beautiful is the truth! It is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. The Savior said to his disciples, 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' What a precious promise to those desiring to know the truth! If they know it they love it. You said in one of your letters, 'If we love, we have all the rest.' This is the truth, I firmly believe. But sometimes I question myself very closely, and wonder, Why is this dull and lifeless frame? Why am I so forgetful of the numberless mercies and benefits I enjoy day by day? Why have I such a murmuring spirit at the dispensations of providence, instead of being submissive to the divine will? Is it not, my brother, because that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and prone to evil as the sparks fly upward? We cannot do the good we would. Remembering all the way the Lord has led us, we come to this conclusion. For many years I have been striving and desiring to live and walk according to my profession; but O how far short do I come of my desire! But the Lord knows our desires, and if we have one right one he has given it. Let us praise him from whom all blessings flow. 'All our springs are in thee.' Says one of old, 'He remembers we are dust,' and, 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so doth the Lord pity them that fear him.' Such shall feel the healing of his wings. We sometimes feel a small realizing sense, as we hope, of his healing power, which binds up all our broken bones and enables us to say, Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him as I ought. If our poor, feeble powers cannot praise him here, there is a home for the blessed, where endless and unceasing praise will be given.

"One of our most valued members has been called away by death. Old brother Barton Richards has been called, beyond a doubt, to that blessed inheritance of which he so often had a foretaste here. We lament the loss, while we desire to be submissive to the all-wise decrees of the Most High. We were loth to give him up. He was able to give us wise counsel in the house of God. He was well instructed in discipline, according to the word, and we looked to him for advice about many things in which we felt ignorant. But the will of the Lord is done concerning him and us, and may he reconcile us to his will. I am now the oldest member in Ebenezer Church. I felt all winter that my time of departure was close at hand. I was very feeble. Since spring has come I feel a little stronger, but am far from being strong yet. I thank you for your kind invitation to come to the Balti-

more Association. I would indeed accept it, but do not think my strength is sufficient. I would enjoy it, I know, could I go. I feel the infirmities of age. I am tottering at times, but am greatly blessed in every condition, and have great reason for adoration and praise. We have excellent preaching. Our dear pastor is an able defender of the truth. We love to hear his faithful testimony to the truth. It is truly a blessing and favor bestowed to have one to go in and out before us, speaking the truth in Christ. We are all living at peace among ourselves. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! When there is a cordial greeting, we feel that it is good to meet in the prescribed ordinances of the Lord's house, listen to the word preached, and enjoy the communion and fellowship of saints. The pleasure this affords us poor sinners cannot be told by mortal tongue."

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

DECHARD, Tenn., Feb. 25, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—With your consent and approval, I wish to address your readers on the subject of predestination; and to avoid repetition hereafter, (as I wish to be concise), will state that to will, purpose, ordain, appoint, predestinate, as applied to God, are different words expressing the same act, and are in unison with the divine perfections, eternity, immutability, independence, foreknowledge, or omniscience, goodness, or holiness. And by God's power and providence, he executes neither more nor less than what he wills. These are the premises upon which I purpose investigating the important subject of predestination. If God is the only eternal, immutable and independent God, all things developed in time were by him pre-determined and appointed, embracing creation and the final end or destiny of the things created. If so, he planned and executed the whole train of events necessary thereto. And with this view of the subject, the following seems in harmony: "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." "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Col. i. 16; Rev. iv. 11. As there is nothing excepted in God's creation, neither matter nor spirit, and as they were for his use and pleasure, he must and did appoint the things created to some definite use and end, in order to accomplish his pleasure. And as he declared the end from the beginning, he certainly provided for and operated all that comes between the beginning and the end. So the apostle says, he "worketh all things [that is, all things created] after [or according to] the counsel of his own will."

Thus we see that he is not only the uncreated Creator, but the unmoved Mover of the things created (Isaiah xlv. 10), and that the beginning and each succeeding and depending link in the events in God's economy of universal government over his creatures was ordered in wisdom and executed by omnipotent power; therefore his counsel stands, and he does all his pleasure, and consummates the declared end. Now I ask, Were all things in their creation and operations necessary to consummate the declared end? If so, is it not reasonable to suppose that God appointed it? And if anything exists not necessary to the end, why did he allow it? Would it not be redundant, seeing there would be more than he appointed or needed to run his government? "O! but such views make God the author of sin, and all of its evil and calamitous effects." This has been a stumbling-stone and rock of offense to the most of professors, since the days of Pelagius at least, and I feel safe in stating, as my honest conviction, that from this has originated more prejudice against the doctrine of predestination than all other sources combined. I know this has been the case since my connection with the Baptists, and even from my early youth I was taught to regard with abhorrence the supposed blasphemous doctrine that involved the idea of the just and holy God being in any sense the cause or author of such a foil as the entrance and reign of sin; and often since my connection with the Baptists, good brethren have told me that it would not do to take any position that involved the idea of God being the "author of sin," about which I have been much perplexed, and have tried hard to insert an unauthorized or uncaused link in the chain of events in God's government over his creatures; and I reached the conclusion that the predestinarian chain has not and will not admit an Arminian link in it, which I shall endeavor to demonstrate; and as the entrance and reign of sin seems to be the point of difference among Baptists, I wish to dwell somewhat upon it. To avoid this seeming foil in God's government over his creatures, many theories have been advanced; but among the Baptists of my acquaintance (and it is with them that I have to do) it is held that Adam in his primeval state was able to stand, but was liable to fall. To this view of the subject I tried to conform; but on reflection I concluded that these two propositions were inharmonious: that if he was absolutely able to stand, he was not liable to fall; and if liable to fall, he was not absolutely able to stand, as liability implies possibility, and possibility implies doubt, contingency or uncertainty. The Bible view (to which I refer the reader) seems to be that in pursuance of God's purpose to people the earth, he created one man, Adam, and his race in him; prepared the garden as a place of residence for him and his bride, to whom, as federal head of his

race, he gave a law, to which he required his conformity. In doing so, he was entitled to the blessings of an earthly paradise, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil being excepted. As Adam's sin consisted in nonconformity to the divine law, in that sense his act was of a negative character, which to my mind shows that the law was not given to perpetuate the existence of the man in a state of innocence, but as a rule to regulate his conduct while in a state of innocency. And as we know that he was susceptible of the seductions of temptation, and gave way, and was overcome by the circumstances surrounding him, of which God was the author, are we not therefore warranted in the conclusion that the law was given Adam as a rule or measurement, and, when applied, manifested his imperfections? In this connection I will state that the union formed between the man and his bride was the grand and crowning inducement with the man to go into sin. And as this union is the very base of civil society and human happiness, we cannot suppose it accidental, or not appointed of God, as were all the circumstances leading to the fall. The apostle says, "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." And Adam's act was an apt comment on the apostle's teaching. Lust was first conceived in his mind, and determined his will to action. Some brethren seem to think the act made or created sin, whereas it was sin that caused the act by which sin was developed, sin being the cause of the act. Now, taking all the circumstances into consideration (to which I refer the reader), of which God was the author, could Adam have acted otherwise than as he did? If not, God must have willed and determined the fall. If God did not will the fall, Adam must have possessed a self-determining will. If so, as a free actor he might have acted various other ways than he did, it being optional with him how, or whether he would act at all. Besides being self-contradictory and incompatible with the infinite perfections of Deity, this view of the subject would unsettle and disarrange the whole plan of God's universal government over his creatures; for his government, both as it relates to the material and immaterial worlds, is based upon the fall and condemnation of man. Then how apposite the language of the psalmist, that God has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all. I believe therefore that the fall of man units with and forms an important link in the chain of events, and is absolutely necessary in the accomplishment of God's purpose in creation. Some brethren argue as though those differing with them hold that sin in its essence was derived from God, as we derived our nature from Adam, or as fruit derives its nature from the tree that bears it, which is a very absurd inference. I believe that all God's creatures, from the highest to the lowest, are alike equally and infinitely

inferior to and removed from him as their Creator, and from this creation sin was engendered, and that according to the will and purpose of God; for God either willed that Adam should fall, or he willed that he should stand, or else he had no will as to that event. If the first, we find the event is in harmony with the will; if the second, we see there is a conflict and want of harmony between the event and the will; and if the last proposition be accepted, then Adam would be in God's stead, as his course would give shape to all future events; for, as a self-determining actor, he might determine himself this or that way, or not act at all. And thus brethren, in their efforts to screen and honor God, do impeach and degrade him below the standard of his creatures. The supreme Ruler, Director and universal Governor of heaven and earth does not need nor does he ask the aid of his poor, finite creatures of a day, to assist in the conduct of his government, as he makes his will his rule. He reposes the inhabitants of earth as nothing, and does 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 is under no law, and there is no tribunal before which to try him, in heaven, earth nor hell, nor to challenge his sovereign right of dominion over his creatures. God forbid that I should ever in thought, word or deed prescribe rules for my Sovereign to regulate his conduct in order to be just.

I will close for the present, with the hope of resuming the pleasing subject.

JAMES WAGNER.

ALEXANDRIA VA., March 2, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed find remittance for our list of subscribers to the SIGNS; also a few lines in the way of correspondence, which I hope are in brotherly love, for your perusal. Yet whenever I attempt to write I always feel my poverty and leanness in writing anything that would be interesting to my brethren. But notwithstanding my feelings, I do sometimes feel it would be a pleasure to me, even in my poor way, to drop a word of encouragement to the tried and faithful watchmen that stand on the walls of Zion for the defense of the truth; for to me there seems to be now apparent signs of restlessness and uneasiness amongst many of the Old Baptists; signs of approaching danger. For instance, if we hear preaching or read communications that we have to guess at what the preacher or writer means, and whether or not he is sound in doctrine, we naturally feel uneasy. And to me it is apparent that we should use eagle eyes and the understanding mind to scrutinize closely every approach made, and be sure there is no Babylonish garments hidden in our tent. I do like that kind of preaching or writing that, after hearing or reading the same, I can say amen to, without reservation; that kind which has the clear gospel ring to it, in which we find no frame

to pronounce clearly the Shibboleth of the Lord. But enough of this criticism at present, as I see I am digressing from what I intended to write you. My desire was to encourage the watchmen or preachers that stand upon the walls of Zion, including brethren Beebe in their editorials, and their able correspondents. I was much pleased with Elder Wm. J. Purington's article on Predestination, and many faithful brethren who write ably for our paper. We find written in the Psalms, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" And another inspired writer says, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." So when I read the editorials in the SIGNS, and the communications of many dear brethren and sisters, the first thing that presents itself to my mind is, Is there a scriptural foundation for the argument advanced? If so, then there goes out from my soul an amen, so let it be, and there follows a fellowship and brotherly love from the reader to the writer of the article. For instance, after reading the communication of Elder Purington on Predestination, including the all things, whether they be good or bad, there was a feeling to say, Well done, thou faithful servant. To me it seems impossible to remove one particle, however small, from the foundation that is laid. If we do, there is a rent in the structure that will show the hand of designing man. Satan, in olden time, with all his subtlety, made the first advance on our mother Eve, and through her weakness made an inroad for Adam to follow in the transgression, which entailed on all his posterity the penalty pronounced on man. Yet notwithstanding all this, the foundation standeth sure. Satan said that predestination was not true. "God knows that ye will not surely die." But the sequel has proved the opposite. We daily see the bier conveying the bodies to the tomb. None can deny but death has fallen heir to all men since the day of Adam's fall unto the present time. Yet "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." In the book of Job we read this language, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" And a little farther down, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Did God make a mistake when he included all the sons of God? No. Inspiration never has made a mistake, and never will. All that the prophets and apostles have written has been and will be fulfilled, even to the very letter of the word. All the redeemed church shall come to Christ; not one shall be left out. There is no mistake. Predestination, election, God's sovereignty, the final perfection of the saints, the unity of Christ and his church, is a doctrine that will live when time is no more. But the apostle tells us that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse,

deceiving and being deceived, and that many shall follow their pernicious ways. But the truth shall stand; the promises fail not. How can they? The Lord has declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Remove him and then you can remove the foundations; but not until then. So then, dear brethren in the ministry, stand fast in the liberty of the gospel, cry aloud and spare not, preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, fear not the frowns of men; for this doctrine will stand the test of all criticisms, and your names will go down to the grave with honor, leaving a sweet-smelling savor; and having fought a good fight, having kept the faith, for you there is laid up a crown of righteousness, which the Lord will give you at that day.

Dear brethren, I have stretched out my letter too lengthy, longer than I expected; but you will pardon my intrusion and correct all errors.

Affectionately yours in fellowship,
JOSEPH BRODERS.

MEANS AND POWER.

"DORCHESTER, N. B., Feb. 7, 1886.

ELDER LEE HANCKS—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on means and power in connection with the following Scriptures: Psalm xlix. 7, Jeremiah v. 31, 1 Cor. ix. 22-27, Phil. iii. 11, 1 Cor. ix. 18.

Your brother in hope,

WM. E. BUCK."

REPLY.

Psalm xlix. 7: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." Dear brother, I much rather you would have called on some abler gift to explain the above Scriptures, but I will give such as I have. You seem to desire my views especially upon "means." The word means is defined as an instrument, method, machine, &c. The word "means" occurs several times in the Bible, but nowhere, according to my understanding, as an auxiliary for helping save souls. The foregoing Scripture is describing a class who trust in wealth, riches, &c., and the psalmist declares that by their "means" they cannot redeem their brother. He says nothing about God's means. David says, in speaking of a certain pharisaical sect, that they are not troubled as other men, their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish. Men have a great many "means," to wit, the Sunday School, theological seminaries, temperance societies, protracted meetings, mourners' benches, &c. All these "means" belong alone to men. Men are dependent upon "means," but God is not. David says, "None of them can by any means [preachers and all] redeem his brother." The first offering was a "means" offering. Cain brought of the tillage of the earth, his own productions. That is what the Babel-builders tried to go to heaven on, their own works or means. That same spirit is yet in the world. Now, brother Buck, notice that the means used every time was means which belonged to men. Paul, speaking of means, says, "That I might by all

means save some." That is, I understand, he wanted to use every lawful method to save the church from the many errors and delusions extant in the world. Paul says to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." It is evidently living people that hear, hence it could not mean an eternal salvation, for Timothy was already a minister of Christ. But "thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee" from errors, Arminianism, &c, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life," says Jesus. God does not stand in need of means to convert a sinner, nor to send a preacher to preach, for he speaks, and it is done, he commands, and it stands fast. Some say the valley of dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii.) represents dead sinners, and Ezekiel was an instrument in giving them eternal life. But a bone, no matter how dry it is, has had life prior to its being dry. The dead sinner never had any eternal life existing in him. Hence this cannot represent the dead sinner, but Israel (children of God), who often die to their christian comforts, by living after the flesh. If we should admit that God needs means, he could not get any help on earth. David says that if he were hungry he would not tell poor, puny men, for the cattle upon a thousand hills are his. "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!" "He doeth his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?" How can poor, fallen man have the audacity to say that such a God is dependent upon means to accomplish his purpose? Some say that he uses or sanctifies the falling of a leaf, the fading of a flower, the death of a relative, or the preached word, to the quickening of sinners. Suppose the leaf does not fall, the flower does not fade, the relative does not die, the gospel is not preached; then the sinner is lost, and God is standing with outstretched arms all in vain. Would you not feel sorry for such a God? Bless the Lord, we do not worship such a God as that. Man at his best estate is vanity, and nothing, and less than nothing. God has never called upon poor man to assist him. The Spirit quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. Then, my brother, all the means belong to man, or are what he uses to accomplish his purposes. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God." "After that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Notice, it is to save believers; not eternally, but with a time salvation. The gospel evidently has a saving efficacy

in it.—See Rom. i. 16. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The preaching of the gospel draws a line of discrimination between the church and the world, and believers are saved by it; saved from errors, false teachers, disobedience, and are made to come out of Babylon and eat at the gospel table. You cannot find in God's written word where he has ever authorized any man or set of men to educate men and send them forth to save with eternal salvation. He told Peter to feed his sheep, not make sheep. John the Baptist was sent to make ready a people prepared for the reception of the Lord. Philip was sent to preach to the eunuch, Peter to Cornelius, and Ananias to Saul. But every time the Spirit had prepared the hearer before the preacher was sent to preach. All the prophesying under the Mosaic dispensation was to Israel, and not to make Israelites of the Gentiles. The angel that flew in the midst of heaven (church) had the gospel to preach to the church, or children of God. The apostles in writing addressed their epistles to the church. We have no right to take the children's bread and give it to dogs. "Cry aloud, and spare not, show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." Dear brother, your salvation does not rest upon the preacher keeping you. While it would be a great privilege for you to hear the gospel proclaimed, and to eat at the gospel table with the dear saints, and to realize many refreshing seasons which you do not now enjoy, it is the Spirit that does all the work from first to last. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "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." "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." You, dear brother, have a sure refuge to trust in, notwithstanding your destitute condition. God is with you for a refuge and strength, and is a very present help in time of trouble. "The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." What more does the christian want? "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Brother Buck, if I had time I could write more, but I only get a little while to write after my supper of a night. I labor hard in the day, and try to write some nights when I feel so impressed. I have not done the subject justice, but I will have to desist, feeling quite feeble and very much fatigued. We have a great many sound Baptists here. I am not personally acquainted with Elder Redd. I live some distance from him, but I think he is a sound minister. Write soon.

Your brother in tribulation,

LEE HANCKS.

MACOMB, Ill., March 12, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—As I have promised to furnish for publication in the SIGNS some further extracts from letters written me by our dear departed sister, Mahala Spurgin, and having also been requested to do so by some of her correspondents, I will copy a portion of one or two of her letters to me from Palestine, Texas, in 1882. I wish to say here, however, to brother Myers, of Locktown, N. J., that the letters he sent me, written to him by the departed sister, are deeply interesting, but I have recently sprained my right arm and shoulder, and write in much pain, and have such a large package of her letters to me on hand, I hope he will not be hurt with me if I do not copy the letters sent to him by the sister.

If I could consistently leave out her reference to me I would do so, but I feel desirous to let her express her own feelings in her own way. From Texas, in 1882, she says:

"My Very Dear Brother, I hope:—Your precious letter of the 22d of March came to me truly like cold water to a thirsty soul. I had looked and longed to hear from you for a length of time, and we so often spoke of you one to another. I was fearful that something was the matter with you, or that your Master had called you up from your labors to your reward; but there is something more for you to do or to suffer, for some wise purpose known to himself, which will be made manifest in due time. I deeply sympathize with you in your extreme sufferings, for I am acquainted with much bodily pain. O, my brother, when we look back to Gethsemane, and even try, in imagination, to portray to ourselves the agonies of the dear Lamb of God for the redemption of his bride, we are overwhelmed and astonished at the sight. A poet says,

'With pleasing grief and mournful joy,
My spirit now is filled;
That I should such a life destroy,
Yet live by him I killed.'

His dear, innocent human nature dreaded the agonies of death, and asked if it were possible for the cup to be removed, but instantly gave up to the Father's will. But it was not bodily pain alone that caused the holy sweat. It was soul suffering. Some one says, "The sufferings of his soul were the soul of his sufferings." If his children, when quickened into life individually, feel the weight of guilt and condemnation that is due them, how many ten times ten thousand did our blessed Redeemer bear of the weight of all his people at once? How stupendously great, passing all finite comprehension!

'O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Savior's praises speak.'

Yes, I sometimes wonder why it is that we who have a hope that we are his chosen ones, having it made manifest by the Spirit that we are born again, having received the Spirit of adoption whereby we are enabled at

times to cry, Abba, Father, are not more in his praise than we are. But our carnal, sinful nature, unbelief and Satan rob us of our comforts, and we fear lest we are mistaken, doubt our heirship to that great and glorious inheritance which is in reserve for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Thanks to his ever blessed name, we are not our own keeper, for 'The Lord is thy keeper.' 'I will keep it night and day.' When we meet with trials, tribulations, afflictions, losses, crosses, disappointments and bereavements, we sometimes feel that we can hardly bear up under them, and, indeed, if we were left alone in some of the great troubles and sorrows through which we are called to pass, it seems that we should sink under them; but his grace is sufficient for us at all times. And why should we murmur and complain, when we know that it is only momentary and light when compared with eternity and the weight of glory? Then,

'Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall;
May I but safely reach my home,
My God, my heaven, my all.'

For many years mine has been a remarkably rugged road, and I have tried, as best I could, to beg our Father to grant me submission, an entire resignation in all things to his blessed will concerning me, that I might patiently acquiesce therein. And I do hope that he has by his superabounding grace wonderfully sustained me; for which I hope my great desire is to give thanks and praises to his exalted name while I have a being.

* * * * *

"From the accident which I met with last June I have not recovered yet, but, thanks to our merciful Father, I am now improving considerably; can walk about the house without my crutch, and no considerable pain. Sometimes in the night, when, perhaps, lying too long in one position, I awake with most excruciating pain, but it soon subsides. I have thought that I never was so truly thankful for any temporal blessing as I trust I am now. After suffering the most intense pain for months, without hopes of ever walking alone, my general health is restored, my appetite good, and I can begin to get about so well, contrary to the most sanguine hopes of my friends. And the kindness of this dear brother and sister cannot be surpassed, even if I were their mother. * * * I hope that I am thankful that the plan of our redemption is just as it is; for no other way could ever reach such a case as mine, who am all over sinful and polluted, not one redeeming quality about me. No will or power to perform one good act. But lo, he came, as was written of him in the volume of the book, to do the will of the Father. Now the sacrifice is made and accepted. He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. O blessed Surety! in whom the Father is well pleased. And being clothed in his righteous-

ness, we shall stand acquitted before him, and be gathered in with all the redeemed, to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb forever and ever."

The foregoing is but a part of one of her letters, but I have not time now to copy further. I submit it to the editors. May grace abound to them and to the Zion of our God.

I remain your brother in Christ,
I. N. VANMETER.

CHAMBLISSBURG, Va., Feb. 9, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—A few days since I received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of February 1, 1886, and was gratified to learn that the brethren had so promptly responded to your call, in securing new subscribers to the SIGNS, which I so highly prize as a medium of correspondence with the dear children of God. It is with fear and trembling that I grasp my pen to write a little for the household of faith; for if I am not deceived in myself, it is for the good of souls and the glory of God. And while the impression is so strong to write that it seems hard to desist, I am well aware of my fallibility, and feel sensibly, I trust, that if a saint at all, I am one of the least; for when I would do good, evil is present with me; and the things I desire, I do not; but the things I would not, them I do. I am made to cry much of the time, O my leanness! my leanness! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Only by and through the Lord Jesus Christ can I be delivered. If I only could write as some of my brethren and sisters do, how glad I would feel. But notwithstanding all this, I sometimes hear from our stands, and see from the pens of some, things which are not food to me. I try to apply the fault to myself, though not always able to succeed. I sometimes hear brethren reprove Arminians, and say that Arminians talk about getting religion, and that men do not get religion, but religion gets them. Now, my judgment is that such expressions only give enemies of the truth the advantage of us. If we have Christ in us the hope of glory, we evidently have got him and he us. He is in the Father, and the Father in him. He is in you and you are in him. Then we are, according to our manner of expression, in possession of religion, and it is a free gift to us. "Not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." If I were to give a brother a dollar, it would not get him, but he would (according to our language) get that. In the same sense we get religion; not for worth or merit on our part, but according to the purpose of God. He hath chosen us before the world began, and now has made himself manifest to us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. And sometimes I hear brethren say that they are not called to preach to sinners, but to christians. One brother says, "to live sinners." Let us examine the words of our Savior in regard to the preaching of the gospel of the Son of God. I read

in Mark xvi., after our Savior had risen from the grave, and it was told the disciples, they did not believe. And afterward Jesus appeared unto the eleven apostles, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Now, brethren and sisters, let me ask, Did our Savior mean what he said, when he told them to preach the gospel to every creature? If he did mean what he said, what right have we to say that we are not commanded to preach to sinners? How are we to distinguish between good and bad when we arise before a congregation as a witness for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as the way, the truth and the life of poor, lost and ruined sinners? Did not our Savior preach repentance for the remission of sins? And did he not command the apostles to preach repentance? If he did, ought not we to preach it to all who come to hear us, like as Peter did, when as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved? Peter did not claim that it was by his power that any were saved, or added to the church, but that the Lord did it. When Jesus called the seventy and sent them out two and two, he said to them that he was going to send them as lambs among wolves, and described to them the manner in which they should go. And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name?" He tells them not to rejoice in this, "but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, 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."—See Luke x. Now, brethren and sisters, let us examine the great apostle to the Gentiles and see who he preached to. When Paul had gone up to Jerusalem, and was led into the castle, before the chief captain, to be tried for preaching the gospel which the Savior had committed to him, he said to the captain, "May I speak unto thee?" The question was asked if he could speak Greek. And when license was given him, Paul stood on the stairs and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And there was made a great silence. He spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying, "Men, brethren and fathers, hear ye my defense which I make now unto you." Now we behold Paul addressing the audience (which I cannot believe for one moment were all live sinners), telling them that he was a Jew, and how he had persecuted this way unto death, binding and delivering into prison both men

and women. He tells them that he was zealous towards God, as they were that day. That was before his conversion. Now we see him continuing his speech to the same people, telling them what the Lord had done for him, which had brought about the great change in him. And by this means the gospel of the Son of God was carried from place to place, by the hands of wicked men, who were doing all in their power to prevent its spread. Now, brethren in the ministry, is that Arminianism? If it is, then I am deceived in my mission, and can only say, If the light that is in me be darkness, how great is that darkness. This is what I call bearing witness to the truth, leaving the office work of the Spirit with God; for known unto him are all his works from the foundation of the world. I trust I have learned by sad experience, a little over twenty-eight years since, to have no confidence in the flesh, and that sinners are saved by the grace of God. Like the apostle, that which I thought was unto life I found to be unto death. And my understanding is that all men in a state of nature are dead in trespasses and in sins, and there is no power which can give life but the power which belongs to God. All in a state of nature are dead to spiritual things, and cannot be benefited by the preaching of the gospel until life is imparted, and then they come under the law which is a schoolmaster to Christ. On arriving at the end of it, they die to that legal hope which consists of works, and are made alive unto righteousness. Thus it is we see what Paul meant by saying, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." A man must have life before he can be killed. It has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe; to save them from false ways and doctrines which are prevalent in our land. Now says the apostle, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them which are lost." Arminians in this part of the country do not preach it in this way, but claim that men have a portion of this work to do; that men must begin the work, or it never will be done. Consequently they invent plans by which to accomplish this work, such as Sunday Schools and many other idols, to train the children from infancy to hate the doctrine which Christ and his apostles preached. Clergymen teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and like Baa's prophets they cry from morning until evening for their god to hear and answer them. But at the same time they complain of the emptiness of the Lord's treasury, and ask the world to help replenish it. Why do they ask the Lord to help them, and at the same time deny his power and ability to do so? I answer, Because a stream cannot rise above its fountain head. With all the ingenuity they possess, they cannot get above that earthly Adam. They are of the world, and the world loves its own.

Dear brethren and sisters, I have

written under a deep conviction to do so, and at the same time with great fear that it will not be edifying to the saints should it be allowed space in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

As ever, yours to serve in gospel bonds,

P. M. WRIGHT.

"GO HOME to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."—Mark v. 19.

This was the language of our Savior, spoken to the man out of whom he had cast the legion; and I conclude it is as much a command to the individual to-day, out of whom the Lord has cast the unclean spirit, as it was to the man possessed of the legion. But how often do we see the man or woman whom the Lord hath had so great compassion upon, disobeying the command of the Master. I am well convinced that when any of God's dear children have been made to cry, "Abba, Father," and have been enabled to sit at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right mind, when their duty is made known to them, if they would obey the command of Jesus, and go to their friends (the church), and discharge their duty by telling them what great things the Lord has done for them, they would be delivered from many temptations which are sure to follow disobedience. "O!" says one, "my hope is so small that I want a brighter evidence that God has, for his dear Son's sake, pardoned all my sins." Let me tell you, dear soul (and I speak from my own experience, as well as many others), that when you first saw yourself a sinner, standing, as it were, in the presence of the just and holy God, who cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, you began to cry, "Have mercy upon me; thou Son of David." "God have mercy on me; save, or I perish." It seemed that your pleadings were all in vain. The heavens above seemed sealed as with a sheet of brass, and your prayers fell to the ground at your feet. After, perhaps, many days and nights of trouble and distress of soul, you were ready to yield up all in utter despair, when it pleased God to speak peace to your troubled soul. You were then enabled to rejoice with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. Hope sprang up within you, that God had for his beloved Son's sake pardoned all your sins. You then felt a desire to go home to your friends and tell them how great things the Lord had done for you. It seemed that you could not wait until the next church meeting, your desire was so great to tell them that when you were about to give up all in despair, God had so great compassion upon you, and had pardoned your many sins. But before this opportunity is offered, the tempter comes along, and whispers in your ear, "You are deceived; these are your own vain and foolish imaginations; and if you go and tell those good people these things, you will deceive them." You feel that you

would rather sink down to perdition than deceive those whom you look upon as true christians and true worshipers of God. So you have agreed with the adversary by the time the church meets, and when an opportunity is offered you to tell how great things the Lord has done for you, you begin to make excuses within yourself, and fail to go forward and do your duty as the Master has commanded you. The enemy of all righteousness, who is ever seeking to mar the peace and joy of the saints here on earth, has to some extent gained the mastery over you. With downcast head you go to your earthly abode, weeping and lamenting, and you at last agree with the adversary that you have been deceived. But you cease not to pray, and your every desire of heart is that God will be merciful to you, and if you are deceived that you may not deceive God's people. You continue thus to mourn and lament through doubts and fears, perhaps, for many days, months, and even years, with now and then a ray of sunlight shining within, which causes a short season of joy and rejoicing. Hoping against hope for a brighter evidence of your forgiveness, and to know what is your duty among the saints and toward God, when you have exhausted all your wisdom and strength, and have been reduced to such poverty that, like the prodigal, you fain would be filled with the husks the swine do eat, you are made willing to obey the command of Jesus, and go home to your friends with the same little hope, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for you. During all these long and dreary days and nights of mourning, doubts and fears, since Jesus first showed himself to you as the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely, you would not give that hope, small as it seemed, for ten thousand worlds like this in which we live. I know by sad experience what it is to be found walking in disobedience, for often during the past twenty years have I had to stoop and kiss the chastening rod. Not only have I passed through many trials and afflictions in body, but in mind also. I feel to admonish one and all to go forward in each and every duty God has enjoined upon them, and in so doing you will have a peace of mind that the world cannot give nor take away.

Yours in tribulation,

J. H. YEOMAN.

SILVER CLIFF, Colo., Feb. 10, 1886.

SCIO, Oregon, March 26, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE—DEARLY BELOVED:—I received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES last evening for March 15, and in looking over my article on regeneration I discover a most egregious typographical error on page 62, near the bottom of the page. There you make me to say, "There is a time for every child of Adam from that day to this to be quickened into temporal life; so in like manner every child of the first Adam was given in covenant to the second or

last Adam as his inheritance. There is a time, a set time, too, when each individual one has been, and shall be quickened into spiritual and eternal life. Said Christ, 'I give unto them eternal life, &c.'" Now, my dear brethren, I would not for the world that such an error should have been committed. I have been called a Parkerite Two-Seeder by several brethren, which is a system I detest. Now here you make me to have said that all the children of the first Adam were given to the last Adam in covenant as his inheritance, and there is a time, a set time, too, when each individual one has been and shall be quickened into spiritual and eternal life, &c. Now this is just what Elder Daniel Parker in his "Three Doses" contended for; that the non-elect were not the children of the first Adam, and that God had no hand, either directly or indirectly, in the formation of the non-elect, but that they were the literal children of the devil—a doctrine that I detest. But this pernicious error being circulated through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will confirm the readers of the SIGNS that sure enough he is a Parkerite Two-Seeder; while others, perhaps, will conclude that I am a Universalist; just according to the construction the reader may put upon the language. If it had been an error of any other form I could bear it better. Now if you examine my manuscript, I think you will find that my language conveyed no such idea. After writing my communication I read it over twice, carefully correcting all mistakes, and if there had been such a gross mistake I most assuredly would have detected it. I do not know that my memory is sufficient to quote the words verbatim that I used, but I know what idea I intended to convey. This is what I intended writing, and what in substance I did write: "Now I will say that there is an appointed time when each and every child of the first Adam, from that day to the end of time, shall be quickened into temporal or natural life; even so, in like manner, there is also an appointed time when every child of the first Adam that was given in covenant to the second or last Adam as his inheritance, shall be quickened into spiritual and eternal life."

As ever yours,

JOHN STIPP.

MCCOYSVILLE, Pa., Feb. 9, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find the amount of my subscription for our dear family paper. What excellent letters it contains. I thought the last number was most excellent. Words would fail me to tell you how much I enjoyed the dear sister Parker's letter. Her mind is carried above her terrible sufferings, to contemplate with ecstatic delight the joy of that glorious rest to which she is hastening. And dear brother Durand's most excellent letter of sympathy to the mourners in Zion, and Elder Purington's letter, were very excellent; also the editorial. In-

deed the whole number was very good, and I do hope the paper will be sustained. I think that I first subscribed for it in 1855, and have taken it ever since. I can remember the SIGNS OF THE TIMES almost from its first publication, my parents being subscribers from the first, and I can remember dear Elder Beebe, the late editor, when he was comparatively a young man. I heard him preach at Rock Springs, Pa., soon after the split had taken place among the Baptists, and he was then publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It would be a great grief to me, as well as thousands of others, if our dear, familiar paper would have to stop for want of patronage.

In christian love, your sister,

S. A. HARLAN.

MILLTOWN, N. J., March 31, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In consequence of the illness of Deacon Peterson, and also deaths that have occurred recently in our small number, we question our ability to care for the association (Delaware River). We have conferred with the church at Hopewell, through Elder Purington, and he informs us that they have unanimously agreed to entertain the association, and that in due time they will forward to the SIGNS for publication directions for those who contemplate attending the meeting.

WILSON HOUSEL.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., Feb. 23, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—On last Saturday I visited our venerable brother, Elder Thomas P. Dudley. I found him remarkably well and very cheerful. His mind is yet filled with an abiding interest for the peace and welfare of Zion, and ready to speak words of comfort, with admonitions of good counsel and advice. His interest in the prosperity of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is without abatement. He gave me two dollars to renew his subscription, requesting me to say to you that he took the first issue of the paper, and has taken it ever since.

As ever, your brother,

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 31, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In my article published in the SIGNS for April 1, on page 76, near the bottom of the first column, there is an omission of this portion of Scripture, "All we like sheep have gone astray, * * * and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isa. liii. 6. To this I have reference when I say farther down the column, "And in the first quotation they are spoken of as such before they fell in Adam."

Affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

DEATH OF ELDER A. ST. JOHN.

JUST as we go to press, we are informed by telegram of the death of Elder A. St. John, which occurred at his home in Watkins, Schuyler Co., N. Y., on Sunday, April 4th.—Ed.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1886.

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

SIN UNTO DEATH.

"WILL the editor please give his views on 1 John v. 16, particularly the last clause? Your sister in christian fellowship,
M. E. C."

R E P L Y .

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."—1 John v. 16.

In the examination of any portion of the inspired record, it is essentially important to remember that the whole testimony of the Scripture is borne by only one Spirit, who is the faithful and the true Witness; therefore our understanding of any text must be erroneous if it conflicts with any other portion of that word. There are expressions in the Bible which may be distorted by misapplying them, so that they will appear to conflict with other inspired expressions; but whenever this is the case it is certain that our understanding is at fault in reference to one or both the passages. The definitions of words as given in the dictionaries of worldly wisdom are not always consistent with inspired definitions, and in such cases confusion is likely to result in the understanding of those passages when such words are used. To avoid this difficulty it is well always to give heed to the context and to the whole record which refers to the subject, in order to see just what is the literal meaning of every inspired expression.

In the immediate connection of the verse under consideration the apostle refers to the record "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."—Verse 12. From this it is evident that those to whom this epistle was written can never perish, for none can have eternal life but those whom our Lord Jesus claims as his sheep, of whom he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—John x. 27, 28. This eternal life can be given by none other but the Lord Jesus alone, who addressing the Father says, "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."—John xvii. 2, 3. They who have received this gift of eternal life cannot by any possible word or action lose that life, for it is hid with Christ in God; and that life is Christ in you, the hope of glory.—See Col. i. 27; iii. 3, 4. From the passages cited, it is evident that they to whom the Lord Jesus has given eternal life, cannot "sin unto

death" in the sense of forfeiting that life. Yet it is also manifest that the context definitely describes these living saints as the only people to whom the whole epistle is written, and to them exclusively this language can apply. While the eternal life of every one of the subjects of salvation is just as secure as is the life of their exalted Lord, and they can no more lose that life than they can destroy the God who gave it, yet there is a sense in which they die in living after the flesh. It was to those whom he designates as the "beloved of God, called to be saints," that Paul wrote, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die."—Rom. viii. 13. In the immediate connection of this truth, Paul gives the scriptural meaning of death and life as applied to the experience of the saints, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."—Rom. viii. 6. In the strict letter of this text, it should read, "For the *minding of the flesh* is death," &c. This shows that there is a death experienced by the saints in walking after the flesh; and this death cannot be experienced by any others except such as are called to be saints, who are in Christ Jesus. They live in "the answer of a good conscience toward God" in obedience to the law of their Redeemer; they die in disobedience to him. This was typified in the legal dispensation where Moses enjoined obedience on the natural Israelites, saying, "For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it."—Deut. xxxii. 47. The observance of that law by the heathen, even if they could have rendered obedience to it, would not have constituted in them any relationship to Israel, nor could they become Jews by any efforts of their own; so nothing which the natural man can do will ever make him a living child of God. By disobedience to the law which was given to them, the Israelites brought upon themselves the penalty of death; yet even in their most presumptuous sin they were still Israelites, though they died. No depth of guilt could change their relationship to Abraham. So, in the case of the spiritual Israelite, nothing can separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. The death to which our text refers then, is not a final separation from the Lord of life, but it must be the necessary consequence of the transgression of the law of Christ. As in obedience to that law the saints enjoy the answer of a good conscience toward God, which is life to them; so in disobedience to that law they die to the present comfort of that life which is given unto them. In this experimental sense, while "All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death;" the only sin which can attach to the saints is the transgression of the law of Christ; for they are under no other law. They cannot sin

against that law from which they have been delivered by the atonement of their Redeemer. So Paul says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."—Gal. iii. 13, 14. The effect of this glorious redemption is to release them who are bound to the service of sin, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."—Rom. vi. 14. This freedom from the dominion of sin results to the saints from their deliverance from that law whose penalty is hopeless death. And this deliverance is alone through the redeeming blood of Jesus, which cleanses them from all sin.—1 John i. 7. These redeemed ones "have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."—Gal. v. 13. This admonition bears the seal of divine authority, and those who love the Lord Jesus feel its force, as it speaks exclusively to them. To such as love sin and trust in their own works for righteousness, this assurance of liberty appears to give license to continue in sin: but to the saints who are redeemed from the bondage of sin, this truth appeals with heavenly power, calling for unceasing devotion and thanksgiving to their gracious Deliverer. None can be his people except such as love righteousness and hate iniquity, for the Spirit of Christ leads every one of them by the same way in which their Lord has gone. They are neither hired by the reward of heavenly glory, nor driven by the fear of punishment to keep the commandments of the King in Zion. His love is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them; hence they are willing and desirous to follow in the way of obedience to his law. They "hunger and thirst after righteousness," and all such characters are willing in the day of the power of Jesus Christ.—Matt. v. 6; Psa. cx. 3. Such only are they to whom the instruction in our text is addressed. It can apply to no others.

In the law of love, which is the essential element of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus, the saints are required only to work out that which God worketh in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—Phil. ii. 13. In doing this they are called to deny self and crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. That divine love being the fruit of the Spirit which dwells in the saints, is the characteristic principle by which the law of Christ is fulfilled. The whole body of our Redeemer is so vitally one that no member can suffer without affecting all the members.—1 Cor. xii. 26. And this law of the Lord is put in their inward parts and written in the hearts of his people,

according to the promise in the new covenant.—Jer. xxxi. 33. This unity of the Spirit is the tie by which the saints are all identified as brethren, being born of the same parentage; for Jerusalem is the mother of us all, and the one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the Father of all them who are born of incorruptible seed by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.—Gal. iv. 26; 1 Peter i. 23. These brethren have need of the guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead them in the right way during their pilgrimage here in time, and that guidance is given in the individual experience of each of them, as well as in the perfect instruction in the law of our King as written by inspiration. It is by the concurrent testimony of the written word and of the Spirit within them that they have the assurance that they are led by the Spirit of God, and therefore they are the sons of God. This is the tie of brotherhood by which they are united in one hope of their calling, in the same "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. iv. 5, 6.

Now, to these brethren the direction in our text is exclusively addressed, and it can apply to no others. They cannot sin by transgressing a law from which they have been made free; nor can they incur that death which is the penalty of such sin. But there is a death experienced by the saints in following their carnal mind, which is a "fearful thing" to them.—Rom. viii. 23; Heb. x. 31. To them it is death to be cut off from the fellowship of the church, and to feel themselves justly denied the privilege of walking in the ordinances of the house of God with those in whom they see the image of Christ. To one who has no love for the truth of God, there is nothing fearful in being shut out from the privileges of the church. Such characters are not at home in the church, for they feel it is a restraint upon them. Exclusion from the nominal fellowship of the saints but releases them from bondage; but to them who love the Lord, there is nothing so fearful as to be justly cast into that "outer darkness" where there is no company but such as hate the truth. To them it is death to lose the fellowship of the church. When a brother has by his transgression of the law of Christ sinned himself out of the fellowship of the church, his sin is unto death. Nothing but exclusion from the visible organization of the church can satisfy that law, and there can be no real prayer for such transgression, since the Spirit of God cannot indite a prayer in opposition to that law which has been given by that same Spirit. Hence the specific declaration, "There is a sin unto death. I do not say he shall pray for it." This will accord with the experience of the saints who have known such transgression. While they may have felt sympathy and

personal regard prompting them to desire that the transgressor might be still in the church, they have found no prayer indited in their hearts for that life to be given him. There is such a thing as asking in the form of prayer, and all such asking is vain; for God is worshiped only in spirit, so he answers only such prayer as his Spirit indites. As faith is the fruit of the Spirit, it can never originate a prayer for that which that Spirit forbids, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."—Rom. xiv. 23. The prayer which is of faith is always heard and answered, because it must be in harmony with the will of God. So the text declares the fact that "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, *he shall ask.*" This is a positive assertion rather than an injunction. The fact that this petition is written in the heart of the saint in any case is evidence that the sin is "not unto death;" for if there is no love for the offender there can be no true asking for his life or preservation in the fellowship of the church. In such a case the sin is unto death, and the direction in the text expressly disavows that "he shall pray for it." In every case of sin on the part of them who profess to hope in Christ Jesus for salvation, the saints must judge whether the sin is unto death; and their judgment is determined by the test stated in our text. If the saints can ask in faith that the sinner may still live in their fellowship, that asking proves the sin to be "not unto death," and the prayer is of faith, and saves the transgressor in the love and fellowship of the one in whom that prayer is indited by the Holy Ghost.

Nothing written by inspiration can be of any value to us except as it is opened to our understanding by the Comforter, who takes of the things of Jesus and shows it unto his saints. In vain may we seek to find the precious gold of divine truth, even by searching the sacred Scriptures, unless we are led by the same Spirit which inspired the holy men by whom they were written. This truth is received by none but those who are taught it of God, and all such when guided by the Spirit see in the Scriptures the one testimony of Jesus, the perfect and only Savior of sinners. In his law they see the complete guide to direct their feet through all their earthly pilgrimage, and that law is written in their hearts, so that they love its every precept; and every act of obedience becomes their highest privilege. The prayer of faith for the life of a sinning brother, especially if the matter is confined to himself and the one brother seeing the sin, is one of the highest privileges which the saints can enjoy while here on earth. If the sin be a personal injury, the prayer for the life of the sinner can only arise from that same Spirit which spoke in the expiring breath of our great Redeemer, "Father, forgive them; for

they know not what they do." Nature can never rise so high as to inspire that prayer. It can arise only from the Spirit of Christ in them who feel its heavenly power inspiring love to enemies.

That "there is a sin not unto death," as stated in the verse following our text, clearly shows that the text does not refer to that sin which is against the law given to Adam, or that which came by Moses; for there was no sin under those laws but that involved the penalty of death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," is the awful sentence which clothes with the blackness of utter despair all that legal heaven. But in the new heaven of gospel liberty it is provided that there is sin which is not unto death; for Peter says to the Jews, "For God our Father raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts v. 30, 31. So, the same truth which is expressed in our text is written in other words by another apostle, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—James v. 19, 20.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

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

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

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

"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 24, 1886, by Elder Benton Jenkins, at the residence of the bride's grandmother, Mrs. Mary Uptegrove, New Vernon, N. Y., Mr. S. Lewis Wilkison, of Middletown, N. Y., and Miss Belle Tuthill, daughter of Mr. Oliver Tuthill.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request of the bereaved husband I write for publication a notice of the death of his wife, **Louisa Twist**, at their residence in Marshall Co., Ill., Jan. 21, 1886. Sister Twist was the youngest daughter of William and Sarah Palmer; was born in the state of Indiana, Feb. 11, 1844, moved with her parents to Illinois in 1856, was married to Mr. W. W. Twist March 9, 1866, united with the church at this place in June, 1876. She has always been a consistent and orderly member, filling her place and seat whenever it was possible to do so. Having clear views of salvation by grace alone, she had no compromise to make with error, and was never afraid to speak her mind or contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Being kind-hearted, as a neighbor she was esteemed by all who knew her, out of the church as well as in it. The little church here will miss her, as she was one of the few who attended very regularly and was always ready to bear her full share of burdens. Her ample home was a good stopping place for brethren and sisters when visiting us, and a good place of entertainment during our associations, as many can witness. During the last few years sister Twist, with her husband, has spent considerable time from home in traveling, having spent two winters in Florida, and once took a trip east, attending some of the associations, as no doubt some of the brethren and sisters will remember. She is gone from the shores of time, and we can truly say that we sorrow not as others without hope, for precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. The stroke falls heavily on friend Twist. As they had no family, he is left alone and feels his loss severely. We pray the Lord will sustain him and all the bereaved relations and friends, for his great name's sake.

A short discourse was delivered by the writer, using as a text, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."—Job xix. 25.

JOHN DOWNEY.

VARNA, Illinois.

WITH a sorrowful heart I attempt to write the obituary of **John W. Allison**, son of J. P. and Mary Allison, aged twenty-seven years and eight months. He fell asleep in Jesus at ten minutes before ten o'clock in the evening of February 24, 1886. His disease was consumption, which he bore with marked christian patience. He was not a member of any church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will give his own testimony in his own words. A while before the breath left his body, realizing that his end was near, he called us to his bedside and said to us, "Do not grieve after me, but rejoice; for truly I can rejoice, for the old man is put off. Here is where the change comes. We put off the old man and put on the new man. I am now like a little child, and Jesus told me that of such is the kingdom of heaven. O do not doubt christianity; it is a beautiful reality. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Bless his holy name, he does and will take care of his children. He told me to tell you, before I passed away, of my hope in his dear name. No man knows himself until he is quickened by the Spirit. Then it is he can see that he is nothing, and worse than nothing. But I am now happy, for Jesus has borne my sins upon the cross. I wish I could explain, but I cannot talk." Here his voice failed, but he revived again, and said, "Father, do not grieve. I am happy. I suffer no pain. No one ever had better parents than you are to me. Do not fear to preach the doctrine you have ever contended for. There is no other possible plan that will save poor sinners; the only plan of salvation." He had his wife to read the first chapter of John, and said many other things relative to his departing and being with Jesus, and of how light it was

when Jesus was with him. He also made arrangements relative to his funeral, and passed away without a struggle. O what a great consolation this is to us who are left to mourn his departure. But we truly can say that we mourn not as those who have no hope. He was a very affectionate son, very dutiful, always trying to please and gratify his parents. May the good Lord sanctify this to our good and to his own glory, is my humble petition.

ALSO,

DIED—November 9, 1885, **Mary Myrtle Allison**, daughter of J. W. and Lottie Allison, aged one year, four months and nine days.

J. P. ALLISON.

PINE, Lind Co., Oregon.

FEBRUARY 26, 1886, at the family residence in Sugar Loaf, Orange Co., N. Y., with pulmonary consumption, **Miss Elizabeth Knapp** fell asleep in the full assurance of living faith in Christ Jesus. The intensity of her suffering abated some weeks before she was taken away, and she was enabled to bear witness to the truth of her Redeemer's promise, that he will come again and receive unto himself his ransomed ones, that where he is they may be also. The calm trust in which she waited for the word of her Lord to call her to her eternal rest, gave unquestionable testimony to the fact that she was supported by that power of God which keeps all his saints, and left no doubt in them who witnessed her last day that she left the troubles of earth for the fullness of joy in the immediate presence of the Lord.

Sister Knapp was born May 15, 1814, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Warwick by the late Elder P. Hartwell, July 20, 1845, in company with three others, and was by divine grace enabled to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior by walking in the Spirit and crucifying the flesh, until called to her ever-lasting rest. Her only surviving sister and many mourning relatives could desire no clearer evidence that their loss is infinite gain to our dear sister.

A large assemblage of sympathizing friends attended her funeral at her late home on March 1, when Elder W. L. Beebe spoke from 1 Thess. iv. 18, after which the body was committed to the grave in the cemetery near the village, where many of the family had been laid to rest before her. May the Lord bless this dispensation of his providence to the good of all concerned, and to his name be glory evermore. Amen. B.

Elder Chester Schoonover died at his home in Ferrytown, Sept. 24, 1885, aged seventy years and six months. He was born in Broome County, N. Y., and came to Ferrytown when about sixteen years old. He was married twice, and left a wife and two children. He experienced a hope in Christ and was baptized by the late Elder Henry Rowland, May 12, 1844. He was ordained Dec. 1, 1860, to the work of the ministry. He was sick several months, and was partially deranged, but got better, and was taken down with pneumonia and died quite suddenly. Elder Marvin Vail preached a very interesting sermon at his funeral.

ALSO,

Mrs. Aurilla Robbins, brother Schoonover's sister in the flesh, died Sept. 25, 1885. She was born in Broome County, N. Y. Her age was sixty-eight years, two months and six days. She was baptized Oct. 10, 1863, by her brother, in the fellowship of the Asylum Church. She was married twice, and left a family of seven children. She did not live near the church. One of her daughters wrote me that she was sick about four years with heart disease, but was so that she kept about the most of the time until last summer; then she kept her bed about half the time. She died in peace with her Savior. She was steadfast and unmovable in the faith till the last. Elder Marvin Vail attended her funeral.

ABBIE DODGE.

WYALUSING, Pa.

BROTHER **John Swain** died a few years ago, but his obituary has never been published; and as his wife or widow died a short time

ago, the family desires that they both be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Brother Swain was born in Fleming County, Kentucky, Dec. 11, 1811, came to Indiana in 1832, married Matilda Darnali that spring, went back to Kentucky and staid two years, then moved to Hendricks County, and lived there the rest of his life. He joined the Baptist Church by experience on the first Sunday in June, 1844, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Hogan. He died April 23, 1871, aged fifty-nine years, four months and one day. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of predestination, with all of the kindred doctrines of the Old School Baptists. He was a constant church member from the time he joined the church until his death.

ALSO,

SISTER **Matilda Swain**, widow of brother John Swain, and daughter of Elder Henry and Sarah Darnall, and sister of Elder Wm. H. Darnall, of Indiana, was born April 2, 1810, and died Feb. 11, 1886, aged seventy-five years, eleven months and nineteen days. She joined the Baptist Church by relating her experience of grace, on the first Sunday in October, 1843, and was baptized on the first Sunday in January, 1844. She lived an exemplary christian life and was much devoted to the cause of her Redeemer. She was one of the best scriptorians in our part of the country, and always ready to defend the Baptist cause with Bible testimony. She was highly esteemed by all that knew her. She was always faithful in filling her seat in the church unless providentially hindered. She had been a sufferer with that dreadful disease called hereditary consumption, and at times suffered terribly; but in her most severe suffering she seemed to be cheerful and was always ready to converse on the goodness of God and how merciful he had been to her. In her last sickness she said she did not want any of us to grieve, but for us to rejoice. She appeared to see her way clear, and was perfectly willing to go and be with her lovely and loving Savior. The day before she died she called us all to her bed and bid us all farewell, saying she hoped to meet us on the other shore. She leaves one brother, Elder Wm. H. Darnall, one son and one daughter, and several grandchildren, with many friends and the church, to mourn our loss; but it is her eternal gain. We do not mourn as those who have no hope.

Your brother in tribulation and in hope of eternal life.

WM. H. DARNALL.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind.

DIED—**Mary McClain**, February 25, 1886, aged eighty-five years, eleven months and one day. Her maiden name was Rush. She was married to Elder Jessie McClain February 13, 1818, he having preceded her to the better world several years. He died July 30, 1874, aged seventy-six years, one month and twenty-six days. Mother McClain was truly a christian woman. She felt that she had a hope in Christ since early life, but had always felt her unworthiness to such a degree that she had never united with the church. Her faith was that of the Old School Baptists. She loved the church as her people, and many have partaken of her hospitality and gone away refreshed in the inner as well as the outer man. Her life was one of extraordinary gentleness, industry and amiability. She was a valuable and trustworthy friend, and in her earlier life, while she was blessed with health and strength, she was faithful and unwearied in her ministrations to the sick and afflicted. This venerable mother was greatly afflicted, and for many years was deprived of sight; but she humbly bowed to the dispensations of providence with cheerful resignation; and now, though her natural eyes are closed in death, her immortal vision has burst forth, and she can see God as he is seen, and know him as he is known. She afforded her children and friends during her life, and especially her last weeks of affliction, comforting evidences of her assured interest in the Redeemer's blood. She often expressed her strong and trusting faith in Jesus, and her love for him, and her prayer was that she might depart and be with him. She spent much time in quoting Scripture. God in his mercy gave her triumphant faith to meet death rejoicing,

and enabled her to say, "We are more than conquerors through him that hath loved us." May her children not look to the grave, where the earthly bodies of this dear father and mother are awaiting the resurrection, but may they with the eye of faith look beyond, to the green pastures and still waters of the promised land, where the spirits of our loved ones, redeemed and glorified by the blood of our Savior, now bask in God's eternal love.

Cease, ye mourners, cease to languish
O'er the graves of those you love;
Pain, and death, and night, and anguish,
Enter not the world above.

Endless pleasure, pain excluding,
Sickness there no more can come;
There no fear of woe intruding,
Sheds o'er heaven a moment's gloom.

MARTHA ANDERSON.

ROCKVILLE, Indiana, March 28, 1886.

EVER and anon the angel of death writes "Finis," and sets his seal upon some loved one; and in heartfelt grief and sympathy for those recently bereaved, this tribute is dedicated to the memory of **Laura May Blanks**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Blanks, who died January 16, 1886, aged eighteen years and ten days. Death is sad at all times, but saddest when in life's springtime we see its withering hand stretched forth, grasping in its rigid folds the span of life, ere it has reached its first score of years. The fifth of January was the eighteenth anniversary of May's birth. Ten more days passed, and the silent messenger came, making her birth and death a joint anniversary. Life began and life finished the same month. Though so young, death had no terror to her, and during her last illness she seemed to have a presentiment of its near approach, and expressed to her friends a willingness to die. To the bereaved father and mother we can only extend true and sincere sympathy, knowing that only time and their submissive christian fortitude can heal the sorrow. The stricken hearts that have before submitted to the mandates of God's will, can again bow to the decree, and fervently repeat, "Thy will be done."

"Only a little while to wait,
Ere life's dull day is o'er;
Its sands are ebbing, and your eyes
Will soon discern the shore

Of the 'beautiful island' by the Jasper sea,
Where the sunlight never dims;
Where the lovely vales of fadeless flowers
Re-echo seraphic hymns.

Up there, in the home of the good and true,
With the loved that have gone before,
Thou'lt meet thy heavenly garnered flower,
And live to part no more."

A FRIEND.

FEBRUARY 21, 1886.

DIED—At his home in Fairfield County, Ohio, near Reynoldsburg, March 18, 1886, **James C. Pickering**. He was born in Buckingham County, Virginia, April 27, 1812. His age was seventy-three years, ten months and twenty-one days. He moved with his parents to Ohio in 1819, where he has lived ever since. He was united in marriage with Catharine Smith, Dec. 3, 1835, by which union there were nine children born (six sons and three daughters), all of whom are yet living; also twenty-three grandchildren were born to him, of which number seven are dead. Catharine, his first wife, died May 8, 1872. September 7, 1873, he married Nancy Cook, who departed this life March 16, 1876, after which he married Nancy Spiliter, July 27, 1876. He united with the "United Brethren" in 1874, and remained with them two years. In 1877 he united with the Baptist Church at Reynoldsburg, in which faith he lived until his death. Our brother was one of exceeding good moral character, spoken of in the highest terms of praise by his neighbors. The writer of this brief notice visited him in his last sickness. He talked freely, and although he realized that his time was short here, he was cheerful. His entire trust was in the Lord. He spoke of his death and burial without the least discoverable emotion, and we were told that he often during the time of his sick-

ness, longed for the time of his departure. Death had no sting to him, and the grave no terror. He manifested his christian character by his walk. As long as he was able to go, he was faithful in his relations to the church. When the time came for the meeting of the church, he filled his place unless hindered in providence. He leaves our sister, his widowed companion, together with his children, the church and many friends and neighbors to mourn their loss. May the Lord be with the bereaved sister in her afflictions, as also the children, and resign us all to his holy will.

The funeral was largely attended, and the occasion was one of deep solemnity. The writer of this addressed the congregation from 2 Peter i. 3-5.

E. BARKER.

DIED—At the residence of her son-in-law, in Goshen, Orange Co., N. Y., on Sunday evening, March 28, 1886, sister **Amanda Smith**, relict of Melancton Smith, and daughter of Deacon Charles Harding, deceased, in the seventy-fifth year of her age. Her disease was congestion of the lungs.

Sister Smith was a worthy member of the Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, and was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe many years ago. She is survived by three children, one brother (James N. Harding, of Waverly, N. Y.), with a large circle of relatives and the church, to mourn her departure, but with the assurance for her to die was gain.

The funeral was attended at New Vernon on the 31st, when a discourse was preached by Elder Benton Jenkins, from Psalm lxxiii. 24, after which her mortal remains were buried by the side of those of her husband, in the cemetery of the New Vernon Church.

"O happy soul, who safely passed
Thy weary warfare here;
Arrived at Jesus' feet at last,
And ended all thy care."

DIED—At his residence, near Otisville, N. Y., about one o'clock a. m., March 26, 1886, **Thomas Rice Palmer**, in the seventy-seventh year of his age.

Mr. Palmer was born in Winterton, Sullivan Co., N. Y., and when about eighteen years old removed with his parents to the farm where he died, and where he had lived for nearly sixty years. He was married to Abigail Beyea, by whom he had two children, all of whom preceded him to the grave. In 1848 he was married to Caroline Comfort, daughter of the late Robert Comfort, and sister of Mr. John H. Comfort, of Middletown, N. Y.

Mr. Palmer followed farming all his life, and of late years was engaged in the insurance business in connection with his occupation as a farmer, and was esteemed as an honest, upright man, and had a host of friends.

His funeral took place on Sunday, the 28th, at New Vernon, and a discourse was preached on the occasion by Elder Benton Jenkins, from Job xvii. 15.

May the Lord comfort the widow, who is left to mourn the departure of the husband of her youth and riper years.

"My times of sorrow and of joy,
Great God, are in thy hand;
My choicest comforts come from thee,
And go at thy command."

In compliance with the request of the bereaved family, I forward you the obituary of sister **Mary Rostrander**, who departed this life November 20, 1885, aged sixty-eight years and eleven days. Sister Mary was a strong believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and earnestly contended for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. She was deep in experience, rich in love, faith and good works. Salvation by grace was her heart's delight, and that which she was made to rejoice in. She remarked, "O that holy doctrine of God my Savior, which saves my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. This precious truth as it is in Jesus is all that makes me free; and I am not ashamed of this blessed gospel, for only in him is my hope. Sister Mary was a great sufferer for

eight years, and was unable to attend the meetings regularly. But when her strength would admit she always filled her place at the meeting; and when hearing the preaching of the gospel and seeing God's wisdom, power, truth and grace displayed in the salvation of poor sinners, she would exclaim, "O this heavenly music, this sweet doctrine, is my meat and my drink. It gives me everlasting consolation and good hope through grace." The sweet peace and joy that filled her mind when she first experienced her espousal to Jesus, was wonderful indeed. It was the time of love to her, and she felt to be delivered from the burden of sin and the condemnation of the law. Like Jacob of old, named Israel, the law could not find her any more, in her betrothal in righteousness to her dear Savior. One week before she died, Elder Durand preached here, and she told sister Mary Campbell that she thought she never would have the sweet joy and peace that she had when she first believed. But while the Elder was preaching and speaking of the experience of the Lord's people, it came with such power to her mind that she was filled to overflowing with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. This sweet peace of mind remained with her until she fell asleep in Jesus. How sweet it is to experience that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Our dear sister was loved by all who knew her, and she leaves a host of friends, children and grandchildren to mourn their loss. Yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope. May reconciling grace be given to enable us to bow in humble submission to God's most holy will.

Elder St. John preached on the occasion, from 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56.

RHODA MILLER.

CAMMAL, Lyeoming Co., Pa.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in the city of Baltimore, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (19th), 1886, and continue three days.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May (26th), 1886, and continue the two following days.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (2d), 1886, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (9th), 1886, and continue three days.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (16th), 1886, and continue three days.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

THIS work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired. Money should be sent by post-office order,

by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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 1886, 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.

Any person who is not now a subscriber, by sending his remittance in addition to the new ones he sends, can have the same advantage of these rates; but his own subscription must not be counted as one of the new subscribers.

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.

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.

INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBSCRIBERS.

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.

RULES FOR ORDERING.

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.

AGENTS

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"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1886.

NO. 9.

POETRY.

WINTER.

'Tis winter in my soul; my sins
Like clouds o'erspread the sky;
While wailing winds and dreary rains
To me all joys deny.

My heart lies hopeless of relief,
And filled with deep alarm,
Like the cold earth, benumbed with grief,
Under the pelting storm.

I try to look to God, but sin
Forbids to lift my eyes;
My cries and prayers are all in vain,
Guilt will not let them rise.

O weary winter of the soul,
How sad and full of gloom!
The heavy hours, how slow they roll,
While griefs my heart consume.

And must I thus fore'er remain?
Will the sun shine no more?
May I not hope that yet again
His beams will warmth restore?

Turn my captivity, O Lord!
Once more to thee I call;
And let thy sweet forgiving word
Make summer in my soul.

Then shall the streams of joyful praise,
Loosed by thy gracious hand,
To thy bless'd name flow all my days,
In my heart's southern land.

SPRING.

WHILE winter's gloom was still o'erspread,
And on my spirit lay,
The voice of my Beloved said,
Rise up and come away.
For lo, the winter's past, the rain
Is over now and gone;
The flowers appear, and songs again
Of praises are begun.

The power and sweetness of that voice
Wrought wondrous change in me;
Made my poor, drooping heart rejoice,
And fears and sorrows flee.
In sweet amazement I came forth;
What wonders met my eyes!
Spring's glorious beauty on the earth,
Her radiance in the skies.

Grace fills the garden of the Lord
With blooming joys from heaven;
The warm south wind is in that word
Which shows my sins forgiven.
'Tis this makes winter clouds depart,
And gives me brighter days;
The sweet spring time is in my heart,
And I am filled with praise.

What heavenly rest from cold and pain
In these soft airs that come
With blessed thoughts of Jesus' name,
And breathing rich perfume.
Thanks that the weary days are o'er;
Thanks for spring's gentle sway;
Thanks for the love that says with power,
Rise up and come away.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., April 2, 1886.

ACROSTIC.

ALMIGHTY God, at thy right hand
Let me forever rest;
May I enjoy that happy land,
Eternal with thy bless'd.
Lord, may thy grace abide with me;
Teach me thy name to adore;
O may my spirit dwell with thee,
Now and forevermore.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STATE ROAD, N. C., Feb. 28, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I again take courage to try in my very imperfect manner to write a few more of the many trials and comforts of my soul in this time life. After I had been so marvelously blessed, as described in the closing lines of my last letter, I thought I would go and preach; for those divine revelations which were so constantly brought to my mind seemed very precious to me at this time, and I thought I surely could not forbear to go and speak of these things, and tell the people of Christ and his kingdom, as he had so beautifully revealed himself to me; for he taught me his holy word in spirituality. So I set out one Sunday to go to a meeting house where I had never been before, and as I traveled the strange road I wondered within myself, Am I right or not? for I had never traveled this strange road before. But when I would fear that I was not right something would whisper, Go on; you are going right. So I went on and came into the state road, and then turned toward the Blue Ridge mountains, and soon came to a house. I called at that strange house, when a man appeared, and I inquired if that road led to State Road meeting house. The man answered that it did, and I kept on inquiring the way until I arrived at the church house, where Elders A. C. Woodruff and Reuben Sparks tried to preach. While they were preaching I greatly desired to have an opportunity to speak, for I could not believe that they were preaching the truth; for they preached that Christ had made the way possible and passable for everybody, and said that everybody could be christians by complying with certain terms. I thought, If this be true, then I am deceived. But I could not at this time believe that I was deceived; but I thought that those preachers were either deceived or else were preaching for Satan; therefore I could hardly keep my seat, for it seemed like my bones would almost shake out of my body while I was endeavoring to keep my seat in silence. I greatly desired to speak in behalf of the truth, for it seemed to almost cause my whole body to quake to see the truth thus trodden under foot and error hoisted so high. But I held my speech until the meeting was closed, and then I set out for home. As I walked toward home I did meditate upon what the preachers had said, and upon my struggle while they were trying to preach, and I began to think, Surely I am wrong; and

if I am not, what shall I do? for those preachers were of the Primitive Baptist order. I thought, If I should ever preach I will be bound to preach the doctrine of Election, and this will cause me to be banished from the people I love so well. I arrived at home and concluded that I would stay at home, for fear that I might be compelled to speak some time while at meeting. But this resolve to stay at home did not give me ease, for my troubles were dreadful and my doubts were without number during this long winter which my soul was fore-ordained to pass through. O, my dear brethren and sisters, language, time and space fail me to tell of the troubles, trials and miseries which my poor soul did undergo during these days of trial; for they were not short, neither were they light. Finally I grew cold, and my carnal mind (or the old man in the flesh) seemed to have gained the victory over the spiritual mind (or the inner man), for my mind was filled with a worldly desire. That is, I found a desire in me to follow after the world; for I greatly loved to speak of the vanities of the world, to talk with my father and others of the world, speaking of things which were of vanity. But finally I saw again that vain are the thoughts of man; and while I was in this vain and delusive way of desiring the foolishness and distraction of the world, great and sudden terrors did again awake my fears of damnation; but I tried to comfort myself by thinking that it was all in God's purposes that I had been thus led. Then it seemed as though some one had spoken in my heart, saying, Why trouble yourself? for God will either save you or damn you, as he has eternally decreed to do, even before the foundation of the world. I answered, I know it, and this is not the trouble with me now; but my trouble is because I cannot serve the Lord; and when I do most greatly desire to serve him, I right then find myself serving old carnal nature. Then I began to give way, saying, I desire to live no longer if I have to serve the flesh in carnality. But while in this dreadful despondency, behold, a voice as of the rushing of a mighty wind said, Arise; I am thy deliverer; I am your life. And is not my sacred life stronger than all the carnal lives of mortals? Then my soul leaped for joy, and did praise the Lord for deliverance, and it seemed to greatly press on me to go and try to preach. But this I could not do, but fought as hard as I could against this impressive feeling. I concluded as yet I would not preach,

and by concluding upon such rebellion my joyful days soon passed away. I rebelled against the moving voice that seemed to rumble in my breast, "Go preach my gospel," until I thought I had wearied it out, and had got rid of it entirely. Then there was a time that I became very negligent, and my old, wicked nature began to manifest itself in many sins and transgressions. While in this sluggish state of sin and great folly I well remember one evening, about sunset; for I had been exceedingly ill and wicked in my nature all that day. While sitting in the door of my father's old house that evening, a dark cloud, which ended in a thunder storm, was rising, and soon the whole earth was darkened. Mighty and terrible thunders were roaring, and sharp lightnings were flashing. Then I was greatly terrified and began to wonder in myself with great fear. I did greatly tremble when I thought of the mighty power of God, and all of a sudden a most soothing calmness passed through my whole system, and the divine spirit of reconciliation seemed to take full possession of every faculty of my existence. Then I began to say, How great is the mercy of God! for how quick could God by his justice cast me down into eternal woe and misery! But instead thereof he has bestowed his wonderful mercy upon me, who am a hell-deserving wretch. Then I thought, O how wonderful is the power of God! Yet he takes notice of such a poor infinitesimal being as I am. Then how infinitely great is his mercy through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. During this divine visitation there was a glorious light shining around about me, and it seemed like my very soul was filled with that beautiful light. This divine work upon my soul made the thunder storm appear very pleasant and beautiful, for it was the loveliest time I ever saw, or as much so as any time I ever saw. How my soul was filled with praises and glorifyings unto God, who gave me the victory through my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. O yes, I thought, I will now go and preach the everlasting gospel of Jesus, and I will tell the people of the mercy of King Jesus, and of the power of God's thundering justice unto all nations, and the glorious victory of Jesus in satisfying the demands of justice, and thus forever staying the avenging hand of justice from his chosen people. And I thought, O what a delightful thing it is to serve the Lord! I will obey his command to me, for I will go and warn the people to flee from the wrath to come.

Yes, I will tell them of the great clouds of his threatenings, and the thundering tones of his justice, and of the power of his sharp two-edged sword (that is, the quickening power of his Holy Spirit); for I then verily believed that I would go right soon to trying to preach, as the light and encouragement of this heavenly vision was very great to my soul, mind and strength. I went on for some time in great ease and comfort, thinking that the first opportunity that offered I would make an attempt to speak as a mouth for God. Now this happy season lasted for several days, for I was continually rejoicing when I would think about the goodness of God toward me, that he should have taken thought of me in his glorious purpose, and to make me worthy to hope in him. And then, O then, has he counted me meet to stand in his presence and speak as a mouth for such an infinite and great being as God is? O what an apprehensive thought! Can it be possible that he has foreordained and chosen such a poor, stammering worm of the dust as I am to preach his gospel to a dying world? O yes, something would say, God did purpose in himself before the foundation of the world, that you, Wm. R. Welborn, should be one of his heralds to preach his own everlasting gospel unto them that he has purposed to send thee to; for something seemed to be sounding in my heart, God has chosen you to preach just so many sermons, for he has predetermined from eternity the very number of words that you shall speak in a preaching way. Then why delay? Then O how dreadful I did feel! And the more I thought on the awfulness of preaching, the more terrible I did feel, until the happy vision just related did begin to sink into the sea of terror; for my peace did flee away like a comet passing through the dismal midnight darkness, and so passed out of my memory for a season. Then I began to think (in the midst of a terrified mind) that I could never stand the fearful thought of trying to preach. O how solemn the thought; yes, more solemn than death itself. Can I ever make the attempt? O no! Then I resolved to die rather than make even an attempt to preach. O what a condition I here got into! for my whole system seemed to be in great agony of fearful sufferings. Great floods of doubtings and words of anguish seemed to fill my mind, heart and soul. My lot was to be at hard labor in my father's field at the time of this great trial of my poor soul, and sometimes I would leave the plow handles and go into the woods and thickets, where I thought no eye but God's could see me. There I would roll, and cry for mercy, being in great anguish of soul. There was no sleep for me, for the bed could not hold me long at a time. I would leave it at midnight hours, and go to some lonely place and pour out the anguish of my soul to God. Finally I experienced a little ease of mind, or I was not terrified as before, and could sleep some; but when I would begin

somewhat to examine myself, O the perverseness of my nature! I could see nothing but sin in the way which I had come, from my earliest recollection down to the present. Then I said, O how worthless and sinful have I been! I began to think of my good seasons which I had passed, and of my former impression to preach. Then I thought it surely was a mistake, and a fancy of the mind, for I thought I was deceived in every point. I would think, why am I so beset with sin? Surely if I was a saint my mind would be wholly employed in thinking most righteously; but instead of being engaged in holy thoughts, it is mostly engaged in the thoughts of sin and foolishness. I had not yet learned that all christians had a warfare of sin and righteousness (the spirit of righteousness warring against the spirit of the carnal mind, and the spirit of the carnal mind against the Spirit of Christ); so I still thought that a christian was pure and undefiled, both in body and spirit. I had never heard any one tell of their ups and downs, only I had heard (as before stated) Elder Candell tell of the troubles of passing through the fiery furnace of purification, or being born again; and with this trial I could greatly witness. But I thought that passing through this process of divine cleansing would deliver the saints from having evil thoughts, and thus enable their minds to always be heavenly, and so have but one mind, and thus be always loving God and always thinking on God and trusting in him. And thinking thus made me to greatly doubt and fear that I was deceived. I would sink down into despondency, and wallow for many days. I well remember a time when I was down in despondency, that I was driven in deep despair to try to pray, and while I was thus engaged the holy Comforter came to lift me up on the wings of unfeigned faith. A few days before my dear mother died she called me to her and gave me a few leaves of Watts' hymn-book, and showed me the following hymn:

"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies," &c.

She turned down the top of the leaf which this hymn was on, and said to me, Take these leaves and keep them in remembrance of your mother, for in a few days you will have no mother. She further said that if I ever got so I could read, she wanted me to commit the above named hymn to memory. So I took the leaves and laid them away, and sure enough mother died a few days after. Although she had always been wild and sinful, and never professed any change as to religion, yet these last words and this last act of hers to me has given me some hope of her felicity. Now I had never thought of those leaves until the above named time, when, as I believe, the Holy Ghost put the words of the above named song into my heart and mind, and caused me to remember where I had placed the remnants. I arose, filled with joyful solemnity, and went and found the remnants. I took

them into my hands, feeling very solemn, and turned to the above named hymn, and began to read it. It seemed as though it was no trouble for me to read it, though I could hardly read at all at a common time; but I could read this hymn with perfect ease. I rejoiced for several days, and finally committed the hymn to memory, which was the first thing I ever did commit to memory. But this soon passed, and I was again plunged into doubts and fears, and was sorely afflicted in spirit; for I came to a stand still place, not knowing what to do. I greatly feared that I had never been called from sin to grace, and I thought, If I am deceived, O how miserable I am! Then I would think, O! have I deceived those few little saints who have had so much confidence in me? Then I could fully agree with Paul, and say, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I would think, O what shall I do, or what can I do, to do me good? Nothing but the witness of the Holy Spirit will do a despairing sinner good. Now, I thought, Can it be possible that all those divine and heavenly revelations which have been delivered to me were to my eternal condemnation, instead of being the witness and manifestation of my being one of the chosen family? I did not doubt that those many visions which I had received were directly from heaven, but my doubts were as to whether they meant my being born again or not. For I well knew that none but those who are effectually called can inherit the kingdom of heaven. Then I thought, Can it be possible that such a worthless sinner as I am has ever had that effectual calling? I was almost ready to say, No; for I thought I had never surely had this calling. But I thought, O how precious is such a calling! for if I only could hope in such a calling firmly, I would not take this whole world for it. Then suddenly this question came into my mind, Would you take the whole world, and ten thousand such worlds, for what little hope you have now? I paused for a moment or more, for it was as though some one had spoken to me. I answered, No, I would not; for if I could not think that it may be I am not deceived, it seems to me that I would die almost in an instant. Then I began to reason, and say, O how I love those of like precious faith! Thus I comforted myself for a few hours. Then violent temptations ran into my mind, and the "two armies" were engaged in battle within me for some time. Finally the Spirit of Christ was victorious, the flesh was again mortified, and the spirit of infidelity was routed. After a time my thoughts began to run on the sinfulness of my nature, and I began to doubt, saying, Why am I thus, if I am a saint of the Most High? Then I thought, O how I love those words of Jesus to his disciples! O that I could hear him call to me in these words, "Take up thy cross and follow me." Then I would sigh, and say, "O Lord, if I have been mistaken in

thy words to me, be pleased to undeceive me, and call me to follow thee; for, O Lord, let me ever be found in thy service. O Lord, let me run after thee." While I was thus sighing and breathing after the Lord, this Scripture came into my mind with great force and comfort, "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." I cannot describe the great consolation I received from this Scripture at this time. Space and time fail me now, and besides, language in many respects fails me. This Scripture has been a source of divine comfort to me in many trying hours since the above named time. Thus I rested for a little season. When I began to get into the ditches and gulleys of sin and sorrow, sometimes almost mired in the quagmires of sin over my head, I would have such longings and breathings in my poor soul for my Lord's righteousness, or for a plainer witness that his righteousness is my refuge in the time of storms and hurricanes, that I could not express it. Language fails me. Then I would cry out in the language of afflicted Job, and of every little saint, and say, O that I knew where I might find him, that I may dwell under his shadow forever and ever. For if I knew that his righteousness was imputed to me, I never would fear any danger; for I would know that I had an everlasting Refuge and that my soul was an inhabitant of the Ark of safety. I cried for several days, being greatly burdened with grief and sorrow, and my sorrow was because I could not keep from sinning. I was also greatly burdened with the yoke of the ministry. But I thought, Why am I thus burdened, for I am so sinful that I can never preach; and besides my sinfulness, I am disqualified in every way; for I thought that almost anybody had a better heart than I had. It seemed that my heart was worse than any brute animal. Then I thought, O that I had been some one of a purer heart! I would cry for the Lord to purify my heart, but my words seemed to barely pass my lips when they seemed to fall to the ground, and I viewed myself only the more wicked. And when I had considered my perverse and defiled nature in every way, I said, Surely there is none equal to me but Satan himself.

I will close for the present. In hope of eternal life, as ever, your unworthy brother in christian warfare,

WM. R. WELBORN.

GHEAT, Ky., March 25, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In the SIGNS of March 15, 1886, is a request from brother D. S. Bunch, of Gordon, Ark., for my views on Luke xix. 10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." But brother Bunch inquires particularly, "What was lost? when and how?" In attempting to answer these questions it may not be amiss for us to look into the great and glorious character of him who is called the Son of man. He is presented in the sacred

word both as the Son of God and the Son of man. The word son conveys the idea of a relationship. As he was both the Son of God and the Son of man, he bore a two-fold relationship. These relationships are declared by the prophet when he says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." That language presents the relationship which he bore to his people; the same to which the apostle refers when he says, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." As a child, as a son, he was capable of suffering, capable of shedding his blood. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission. The offerings in the temple service did not make the comers thereunto perfect. But Jesus says, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me."—Psa. xl. 7. He came in the volume of the book of the law, the sacrifices under which prefigured the shedding of his blood, the great offering made on Calvary, whereby he forever perfected them that are sanctified. But the prophet says, "His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Hence in him dwelt all the wonderful attributes of deity. Being infinite in power, love and justice, and being both God and man, he was in every respect fitted and prepared to seek and to save that which was lost. When our first parents violated the law in the garden of Eden, they incurred its penalty, which was death; and their posterity, which embraces the entire human race, being one with them, were all involved in that fearful penalty. Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come; the figure of Christ. A complete unity existed between Adam and all his posterity. By that unity they all alike became sinners; all alike became subjects of death. "The wages of sin is death." Hence the law reached all of them. 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, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." While this refers to the resurrection, yet the apostle in using that language presents the two headships, Adam and Christ. Adam by his death secured the death of all his unborn posterity. Christ by his death secured the redemption from that curse of all who were one with him; all who were given to him. Our Lord said in his wonderful and pathetic prayer before his crucifixion: "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." Eternity be-

longs alone to Jehovah. Our Lord said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." That life is hid with Christ in God, and is made manifest in all the heirs of promise when they are born again, born from above, in which birth they are created in righteousness and true holiness. That is a spiritual, not a natural birth. Of Esau and Jacob it was declared, "The elder shall serve the younger." That which is born of the flesh is the elder in development, and it shall serve that which is born of the Spirit. The first man was of the earth, earthy, and so are all his natural progeny. John says, "And the earth helped the woman [the church]; and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." Then it is so arranged in divine wisdom and mercy that the natural man, which is the temple for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, shall serve the spiritual man. But he is not worked over and made part spiritual and part natural, no more than Jacob and Esau were blended into one man. But the natural man is often made to serve the spiritual, but with great reluctance. How often, dear saints, do you find your carnal nature making excuses and offering reasons for your wanderings in forbidden paths. But the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood of persecution that the dragon cast out of his mouth after the woman. So it has ever been since the dawning of the christian era. God in his providence has upheld his people and used unbelievers to sustain them against their adversaries.

But brother Bunch inquires, "What was lost?" We answer, The entire human race, in their relation to the first Adam, was lost. By reason of their unity with their father, Adam, when he disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit, he and they all became involved in death, which was the penalty of that law. It does not require argument to demonstrate the truth that man is mortal and must die, for we have daily ocular demonstrations of that mournful truth. The answer to one of those questions involves the answer to all. Adam, by violating the law, lost his right to a home in Eden, and was driven out. He lost that natural life which God gave him when he breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul, and became involved in death, an eternal separation from God and all that is holy. It was from that awful condition that our Lord came to seek and to save that which was lost. Adam was the figure of our Lord in this, that there was a perfect unity between him and all his undeveloped children. And there was a complete unity between Christ and his people, his children. By reason of the unity of Adam and his posterity, they were all lost. His sin was not only imputed to all of them, but they all became sinners. "The wages of sin is death," and all die. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's

transgression." Why did it reign over them? Because they were sinners. But the Son of man came "to seek and to save that which was lost." His people, by reason of their relation to the first Adam, became lost, involved in all the consequences of his transgression. It was from that condition that he came to seek and to save them. The angel said to Joseph, "His name shall be called Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." They were his people, given to him in the everlasting covenant of redemption. He says, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me." And, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Here is presented the gift of the Father to the Son of that people whom he came to seek and to save. They were chosen in him. The apostle says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." These people, his people, whom he came to seek and to save, were blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. All spiritual blessings. Nothing omitted, nothing left out. Blessed with redemption from the curse of the law. Blessed by being called from nature's night to the glorious light and liberty of the gospel. Blessed by being kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Blessed with the glorious assurance that this mortal shall put on immortality, this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and that death about which we have been talking shall be swallowed up in victory. For all these great and glorious things they whom he came to seek and to save were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Surely

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God."

Then, ye saints of the most high God, attune your voices in songs of everlasting praise to him who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.

But perhaps brother Bunch will inquire more particularly what it was that he saved. If so, he will please remember that not a hoof of Israel was left in Egypt. All came forth, led by the pillars of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. Let it be remembered that all that the Son of man came to seek and to save were blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ before the foundation of the world. Those blessings were spiritual, and were secured to them in Christ. If secured to them in Christ, surely those whom he came to seek and to save will without doubt be brought into the full enjoyment of all those spiritual blessings. He did not come into this world to make an offered salvation, the *ultimatum* of which would depend upon its acceptance or rejection by man, by the nat-

ural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit. Those blessings were all spiritual. And if the natural man receiveth not of the Spirit, it follows that he does not receive those spiritual blessings, and therefore rejected our Lord when he came on that great and glorious mission to seek and to save that which was lost. Those blessings were all in Christ, and when he was rejected of men, those blessings were rejected. They rejected him and them because they were enmity against God. But when they whom he came to seek and to save are made the blessed recipients of that spiritual and heavenly birth, they have within them, given to them, the Spirit of Christ; yea, Christ in them the hope of glory. Then they are sought out. The Lord by the prophet says, "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock, in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the dark and cloudy day."—Ezekiel xxxiv. 12. Surely it was a dark and cloudy day when they were under the law, and resting upon a law righteousness. But glory to his exalted name, he came to seek them, as well as to save them. He came to fulfill that law, the demands of which they were impotent by laboring to fulfill; and thereby he saved them, and his right to seek them became perfect, because they were his by purchase. And when he seeks them in that (to them) dark and cloudy day, he brings them into his fold, his banqueting house, and there they fully realize that his banner over them is love. Then he will have fully accomplished the great work for which he came to earth, when all those whom he came to seek and to save are made spiritual and immortal; yea, put into full possession of all those spiritual blessings which were treasured up in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, to whom be glory forever and ever.

If these poor, rambling thoughts shall ever be published, brother Bunch will please accept them as a token of my christian love and fellowship; and you, brethren editors, will please dispose of them as you may deem best, and believe me affectionately yours,

H. COX.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 12, 1886

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—I wish to make a few remarks upon the letter of Elder John Stipp in the SIGNS for April 15, in which he reviews a portion of mine in the number for January 15, but I do not feel inclined at this time to argue the subject at any length. Our views are before the brethren, and I am willing to submit what I have so imperfectly written, with his comments thereon, to the consideration of those who may read them, hoping that no harm will come to any dear child of God from what has been said, but that some may in some way be benefited. I can cheerfully grant brother Stipp's request to bear with him while he expresses his

mind in regard to what I have written. I have ever regarded him with high esteem as a faithful minister of the gospel, and as a deeply taught and able expounder of the Scriptures. Also his age commands from me involuntary sentiments of respect and veneration. I have read his writings with deep interest, and generally with profit, and have but a few times seen anything wherein I was not in accord with the views expressed by him. I see no reason why brethren should not freely express any views that they may have differing from those presented by me, nor why I should be at all impatient with them for it. I always write what I believe to be the truth, but know myself very liable to be mistaken, and I feel that my thanks are due to him who in a spirit of kindness and brotherly love points out wherein he regards me as in error, whether I can agree with him as to the supposed error or not. I often find much difficulty in trying to express my sentiments clearly, and sometimes they have been misunderstood because of a lack of that force and clearness of expression that I desire.

Brother Stipp says he cannot comprehend my meaning upon the subject of the resurrection, but intimates that my language implies a denial of the resurrection entire. Now I do not intend to go over the ground occupied in my former letter, but I write for the purpose of again asserting my firm and unwavering belief in the glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. "I have hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts xxiv. 15. I do not believe "that the resurrection is past already." I believe that it is our vile body that shall be changed, that it may be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. I have never intended to speak or write anything in the least contradictory of this truth; and I hope brethren will, if they conscientiously can, avoid putting any such construction upon any expression of mine. I can well understand why brother Stipp objects to having any of his writings so construed as to place him among the advocates of the Parker Two-Seed doctrine. Some things in his writings bear that appearance; but when in our private correspondence he disclaimed agreement with them, as he has also in the SIGNS, I accept his own statement as to the matter, and am satisfied.

The various Scriptures he has quoted in defense of the doctrine of the resurrection I do not recognize as at all contrary to the sentiments of my letter. In reference to the body of our dear Savior, there is one important difference in our views. Brother Stipp says that the flesh in which Jesus was clothed came down from heaven. This I do not believe, nor do I think such a thing is taught in John vi. 51. No one understands that the Savior speaks literally when he says that his people shall eat his

flesh, but that he thus figuratively teaches the truth that he came in the flesh to bear their sins, and is that upon which those who have divine life are sustained; and no one who has not eternal life can feed upon that truth. No one can say that Jesus is come in the flesh but by the Holy Ghost. So when John speaks of hearing, seeing with our eyes, looking upon, and handling the Word of life, he does not, in my view, refer to the members and senses of this mortal body, but to the spiritual powers of perception, using these natural organs figuratively. "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." The apostle tells us that Jesus took part of the same flesh and blood of which the children are partakers, and it was that he might die.—Heb. ii. 14. I do not understand that it was when "the Word was made flesh," "made of a woman, made under the law", that he was made Priest, Mediator, Head of the church, the second Adam, a quickening Spirit. These characters and relations he sustained to the church before the world began. Brother Stipp says that Jesus took on him, not the nature, but the seed of Abraham. I believe that in being born of a woman, and taking part of the same flesh and blood of which the children are partakers, he took our nature, and thus was prepared to be "tempted in all points like as we are," being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." His was not sinful flesh, but he was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. Nevertheless it was the same flesh of which the children are partakers, although he knew no sin. The apostle appears to me to assert that he took the nature in taking the seed of Abraham, by saying negatively that he took not the nature of angels. And it was because he was *made in all things like unto his brethren* that he could be *tempted in all points like unto them*, and be touched with the feeling of their infirmities.—Heb. ii. 17; iv. 15. I will not extend my remarks upon this glorious and sublime subject further.

In regard to the resurrection, I will repeat that I believe in the resurrection of this vile body, and that the resurrection is not past, but always in the future from the standpoint of time. In eternity there is no future, nor with God. "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: *for all live unto him.*"—Luke xx. 37, 38. I have never agreed with those who deny that the body is raised up. But I am not able to accept the theories and explanations and forms of expression originating with men concerning this mysterious subject. Of course each one is apt to think that those who oppose his views are speculating, and gravely to exhort them not to speculate upon

deeply mysterious things. For my part I regard as speculation that which attempts a natural explanation of a spiritual subject. I think I see in the Scriptures a clear distinction between that which is natural and that which is spiritual. The resurrection is a spiritual thing, not to be understood by our natural powers, but like all the subjects of a spiritual experience, and of the christian's hope, to be understood only when experienced. I still believe that the resurrection is not a lifting up of the material body, but a changing of that same material body from natural to spiritual. The Scriptures do not warrant the expression, "The body is raised, and then transformed or changed." The resurrection is the change. They are one and the same thing. "*It is raised a spiritual body.*" "*It is raised in glory.*" Now if any brother cannot see just as I do, still let him see that I do not deny the resurrection of the body. I acknowledge what brother Stipp declares concerning the power of God to gather the different fragments of a body that have been disseminated through space, and have entered into the composition of other bodies, and reconstruct and raise them up, however impossible it may appear to men, for all things are possible with God. It is not upon the ground of being impossible with God that I object to any such natural view of the subject. Now I also exhort to an acknowledgment of God's power to change our vile body in such a way that flesh will not be taken to heaven, while this identical body in its glorified state will be there, even though we cannot see how it can be done. On this subject I stand by the plain and unequivocal declaration of the apostle, when dealing with this very subject of the resurrection, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."—1 Cor. xv. 50. And that though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.—2 Cor. v. 16. Therefore brethren must excuse me for holding firmly the opinion that we are not authorized to speak of flesh as being in heaven, although dear and highly esteemed brethren have done so. But the glorified body of Jesus is there, and the glorified bodies of all the redeemed will finally be with him there. Brother Stipp says that the resurrected bodies of the saints will be tangible bodies, which means perceptible to the touch. I do not believe that they will be. I do not believe that our natural powers will be taken with us to heaven, nor that there can be any communication through the natural senses between a natural and a spiritual body. I merely state my firm belief on this point, and leave it there. Brother Stipp says again, that when the apostle said, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," he had reference to our unchanged Adamic flesh. I acknowledge that; but I assert my belief that there is no other flesh in which the Lord's children are ever clothed. Nowhere in the Scriptures is the

celestial body called flesh. All the assertions with reference to the glorified bodies being flesh are inferences of men, and not declarations of the word. A distinction is kept up in the Scriptures between the flesh and the Spirit. The Savior's sojourn here is called "the days of his flesh."—Heb. v. 7. He brought that flesh out of the grave unchanged by death, and showed himself in it to witnesses chosen before, thus proving his triumph over death and the grave; and then he ascended, was glorified, and no inspired writer ever speaks of him after that as in the flesh, or as having a fleshly body; but one distinctly declares that we know him no more after the flesh. And in regard to how either his or our glorified bodies will appear, I object to receiving any instruction or explanation from any man; for the apostle says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him."

I write with a feeling of love and fellowship toward brother Stipp, although we do not see alike on these points; and I thank him for his kind manner toward me and for his faithfulness. There was much of interest in his letter, upon which I could speak in cordial agreement with him, but do not now wish to extend my remarks. While I am on this subject I want to acknowledge with gratitude the unusual number of expressions I have received from brethren, of fellowship for and comfort in reading what I hope the Spirit directed me to write in the letter of which we have been speaking.

May we be above all things privileged to eat of that bread of life, and to hear and see and handle the Word of life, which was from the beginning, and has been manifested, we trust, to us; and may we declare and communicate unto each other only what we have thus blessedly experienced; and then shall we truly have fellowship one with another, and shall have the sweet assurance that "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Your brother in the hope and fellowship of the gospel,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SAREPTA, Miss., March 20, 1886.

ELDER WILLIAM J. PURINGTON—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:—I seat myself to drop you a few lines; and although being a stranger in the flesh to you, I sometimes hope we are not entirely strangers in the Spirit. I sometimes feel to indorse your communications in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and more especially on the doctrine of the predestination of all things, for that is the doctrine I believe; but there are some things about it that I do not understand, and it may be that I do not understand any of it; but when I read a piece like your communication in Vol. 54, No. 5, of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I cannot help rejoicing, and giving God the glory that he reveals such truth to poor worms of the dust. Dear brother, I often hear the question asked, Did God predestinate the

disobedience of his children after they have been born again, of the Spirit, or regenerated? Dear brother, will you give me your views on this question, either through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES or privately, for my benefit? for my desire is to know the truth. I hope you will answer this as soon as convenient. I never hear the absolute predestination of all things preached in this part of the country, for some say it will run into two-seedism. I will add no more. Dear brother, please remember me at the throne of grace.

B. F. DOUGLASS.

MY BROTHER:—In replying to the questions propounded in your letter, I feel it binding upon me to use plainness of speech, and shall endeavor to make the reply as brief as I consistently can. The questions involve substantially what has already been argued and proven by Scripture testimony, on the subject of absolute predestination, as published in the SIGNS. In the first place, the Scriptures do not authorize men nor angels to ask such *abstract* questions, for our God "giveth not account [answereth not] of any of his matters." Also, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Now why not be willing to let the awfully momentous matter rest just where those inspired declarations have placed it? Such questions bring up the very subject again that some of our would-be wise men desire to explain, viz., the difference between purpose, predestination, foreordination and foreknowledge; but when such can take a seat at noonday, in midsummer, in full blaze of the sun in heaven, and separate the rays of light from the rays of heat, then it will be the time for them to undertake to separate and classify the difference in those awfully sublime words pertaining to Jehovah, or the attributes of our God. Now as questions are coming to me on various subjects, I feel to ask one or two questions of all who take the trouble to read this reply; but before doing so, I will make one quotation written by Paul, and another written by Peter. Paul says of Christ, "But was in all points tempted [as a verb it is from *peirazo*, to try, to prove] like as we are, yet without sin." Peter says of Christ, "Who his own self bare [*anaphero*, to bear upward; and justly rendered, the past tense would be written, *bore*, instead of *bare*; which, when justly rendered, is from *gummos*, naked; but that is the old English manner of rendering the verb; but it causes some confusion at times] our sins in his own body on the tree." Now the first question: Supposing some of God's children should so walk that some of the temptations with which Jesus was tried should not come upon such obedient ones, did not Jesus suffer that or those temptations in vain? Reader, think seriously of the question now asked. Second question: Supposing many of God's children should be so obedient as not to commit the sins which Jesus bore on the tree, did not Jesus

bear those sins in vain? My brother, sister or friend, think seriously, carefully and prayerfully of the question. Then you *mean to be understood* that the disobedience was predestinated, do you? I have asked the questions, and it is for you to ponder them well. It has been stated, untold thousands of times since the crucifixion of Christ, that the dear Redeemer would have suffered just as much if only one sinner believes and is saved; but such statement is not true, neither is there any authority in the Scriptures for any such "random" talk; for when it is thoroughly analyzed it is the quintessence of Arminianism, and not sustained by a solitary sentence in one of the epistles. Now let us hear what the dear Lamb of God said about the matter in his agony, while in the garden; for he "prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup [*poterion*, drinking vessel] pass from me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." And he also said, "If this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." These words of Christ show to all of us, when we are in the right spirit, or frame of mind, to think seriously on this matter, that our dear Redeemer not only suffered the just for the unjust, but that he suffered in equity; not one sin *more* nor one *less* than his people had committed and would commit; for the very term *cup*, which he had to drink, conclusively sets forth special, definite and efficacious atonement. And were not every sin he bore determined in the purpose of his righteous Father? God forbid that the writer of this reply should ever question or doubt the *absolute prescience* of our God in laying upon his dear Son the exact number and kind of sins which his dear chosen and redeemed family would commit or had committed. We will now produce from the Scriptures the record of a circumstance where a servant of Jesus Christ told the Savior what he would not do, and the Lord told him what he should do. "Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." Men may call the words of the Savior, "thou shalt deny me thrice," predestination, decree, foreordination, or whatever they please. Our Lord told him what he should do, which things he did. What was the sequel? Why, Peter did deny him thrice; and "then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly." O what stinging thoughts of wounded love, what bitter remorse passed through his mind with lightning-like rapidity, while weeping bitterly. But what was the lesson? We never read of

his making such a promise afterward. This subject might be extended to a great length, but no argument that can be written down can convince any one of these important matters, that in the purpose of our God the transgressions or sins are numbered for every vessel of mercy, as well as the joys, and these matters are as firmly fixed as the eternal throne of God; and let us remember, one and all, that God has said by one of his inspired judges, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he [not some one else] also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." All who really feel their nothingness, and cordially receive and believe the fixed purpose of God in all things, are the most discreet, careful, honest, tender-hearted, childlike and honorable persons in our country. It is a lamentable truth that too many in our day who talk the most about obedience, spiritual-mindedness and right living, have been the very persons to bring confusion, error and trouble into the church. I will refer to one case only, which occurred some twenty-five years ago, when the association of which I was a member had to withdraw fellowship from a minister, on account of his course, in what he termed spiritual things. I cannot now recollect whether I was moderator or clerk of the association, but it matters not, for the point I wish is as follows: I said to this same man, How can you partake with the other sects? "O," said he, "I do not commune with them, but with my God." Then said I, We may as well disorganize all our churches, if such a position is taken; but we do not feel prepared to do so just yet. There was no remedy but to withdraw fellowship, as he was entirely too spiritually minded to remain with them who take the Bible as their "guide-book." I will add no more on this branch. As to the matter of the "modernly coined phrase," "two-seedism," I do not feel to take the time nor occupy the space to dwell upon such an absurd theory, as to argue against such an abominable sentiment; and if adhering to divine testimony causes persons to think it is two-seedism, so be it, for I will not give it any countenance. My brother, I hope God will keep you in this day of idealism, and establish you in the truth.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., April 5, 1886.

LOXA, Ill., April 4, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—Being confined at home to-day, and not having written anything for the SIGNS, or very little in a private way to the saints scattered throughout the country, for several years, I feel impressed to make an effort to do so now. And in the outset I will say to my brethren and friends everywhere who may read this communication, that my long silence has not been caused by neglect or forgetful-

ness of the dear relationship that binds all true lovers of God's truth together; nor is it the result of any loss of attachment or devotion to the cause of our blessed Redeemer, for which in weakness I professed an espousal some twenty and eight years ago. No indeed! My mind runs back through all these years of tumult, of carnage and war, years pregnant with strife, civil and religious, wherein the mystery of iniquity has roamed with destructive tread, filling the earth with violence, to the bright Sunday morning in May, 1858, when, in the presence of the members of old Lewis Creek Church, Shelby Co., Ind., the pastor, Eld. J. G. Jackson, led me down into the clear sparkling stream, and in the most solemn and (to me) impressive manner administered to the unworthy writer the ordinance of baptism. How bright and joyful I felt as I came up out of the water! To praise God then in mind and soul was an employment that admitted of no restraint; neither did it require human agency to promote it. The words of the psalmist, I remember, came to me while standing on the river bank, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." And all nature seemed to say amen to it. Everything around seemed to wear an indescribably solemn aspect. Not a single portentous cloud sent its shadow across the interesting scene. My soul was completely enraptured at the divine beauties, excellencies, ordinances and order of the church or kingdom of Christ. I had walked in disobedience and rebellion. For this I had suffered; the rod had been laid upon me. Now I feel that sure enough the path of duty is the path of peace. The heavenly sanction given at that time I can never forget. I do not want to forget it. Little thought did I then have of the bitter trials and temptations that I should encounter in after years. From what I then experienced I had gotten an impression that my troubles had been removed forever. Certainly none but an ingrate could ever doubt such convincing proofs of my being an heir of salvation as were afforded me then. But how little did I then know of the warfare encountered by the Lord's people. In my early experience, although I heard brethren speak of their trials, temptations, doubts and conflicts, their unbelief and sin, I, like Peter, thought my faith strong and secure enough for any and all emergencies; and though all men should forsake or deny my Lord, I never. Looking over the years that have intervened, how different all now seems to me. Crookedness marks my entire pilgrimage. Evil has characterized my every step. It seems that I have gotten farther away from the throne, instead of nearer. O the sad desolations that lay revealed all along the way that my impious feet have trodden! It is a wonder of wonders that I have not been consumed. Nothing short of the unchangeable love of God could have brought me safe thus far. In all my service in the church I can see

nothing to commend me in the least. But on the contrary, I see enough to fill volumes that I have left undone; because evil is present with me, so that I cannot do the things I would. Discouragements have been without number. Troubles like great rolling, crushing waves have almost at times covered my head. My soul has been filled with bitter anguish and pain. I have been shut in by the darkness of spiritual night. Then came a flood of doubts; but my soul was made to "consider the days of old [when the Lord became precious to my soul], the years of ancient times." Yes, and back to the cross of Christ, in the years of old, by faith I see him in whom my soul delighteth. "I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search." "Will the Lord cast off forever? And will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Does his promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. And I said, This is my infirmity. But I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary. Who is so great a God as our God?" How precious are these words of the psalmist. What! will the Lord forget to be gracious? Will he suffer his faithfulness to fail? It is our "infirmity" that questions thus, or for a single moment will impute neglect or forgetfulness to our Lord and Master. And though we may depart from his statutes, keep not his commandments, and wander away from the path of righteousness, yet the truth remains that the "Lord's way is in the sanctuary." Our unbelief changes none of his heavenly attributes. The clouds may obscure the sun for days and weeks at a time, but the sun exists in all its created glory and brightness nevertheless. Spiritually the darkness around may be very great. The Sun of Righteousness may be entirely hidden behind the dark clouds of unbelief. In our weakness and infirmity we may doubt almost the existence of such a Sun of Righteousness. But how often has it been demonstrated to us that

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

Our God lives, and there is none like him. And, dear brethren, through all my varied life, though many snares and besetments have infested my way, he delivered me from them all, affording me many precious seasons of rejoicing. I desire to feel thankful that I can go back in my experience to the day of deliverance, when the Lord lifted me up, established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his holy name; though, as already remarked, the warfare has been vigorous, and I have felt pretty much as David did when he exclaimed, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul."

Saul (the flesh), it seemed, sometimes had almost gotten the victory over me. But the Lord is my shield and help; he is become my strength and salvation.

I have written these few lines as I gathered the sentences from passing thoughts, and submit the same for your inspection, and if thought to be worthy a place in the SIGNS, you can use the same. May God grant strength to the weak, weary and heavy laden, and direct the SIGNS to the comfort of the flock, is my desire.

Your brother in hope,

J. G. SAWIN.

CARROLLTON, Ky., Jan. 31, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—According to a long desire, the time has come for me to pay up arrears and renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have felt very sorry at times because I was not able to pay at the time I knew it was my duty to pay; yet if my heart deceives me not I know I do not want something for nothing, and I hope to be able at some time to "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." This is the second time since 1874 (when I commenced taking the SIGNS) that I have found myself in arrears; yet I am thankful that I have been able again to pay up. If it will not crowd out better matter, I will try to write a few thoughts for the household of faith, upon a clause of the experience of the apostle Paul, which more nearly accords with my own experience, if perhaps I may have a good one. Now, when I was in the greatest soreness, perplexity and trouble, fully, I think, realizing my utterly lost condition, a very comforting dream was given me in connection with this faithful apostle, as all my desire was to fulfill the instruction of Peter to those inquiring Jews on the day of pentecost, to "repent," &c. I could find no repentance in what I thought Peter meant. How to repent was my greatest trouble. My chief desire was for repentance, and how to get it I knew not. Then it was that I had this dream. I was preparing for a journey, and as I went out early in the morning from the house in which I had lodged the previous night, apparently a short distance from the house to the most beautiful highway I had ever seen, as I passed out the little gate into the highway a traveler came along the road, who was going in the same direction I was to go. So I joined his company, and as we journeyed on together we conversed, and the subject of our conversation was, Awake, sinner, for repentance is in thee. And this fellow-traveler's name was Paul. He left the highway and ascended a straight path to his residence, a very beautiful palace, and left me to pursue my journey alone on the highway. And on either side of the highway was a very rough and broken country. When I awoke, I felt easy in mind. Hope brightened, and I have been traveling in fellowship with Paul's writings and experience apparently more nearly than any other of

the New Testament saints, although their testimony united forms a most beautiful chain or highway. "When I would do good, evil is present with me; and how to perform that which is good, I find not." Now, in my own travels I am assuredly with Paul, and how to perform my duty I find not. It seems that temptations await me at all points of my career, and those of the most sinful, the most heart-rending, while my own efforts of resistance seem to be the weakest, the easiest to overcome by temptation, so that I am bound to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" "Lord, undertake for me." "Lord, save, or I perish."

We behold, and the world is going on as of old. The synagogues are still standing, men are still crying, "Let us build up again the waste places," and our land is groaning under the weight of its vanity, while the church of the living God travails in sorrow of dust and ashes, all scattered and scarred, because the wolf is after the flock. The wheat is sorely choked by the tares, the fowls are picking up that by the wayside, thorns are choking out that which falls in stony places, and some that stood with us a long time are gone off after the worshipers of the "golden calf," and it seems that I am left alone, and they seek my life. But blessed be our God, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And "All things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose." Dear brethren and sisters of the true faith, does it not fill your hearts with bitter sorrow to see those who have professed the faith in Christ, gone in and out before you so many years, walked in fellowship with your parents before you, and were pillars in the house of God, now, while the church is so weak, going off after the gods of the world, saying, "Our children and children's children are all there, and I feel like I want to be with them, because they want me to come with them?" Dear brethren and sisters, "If the Lord be God, serve him, but if Baal, then serve him." It seems to your humble brother that he should serve the former. Yes, if every one else should leave, he alone would stay, because he could find no peace anywhere else, and must trust in his Lord and stay upon his God, though he should turn away his face from him. He feels, Woe is me, because I dwell in the tents of blackness. He feels to be the meanest of all the creatures of God's grace, yet his greatest desire is to love and serve him, for his great love wherewith he loved us before the world was, and gave himself for us, and suffered death, even the humiliating and cruel death of the cross, that his people might be saved. Though there is no good in my flesh, shall I leave? O no! Though he slay me, let me yet trust in him. To whom shall I trust?

Dear brethren Beebe, please receive this letter in the spirit I hope I penned it, and if it is according to

truth, publish it as a contribution from a very weak brother yet in the flesh, but I hope strong in the faith of God's eternal, unconditional election of the saints, as well as his absolute predestination of all things, from the great empires of the world to the tiniest insect of the air, water or earth. "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." "Even for this purpose have I raised thee up," &c. I desire to be permitted to read the SIGNS as long as I may live, and it is conducted according to the word of God.

Your brother in tribulation,

ISAAC CRAIG.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 31, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I see in the SIGNS for March 15 some queries addressed to me by brother D. S. Bunch, of Gurdon, Arkansas, concerning the "kingdom of God." He says, "Will brother F. A. Chick tell us when the God of heaven set up his kingdom on earth? Has it yet been set up? And if set up during the incarnation of the Savior, how did Abel, Enoch and others who lived antecedent to his incarnation get into it actually?"

I feel to-day like inditing a brief reply to these queries. And in the first place it seems to me that we must keep in mind the difference between the real nature and substance of the kingdom of God, and the various ways in which it has been manifested. In one sense of the word the kingdom of God (or the dominion of God) rules over all. All creation is under his rule. Angels, men and brutes obey his behest. His is the kingdom of nature, and his is the kingdom of providence. All this is fully recognized in the Bible. And many things in nature and in providence are made use of by the Holy Ghost to illustrate the kingdom of his grace. What God does in any department of his work is in harmony with all the rest. But the theme of the Scriptures is the kingdom of his grace, in which he works righteousness, and the fruit of which is joy in God and peace from Jesus Christ. But this kingdom is often pictured out in some one of its many aspects by parables taken from the natural creation of God and from his providential arrangements in the world. This kingdom of God has been revealed in many ways in the world. It always existed. Wherever a believing heart has been found, there has been a revelation of the kingdom of God. But in different ages God set up various orders of worship, and various rules and forms were appointed to set forth this kingdom. Under the patriarchal dispensation God revealed himself to men, and was found of Abel, Enoch, Abraham, &c., and these all willingly submitted to his dominion, as a dominion of righteousness. And having come to know him, they worshiped him, each as priest in his own family. This was the outward manifestation of that kingdom through holy men of old. Under the legal dispensation God united the tribes of Israel together, and gave them one high

priest and one worship. Not all who were thus united together outwardly were truly in the kingdom of God. But by types and shadows, by sacrifices and offerings, by priests and tabernacle, God gave more full manifestation of his kingdom than before. The true kingdom lay back of these outward forms. It was to be found living in every heart that loved and served God. But in a higher and more exalted sense was this kingdom set up and revealed when Jesus Christ came, manifested in the flesh.

In this higher sense its very embodiment was in the person of our Lord himself. When he came it was said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." He contained in himself all the life and power of that kingdom. In him and through him it was to be manifested as never before. He lived it out, and in him by all that he did and said was all its power and glory and excellency to be seen. In this sense of the word it was "at hand" as it had never been before. In this view of it could Daniel say, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be removed." There was now to be a clearer manifestation of it than ever before. From the fall till now all had been as the moonlight or starlight. Some light was given. What light did shine was the reflection of the Sun of Righteousness, and heralded his rising. But now day had dawned, the Sun had arisen, the moon and stars fled away, and the full light now shined. This light never should fade. This Sun never should go down. The kingdom of God did not now begin to be, but it was revealed as never before. I will not take up time to repeat what I said in a letter in the SIGNS of Feb. 15, concerning what the kingdom of God is. "It is not meat and drink,

but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Of it they shall say, "It is within you. It is 'not in word, but in power.' It 'cometh not with observation.' It is 'like leaven.' It is 'like mustard seed.'" These are some expressions which describe it. Now then, bearing all this in view, I will briefly answer our brother's queries more directly.

1st. When did the God of heaven set up his kingdom on earth? In Daniel it is expressly declared to be "In the days of these kings;" and I suppose that no one denies that this was the time of the Savior's incarnation. Then, as has been said, began the manifestation of its full glory in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. And ever since then, in every heart where Jesus dwells in power and great glory, that kingdom has been perpetuated.

The second question, "Has it yet been set up?" is answered in the above.

The third question, "How did Abel, Enoch and others get into it actually?" I would answer in this way: As far as the spirit and knowledge of the kingdom was given to them, they were in it, but not in it in the sense of seeing its full glory and beauty, as they have been revealed in these last times, or gospel day. God has re-

served some better thing for us. They saw the starlight, but did not behold the sun-rising. In so far as righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost dwelt in them, they were in the kingdom. Of course they were not in the visible organization of the church; but they had the life and spirit (in measure at least) which is the necessary qualification to church membership. They were our brethren, though not walking in such clear light.

I trust that these replies may prove satisfactory to our brother, and to all. All that any of us can know of the kingdom of God is by revelation in our experience. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

I have received the SIGNS of April first, and think it specially good. The editorial is very rich. Solomon's Song is a treasury of rich things. You have brought some of them forth. God gives his people resting times, when they take rest in sleep; but even then the heart is wide awake, ready to respond when the Bridegroom calls. The bride is a "helpmeet" for the husband; and when he calls, and the heart is full of love, how quick the response. I have been thinking of late about Eve being a helpmeet (or suitable) for Adam. How is the church a help for her Husband? I see a glimmer of light, but only a glimmer. I cannot yet talk about it. It has connected itself in my mind with the description of the virtuous woman, in Proverbs xxxi. I wish that some brother would write me about it, either privately or through the SIGNS.

I remain, as ever, your brother in gospel hope,

F. A. CHICK.

AMITY, Ind., Jan. 1, 1886.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—As the old year has just been numbered with the past, and a new year is ushered in, we note the rapid flight of time. God hath fixed time in its onward march. Winter and summer, seedtime and harvest, are all appointed by the great Jehovah, the Ruler of the universe. As we see winter approaching, we know that summer is ended, and that by and by springtime will come again. God hath appointed it, and governs it by fixed laws. The sun ruling by day, and the moon and stars by night, convince us of that perfect order in the mind of the great I Am, who rules earth and heaven. All his works show forth that perfect law by which they are governed; that God works, and none can hinder. And that he hath appointed the end of all things, we doubt not. He reigns as King supreme, and hath declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and giveth the kingdoms to whomsoever he will. He hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habi-

tation. This Being that is infinitely wise, righteous and holy hath chosen you, O poor of the flock, and I desire to write of some of the marks or characteristics of these poor of this world, yet rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." If you, dear reader, have righteousness or riches of your own treasured up, you are not poor. If you have houses and lands, and dwell at ease, you are not poor, laboring or heavy laden. The Savior said, "They that are whole need not a physican, but they that are sick." We see the poor, diseased, suffering one bowed down with sorrow and sin, mourning and lamenting their condition by reason of sin. In bitterness of soul they cry out, "Guilty and unclean before the Lord." They look, and all is black and dark within; feeling to be of unclean lips, and mourning over a stubborn, wretched heart and wandering mind, they say, "Can I deem myself a child?" "Am I his, or am I not? If I am, why am I thus?" I try to walk as christians walk; but all things that I would, I do not; and to my sorrow and shame, the things that I would not, them I do. So I find that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing. I am full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, from the head even to the feet. There is no soundness in me. Sometimes I think the sores are about healed, but out they will break, worse than ever. They are neither bound up nor mollified with ointment. O! tell me, is it thus with you? Reader, how is it with you? If you are thus, you have not much to enshrine you even at the feet of Jesus. Therefore you are poor, having no righteousness, worthiness or merit of your own to plead before the great I Am. Now let us try you by the measuring rod. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Are you afflicted? David said he was greatly afflicted; but he also said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." "In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted." Are you poor? The prophet says that the poor shall not cease out of the land. The Lord heareth the poor. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." God hath chosen you out of the world, yet chosen you in the furnace of affliction, that you may be tried so as by fire, and may come forth as gold that is tried. Dear saint, God hath appointed you unto that end. The dross, the hay, wood and stubble must and will be consumed; for the day cometh that shall burn as an oven. You are blessed indeed to know that he is God, and

beside him there is no Savior. These light afflictions are but for a moment, and work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. You find no continuing city here, but seek one whose maker and builder is God. O how precious is the hope that reaches beyond all conflicts, groans and tears. If these thoughts be yours, you are blessed. Jesus is your hope and your all. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. God is your Father, Jesus is your brother, and heaven is your home. "I am rich; my Lord hath made me so." He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.

Wishing you all a happy new year, with the blessings of a kind providence, I remain affectionately your brother in hope,

P. W. SAWIN.

RUSHMORE, Ohio, Jan. 27, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have felt for some time like writing a few lines to you, to let you know that I rejoice to know that the Giver of every good and perfect gift is still sustaining you in the editorial department of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. When I read your very able editorials, and the communications of Elders Durand, Purington, and a great many others, and the christian experiences of the many brethren and sisters scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country, my poor heart is made to rejoice and feel glad that there is such a medium of correspondence as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, through which the brethren and sisters can communicate with each other, tell of their many trials, troubles and afflictions, their sorrows, dark and cloudy seasons, the inbred corruption of their own heart, the deceitfulness of sin, the justice of God in their condemnation, the inexpressible goodness and mercy of God in the adorable scheme of redemption, all of which is easier felt and received of others than expressed by ourselves. After having used all the language at our command, we break out in the language of Paul, "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.

Dear brethren, I see in the last number of the SIGNS for last year that your subscription list has been very much reduced by other periodicals starting up in different parts of the country, claiming to be devoted to the cause of the Old School or Primitive Baptists. There is no doubt in my mind but some of them are very good papers, but that they are any better than the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I have my doubts. And whether or no it would have advanced the cause of the Primitive Baptists just as much or more for all lovers of the apostolic faith and practice to have continued their support to the SIGNS probably will never be known. But that there is strong opposition to some of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, I am well aware, that is, if I know the

doctrine. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you; who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."—2 Pet. ii. 1. Now, brethren Beebe, if these things shall be, how can we or anybody else hinder it? Now I do not wish to say who the false teachers are, but if the principles and doctrine set forth on page 283 of last volume are false, then it is plain to see who are the false teachers. But if they are the doctrine of the Bible, then those who so strenuously oppose those principles must be the characters described by Peter. But I believe there are a great many of the children of grace who have never been indoctrinated into the principles of the doctrine of the eternal, sovereign will of God in all events, and therefore they are more easily captivated by the allurements of those false teachers, whoever and wherever they are. Perhaps David gives some account of them. He says, "Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues; for I have seen violence and strife in the city. Day and night they go about it, upon the wall thereof. Mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it: wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets. For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him."—Psa. lv. Brethren, it does appear to me that the time is not far distant when the church of Christ will be called upon to pass through trials and temptations as severe as it did fifty years ago, or at the commencement of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Then it will be seen who will be enabled by the Spirit of God to stand fast in the liberty wherewith we are called. Who will be able to stand the fiery darts that will be hurled against them? None but those who are kept by the power of God through faith. O how heartrending it will be to those who live to see that day, when they will have to part with those they took sweet counsel with, and walked with unto the house of God in company.

Brethren, I submit the above to your better judgment. If you give it a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, please correct mistakes. But if I have used words without knowledge, or have said anything to cause the little ones to offend, cast it aside.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality,
J. G. FORD.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Feb. 24, 1886.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—If you think best, please publish the inclosed letter of Elder Martindale. I believe it will be interesting to sinners saved by grace, especially those who were personally acquainted with him. Yours unworthily,
M. VAIL.

HAGARSTOWN, Ind., Feb. 6, 1886.

ELDER MARVIN VAIL—DEAR

BROTHER IN HOPE OF A BLESSED IMMORTALITY:—I have often thought of you and your kind wife since I was at your house, and was so kindly treated. Sister Vail did favor me, for which I felt thankful. I still cherish you in my memory, and also your father and family. I tried to preach at your father's house on Sunday afternoon, and I often think of an expression of your sister after meeting was over. When you came in she said to you, "You have missed a good dish." This did my very soul good, to think that some poor, hungry soul had been fed on the sincere milk of the word. O how amazing and wondrous it is, that God can feed a poor, hungry one by so feeble a one as myself. But I recollect that God could and did feed Elijah by a carrion bird, even a raven; for it brought him meat in the morning and in the evening. Then, my brother, do not be discouraged. You do not know how many are comforted under your ministry. The Lord knows best how to provide for his children. Sometimes we feel discouraged, and think that our preaching is only mockery; but, my dear brother, it is not mockery to preach Christ, the way, the truth and the life; for there is none other name given under heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved. The apostle Paul said, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." All the hope I have of endless bliss is in Jesus and his righteousness; for well do I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. Then I have nothing to rely on but Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Then, if we have this faith, it is an evidence that we have been born again; for every one that is born of God possesses this faith, for it is the fruit of the Spirit. "But without faith it is impossible to please him." Then all mere pretentions to these things will do us no good, because they would not be mixed with faith in us. I am a firm believer in the sentiment that all the ransomed of the Lord shall be born again. Not that the old fleshly man is born over, but the sinner is renewed in the spirit of the mind by the power of God. And when the sinner is convicted of sin by the power of God, he will surely cry, "Lord, be merciful to me, if mercy can in justice be given to such a sinner as I." A child never cries until it is born. We are informed in the Scriptures that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Then and there, when the sinner is pricked in heart, is the time that mourning, lamentation, weeping and repentance begin. Here is a sick soul. "O Lord, what shall I do? I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips." There is no self-righteousness now, no worthiness or merit. What is the matter? I see myself just as I am, without hope and without God in the world. In this way the good Lord leads his children out of self, and from all legal righteousness, and then he reveals himself to them as the chiefest

among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. But it seems to me that all this distress is experienced by the heirs of promise after they are born again; for while they are dead in trespasses and sins they know nothing of this; therefore they love the world and the things of the world. If these things are not some of the evidences that characterize and point out one that has been born again, I know nothing of the working of the power of God in the soul. Such will say, "If saved, it is by grace, all of grace, from first to last." These can and do sing,

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me."

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. If Jesus bore all the sins of his people, then they are all put away by him; and if not, they never can be put away, for Jesus dies no more. The apostle said, "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." I have written more than I expected.

JAMES MARTINDALE.

SIDNEY, Ohio, Dec. 15, 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find two dollars for our dear messenger, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It contains all the preaching I get, and I am lonely without it. The contents are a great comfort to a poor sinner like me, for by them I learn that in some parts of the world Christ is preached as a full and complete Savior, just such a Savior as a poor sinner like me needs. For well I know that if my salvation depends on anything I have done or can do, I have no hope. And sometimes when I lose sight of everything but my sinful self, I think I have been mistaken, and see nothing good to hope for, for the promises are all hid. I cannot claim one until it pleases the dear Lord to drive away the cloud that intervenes. Then I feel that I can trust him, and can say as did one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." And when I call to mind former years, when, as I trust, Jesus, the dear Savior, made me feel that I was a poor, lost sinner, and the time rolled around, which was five years, when it pleased the Lord to speak peace to my soul, O how calm and happy I felt! My soul was full of love to my heavenly Father, and to all I met. I wanted to throw my arms around them and tell them what a dear Savior I had found. He was to me the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. I little thought at that time of the warfare that awaited me. But O the darkness and doubts and fears that have assailed me since those happy days, when all was joy, peace and love. But it is through much tribulation that we enter into rest. I am often made to say,

"Is this, dear Lord, the thorny road
That leads us to the mount of God?
Are these the toils thy people know
While in the wilderness below?"

But I feel that I am nearing the shore of the eternal world, for I am growing old; and what a blessed prospect to all who love the Lord.

Then, dear saints, we will be freed from the monster sin, and our joy will be full.

"O glorious 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."

O how I would love to hear a gospel sermon once more! It was once my happy privilege to meet the dear saints once a month. I cannot tell you, brethren and sisters, how much I enjoyed meeting those dear kindred, I felt so much at home with them. Our dear minister, Elder J. C. Beeman, would come sixty miles once a month, through rain or snow, heat or cold, unless providentially hindered. Then later on I was favored in hearing Elder George Cottrell, another faithful servant, over a year. O that it would please the Lord to send some one to gather together those of his children in Shelby County. "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small."

Now, brethren Beebe, if you can get anything out of this that will not do any harm, you may publish it. I am willing to abide by your judgment.

As ever, your sister in hope,
REBECCA M. CRAFT.

WOODLAND, Cal., Jan. 17, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I have been thinking for some time past of sending for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but it seemed as though I had not the means just at my command; and as I have not seen any late numbers, I begin to feel like I would love to see our old family paper again. It is about three years since I left off taking the SIGNS, as I was so unsettled. Now I think I am settled for the rest of my natural life, in this beautiful town of Woodland. The Old Baptists are very scarce in this part of the world. There are two who came over from Santa Rosa, old brother and sister Romine. They took the SIGNS several years ago. Inclosed please find an order for two dollars, for the ensuing year. Please let us begin with January first. You will please send us the paper, as we want to see if the Old School Baptists still live. I am still the same old "Hard Shell" as ever, having been kept by the power of God, or I should have fallen long ago. I am saved by grace, through faith, and that not of myself. I am no free agent; if so, I would be better than I am. But when I would do good evil is present with me. The apostle says, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." Then how is it that "good people" are going about saving souls? But their doctrine does not correspond with the songs they sing.

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand."

They say they can get off and on at pleasure. Now it seems to me if I could get on and off just as I chose, I should not feel very safe. I should be sure to fall. But I feel to say,

"Firm as his throne his promise stands,
And he can well secure
What I've committed to his hands,
Till the decisive hour."

For what could wash away my stain?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Then it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins. He hath quickened us together with Christ, for by grace are we saved. Bless the Lord, he has saved us, and called us with an holy calling, and our sins and our iniquities shall he remember no more forever against us.

I have written more than I intended when I began. Finally, brethren, farewell.

E. M. HOLLINGSWORTH.

SIoux FALLS, Dakota, Feb. 5, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—You ask, "Has the SIGNS OF THE TIMES outlived its usefulness?" I answer decidedly, for myself and thousands of others, I presume, of the scattered flock over our broad land, No. It is highly edifying, comforting, and next to the Bible the best reading I have. I was startled at the thought of the discontinuation of the SIGNS, and immediately my prayer was, "O my Father, take not this great privilege from me, a poor, unworthy and far off wanderer from all my brethren here below." But as I write this I think of that dear elder Brother who has followed me all my life, although I have often felt he was afar off. I have just finished reading Elder Wm. J. Purington's letter on the Absolute Predestination of All Things, and believe his views are according to Scripture, although it has taken me years to learn this awfully sublime subject. At one time in my life, when my children were young men and women, and I was poor in this world's goods, I had a strong desire to have more of this world's goods for their sakes. So I said in my mind that I would have something, or die in trying to get it. In this state of feeling I was one day riding, when suddenly I was dashed to the ground, a hay fork entering my body just below the short ribs, and coming out between the shoulder blade and spine. What did I gain? A long sickness. Did I die? No, although the physicians pronounced the case fatal. But when I awoke to consciousness my pride was somewhat subdued. In all this chastisement Jesus did not forsake me, but on that bed of languishing and pain were some of my happiest days. Such exalted views of his perfection I had never known before. In this heavenly frame of spirit I forgot bodily pain. On the wings of his love I was carried above all sin and temptation. But language is too feeble and entirely inadequate to express the glories of the great Redeemer. Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy great name be glory, honor, power and thanksgiving, both now and forever.

Yours in a precious hope and fellowship of the gospel,

A. K. ENGLISH.

POLK Co., Oregon., Jan. 19, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—We are a little few here, amid delusion. Many more are the children of the bond-woman than of the free. May the

good Lord keep us in the straight and narrow way. I am now within a few days of my seventy-third year, and I know that I cannot remain long here. When I look back over the eventful years (nearly fifty-five) since I trust the good Lord met with me and spoke peace to my soul, my mind is often led back to the spot in Kentucky where I felt that burden of condemnation and the justice of my banishment from his presence forever. While prostrate on the ground, pleading for mercy, that burden seemed to roll away. Many have been the times I have prayed for the return of that burden, but it did not return. I have long since believed that it is all that I will receive in that way; but hope abides. I have not missed many numbers of the SIGNS since I commenced taking it. We believe the children of our heavenly Father pray for the peace and prosperity of Zion, and for each other in love.

DAVID PARKER.

DANSVILLE, N. Y., March 1, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed please find two dollars for the SIGNS. Apologies for delay might be well, but I prefer thanking you for continuing to send the welcome sheet, which has become a necessity, and affords me all the preaching I have, except as I am occasionally at long intervals favored with a "feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined," by going a long distance for it. In January I was privileged to hear the precious gospel preached by Elders Durand and Bundy, at brother May's house, near Penn Yan, where a goodly number of those who love the truth were gathered, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. The only drawback to my full enjoyment of the occasion was a sense of my utter unworthiness to partake of the heavenly feast. Preliminaries for organizing a church were talked over, a meeting to be held in May for that purpose.

I have been much fed and comforted by the communications and editorials in the SIGNS, especially those on personal experience in the christian warfare, all so fully setting forth the doctrine of salvation by grace, and by grace alone, without one item of creature merit. Agreeing in this, what need of contention about minor differences? I am afraid sometimes there is too much of "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals," in place of charity.

With love to all the saints, truly yours,

P. WEST.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

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

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1886.

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

DANIEL XII. 3.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please give your views on Daniel xii. 3? Who are the two characters mentioned? Does the shining take place in time or eternity?

Yours in hope of eternal life,

PERMELIA CAMERON.

PILOT GROVE, Texas.

REPLY.

"AND they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

As all the prophets give witness to our Lord Jesus Christ, we understand that there is nothing recorded in prophecy that is not fulfilled in Christ; but it does not necessarily follow that we can see that testimony in every page. The natural sun is as brilliant at midnight as at noon, but the darkness of earth coming between us and the fountain of light covers us with that shadow which we call night, so that for the time we have no benefit of the sunlight. As it would be folly to deny the existence of day because darkness envelops us, so it is not consistent to deny the plain record of truth because we cannot comprehend it.

In the immediately preceding context the prophet was moved to declare the coming of Michael, "the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people." This was to be in a time of such trouble as had never been even to that same time; "and at that time thy people shall be delivered, even every one that shall be found written in the book." This was fulfilled in the removal of the legal dispensation when the handwriting of ordinances was nailed to the tree of the cross by the one spotless offering of Michael, our Redeemer. The Lord himself declared that these dreadful calamities must all come in the time of that generation to whom he said, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."—Matt. xxiv. 34. By comparing the discourse of Jesus in connection with this declaration with the prophecy of which our text is a part, it will be seen that the same time and the same events are declared by our Lord to which this prophecy bore witness.

The declaration of the awaking of "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth" does not appear to refer to that general resurrection of the dead, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, "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."—John v. 29. If this had been the specified awaking it would not have been limited to "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth." The characters seem to be the same captives to whom the

Lord speaks by the prophet, saying, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."—Isa. lii. 1, 2. Those waiting and poor ones who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness shall be filled. Such are blessed in their poverty and mourning, while such as find pleasure in living after the flesh will receive the chastening of the Lord at his appearing, as surely as he deals with them as his children. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 6. This chastening is a fearful thing to them on whom it is visited, even though they are not cast off forever. Under the rod of this chastening they feel the pains of hell, and to their mind they are utterly cast down. In this experience they awake to shame and everlasting contempt. In the setting up of the gospel kingdom of Christ there was a terrible display of judgment visited upon the nation of Israel, and many of them who slept in the dust of that earthly sanctuary did awake, some to the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, which is everlasting or eternal life; and some were only aroused to the shame and everlasting contempt of finding that dispensation of carnal ordinances was a dead letter, and their trust in its provisions was vain.

It was in this time of trouble that the God of heaven set up his everlasting kingdom in the establishing of the church of Christ in gospel liberty. Then "they that be wise," or, as it is rendered in the marginal reading, "they that be teachers," "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." As it is written that all the children of the new covenant Zion shall be taught of the Lord, they who are designated as "wise," or as "teachers," can be none other than those who are guided in all their teaching by the unerring Spirit of God, and these are the inspired apostles and prophets who testified the truth as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. "The inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding," therefore they speak the truth of God, which can never fail to shine with the glorious power of its divine Author. This is "the brightness of the firmament." It is only as this divine lustre of eternal truth is revealed in the inspired record that the apostles do "shine as the brightness of the firmament." Those who see only by the light of natural reason behold no more brightness in the inspired Scriptures than they who are literally blind can see in the sunshine. Even the saints who have been blessed to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, cannot always see the testimony of Jesus in the written word. If they could find

that light by merely reading the Scriptures, they would not need the grace of God to guide them. But they are dependent upon the Spirit of truth to show them all things whatsoever the Lord has said unto them. The natural firmament has no brightness of itself, being illuminated by the light of the sun; so, even the inspired apostles glow with eternal radiance only by the light whose fountain is the Sun of righteousness. In this light there is no division of glory between the inspired teachers. Paul and Peter and John are lost in the brightness of this firmament as it glows with the divine glory of Jesus, as stars are concealed in the light of the sun. All the inspired teachers appear wise only in their united and inseparable testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy.—Rev. xix. 10. So, in the vision of Ezekiel the living creatures were themselves covered by their wings, while "their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps; it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning."—Ezek. i. 13. These clearly typify the ministry of Jesus, including apostles, prophets, and all who are sent of God to bear witness to the truth of salvation by grace. The same divine power by which they who are called of God to speak his truth, are sustained as on heavenly wings in their holy ministry, that same power covers them as individuals, so that they all say in spirit with the apostle, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."—1 Cor. iv. 5. Thus, while "they that be wise" shall shine in their appointed place in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord, it is only with that brightness which they receive from him; and that is inseparable as the brightness of the firmament, so that there is no room for boasting, and none can despise his brother as having less of this glory, for the same firmament embraces all in its brightness, for which the most gifted apostle is just as dependent as is the weakest saint. This shining is peculiar to the kingdom of Christ; for in no other people is there such unity as that which glorifies together all them who are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." They who are called with this holy calling "are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."—Rom. xii. 5. Hence, "if one member be honored all the members rejoice with it. Now, ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—1 Cor. xii. 26, 27. This declaration includes "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."—1 Cor. i. 2. Truly, this is the glorious firmament of the electing love of God in which all who are wise unto salvation are embraced; and since all the light of this heaven is in Jesus the Sun of righteousness, none of them who are thus glorified

together in the Lord can claim any brightness but that of the firmament in which they are placed by the eternal purpose of God, "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."—Eph. i. 3-6. As the natural firmament embraces all the material universe, so the all-pervading love of God is the firmament which includes in its heavenly glory all who are saved in the everlasting covenant of grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Since this glory of God "covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise" (Hab. iii. 3), evidently there was no place in the universe for creature boasting. Hence, "the brightness of the firmament" is all the lustre which can be seen in this new creation; and they who are "wise" (or teachers), even though appointed to thrones of judgment as apostles in this everlasting kingdom, can shine with no greater brilliance than "the brightness of the firmament" in which they are placed by the grace of God. In that brightness they shall ever shine as the lights which God has ordained to give light upon the earth of this new created universe. From their decisions there can be no appeal; and they can never conflict or disagree, since they all shine as the brightness of the same firmament, whose light is the revealed presence of the Lord God.—Rev. xxii. 5.

"And they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." In the primary application of this prophecy it clearly describes the inspired apostles, who are the fixed stars in the gospel heaven or firmament. The presumption of worldly religionists who claim ability to convert graceless sinners to the love of righteousness is very clear evidence that they are ignorant of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The power of God exclusively can make sinners love holiness and hate sin; and this work requires that they be killed and made alive. Not even inspired apostles could claim this power. It never was given to any but to the Lord Jesus alone.—John xvii. 2. Those who assert such power in themselves assume to have control of eternal life. But there is a sense in which the saints do "turn many to righteousness," as expressed in the text. The true meaning of the text is explained by the apostle when he says, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—James v. 19, 20. As inspired to judge the twelve

tribes of Israel, the twelve apostles shine forever in their recorded decisions, and in the church of God as princes they rule in judgment to the end of time. By their decisions many are turned to righteousness in the obedience of faith, being guided by the inspired directions to walk according to the law of Christ. Indeed, it is by their inspired words that all the saints are turned to righteousness, since as stars they guide the bewildered pilgrims in their weary sojourn on earth. However the feelings and the fears of the saints may darken their pathway and cause them to halt, the inspired directions of these stars always show the path of life to them who have eyes to see and an ear to hear their testimony. When we are covered by thick clouds so that we see neither sun nor stars in many days, then when again the stars appear they are joyfully seen, for they afford a safe guide to turn our course in the right way. It is not the fault of the stars that we do not know what course to pursue at any time. They are always in their appointed place in the firmament. It is either that we are covered by the mist and fog of our earthly atmosphere, or because of our own defective vision that we cannot see their light. But neither our own blindness nor all the malice of men and devils can ever dim the radiance of these stars. Calmly they testify in their unceasing anthems of joy that glorious truth which fills eternity with the praise of our Redeemer, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. v. 9, 10. This testimony is the one voice of all who are taught of God, and they know its truth by personal experience. They are wise as led by the Spirit into all truth; and guided by that Spirit they are ever identified with the inspired apostles in turning many to righteousness. Thus in the wonderful counsel of God there is no glory given to one of the saints to the exclusion of another: but the crown of triumph upon the dear Redeemer is the joy of every redeemed sinner, and with one voice they cry, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name, give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."—Psalm cxv. 1.

TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS.

NONE but practical printers can understand how extremely difficult it is to avoid mistakes in the publication of such a paper as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The contents being almost entirely original, the copy is manuscript, and there is more liability to err in putting such matter in type than in copying from print. But we are not the less mortified when gross errors appear in our paper. In the blunder to which Elder Stipp called attention in our

last issue the compositor had inserted the little word "was" in the close of the ninth line from the bottom of the first column of page 62, thereby changing the meaning of the entire sentence, and making the writer say what neither he nor any sound Old School Baptist believes. While we deeply regret the blunder, it may be that it has resulted in good, since it has given occasion for our esteemed brother publicly to record his rejection of that heresy with which he had been charged. To his cotemporaries it may not be needful that he should do this, but it may be of service to posterity. Begging the forbearance of our patrons and correspondents, we shall endeavor to be still more guarded to avoid such mistakes in the future.

ERRATA.

IN THE second poem on first column, first page of the SIGNS for April 15, Psalm lxxvii., in the second line of the second verse, read, "refused;" third line read, "considered."

MARRIAGES.

IN North Berwick, Maine, April 3, 1886, by Elder William Quint, Mr. Albert E. Chadbourn and Miss Lavonia P. Hammonds, both of North Berwick, Maine.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of the bereaved family I send you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary of our beloved brother, **Elder John Turnidge**, forty-four years a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The subject of this notice was born May 23, 1816, and fell asleep in Jesus February 20, 1886, being sixty-nine years, eight months and twenty-seven days old when he died. He fell asleep in Jesus at his son's house, brother Joseph Turnidge, of Fern Ridge, Linn Co., Oregon, about fourteen miles southeast from Scio. He left a wife, a poor, aged and infirm mother in Israel, with four sons and several grandchildren, to mourn the absence of a kind and affectionate husband and father; but they mourn not as others who have no hope, as he has left an unmistakable evidence that his happy spirit has gone to be with Christ, which is far better. We deeply sympathize with the bereaved family, and especially our dear aged sister in Christ; but she appears perfectly reconciled to this dispensation of her heavenly Master, having assurance that she has but a few days to remain here in this world of sin and sorrow, when she too shall at her Master's bidding put off her mortal tabernacle and go home where her dear departed husband has gone before, to dwell forever with her dear Lord, who doeth all things well. Three of our departed brother's sons are members of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, and two of them are able ministers of the new and everlasting covenant of grace, namely, Elders Vincent and James Turnidge. Concerning Elder John Turnidge's call by grace, or by whom baptized, I have not been informed. His ministerial labors were performed mostly in the northern part of the state of Missouri. But having very poor health there, in the spring of 1863, he with his family removed to Lawrence County, Missouri, two hundred miles south of his former residence. Here he enjoyed better health, and became acquainted with Elder William Anderson, a bold defender of the doctrine of grace. Here he continued about eight years, and he and Elder Anderson traveled together and reorganized the churches composing the Center Association, which had been destroyed by means of the late war, then brought to a close. And the Lord blessed their labors in a signal manner, by adding to the churches

from time to time such as should be saved. The association likewise was reorganized, and the power and glory of Zion's King was truly manifest in the midst of them. About this time his son, Elder Vincent J. Turnidge, having been put into the ministry, became a fellow-laborer with his father, and they traveled together preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and enjoyed many precious seasons of comfort visiting the churches composing the several associations. Both were great sufferers, brother Vincent J. Turnidge having become severely crippled when a soldier in the war, so he has to go on crutches to this day. In the fall of 1874 he with his family emigrated to Oregon. Here I for the first time saw him, immediately on his arrival, at a three days meeting held with the Lackiamute Church; but living some fifty or sixty miles apart from each other, it was seldom my privilege to be in his company. Here for a time his health appeared to improve; but after awhile he was taken with a violent cough and catarrh in his head, which effected his bronchial tubes to such a degree that he could not swallow anything, although seeming to crave victuals. About four days before he died he called the brethren to his bedside, and prayer was offered by Elder Judson Loofbourrow. He then had them sing the hymn,

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" &c. He then said, "I have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." The day before he died he again called his family and brethren around his bed, and shook hands with them all. Brother Wm. Tucker asked him how he felt. He replied, "All is well; I have been visited by the good Samaritan." He raised his hands and smote them together twice. He was then asked what he saw. He replied, "I cannot talk." Being asked the second time, he said, "I will soon be free." He had the brethren and friends sing almost constantly for the last eight nights of his sojourn on earth. He said, "I am going where singing will never cease." He requested that Elder Daniel Bridges should preach a discourse on the occasion of his funeral, at the Missionary Baptist meeting house, nine miles southeast of Scio, which he did, to a large congregation of attentive hearers, from these words, "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. And as he spoke very short, he was followed by the writer, from the words, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. After which his remains were conveyed a few rods from the meeting house, and deposited in their last resting place on earth, to await the summons from on high, when he shall come forth arrayed in all the panoply and glory of the glorified Jesus, whose full and complete image he shall bear to all eternity.

Our departed brother and bereaved sister, in consequence of his illness, left their own home in Red Prairie, Polk County, and came to Fern Ridge, Linn Co., to live with their son, brother Joseph Turnidge, where he died, and where the bereaved sister is still living.

JOHN STIPP.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, March 20, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—At the request of the bereaved children of Elder Buel Mabon, who departed this life February 13, 1886, at his home in Halcott Center, N. Y., I send the following for insertion in the SIGNS.

Elder Mabon was born in Lexington, Greene County, N. Y., May 23, 1815, the second son of sturdy parents, who were among the early settlers of that section, from whom he took strong characteristics of industry, integrity and morality, which, with developed religious inclinations, gave a long, useful and successful life within this sphere. His opportunities of obtaining an education in early life were limited and meager, but nature had given him good practical common sense, which rendered him what may be termed a self-made man. His opinion and counsel were often sought in business affairs, as shown in his being several times elected

supervisor of his town, and once a representative of his district in the state legislature. His heart and hand were open and responsive to the needy and deserving, and during his lifetime he was a practical and successful farmer, by means of which he leaves a good patrimony for his seven children.

In the winter before he was thirteen years of age, he was baptized by Elder Pettit, in the fellowship of the Lexington Old School Baptist Church, where he continued a member for many years, until he took a letter to the Halcott Church, where he became and remained until the last an active and useful member. By this church he was licensed to preach, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry at a yearly meeting held by this church in July, 1870, where he served as pastor until failing health and other causes prompted him to withdraw his pastoral care. For many years prior to his death he was afflicted with and suffered from calculi, which sometimes prevented him from filling his appointments. Though not eloquent, there was an earnestness in his preaching that carried conviction that the Spirit of the Lord directed. At important meetings of the church, associations, and yearly meetings, where there would be gatherings of ministers, he was retiring, not wishing to press himself forward in a public way, but always had opinions of his own, which were ready and could be given if required from him.

He survived his wife, sister Mabon, but little more than two years (after a period of about forty-six years of pleasant married life), with the youngest child near her majority. Now that he is gone, he will be greatly missed by the church, his brethren and neighbors, but more especially his dear children, all of whom regarded him in the fullest sense and broadest meaning as father. They have no reason to mourn as for those who have no hope, for he has finished his work, and has entered into rest, enjoying the presence of his Redeemer. While visiting him a few days before his demise, though weak in body, he appeared strong and unshaken in the doctrine and faith for which he had long contended. He regretted his many mistakes, among which was that he had not spent more time in the service of his Lord and Master, who was soon to take him from the scenes of time to his eternal home and presence.

His funeral was attended by a large concourse of friends, brethren and neighbors. Elder L. Cass preached from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, and was followed by Elder J. Hewitt in some appropriate and comforting remarks to the family and church. May the Lord reconcile the afflicted to this dispensation of his will, and enable each to say, Not my will, but thine be done.

R. W. SANFORD.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., March 24, 1886.

DIED—At her residence near Mt. Hope, Orange Co., N. Y., on the morning of April 8, 1886, Mrs. Charey Hallock, relict of the late brother Gabriel Hallock. She was born June 10, 1809, and was a daughter of Thomas Helms. Many years ago she professed a hope in the Savior of sinners, and on profession of her faith was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the fellowship of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, of which she ever remained a consistent and beloved member. She was possessed of a very meek and quiet spirit, and endeared herself to all her friends and brethren. Her children mourn the departure of a kind and gentle mother, and the church one of her ornaments. Two sons and five daughters survive her.

The funeral occurred at her late residence on Monday, the 10th, when Elder Benton Jenkins preached to a large gathering of relatives and friends, using as a text, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c.—Job xix. 25, 26. Her mortal body was laid by the side of that of her husband, in the cemetery of the New Vernon Church, he having preceded her about eighteen months.

"In hope of life eternal given,
Behold, a pardoned sinner dies;
A chosen, blood-bought heir of heaven,
Called to her mansion in the skies."

J.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in the city of Baltimore, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (19th), 1886, and continue three days.

A cordial invitation is hereby extended to all who desire to attend the association, both ministers and members. All those who do not know where they are to be entertained during the meeting, who come to Baltimore on Tuesday, will call at Dr. John Thorne's, No. 169 North Calvert St., where they will be directed to homes during the association. Those who come on Wednesday will come direct to the place of meeting on Madison Street, near Calvert, where they will be provided for. We hope for a pleasant and profitable meeting together in the name of the Lord.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May (26th), 1886, and continue the two following days.

The brethren and friends who come to the Delaware Association through Philadelphia will please take the train leaving Broad Street depot at four o'clock on Tuesday p. m., change cars at Wilmington, and take the train at foot of Market Street at 5.40 p. m., for Landinburg. About six of the number will please get off at Hockessin, and the rest at Landinburg. Those coming through Baltimore will all come to Newark depot, leaving Baltimore about three o'clock p. m. the same day.

We hope for and will be glad to see a goodly number of brethren and friends. We hope they will have it in their hearts to visit us, and that they will be permitted to do so.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (2d), 1886, and continue three days.

As the place of holding the Delaware River Association has been changed from Washington, South River, Middlesex Co., N. J., to Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., please insert in the SIGNS the following:

All who attend the above named association, coming by the way of New York City, will take passage on cars leaving foot of Liberty Street, and those coming by way of Philadelphia City will take passage on cars leaving Ninth and Green Streets, or Third and Berks Streets. Be sure and purchase tickets for Hopewell, as some express trains do not stop here. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us, and we shall try to make all feel that they are welcome. We hope the brethren in the ministry will not forget us at the time of our association.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (9th), 1886, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west by the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. will be met at Howell's Depot on the arrival of the way train from the west, at 1 p. m., and on the arrival of the Orange County Express from the east, which leaves foot of Chambers Street, New York, at 4.30 p. m., arriving at Howells 7.15 p. m. All will come on Tuesday to Howell's Depot, as there will be no train on Wednesday in time for the meeting.

Those coming from the north by the N. Y., O. & W. Railroad will be met at Winterton on Tuesday, on the arrival of the mail train at about 5 p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to meet with us.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (16th), 1886, and continue three days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord permit, with Honey Creek Church, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m., and two following days. Brethren and friends coming by railroad conveyance from the east and southeast, and coming by the way of Mansfield or Vernon, on the C. C. C. R. R., first train in the morning leaves Mansfield for Toledo, by the way of Bloomville, where all should stop, finding teams to convey them to places of entertainment and to the meeting. The second train from Mansfield arrives at Bloomville at two p. m. Those coming from the west and southwest, from Toledo to Tiffin, will come right through to Bloomville; and those that come on other roads to Tiffin will change cars at Tiffin and take train at Pennsylvania Depot, to come to Bloomville. The first train in the morning from the west arrives at Bloomville at ten o'clock a. m. The second train arrives at Bloomville at 8.30 p. m. All must be at Bloomville on Thursday to meet the conveyances which will be there to convey them to places of entertainment. On that day (Thursday) teams will be there waiting for passengers on the arrival of every train from every direction.

LEWIS SEITZ.

THE Turkey River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa, with West Fork Church, commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, and continue two days following. Hampton is accessible on the Iowa Central R. R., also on a branch called the D. D. R. R., from Waverly, Bremer County. A cordial welcome to all who love the truth as it is in Jesus.

PAUL SOHNER.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is appointed to be held at the house of J. May, near Penn Yan, Yates Co., N. Y., commencing on Wednesday before the second Sunday in May, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m. Those coming via Syracuse, Geneva & Corning R. R. to Dresden will find a train to take passengers to May's Mill Station, where the meeting is to be held. Those coming via Northern Central R. R. will find the depot of the Penn Yan & Dresden R. R. (a branch of the Syracuse, Geneva & Corning R. R.) near by, which will take passengers to May's Mill Station. Connections will be quite good on the noon train going north, and the five o'clock train going south, at Penn Yan. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. MAY.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

W. L. Vannorman 2, Miss F. E. Brasswell 2, Eli Warren 2, Wm. L. Stegall 2, Samuel Brady 2, John T. Crooks 2, Joseph Lewis 2, H. J. Burroughs 2, John Burroughs 2, Elder J. D. H. Price 2, C. Thomson 2.—Total \$22 50.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

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This work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post office order,

by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

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P. G. LESTER.

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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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.

Any person who is not now a subscriber, by sending his remittance in addition to the new ones he sends, can have the same advantage of these rates; but his own subscription must not be counted as one of the new subscribers.

The "Signs of the Times,"

DEVOTED TO THE
OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,
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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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We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size of the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1886.

NO. 10.

POETRY.

JOHN XVI. 18.

"WHAT is this that he saith, A little while?"

O for the peace that floweth like a river,
Making life's desert places bloom and smile;
O for the faith to grasp heaven's bright "for-
ever,"
Amid the shadows of earth's "little while."
"A little while" for patient vigil keeping,
To face the storm, to wrestle with the
stroug;
"A little while" to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest
song.
"A little while" to wear the robe of sadness,
To toil with weary steps through erring
ways;
Then to pour forth the fragrant oil of glad-
ness,
And clasp the girdle of the robe of praise.
"A little while," 'mid shadow and illusion,
To strive by faith Love's mysteries to
spell;
Then read each dark enigma's clear solution,
Then hail light's verdict, "He doth all
things well."
"A little while" the earthen pitcher taking
To wayside brooks, from far off fountains
fed;
Then the parched lip its thirst forever slak-
ing,
Beside the fullness of the Fountain-head.
"A little while" to keep the oil from failing;
"A little while" faith's flickering lamp to
trim;
And then, the Bridegroom's coming footstep
hailing,
To haste to meet him with the bridal hymn.
And he who is at once the Gift and Giver,
The future glory and the present smile,
With the bright promise of the glad "for-
ever,"
Will light the shadows of the "little while."

MATTHEW XIV. 27.

"BUT straightway Jesus spake unto them,
saying, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not
afraid."

TOSSED with rough winds, and faint with fear,
Above the tempest, soft and clear,
What still small accents greet mine ear?
'Tis I; be not afraid.

'Tis I, who led thy steps aright;
'Tis I, who gave thy blind eyes sight;
'Tis I, thy Lord, thy Life, thy Light;
'Tis I; be not afraid.

These raging winds, this surging sea,
Bear not a breath of wrath to thee;
That storm has all been spent on me;
'Tis I; be not afraid.

This bitter cup fear not to drink;
I know it well, O do not shrink;
I tasted it o'er Kedron's brink;
'Tis I; be not afraid.

Mine eyes are watching by thy bed;
Mine arms are underneath thy head;
My blessing is around thee shed;
'Tis I; be not afraid.

When on the other side thy feet
Shall rest 'mid thousand welcomes sweet,
One well known voice thy heart shall greet,
'Tis I; be not afraid.

From out the dazzling majesty
Gently he'll lay his hand on thee;
'Twas not in vain I died for thee;
'Tis I; be not afraid.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"FOR as in Adam all die, even so in Christ
shall all be made alive."—1 Cor. xv. 22.

How incomprehensible are the principles of death and life. How mysterious are the works of God, who hath made all for his own glory. Vain man may try to search out the deep mysteries of his will; but "As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." Carnal reason can no more fathom his ways, than finite minds can comprehend his immutable will. Carnal reason may vainly attempt to grasp the impenetrable depth of mystery involved in this awful and sublime subject, but it can only be known as God in his infinite wisdom is pleased to reveal it to his saints. All is left on record for them that they need to know. Any views that are not in harmony with that record and with the law of liberty written in the heart of every heaven-born child, must of necessity be false, and should be abandoned. Herein is set forth a parallel case by the apostle Paul, for the comfort and consolation of every child of grace, every one realizing a hope in Christ. The apostles and prophets have left on record evidences that they were men of like passions as we, subjected to like trials, temptations, doubts and fears; and they, moved by the Holy Ghost, have written all that is necessary for our comfort. And as the things written aforetime were written for our learning, and as all things written and left on record for us by them are in harmony with themselves, they are often but a more explicit rehearsal of things spoken before; but now, applying the same to the subject under consideration, it is needful often for us to take up a subject with all its bearings, comparing the scriptural testimony directly treating on the subject under consideration. And as the first clause of our text presents a type or figure of the second, it is necessary that we first ascertain by scriptural testimony how or why "in Adam all die," keeping in view the subject under consideration in this chapter; for he is speaking of the resurrection of the dead, and uses this figure as an assuring testimony that all that are in Christ shall be raised to life immortal and eternal. The apostle Paul further reasons, by setting forth the two heads or progenitors of the two bodies or generations; one natural and mortal, the other spiritual and immortal. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." "And

so it is written, The first man Adam [first in order of time or manifestation] was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening Spirit." He also declares that the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural; was only the embodiment of a natural seed or generation; was of the earth, earthy; consequently was incapable of imparting spiritual, immortal life. For "as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy." Adam said to Eve, when she was made of a rib taken from his own side and brought unto him, "This (is) now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Then they were one in life, one in nature, one in relation; consequently their progeny must be the same. The birth or development of untold generations involve no new creation, but are only Adam multiplied. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth," "and 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."—Acts xvii. 24-26. Then it is only by virtue of all Adam's unborn posterity being one with him by vital relation, and embodied in and one with him when he violated God's righteous law, and fell under its condemnatory sentence, that the dread sentence passed upon all. "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. None of Adam's apostate race are exempt; time cannot obliterate the sentence. Though generation upon generation have come and passed away, none are exempt. Their sinful, degenerate nature is still as old as their degenerate head. All are remanded back to their mother dust. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Paul writing to the Roman brethren asserts this continual reign of death, and vividly portrays the two headships of the two generations, declaring that this first Adam "is the figure of him that was to come." And he very clearly illustrates that Adam in his transgression embodied all his posterity; they were all in him when he transgressed, and were by the offense of one man all plunged into condemnation, by vital relation, unity and identity with him when he committed the offense. "Wherefore 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 unto justification of life."—

Rom. v. 18. Thus the judgment of God was pronounced on all that should ever be born of Adam's earthly nature. Thus "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Even those of Adam's race which are redeemed and quickened by the second Adam, which is "the Lord from heaven," are all included in this universal mortality that came upon the entire race by sin. "In Adam all die; even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Now let us trace this figure as declared by the apostle. "For as in Adam all die;" that is, on the nature we receive from Adam death is indelibly stamped, and our Adamic nature must die; for the judgment, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," will not permit one of Adam's degenerate race to escape. Even so all who are quickened by the second Adam, who is the quickening, eternal, life-giving Spirit, are a chosen generation, a spiritual seed; and in that life which was given them in Christ before the world began, which was treasured up from everlasting, which is by them experimentally received in their new and spiritual birth, they bear the same relation and unity with Christ which is prefigured by their carnal, earthly relation to the earthly Adam in their fleshly descent from him. And notwithstanding their outward man is mortal, corruptible, and decayeth, they have in Christ, as a seed, a life that cannot die. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Thus figuratively setting forth the Bible doctrine of that spiritual, eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested (1 John i. 2), and which was given to all the children of God in Christ, when Christ was given the Head over all to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.—Eph. i. 22, 23. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12. "As in Adam all die," even so all that chosen generation (1 Peter ii. 9), that seed that shall serve him (Psalm xxii. 30), that God hath blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in him (Christ, the second Adam) before the foundation of the world, redeemed by his blood (Eph. i. 3-7), called by his grace, in Christ shall be made alive. Now as in Adam, "who is

the figure of him that was to come," sin is imputed to, and death is entailed on all his seed, in consequence of their relation to and unity with him, even so, or by virtue of that spiritual, vital relation and unity of spiritual life with Christ, all his spiritual seed were one with him when he in their flesh bore their sins in his own body on the cross; when he fulfilled, honored and magnified the law; when he sank in the deep waters of death; when he arose again for their justification. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."—Isa. xxvi. 19. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (or set apart in him); and their glorious Head has pledged himself to raise them up at the last day, and they shall never perish, with the consoling assurance, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Now, with the foregoing testimony, we can readily see the harmony of such scriptural declarations as, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."—Luke xxiv. 46, 47. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold, I and the children which God hath given me." As compared with Psalm xl. 6-9; Isaiah liii.; Heb. x. 5-10. "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. 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: for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."—Heb. ii. 10-18. Then we see there is a *behooval* (and not a mere voluntary substitution), a needs be, to make the sacrifice perfect. "It is Christ that died." When we speak of Christ's atoning blood, we should be careful not to teach the commonly received Arminian theory of a vicarious substitution, for by so doing "judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot

enter."—Isa. lix. 14. And when such views are prevalent, "He that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." If I with one of my members commit a crime worthy of death, the cutting off of that member will not satisfy the demands of the law which requires the life of that member. So also the body of Christ: one or all of his members could not satisfy the demands of the law of divine justice, which required the life, the Head. But when all the penal demands of the law are met, the life, the Head, is given for the members, plenary satisfaction is rendered, and the law is satisfied, magnified and made honorable. He has redeemed them, not only from death, but from guilt and condemnation. "The works of his hand are verity and judgment. All his commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness." He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant forever: holy and reverend is his name." Then to know him in the fellowship of his sufferings, we must first be made conformable unto his death; must experimentally become dead to the law by the body of Christ. "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." We must first follow him experimentally through the deep waters of the dark valley of the shadow of death, before we can know him and be partakers of his joys, whom to know is life everlasting. Hear him as typified by the psalmist, while viewing and bearing the sins of his members: "Withhold not thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me. For innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head: therefore my heart faileth me."—Psalm xl. 11, 12. Also, "Save me, O Lord, 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," &c.—Psalm lxxix. 1, 2. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." They are also chosen in the furnace of affliction, and that for God's own glory.—See Isaiah xlvi. 10, 11. And "in their afflictions they will seek me early."—Hosea. v. 15. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth *him* out of them all." But the unrighteous seed are not so; for "there are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. Their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart could wish." "They anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph." "They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the

earth. Therefore his people return hither, and the waters of a full cup are wrung out to them." His members must follow him through all his journey, must experimentally realize their condemnation to death by sin under God's righteous law, their deliverance from death and guilt under that law; must follow in all his temptations, sorrows and afflictions, being partakers of his sufferings, that they may be also of his joys. Then, "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." And when they have filled their lot here, they must meet the grim monster, death, and be raised to their eternal inheritance. "But some will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" Now Paul declares this to be a foolish question, and it would be heaven-daring presumption on our part to try to elucidate clearly to the mind what the inspired writer has declared "a mystery." We dare not speculate, but must be directed by the testimony left on record for us by the inspired writers. All is there written that we need to know; to go beyond this is but to launch into a fathomless sea of speculation, with neither chart, compass nor rudder, consequently can only drift with every wind of doctrine. Yet notwithstanding it is a mystery, it is declared to be a mysterious truth, and we dare not deny the crowning act of redemption, the crowning hope of all that are in Christ Jesus our Lord. For although the redeemed of the Lord "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," and in that sinful, earthly nature were included in the judgment to universal condemnation, and must die, yet as the recipients of the free gift, being born of incorruptible seed, the Lord will in the resurrection "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." "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain: it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." To Adam's seed is given a natural, mortal, earthly and corruptible body, being born of corruptible seed, which dieth and decayeth. To Christ's seed is given a spiritual, immortal, heavenly and incorruptible body, being born of incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a

living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit. 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. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." But as Christ only hath immortality (1 Tim. vi. 16), they only who are born of God are partakers of his immortality. Unto all of them he gives eternal life, and they shall never perish.—John x. 28. The death of all the sons of Adam who are not partakers of the life and immortality of Christ, leaves them in death, being condemned already (John iii. 18), and shall not see life. However, they shall come forth; not unto the resurrection of life, but unto the resurrection of damnation (John v. 29), raised to a state of endless death. Death is the only heritage they have received in Adam. As sin hath reigned unto death, even so grace hath reigned through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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, meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thes. iv. 14-18. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Whatever may be the difference of views of men here in this time state concerning this glorious mystery, or the many jars and discords that they are heir to, when this is consummated, and all the redeemed of the Lord enter into the full fruition of their hope, they will with one voice, without a discordant note or dissenting voice, ascribe all praise, glory and honor unto God, saying, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "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." This is the foundation and capstone of the hope of the humble writer.

The foregoing has been written by piecemeal, in the midst of many carking cares, and if it should ever come before my brethren my desire is that they will cast over it the mantle of charity, yet measure it by the unerring standard of truth; and if found too short, stretch to the line; if found too long, cut down to the standard. But in all things and at all times "let brotherly love continue." In great affliction, yet in humble hope, I will subscribe myself your brother in the fellowship of the truth,

ALBERT DAVIS.

FOREST CITY, Mo., Sept. 1, 1885.

SCIO, Linn Co., Oregon, April 16, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In looking over some of the back numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I see in No. 12, Vol. 53, the following:

"MECOSTA, Mich., June 1, 1885.

WILL brother John Stipp, of Oregon, please give his view on Zechariah vi. 12, 13, and oblige a pilgrim?

STEPHEN HAMMOND."

The passage which brother Hammond asks for information on reads thus: "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is THE BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." This was written at the time of the return of the Jews to Jerusalem from their seventy years of captivity in Babylon, the Babylonians having destroyed the city, and the temple at Jerusalem they burned with fire. Zechariah, being one of the captives, and a prophet of the Lord, prophesied concerning the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem. As it is written, commencing at verse nine, "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Take of them of the captivity, even of Hildai, of Tobijah, and of Jediah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah; then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is THE BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord," &c. Here is a plural noun (crowns), which signifies more than one; doubtless there are two crowns; the one to represent his kingly authority, and the other his priestly authority. These were made of silver and gold, and were set upon the head of Joshua, the high priest, who was a figure of the Branch, even our "great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God." It would appear almost need-

less to undertake to prove that this Branch is the Lord Jesus Christ, when it is so plainly set forth here. Nevertheless I will quote a few corresponding Scriptures. "Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at: for behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. For behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua, upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."—Chap. iii. 8, 9. "In that day [gospel day] shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent," &c.—Isaiah iv. 2. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord," &c.—Isa. xi. 1, 2. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."—Jere. xxiii. 5, 6. Again, "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land," &c.—Jer. xxxiii. 15. Now let us compare Isaiah xi. 1, 2, "And there shall come forth a root out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots," &c., with our text, Zech. vi. 12, "Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord." Here we see that this Branch of righteousness had a place in the roots of Jesse, out of which he grew. And the Lord saith, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."—Rev. xxii. 16.

We will now go back to the type. History gives an account of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon thus: "The captives were treated not as slaves, but as colonists. There was nothing to hinder a Jew from rising to the highest eminence in the state (Dan. ii. 48), or holding the most confidential office near the person of the king (Neh. i. 11). The advice of Jeremiah (xxix. 5, &c.) was generally followed. The exiles increased in numbers and in wealth. They observed the Mosaic law (Esther ii. 8), they kept up distinctions of rank among themselves (Ezek. xx. 1), their genealogical tables were preserved, and they were at no loss to tell who was the rightful heir to David's throne. They had neither place nor time of national gatherings, no temple, and they offered no sacrifice. But the right of circumcision and

their laws respecting food, &c., were observed."—Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, page 138. Now seeing that these Jews had returned unto the land of their nativity, it became necessary for them to re-establish their kingdom and their priestly offerings, and rebuild their temple as set forth in the prophecy of Zechariah. Hence we read, "And he shewed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by."—Zech. iii. 1-5. "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? 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."—Zech. iv. 1-10. I have thought that Zerubbabel and Joshua were types of the man whose name is The Branch, who should grow up out of his place (*i. e.*, the root of Jesse), that should build the temple of the Lord; Zerubbabel representing his kingly office, and Joshua representing his priestly office. They, as a type, were appointed to build, or rather rebuild, a temporal temple; but the man whose name is The Branch, as the great antitype, was appointed of old, even from everlasting, to build the spiritual temple of the Lord. "Even he shall build the [spiritual] temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne." Even him who "hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords."—Rev. xix. 16. "Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords."—1 Tim. vi. 15. "The King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God," &c.—1 Tim. i. 17. "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."—Isa. xxxii. 1, 2. "Even the man whose name is The Branch."—Zech. vi. 12. We must bear in mind that during the seventy years of the captivity of the Jews, they had neither king, kingdom nor priesthood. For we read, "And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city [Jerusalem,] and there was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: now the Chaldees were against the city round about: and the king went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah [the king] before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon. And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: and he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire."—2 Kings xxv. 3-9. Thus you see that so far as the heirship to the throne of Judah was concerned, it was cut off in the slaying of the sons of Zedekiah, the king. And the king of Babylon put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and brought him to Babylon, and slew him there. So there was a suspension to the throne and priesthood of Judah and Israel for the space of seventy years, until the return of their captivity, and the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem by Cyrus, king of Persia.—See Ezra i. But "The man whose name is The Branch" should not only sit and rule as a King upon his throne, but he should also be a Priest upon his throne: not in the polluted city of Jerusalem, defiled with the blood of the prophets and martyrs of Jesus, but in the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the great King, whose kingdom is not of this world. And he was not anointed King and Priest by man, who is of the earth, nor with oil which is the product of the earth, but with the Holy Ghost, by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; as it is written, "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: he is Lord of all: that word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power," &c.—Acts x. 36-38. Again, "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." We will now turn our attention to the manner of his anointing. We read, "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased."—Luke iii. 21, 22. Now let us compare this with John i. 32, 33, which reads thus: "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." So we see that the heavenly Dove never flew off and left him. This is how God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power. And he was anointed King and Priest at one and the same time. And Luke further saith, "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness," &c. "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."—Luke iv. 1, 14-19. The Lord saith concerning Cyrus, his anointed king, "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts."—Isa. xlv. 13. King Cyrus, as a type of the man whose name is The Branch, was appointed by the God of heaven to let go the captives of Judah and Israel from the Babylonian captivity, and rebuild the city and temple at Jerusalem, which were only typical, and merely temporal. But the great antitypical Cyrus, whose name is The Branch, was appointed by the God of heaven, from the ancients of eternity, in an everlasting covenant, to let go God's captives, who are shut up in prison, under the curse of a violated law, and are

in bondage under sin and Satan. As it is written, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." "And he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water."—Zech. ix. 9-11. "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children."—Isa. xlix. 24, 25. But the man whose name is The Branch is not only a King to sit and rule upon his throne, but he is also a Priest upon his throne, which is an eternal throne, as testified by the Father. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."—Heb. i. 8. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. i. 11. And of his priesthood the Father also testified, saying, "For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, the Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vii. 21. "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." This is the man whose name is The Branch, that shall build the temple of the Lord: not the temple made with hands, of which Christ saith that there should not be left one stone upon another that should not be thrown down; but as King and Priest he should build the temple of the Lord made without hands. "And the counsel of peace shall be between them both;" *i. e.*, as King and Priest, or between his kingdom and his priesthood, that there should be a perfect union between the two. Herein is set forth the manner of the building of the temple, that the man whose name is The Branch is building, and who shall bear all the glory. "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively [or living, marg.] stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."—1 Peter ii. 4, 5. Again, "Now therefore ye [Gentiles] are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being

the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. 19-22. "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—2 Cor. vi. 16. John, in his description of the holy city, New Jerusalem, saith, "And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 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. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it."—Rev. xxi. 21-24.

Brethren editors, I submit the foregoing to you for your disposal, and if published, then in general to all the readers of the SIGNS, and especially to the consideration of brother S. Hammond.

Yours in brotherly love,
JOHN STIPP.

DAYTON, W. T., Dec. 21, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I feel inclined to-night to offer a few reflections on John x. 12; and if my views on this testimony of the inspired John should differ somewhat from those of my dear brethren, I hope that none of them will be offended with me. It has rested with considerable weight on my mind for some weeks past to give my views on the above named passage to the readers of the SIGNS. But that I be not further tedious unto you, I will transcribe the verse and proceed.

"But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep." First, it may be proper in this place to remark that it is possible that the translators have here, as in other places, retained the Greek transposition; for my opinion is that if the English transposition had been given it would read thus: "And the wolf catcheth the sheep and scattereth them." But not having time to discuss this matter, I will leave it for scholars and critics.

Three opinions have been advanced with regard to the wolf and the sheep, and also the hireling. The first of these I shall notice is that held by those who hold the so-called doctrine of falling from grace, drawn from a misconception of the teaching of Paul in his letter to the Galatians; and carrying that to this parable of Jesus, they suppose that the Savior teaches in this twelfth verse that the wolf (whom they suppose to be Satan) is permitted to enter the sure habitation of the children of God, and to kill and destroy them; notwithstanding the parable teaches exactly the opposite, and inculcates the blessed doctrine of the final perseverance and preservation of the saints, and on the

same grounds, the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, as set forth in Romans viii., wherein Paul challenges earth and hell, saying, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again." Now, to escape the deductions of those who believe more in apostasy than in Jesus Christ, some have held that the wolf catcheth not the sheep, but the hireling; which, as an abstract proposition, may be true when applied to false teachers, but not at all deducible from this text; for the pronoun them has for its antecedent the noun sheep. Again, some holding the same general error have supposed that the wolf, or the devil, is permitted to enter the fold of Christ, and to catch, worry and scatter the sheep, but not to kill them.

I have been thus particular to set forth the three opinions, which are alike erroneous, originating in a misunderstanding of the design of this parable, and now I will as briefly as possible express my understanding of our Lord's design. And first we will notice that the two parables in this chapter are different from the parables in Matthew xiii., and in other places, which are designed to show a likeness or similarity; and a rule is also given, and exemplifies this rule by explaining and applying some of them. Thus when the Master would convey a spiritual truth by illustration, he would compare it to something in nature; as, for example, wheat, mustard seed, net, &c. I call these parables of similarity. But the two parables in John x. are parables of dissimilarity; that is, they are unlike. Now to the subject, the good shepherd, the hireling, the sheep and the wolf. In the first of these parables Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." You will mark the difference here. At the seventh verse he begins the second parable. "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers." (I wish the difference between the good Shepherd and the thieves distinctly noted). "I am the door: by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find [not a wolf, but] pasture." This gives the key to the correct understanding of verse seven. "The thief cometh not but for to kill, and to steal, and to destroy. I am come that they [the sheep] might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is a hireling, and not the Shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them [the sheep], and scattereth the sheep." I would love to comment on this whole connection here, but time and space forbid. But having

rambled to this point, I will endeavor to give a short statement of my views on the twelfth verse, and leave them with my brethren to compare with the word of God. The Lord here teaches that he is the good Shepherd, that he is the owner of the sheep, that they were given to him, and that there is life union between him and them, in consequence of which it behooved him to suffer and die for them; and therefore they shall never perish, be killed, nor scattered away from him; that he leads them into a place of safety, a sure resting place; that no weapon formed against them shall prosper, and that they shall condemn every tongue that shall rise against them; and lastly and negatively, that they are not at all subject to the vicissitudes which sheep are subject to under hirelings, who have no right or property, and not under obligation by covenant with the owner, but simply employed to take the ordinary care of the sheep of his charge. In short, the devil is never permitted to invade the sure dwelling of God's people in Christ Jesus.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine, April 2, 1886.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I now inform you that I received your welcome letter in due time, and that I am always glad to receive letters from any of God's children, and especially from those that I have associated with in the past in the worship of God. You having seen in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary of Vesta O. Ramsdall, and what she said to me before she died, in asking for my light upon that passage of Scripture in the fourteenth chapter of John, "In my Father's house are many mansions," &c., and that I preached at her funeral from the same words, would like for me to write down the sermon and send the same to you, as you have had a travel of mind upon the same. I cannot write down the sermon, but I can write out some of the main points of the sermon. I will first say that Vesta, in the talk that I had with her, wanted to know if the children of God live in this house with the many mansions, in their christian experience here in the flesh, or is it after they are taken to their eternal home. I will now say that it is in this world that they live in this house with its many mansions. Christ, in this gospel day, has set up housekeeping. The church is his bride, and he is her husband. And as he is the head and law giver to govern the house, there are many mansions in this house, just enough for the whole family to be schooled in and to be taught in every part of their experience while they live in the flesh. There is a mansion for the children to be born in, where they are well cared for, and are fed with milk. But they being babes, are unskillful in the word of God, and do not know that they are children by birth. The first that they are taught is to believe in God, and there they see that God's law is just and good; but they are carnal, sold under sin. Here is where they see

their own just condemnation, and soon become fully satisfied that they cannot do anything to satisfy the demands of that righteous law; cannot see any way that God can save them and remain just. They then have that heart trouble that only can be known by those that have felt the same. Now if this was the only mansion in this house for them to be schooled in, they must sink down forever in despair. But they soon are taken into another mansion, where the good Teacher says to them, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions." Then and there this great Teacher explains himself so plainly to them that they do believe in him, and everything that condemned them in the other mansion is removed out of the way; for they see Christ, the Son of God, in his birth, in his life, in his blood on the cross, and also see all the sins of the children of God laid upon him, and by him carried into the land of forgetfulness, never to be remembered again. So by the body of Christ they have become dead to the law, that they shall have clear sunshine all their journey, until they are taken to their eternal home. Now if they could have their way, they would stop in this mansion until death. But they are soon taken into another mansion, where they see that in themselves there are two minds, a fleshly mind and spiritual mind, and that these are in opposition one to the other, so much so that they cannot do the things that they would, and are made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Here the Teacher informs them that in themselves, that is, in their flesh, there is no good thing, and that if they were dealt with according to their works they never could be saved; for all their own righteousness is like filthy rags, so that they are wholly dependent upon what Christ has done for eternal salvation. He also teaches them that he has chosen them out of the world, and in the furnace of affliction, and that this is to purify them as gold and silver is purified; and that their seeing themselves such great sinners is all in their favor; for he came into this world, not to save good people, but sinners. They then have a travel of mind that they never had before: for the gospel preached pricks them in their heart, so that they cry out, "What shall we do?" Here the Teacher says to them, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 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." When the children have strength to enter into this mansion, then they are married unto him, and receive the name Christians; for they have turned their backs upon the world, to follow him in his commands, through evil as well as good report. This is Christ's (not man's) Sabbath

School. In this mansion some are schooled and made willing in the day of God's power to preach the gospel, and others are schooled to hear and understand the word when preached, having their pure minds stirred by way of remembrance, and can say, Amen. Now as some are taught to preach, some to pray with the Spirit and with the understanding, some to exhort the children in the way of God, some to sing with the Spirit and understanding, and some to hear in the Spirit understandingly, is it any wonder that they gather together from the east, west, north and south, to worship God in spirit and in truth? It would be beyond me to mention all the mansions in this house, so I will come to the last one, which is the one to die in. We, while in the other mansions, often look forward to this mansion, and sometimes try to understand the experience in that mansion; but it is always beyond our grasp. But God has fitted it well for every one of his children when they pass into it, and they will be enabled to say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The above letter was written to an aged sister Macomber, in Jay, Maine. As I have not written anything for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, except obituaries and corresponding letters, I will send this to her through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If you should think best not to publish it, send it back to me, and all will be right with me.

WM. QUINT.

LOUDOUN COUNTY, Va.

DEAR FRIENDS:—It seems that my mind is directed to write my experience, which I will try to do as I may be enabled by the Lord; for of myself I can do nothing. I went to Sabbath School from my earliest recollection, and thought that was the only way through which I might be saved. When I was twelve years old I attended a protracted meeting at Bloomfield, Virginia. I felt that I was a sinner, and, true to the nature of Adam, I thought I must perform some good work through which I might be saved. I thought the Methodists were the only good people I knew. They told me to come forward to the mourners' bench, and exhorted me with many such words as, "They that seek me early shall find me." "Now is the day of salvation. Now is the accepted time." Not knowing the true meaning of them, I went forward and professed conversion. I lived contented and happy for four years, when a feeling came over me that I cannot describe, and which I thought resulted from not performing my religious duties as I should. I tried to live more zealously, but could not get over that feeling. I thought the Old School Baptists were the oldest fogies, who thought nobody but themselves would be saved. At last I went to their meeting. Elder Badger preached, and he told my feelings better than I could have told them myself, which set me to thinking.

But soon Satan came with his cunning craftiness, and I thought I ought to be ashamed of myself to listen to such "standstill doctrine," as it was called. I was afraid that some of the Sabbath School scholars would hear of it. I went on, trying to do better, but did worse. I could not forget the words I heard that day, nor could I feel satisfied with the Methodist preaching. I continued in that state for nearly two years, when it seemed to me that I was a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God, and could do nothing to merit my salvation; that if I ever was saved, it would be through free, rich and reigning grace; that if I was lost, it was no more than I deserved. I loved the Old School Baptists better than any other people in the world, and could have no more love for the Methodists, and quit going with them. At times I was delighted with Elder Badger's preaching. It seemed that sometimes I could hope that I was one of the chosen ones, for it was plain to me now that only those for whom Jesus died would be saved. But then the thought that I was deceived would come, and then I would be left in darkness and gloom. I continued in this state nearly a year. I attended the association at Ebenezer last August, and I never enjoyed a meeting so before. It seemed as if a heavenly light shone on every face. The words that fell from those dear ministers' lips fell like drops of rain on dry and parched ground. Many of the dear people came home with us, and O how I enjoyed hearing them tell of the love and mercy of God. But on Saturday after I thought how wicked I had been to feel thus, when I had not the least right of enjoying such things. Elder Durand came home with us on Friday, and preached at Philomont on Saturday evening. O how I felt! I cannot describe it. I spent a restless night. On Sunday morning he preached at the association ground from the words, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," &c. He explained the inheritance of the saints, and the thought came to me, What a blessed inheritance. O if I were only worthy to be an heir. Then these words came to me, By his strength ye are made strong. By his stripes are ye healed. O how happy I was. It seemed as if I could see the ground for my hope. I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It was then that I heard that shout of joy that goes up from every redeemed one. I trusted not in myself, but could look to Jesus, in whom all fullness dwells. I could see that it was not for good works that we could do, but the merits of Jesus' blood, which had power to cleanse even wicked me. I left that ground and those dear people with the happiest feelings I had ever felt. I came home, got the Bible to look for the text, and opened to the words, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death:

that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." It seemed to me that my duty was clearly set forth in these words. I desired to be baptized above all things. My desire became so great that I could conceal it no longer. I told dear sister Garrett (with whom I live) my feelings. She spoke words to me that comforted me, and made me rejoice to know that we had been taught the same. It seemed to me as if our meeting day would never come, I had such a desire to follow my Savior in the watery grave. But the nearer the time came, my desire grew less. I began to doubt, and I could not sleep. I felt it to be my duty, yet I was afraid I was deceived and would deceive the church. On Saturday morning I felt as if I could not go, but I went. Elder Badger's text was, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord," &c. My mind was settled. I could stay away no longer. I told them but very little. They received me, and on the second Sunday in September (with brother Sammie Garrett and his wife) was baptized by dear Elder Badger. O what a peaceful feeling came over me. I felt like I had been wandering in a dark, desolate wilderness, and that I had now got home. Since that time I have passed through many doubts and fears, but my hope is precious. At times I am made to overflow with love and thankfulness, to think of the blessings bestowed on such a wicked, sinful worm as I feel myself to be; that I was untangled from the midst of Babylon, and brought into the glorious light and liberty of the children of God, and blessed with the privilege of being with the people I love, being permitted to meet with the dear children of God and hear the words of love that they speak, and having the blessed hope that when this earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

"This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

From sorrow, toil and pain,
And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity."

ANNIE B. THOMPSON.

BYBERRY, Philadelphia, Pa., Jan. 26, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As my affliction is such that I am kept from meeting with the saints of our God, I feel to write something of what I hope are the Lord's dealings with me, if he will so guide my pen and mind.

Dear loved ones in the Lord, if I am deprived of meeting with you in body, I trust I am with you in heart. It is a hard trial for me; but the Lord's ways are not our ways, therefore be ye reconciled. It is a sweet meditation to think that I should be blessed with the happy privilege of being numbered with the dear children of our God. I often wondered

why I should be remembered, unworthy as I feel myself to be. I have been a member of the Old School Baptists ten years, and in that time I have passed through many dark seasons, and am ashamed to say that I am no better to-day than I was then. I have set many times to do better, but get no better, but worse. If I had not heard many of my brethren and sisters say the same thing, I would be in despair; but in many good letters I read, both in the SIGNS and privately, I hear the same language. We often feel to rejoice that grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, and that life is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Is not this enough? O dear loved ones, our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I have found it good to be afflicted. As a dear sister said in writing to me, it brings us "Nearer, my God, to thee." I have had some very precious seasons in my own mind of late. It has been to me like the clear shining after rain. It seems to me the Lord drove the clouds from my sky, and I was drawn in love again, as in the days of my first experience, when I was brought to ask a place among his dear children. I feel that my dear Redeemer has again given me renewed evidence of acceptance with him; for I feel to be drawn out in love to his dear children. The words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," come sweetly to my mind, and make my heart burn within me. What is our natural life without this indwelling Spirit, or Christ in us the hope of glory? I have been enabled to look back and behold the way the Lord has led me since he revealed to me his will. These seasons are soul-cheering indeed, although few and far between. How mindful we ought to be of our walk and conversation, and to show that we have been with Jesus and learned of him. While the Old School Baptists are said to be do-nothings, they are the only people that show their faith by their works. It seems such a wonder to me that I was ever made to hear his voice and enter where there is room. O what an all-sufficient Savior he is to me, who am the chief of sinners, and less than the least of saints, if one at all. But I thank God (if I know how to be thankful) for the many blessings that have been bestowed upon me in times past, as well as in the present. I have many doubts and fears. Am I fit to be numbered with God's dear children? Sometimes I fear I have deceived them. I think that if you all knew me as well as I know my sinful self, you surely could not have fellowship for me. I am at times cast down so low that I have but little hope; but this little hope is greater than all the world to me. I know if I am saved, it is by grace, and not for any merit within myself.

"Though I have him oft forgot,
His loving-kindness changes not."

I have written more than I intended when I commenced, but I hope you will pardon me for doing so. Do with it as you think best, and all will be right. When I look it over, it looks so imperfect, like myself, that I almost fear to send it.

I remain your unworthy sister,
RACHEL M. OPDYKE.

FEBRUARY 20, 1886.

ELDER B. JENKINS—DEAR SIR:—Although a stranger to you, I have had a desire to write you for months, telling you some of the exercises of my mind, and asking if you can see anything in them of the way a child of grace is led. My father being a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, I heard much of their preaching. I was also a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from my childhood, although it was "Greek" to me until God in his mercy was pleased to enlighten my mind to the precious truth therein contained. About twenty years ago I was made to see that I was without God or hope in the world. I cannot explain to you the wretched state of my mind for months that followed. I felt I was banished from God and all that was good. Struggling along with my burden of sin for nearly a year, one Sunday morning I resolved to go to meeting. As it was Methodist, I did not expect to hear anything to benefit me, for it was all "work, work, and live," and I had come to know by experience that the works of the creature could do nothing for me. I went in and took a seat by a window. The minister gave out the hymn, "Jerusalem, my happy home," &c. I arose with the rest, the congregation commenced to sing, and such a flood of joy, peace and happiness poured into my heart as I cannot describe, it was so full and complete. I was like Paul, I did not know whether I was in or out of the body. It seemed I could see the Savior hanging on the cross, and for me. Then I could say, "My Savior, mine." O precious thought, to think he thought of me before I had a being here. My heart kept singing these words, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me bless his holy name." I went along in this happy frame of mind for months. Then the subject of baptism was much on my mind, but I would try to banish it. Being very diffident, I thought I could never go before a church and tell them what I hoped the Lord had done for my soul. After a time the sweet assurance and peace I had enjoyed left me, and I have been stumbling along, sometimes in the light, but oftener in the dark. Last winter the New School Baptists here had a great revival, and many were baptized; among the number was one of my sisters. When she was to be baptized the minister came to see me, and tried to persuade me to go with her into the Jordan they have convenient under their pulpit, all warmed and nice. I told him no, I could not; that the Old School Bap-

tists were my people if I had any. He said, "I am astonished," and left me. What do you think of their mode of baptism? I cannot reconcile it in my mind to be baptism, and could never feel at home there. The only effect of his talking to me was to make me feel that I was living in disobedience to the dear Lord's command; and whenever I think of that important duty, I begin to question myself, Am I a subject of grace? If not asking too much of your time, I would dearly love to hear from you in reply to this poor scribble.

Will you please inform me where the next association (Warwick) is to be held, and when?

Very respectfully yours,

W.

BATH, Maine, March 7, 1886.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel as if I would like to talk to you all this pleasant morning. I love the reading of the SIGNS, and if I could write as many can, it seems as if it would be a pleasure, for then you would have a good letter. I have been permitted the last year to meet with the brethren and sisters here in Maine often, and it has been a pleasure to me to see their love and fellowship manifested towards me. My mind goes back this morning to my first thoughts about religion (which was when I was about eight years old), and how mysteriously I was led along, until about eighteen, sometimes trying hard to live a better life, and at other times enjoying the pleasures of the world, and thought I was better than many. But when the time came for me to see myself a lost sinner, and no way for me to be saved, all my good deeds were cut off, for sin was mixed with all I tried to do. The words of my prayers did not rise higher than my head, but all the time the desire of my heart was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." I can never forget one night, when it seemed as if I could not live until morning, so great was my distress of mind. There appeared no hope for me. But these words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," came into my mind, and the love was shed abroad in my heart. O what a change in my feelings! for I had Jesus Christ revealed to me as my Savior. The plan of salvation was clear, all of grace, with no works of the creature in it. The joy I felt at that time has never been expressed; and when I went to this people to ask a home with them, and they received me, and I was led into the water and buried in baptism, I felt that "In thy presence is fullness of joy." I have rejoiced at times since then that I have a home with this people, can share their burdens and trials and joys, and can go in and out with them. And when I can meet with them, they all patiently listen while I try to speak in a stammering way of the goodness, love and power of God, of the way I have been led, of the precious name of Jesus, and how he saved his people from their sins. How safe they are in him! God has declared, "I am

God, I change not." And every one of his children is taught of him, and all say, "Salvation is of the Lord." David says, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." "The Lord is my light and my salvation." Paul says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

I have written more than I intended, and if brethren Beebe throw it aside all will be well. I think the SIGNS is full of good tidings, and I do not desire to crowd out better letters than this. May God bless you all, and make us all to know him and the power of his resurrection, is the desire of your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

KEYSTONE, Mo., Jan. 14, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been waiting in part ere I sent on my remittance, to get one or two new subscribers, and one promised that she would send. The dear old family paper contains most of the preaching that I can feed upon, except the Bible and our hymn book, as I have so few opportunities of hearing any of our faith and order. Last fall I attended Fishing River Association, in Clay Co., Mo., and heard some good preaching from Elders P. L. Branstetter and W. Priest, of Missouri, Elkin, of Illinois, Morris, of Texas, and others; and at times it has been like bread cast upon the waters, and has been gathered up when sitting alone. My mind travels back to that and other times that I have been fed, when the doctrine has dropped as the rain, and distilled as the dew. There is nothing earthly that we can compare with this food. I have been told often that it is prejudice that keeps me from enjoying Arminian preaching. Sometimes I go, but am reminded of the prodigal, for I fain would eat, being hungry, but have no appetite to feed upon what I hear, and return home feeling dissatisfied with myself, and try to break the spell by reading Paul's experience, and some of those sweet promises in different parts of the Bible. Sometimes this cheers me up, and I feel established. At other times I can draw no comfort from reading, for doubts and fears crowd upon me thick and fast, and I ask myself, Is it all a delusion? Sometimes the answer comes promptly, No, O no; for why is it at times that the world and all that it contains is as nothing compared with this sweet hope that we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec? And now, in conclusion, I will say, dear Elders, brethren and sisters, write on, one and all, and let us try to cheer each other as we travel along in our pilgrimage. If we have only one talent, let us not hide it, but speak often one to another; for we are told that a book of

remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord. And now, dear sons of dear Elder Beebe, my heart goes out to you in closing, perhaps, the last I may ever write to you. May the good Lord uphold you by his mighty power, and make you a blessing in feeding his dear children, as he did your dear father, is the prayer of

MARY B. DUDLEY.

ST. EDWARD, Neb., Feb. 14, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Find inclosed two dollars to pay for another year's subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes laden with the glorious truth of the gospel of Christ. It contains all the gospel preaching we have near here. We have all of the isms of the day preached here (do and live), but that is no food for one that loves the doctrine that is published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Jesus 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." God, because of his eternal, unchangeable love, made choice of the heirs of promise; they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, in time are developed and called, and receive an evidence of their election. They are kept by his almighty power, and will eventually receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. The apostle Peter says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." One of the peculiarities of the people of God is, they love to tell, not what they have done, but what Jesus has done. Let us stand aloof from all the man-made religious institutions of the day, schools of human teaching, to make and qualify preachers, and to teach children to pray, and every other thing that is not sustained by the word of God. It is for this cause that our names are cast out as evil. The ancient saints said that they were strangers and pilgrims, and had no continuing city here, but are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. So let us look forward for the promise; for Christ has said that where he is, there we shall be also. The prophet declares that 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. Dear brethren, stand fast in the Lord. May he preserve you by his grace, and may you feel the sweet manifestations of his love, and be kept by his almighty power, through faith unto salvation. May we all walk together as a band of brethren, in the faith once delivered to the saints.

Yours in love and fellowship,
JOHN CLARK.

ALBANY, Mo., April 2, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I feel that the SIGNS is filled with excellent reading matter, and from the date of communications I would judge that you always have abundant material

on hand to select from. For this reason I have often smothered desires to write to the many readers of your excellent paper, as also to comply with many requests from the dear saints to cast in my mite. To the many dear saints throughout the states that have written very comforting and precious letters to me while cast down with deep grief and affliction in the past, I find that I cannot command language expressive of the sentiments of my poor heart, for their tenderness towards me, who am less than the least of all saints, if one at all. May the dear Lord reward them with tokens of his love, and in deep trials comfort them with the comfort wherewith he has comforted me. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: and not one of them is broken."—Psalm xxxiv. 19, 20. The Lord's faithfulness to keep his own is manifested in that he is an ever-present help in time of trouble, to deliver in his own good time his anointed. Empty and meaningless are words spoken by kind and dear friends when the Lord's presence is not felt, and his love and pity are by his sovereign hand withheld. But one look of compassion from Jesus, and every word in his name sounds sweet and melodious, reaching out in love and pity, bringing peace and reconciliation to his divine will. In the many afflictions of the righteous God's glory is displayed, in that he teaches them that none can deliver but he that is mighty and able. His righteous reign in Zion embraces the subjection of all things unto himself, in that he will not give his glory unto another. None but the saints are afflicted with afflictions that lead to deliverance in the Lord. Their afflictions, like an unseen hand, lead them to the only fountain and source of all comfort. In common with all men, the children of God are subjects of sorrow, loss and pain. Their lot and portion in this respect differ not. Diseases and death pervade the households of all alike. The sorrow and afflictions of God's people work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at things which are seen (temporal), but at things which are not seen (eternal).—2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. Thus Paul says that we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.—2 Cor. iv. 8-10. Thus the life of Jesus is manifested in the afflictions and sufferings of the saints, in that he suffered for them; and the Lord has ordained that it is in him they have peace. In the world they shall have tribulation. But O what cheer to the poor of the Lord, to have the Comforter bring to their minds the truth that he has overcome the world, and hence their deliverance is of the Lord. The mercies of the Lord endure forever, and the deep-

ly exercised soul experiences the truth that

"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."

Sung with that Spirit that teaches that the foundation that God laid in Zion was not laid in vain, designed and embraced the whole building of God, and upon whom and in whom every subject of grace partakes of the suffering of Jesus. Then, ye suffering saints, 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.—1 Peter iv. 12, 13. I believe we may feel a degree of rest and peace in Jesus whenever we are from our destitution driven to him as the only refuge. Failing to find a solace anywhere else, we go to him in an hour of adversity. A trial of our faith results in victory whenever we but touch the hem of his garment. Our own garment will not do; our own strength will not do; but when, O! when we can realize his presence, when the door was shut, as in the case of the disciples, how heaven-like is that peace that he gives, saying, "My peace I give unto you." No hand but his could thus deliver. It is in deed and truth a rest, a ceasing from our own works, to rest in him. All the saints have not the same peculiar trials to pass through. It is said that ye are "a peculiar people." And in all their afflictions the peculiar heritage of the saints of God is that their righteousness is of the Lord. He heals all their backslidings. To him he teaches them to go with all their complaints, and like a kind and loving father or mother he hears them. The ear of the Lord is open to the cry of the righteous. The Lord heals them.

Dear brethren, I have hastily thrown together the few thoughts above, and submit them to you for disposal. I trust I have in a small measure witnessed the hand of the Lord as stretched out towards me, a poor worm of the dust, sufficient to cry out and say with David, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."—Psalm lxxxiv. 1, 2. In conclusion let me ask you to give us your views on the thousand years reign of Christ, Rev. xx. 4-6.

Yours in Christ Jesus, as I hope,
ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

SILVER CLIFF, Col., March 21, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—If you will allow me space in the SIGNS, I will address a few lines to the faithful of the household of God.

Some time ago I wrote the brethren Beebe of my lonely and hungry condition, in being cut off from the society of Baptists and church privileges, stating that I desired to emigrate to where I could enjoy these

privileges. I have written to those brethren that brethren Beebe gave me the names and address of, but do not hear from them. I have been for over a year past trying to get correspondence with my kind of Baptists in a locality where I would be able with my means to get a home for myself and family, but have so far failed. I will say here that if there are any Baptists living in southern Oregon who believe in the doctrine of the predestination of God (not part predestination and part happen so) and final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory, I want them, I pray them to write to me. As I said, I have been trying to find a people that I can call my people, and their God my God. I have before me letters from various parts, the writers all claiming to be Baptists. One says, "We are far ahead of any such old foggy doctrine as the Predestination, Election and Foreknowledge of God. This and Eternal Vital Unity is heresy."

Sometimes I feel to almost despair and cry out, Is there one like me? Am I left alone?

Brethren Beebe, if you will give this a place in our family paper, the SIGNS, it may be that God will put it into the mind of some one who reads it to write me from that portion of the country I desire to go to. May God enable you, dear brethren, to wield "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon" to the honor and glory of his holy name.

I am yours in hope of eternal life,
J. H. YEOMAN.

105 MEIGS ST., ROCHESTER, N. Y., }
April 14, 1886. }

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed two dollars, the amount due for the SIGNS. It is a very welcome messenger to me, and I enjoy the communications from each writer. The SIGNS contains all the reading matter and preaching I have that is in accordance with the Bible. In the number for March fifteenth, J. H. Yoeman writes from Silver Cliff, Colorado. He says, "I want you to know there is one poor, weak worm of the dust living among the 'Rockies' of the west, deprived of the society of those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," &c. There is another weak worm, subject to the same deprivations; not among the "Rockies," but in a popular city, in the midst of eastern civilization, where there is no lack of so-called churches and preachers; and they are able to call six or eight evangelists, at a salary of one hundred dollars per week, to "help the Lord save souls." But when they begin to talk, they leave the Lord out entirely; for one of them said his business in Rochester was to save souls. Why is it, in a city of over a hundred thousand inhabitants, with all the improvements of civilization, arts and sciences, and that boasts of a christian religion, there is not one spot where I can hear the truth as it is in Christ Jesus? Surely I am alone. In the April fifteenth number of the SIGNS there is

a piece signed "Lee Hancks." He is a minister, and writes in reply to William E. Buck. This portion is said to me: "Your salvation does not depend upon the preacher keeping you. While it would be a great privilege for you to hear the gospel proclaimed, and to eat at the gospel table with the dear saints, and to realize many refreshing seasons which you do not now enjoy, it is the Spirit that does all the work, from first to last. 'You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.'" I know this is true. I know it by experience. It is many years since the Lord taught me by his grace, and made me feel my dependence upon him. In all these years I have never had the privilege of eating at the gospel table with the dear saints, and only at long intervals have I heard the gospel proclaimed, and then by traveling some distance. But the Lord has kept me. I am amazed every day of my life, that Jesus should have compassion on me, a sinner. Notwithstanding my imperfections and my sinful nature, I know he has given me an evidence of his love and the forgiveness of sins. It is comforting to read communications in the SIGNS, coming as they do from distant parts of our country, and all speaking the same language. They all give God the glory, even that poem by Derzhavin, a Russian gentleman, born in 1763, and published April first. I hope I may have the privilege while I live of reading from the pen of Elders Purington, Stipp, Beebe, Smoot, Chick, Vanmeter, Durand and others. I was interested in the pieces written by James Wagner and Joseph Broders, on Predestination, although there is one expression of the latter I feel like taking exceptions to. It is this: "Satan, in olden time, with all his subtlety, made the first advance on our mother Eve, and through her weakness made an inroad for Adam to follow in the transgression." Now, for relation's sake, I would like to say a few words in mother Eve's defense. I fail to find evidence in the Bible of Eve being weaker than Adam, either mentally or physically. I know it is commonly admitted, and Martin Luther said, "The devil torments us in the place where we are most tender and weak, as in paradise he fell not on Adam, but on Eve." From what is recorded there is much to prove that Eve was the stronger of the two. She surely was braver; for when the Lord called to Adam, Adam hid, and said he was afraid; and he uses thirty-eight words to frame his excuse. He lays the blame on Eve; shows a selfish disposition, to say the least. I suppose Adam knew little of the amenities of life. When the Lord asked Eve what she had done, she did not try to shield herself with excuses, but told the truth in eight words: "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." "The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field;" for that reason he was sent to tempt Eve, knowing that if she fell, Adam would follow her example; and he did. Adam's fall was in the wisdom and

foreknowledge of God, the same as the betrayal of Christ and his crucifixion.

Please give your views on Revelation xi. 15-19. I do not understand the book of Revelation, but desire an understanding of it. Do you believe the things recorded in this book have come to pass?

Yours in hope of life eternal,
MRS. J. B. WEST.

CANTRAL, Ill., Jan. 26, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—As I have felt impressed to write a short communication for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, being much comforted by others, I will now make the attempt, fully conscious of my inability to write to the comfort of any one. We are exhorted to speak often one to another; and though separated far and wide, we are all taught in the same way, for all God's people shall be taught of him. There is no salvation in any other way. He says he will give them one heart and one way, and they shall be his people, and he will be their God. Sometimes I am lost in wonder and amazement at all these things. What am I, that God should be mindful of me? It sometimes makes me tremble. But what I am, I am by the grace of God. I neither received it of man, nor was I taught it of man, but by the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. O that I could love him more for all his goodness to poor me. All his promises are sure. It matters not what our afflictions are if we are chosen in him. His remnant shall be saved. I often find my thoughts reaching back to the time when that still small voice spoke peace to my troubled soul. O may the God of all grace enable each and all of us to walk in the way of him who has said, "I am God; I change not."

Your unworthy brother,
HENRY NAVE.

BUCKLAND, Va., Jan. 25, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the name of a new subscriber, and inclose two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I heartily regret the loss of so many subscribers for our paper. I do not believe it has "outlived its usefulness," and I hope the brethren will see the necessity and attend to its support. Its columns are filled with able and precious communications, and its lovely writers have and manifest the meek and lowly Spirit of their Master in their interchange of views upon fundamental truths. Its readers are entertained, instructed and comforted, and often, no doubt, their hearts are stirred within them to add their feeble testimony by writing for the same. This last number (January 15) is a precious number, and while the whole is interesting and profitable, the editorial, "Comfort for Trembling Ones," seemed especially applicable to my own present tried and barren condition. I would be remembered by all the precious saints who both write for and read our precious paper, in their prayers to God.

LOUISE HUNTON.

NEAR BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, April 10, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am happy to learn that the Church History will soon be published, and I for one feel to say that I will double my subscription for the History as soon as the eight copies for which I have subscribed come to hand; and I wish to say to all the brethren of the Old School Baptist order, that they do likewise. We read in the SIGNS some time ago that brother Hassell is financially ruined in making out the manuscript for the History. Dear brethren, one and all, let us bear in mind that brother Hassell has done a work that probably few others could have accomplished, in writing out a true history of the Primitive Baptist Church, and "that we, the members of the Primitive Baptist Church, who are able to do it, should stand by him," and give him a portion of our earthly substance, to bring him upon a level with us.

Yours for the right,
LEWIS SEITZ.

MACOMB, Ill., April 15, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for which extend my subscription for six months. I have only been a subscriber for a short time, but I can hardly do without the dear SIGNS, which is such a welcome visitor, and is read with so much edification and comfort. Indeed I often wonder what I and thousands of others of the poor of the flock who live so far from the sweet sound of the gospel trumpet, and so seldom hear the glad tidings of salvation, would do were it not for such a blessed medium of correspondence, whereby the children may hear from each other, and feast on the good things contained therein. I hope the lovers of Bible truth will sustain our dear paper, and continue to write for the comfort of the Lord's humble poor. May the blessings of heaven rest upon you, dear brethren, and all the children of our God, is my humble prayer.

MRS. DOC. RUNKLE.

JACKSONVILLE, Alabama.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find four dollars, for which give credit on subscription as directed. I will have to make the same kind of apology that our esteemed Elder Purington said Adam did, "fourteen words for an apology, and three words for acknowledgment." If it is not asking too much, tell brother Purington that his letters on "Absolute Predestination of All Things" contain the doctrine that I believe and heartily indorse, and from my heart I bid him God speed.

C. F. HEDGPETH.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

WILL Elder F. A. Chick please write upon the words found in Revelation xiv. 13, for the benefit of the readers of the SIGNS generally, and especially to gratify an aged sister, whose natural hearing is very defective?
B. J.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1886.

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

SALVATION AND BAPTISM.

"HE THAT believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."—Mark xvi. 16.

By request of an esteemed brother we present some thoughts in regard to this familiar and often discussed subject, and it is not designed either to repeat what others have written, or to controvert their views; but simply to give such reflections as may be suggested to our own mind in connection with the text.

The words of our text are a portion of the last recorded language of our Lord Jesus, after his resurrection and before "he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." The same commission of which these words are a part is recorded by Matthew, but by the same Spirit which moved Mark to write this verse Matthew was directed to give the assuring promise of the gracious Lord, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." The literal reading of the text does not seem to be the same with the statement given by Matthew, but when the Spirit shows the testimony of Jesus in the two passages they are seen to be perfectly harmonious. The presence of Jesus with his saints and with the inspired testimony of his apostles and evangelists, is the only light by which believers are distinguished from unbelievers, hence there could be no judging between those who are saved and those who are not, but by that manifest presence. The only character who can believe is that one who has the indwelling Spirit of Christ, of which faith is the fruit; for it is impossible to believe without evidence, and the only evidence of spiritual truth is that faith which is the gift of God. This is not only beyond the reach of natural reason, but it is impossible that its testimony should be received by any natural powers. So Paul says, "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."—1 Cor. ii. 14. It seems wonderful that carnal religionists cannot see this plain declaration of inspired truth, since it is just as plainly evident as the fact that one who has no eyes naturally is not able to see the things which are displayed in the light of the sun. But even this illustrates the truth that these things are hidden by the wisdom of God from the wise and prudent, and revealed by that same sovereign God to babes. This discriminating election of grace is the peculiar glory of the salvation which is made manifest in Jesus Christ. The perfect harmony of justice and judgment with infinite love and mercy

is the transcendent display of divine glory in which the name of the Lord is exalted above all the world of material creation; for in the wonderful work of saving his people from their sins Jesus did magnify that word of the Lord which is forever settled in heaven above all the name by which God is revealed in the works of nature. This truth cannot be more clearly and forcibly expressed than as it is written by Paul, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets: even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 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; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."—Rom. iii. 21-26.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The only subject of this salvation is the believer. If any one who does not believe should voluntarily offer himself as a subject for baptism there would be no salvation in his being baptized. It would be mere mockery for such a man to submit to the ordinance of baptism, since he could not obey the God whom he did not know, and the naming of God in administering the ordinance would be to such unbeliever but an unmeaning sound. So it is written, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb. xi. 6. The work of them whom Jesus hath sent forth, whether as inspired apostles, prophets and evangelists, or as pastors and teachers, is not to convert the enemies of truth to the belief of the gospel. They are simply authorized to "preach the gospel to every creature." The Lord while under the law of Moses had sent forth chosen disciples to preach repentance, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." They were forbidden to go to the Gentiles or Samaritans. They were sent exclusively to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.—See Matt. x. 5, 6. Now, there is no limitation to their commission, for the middle wall of partition which was against the Gentiles, was broken down by the sacrifice of our Lord, when he by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. Hence the direction is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." They were not to ask whether their hearers were Jews, nor was it their duty to find out whether their preaching would be acceptable to the people. All their work was to proclaim the glad tidings of great joy to every creature. It was not required, even

of inspired apostles to convert unbelievers and make them believe. The gospel which would find a joyful welcome in every heart which God had opened to receive it, would develop the enmity of the carnal mind in those who had "received not the love of the truth that they might be saved."—2 Thess. ii. 10. This difference in the effect of the proclamation of the gospel marks with unmistakable accuracy the line which separates between them who believe and them who believe not. So Paul says, "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"—2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. The very same truth which fills with joy the hearts of those who are made alive to God is most repulsive doctrine to those who are dead in sin. This is the divinely authorized test by which the saints are distinguished from them who are still in carnal enmity against God. That only believers are proper subjects for baptism is evident from the demand of Philip when the eunuch said, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."—Acts viii. 37. Hence the immersion of an unbeliever is not baptism in obedience to the commandment of our Lord. This will be readily admitted by those who have received the truth of God in their own experience.

There is another thought in connection with this subject to which the prayerful attention of every believer may well be directed; and it is forcibly presented in the text under consideration. That is, the inseparable duty and privilege of obedience as the effect of indwelling faith. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." From the belief and baptism being spoken of in close connection, it is clear that the Lord referred primarily to the actual obedience of the believer in following the example which he gave when he went to John and was baptized in Jordan. There is a sense in which the believer is saved by baptism. To this truth Peter bears witness, referring to the ark wherein Noah and his family were saved by water, and saying, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."—1 Peter iii. 21, 22. This salvation is not the redemption of the believer from the curse of the law, nor yet is it the gift of eternal life by which the whole body of Christ is securely kept in the righteousness of the Redeemer. This "answer of a good conscience toward God" is that which saves the believer from feeling that condemnation which is visited upon the saints

in disobedience. It is never the privilege of the believer to feel the peaceful assurance of obedience while living in disobedience. Although the eternal life of every redeemed sinner is securely hid with Christ in God, it is often their bitter experience to find no present evidence of their interest in that salvation, while all their surroundings testify against their claim to life in Christ. While it is true that the blood of Jesus cleanses all his people from all sin, so that there is no condemnation to them that are in him; yet they are chastened in walking after the flesh, and while so living they die experimentally. It was to baptized believers whose "faith is spoken of throughout the whole world," that Paul said, "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Rom. viii. 12, 13. It was to "holy brethren" that the admonition was given, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. iv. 1; x. 31. However graceless carnal professors may despise this salvation, to them who love the Lord it is the consummation of their deepest desire to be conformed to the perfect pattern of their holy Redeemer; and each of them can unite with Paul in the desire 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; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."—Phil. iii. 9-11. The only sense in which this desire can be realized is in that obedience to the precepts and example of our Lord by which our works shall attest our love to the precious law of his kingdom. All our profession of love to him is vain while in works we deny him. No answer of a good conscience toward God can be experienced while our feet are not standing within the sacred gates of his chosen Jerusalem. The boundary of that holy city is expressly defined by our Lord when he says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." As the King in Zion he has given no commandments to any one who does not love him; and it is included in the severe chastening experienced by the disobedient saints that they feel their sin against their Redeemer as a continual reproach, testifying that they do not love him. Indeed no trial could distress them if they could always feel the assurance that they possessed the true principle of love to the Lord Jesus. Under the searching trial which is to be experienced by every follower of Jesus, it is a great salvation to have the witness of a good

conscience toward God that we are walking in loving obedience to the ordinances which our Lord has established in his gospel kingdom. The measure of the value of this support is best realized when in disobedience we feel the loss of it. Peter doubtless felt more keenly the worth of Jesus' approval when the Lord looked on him in his defection, than when he professed entire devotion to his Master. So in our seasons of darkness, when we can find no evidence that we love our Redeemer, the longing desire after his approval is the "light that shineth in a dark place," by which it is manifest beyond all question that the love of God abides in us even when we can claim no assurance of it. This desire to obey him is attested by our obedience in following him in baptism, thus saving us from the self-condemnation which is experienced in disobedience, and the death which results from living after the flesh. Obedience to the law of Christ is life to the believer, and disobedience is death to his spiritual enjoyment. So baptism saves the believer from that death.

"But he that believeth not shall be damned." This is the evidence by which the fact is shown that they are not the manifested subjects of that grace by which sinners are made to receive the gospel as "glad tidings of good things." Their failure to believe is not the cause of their being damned; but it is the evidence that they are yet in the condemnation which passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. So John the Baptist declared the same truth as in our text, saying, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John iii. 36. No created being is authorized to forbid the vilest sinner to hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. When Stephen was stoned, a proud young Pharisee kept the clothes of his murderers, and was consenting unto his death. That same man was a chosen vessel unto the Lord to bear his name far among the Gentiles, and must suffer great things for that name's sake. He was saved in Christ before he persecuted the saints, but that salvation was not revealed even to himself until he was called with that holy calling which effectually killed his pride and made him glory in tribulation. So, the proudest persecutor of the saints to-day may to-morrow be changed to a praying believer by the infinite power of divine grace. It is not for us to limit the power of God; but the evidence of unbelief marks those who are now governed by it as now abiding under the condemnation which rests upon the world lying in wickedness. The form of the expression, "shall be," in both cases in the text we understand to express the positive decision of the supreme Judge, rather than to declare a future judgment either of salvation or damnation; for certainly the salvation of all his people was complete when

Jesus rose from the dead, and there can be no further condemnation required for the damnation of unbelieving sinners, since "By the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." They who are saved in Christ can never be lost; and they who are not cleansed from sin in his precious blood must ever remain under the condemnation of death. This judgment will be revealed in the last time. It can never be changed.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

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

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

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

"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.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please change the address of my paper to 272 Clinton Avenue, Albany, N. Y., and also publish my address in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so that the brethren will be able to find me when they visit Albany.

LORENZ HECKER.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

D. B. Pugh 2, G. W. Caldwell 2, H. G. Jones 2, J. R. Jarrell 2, J. F. Hancock 2, Thos. Chapman 2, Jane Carmin, 2 O. J. Daniel 2. —Total \$16 00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, at the residence of the bride's parents, in Tuscarora township, Juniata Co., Pa., Miss Ida M. Harlan and Mr. Boyd E. Hart, both of Tuscarora.

FEB. 9, 1886, by Elder L. H. Hardy, at the residence of Mr. J. B. Mann, in Newport, Carterett Co., N. C., Mr. A. G. Edwards, of Pitt County, and Miss Lizzette Mann.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

I AM deeply grieved to record the death of our dearly beloved grandmother, **Phebe Hoyt**, who quietly and peacefully passed away Monday afternoon the fifth instant, after an illness of only one week, at the age of nearly ninety years. Notwithstanding her age, her mind was strong and clear to the hour of her death. She had been suffering many years of asthma, and that with a slight cold proved too severe for her bodily strength. As soon as her condition was realized her children were summoned, all of whom made haste to her bedside; and surrounded by her children and grandchildren, all that loving hearts and willing hands could do was done for her comfort. A doctor was called, but she said a doctor could do her no good, and refused to take medicine, calling upon and depending upon God for strength and support. She was born at Litchfield, Connecticut, Sept. 9, 1796, and at the age of nine years moved with her parents, Lewis and Sarah Styles, to Orange County, N. Y. In 1819 she was married to John Hoyt, who was born in Stamford, Conn., May 7, 1787. Their married life was spent near Mt. Salem, Sussex Co., N. J., where they both died. On Jan. 10, 1848, she was left a widow with ten children, all quite young (six sons and four daughters), and with diligence and care, and the goodness of God, she reared them all to honor and love her in her old age. She was often heard to say that never was a mother blessed with such noble, kind-hearted sons as hers. They made her later years happy by kind attentions and frequent visits to the old home, where they always found a hearty and joyous welcome. Of her ten children, nine still survive: Joel I. and P. H. Hoyt, of Jamestown, N. Y., L. S. Hoyt, of New Castle, Pa., A. B., John T. and J. R. Hoyt, of Orange County, N. Y., Meliscent, wife of M. W. Elston, and Abbie and Lora, who live at home. Phebe Ann died in June, 1860, aged about thirty years.

Grandma has been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than fifty years, commencing with the first volume. She became a professor of religion at the age of sixteen years, and a few years later joined the Presbyterian Church at Westtown, Orange Co., N. Y. Although she never made a change, she has been a faithful lover of the Old School Baptist cause, always attending the meetings and associations when it was possible to do so. I was with her the last time she attended the association at Middletown, N. Y., about six years ago. She never talked very much upon these things, and I cannot speak as one who understands; but her renewed strength and activity and the animated countenance, told of how she felt within; and she never tired, she said, listening to such preaching. The last time she attended meeting was three years ago. I took her to Unionville to hear Elder W. J. Purington, of Hopewell. It was an evening in September. She felt she was not able to go out, but we induced her to try. Elder Purington spoke from the text where the words are, "Arise, my fair one, and come away," &c. It so affected her that she was filled to overflowing, and wept tears of joy throughout the discourse. Coming home she expressed much pleasure and satisfaction. She said it was a feast, and had paid her well for going, and would not have missed it for the world. She took great comfort in reading the Bible, always kept it lying near at hand, and many times have I found her bowed, her head in her hand, in deep interest over her favorite book, the Bible. As a counselor and adviser her children and grandchildren had perfect confidence, knowing that it was always given with true love and interest for their welfare.

The funeral was held privately at the home, Wednesday, April 7. It was a gratification to the family to have Elder Purington preach upon the occasion, from Romans v. 20, 21, after reading the very appropriate hymn,

"Ah, lovely appearance of death,

What sight upon earth is so fair," &c.

The pall bearers were the six sons of the deceased, and it was an unusual occurrence, and indeed a lovely sight, to see her borne so gently and tenderly to her grave by her sons of whom she was so justly proud.

KATE SMITH.

MT. SALEM, N. J., April 12, 1886.

It becomes my painful duty to prepare the obituary notice of another of the household of faith, **Elder Jesse J. Goben**, of Crawfordsville, Indiana. Brother Goben was born in Jefferson County, Kentucky, December 17, 1808. When about twenty-one years old he came to Indiana and entered eighty acres of land, and partly built a cabin on it, seven miles east of Crawfordsville. He then went back to Kentucky and married a young lady by the name of Mintia Plunket, December 3, 1829, and started back to Indiana December 11, three days after he was married. Having but one horse, he sent his goods and his wife with the horse, himself walking the whole route, having to contend with the many dangers of high water and snow storms. His wife had joined the Baptists in Kentucky before they were married; but he not knowing or caring much about religion, started out in the world to make a living for his family, and worked very hard. A few years thereafter he became very much troubled in spirit about his condition, which lasted for a long time, until his burden became so heavy that he thought he was the greatest sinner in the world. But at an unexpected time the light of the glorious gospel shined in his heart, which caused him to rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. Some time after this he joined the Baptist Church at Smartsburg, in Montgomery County, and his membership continued there until his death. After joining the church his mind became exercised on his duty as a minister of the gospel, and for months he had no rest day nor night. Sometimes when at his work his mind would become so exercised that he would leave his work and start off through the woods, preaching with all the powers of his mind. Some of his neighbors hearing him, thought he was crazy. His church in process of time set him forward to the work, first giving him license to exercise his gift, and afterwards ordained him as an Elder. He has been preaching over forty years, and in all that time has been zealous in the faith and order of the Old School Baptists. No minister ever had a better estimate of the brethren than he had. He was universally loved by the brotherhood, and even amongst religious opposers he was held in high esteem, and never had a personal enemy, so far as the writer knows. He died March 15, 1886. His funeral was preached at Smartsburg (this county) March 17, by Elder Whitlock and the writer of this notice, to a large congregation. His wife died some three or four years ago. He leaves four sons and one daughter, with many personal friends and the Baptists in general, to mourn their loss; but we do not mourn as those that have no hope. The writer visited him often, and had frequent conversations with him. He always said to me that he did not fear that which should be after death, but he dreaded passing through the gate of death. He said it was not strange that he should fear the sufferings of death, as Christ himself prayed that the cup might pass from him. In short, brother Goben was a good man in every sense of the word, and I feel that none will miss him more than myself, for he has always been a much beloved brother. I would like to write more, but I do not want to trespass on your columns.

I will close, asking my brethren every where to pray for poor, unworthy me.

Yours, as I hope, in gospel bonds,

WM. H. DARNALL.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Less than one year since, in the SIGNS of May 1, 1885, you published, by request of the surviving companion, the obituary of a father in Israel, Deacon John Kagy. Again his death entered that family circle and summoned hence the stricken companion of one year ago. Sister **Catharine Hite Kagy** had been confined to her bed most of the time since the departure of her husband, and like an imprisoned bird remained restive and anxious to be absent from the flesh and present with the loved one on the other shore. She was born in Rockingham County, Virginia, July 25, 1801, and expired at the old homestead, now the residence of her son Isaac, in Seneca County, Ohio, Feb. 21, 1886, being eighty-four years, six months and twenty-six days old. She was the mother of seven sons and three daughters, one son and

two daughters preceding her to the spirit world. She was married to John Kagy, Dec. 3, 1820, in Fairfield County, Ohio, where she had lived since six weeks old. She was baptized in the fellowship of Pleasant Run Church, by Elder Thomas Snelson (I believe), in February, 1827. In those days live Baptists could sing,

"Christians, if your hearts be warm,
Ice and snow can do no harm."

In the sunshine of redeeming love, though baptized by cutting away the ice, she went on her way rejoicing. The same year with their little family they moved into the wilds of Seneca County, Ohio. Here they had for some time the Mohawk Indians camped less than two miles north, the Senecas about eight or ten, and the Wyandots fifteen miles southwest. The trials and toil of those pioneer days found in mother Kagy the requisite courage, fidelity and industry to provide an ample table and other comforts for a large family, and a hospitable board for visiting friends. "Aunt Katy," as she was familiarly called, though possessed of an ardent, impulsive nature, had a kind heart for the sick and afflicted, and proved her sympathy by many ministrations at the bedside of suffering neighbors. But the storms of life with its temptations and duties are past, and we are assured that our aged sister has entered the haven of eternal rest. Her body sleeps by the side of her husband's, in the family burying-ground, its interment being witnessed by a large concourse of relatives and friends, who were addressed briefly by Elder L. Seitz, from this question of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?" O that like Job we may be able to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." And because he lives, we shall live also. At the summons to go hence may we sing joyfully,

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
And 'mid the brotherhood on high
To be at home with God."

JOHN SEITZ.

DIED—At her residence in Margaretville, Delaware Co., N. Y., April 9, 1884, an aged aunt, sister **Jane C. Faulkner**, wife of Jeremiah Faulkner, in her seventy-fifth year. Her disease was dropsy. She was a great sufferer at times, but looked forward with an eye of faith, through the mists of affliction, to that better country where diseases cannot come. She experienced a hope in quite early life, and was united to the Old School Baptist Church of Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., at the time of her demise, always desiring the peace of the church, and has now attained to that peace that passeth the understanding of this transitory life. We trust the loss sustained by her husband while he survived her, and to the children, was more than made up to her in her eternal happiness. She left her husband, three sons and three daughters, besides an aged mother, brother and sister, with the church, to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—September 14, 1885, my aged uncle, brother **Jeremiah Faulkner**, at the residence of his son-in-law, Morris Faulkner, near Margaretville, after a short illness, aged eighty-three years lacking one day. His disease, we think, was consequent to old age, of a rheumatic nature. Brother Faulkner also united with Middletown Church, of Delaware Co., N. Y., many years ago, and was a firm defender of the faith once delivered to the saints. It has been my privilege to journey with him a great many miles to and from meetings, and he always regretted to see the brethren in contention about anything but the faith of saints. His desire did, so far as I know, bespeak the preaching of peace by Jesus Christ, and he seemed determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified among the brethren. But he grew old, and has passed away with the hope that when the trumpet sounds to announce the resurrection of those in their graves, that mortal clothed in immortality, corruptible in incorruption, will prove death to be swallowed up in victory. And I think I joy in the thought that those that are alive and remain shall not prevent those that are asleep; for while the saints shall not all sleep, they shall all be changed, in the twinkling of an eye. How

wonderful and mysterious. Thus did one aged brother in Christ go from a world of strife, to one, we trust, of peace, and leaves his children and others to mourn.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

ANOTHER dear old mother in Israel is gone. Sister **Mariah Skinner**, after three months of suffering, fell asleep in Jesus, March 14, 1886, at her residence in Hancock County, Ohio. Sister Skinner was born in Marion Co., Ohio, Nov. 22, 1817. Her maiden name was Tickle. March 19, 1844, she married Buel Skinner, in Perry Co., Ohio. To them were born five children, two of whom survive her, a son and a daughter. Besides them she leaves her husband and a number of grandchildren to mourn. Her death was a triumphant one. She longed and prayed for death, yet she wished to be submissive to God's will. She had no fellowship for the "unfruitful works of darkness." She had a very bright experience, and it was a comfort to hear her tell how Jesus manifested himself to her as the complete and only Savior, after she had given up all hope. Christian experience was food and drink for her, and trouble in Zion always gave her pain. But her spirit now rests with the Lord, and tears and groans with her are over. Her kindred in the flesh are not the only ones left to weep. The church has lost a worthy member. May we all "be still and know that I am God." "He doeth all things well."

The writer of this notice talked to sorrowing relatives and sympathizing friends from the expression of David, "O that I had wings like a dove," &c., (sister Skinner had referred to it some time before her death) after which her remains were taken to the cemetery one mile east of Van Buren, to await the coming of the Lord. Blessed sleep in Jesus.

GEO. A. BRETZ.

DIED—At her home in West Hamilton, Butler Co., Ohio, August 15, 1885, sister **Catharine Beever**. The deceased was born March 16, 1808, and was in her seventy-eighth year at the time of her death. Sister Beever had for many years been a faithful and consistent member of the Old School Baptist Church, always filling her seat when it was possible for her to be present. The writer has been informed that she united with the church over fifty years ago, and no doubt has been a witness to the many trials and dark seasons through which the church has passed during all those years.

A few appropriate remarks were made at her funeral by a minister of the "Reformed Church," there being no Baptist minister within accessible distance. It is confidently believed that our sister is in the enjoyment of the unspeakable pleasures in that world where all is love.

GEO. W. FULKERSON.

HAMILTON, Ohio.

DIED—At the residence of her son, Mr. Lee, in New York City, **Mrs. Hannah Stultz**, aged eighty years. Sister Stultz was born in England, and came to America many years ago. She was baptized by the late Elder J. C. Goble, being then Mrs. Lee. Her membership was with that of her late husband, Deacon H. Stultz, at Washington, N. J., for sixteen years. Her funeral was on March 21, 1886, at the meeting house of Ebenezer Church, 154 West 36th street, when Elder W. L. Beebe spoke from the text recorded 2 Cor. v. 1-3, after which the body was laid in Greenwood Cemetery. B.

"O glorious 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."

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Elder John W. Timmons is dead. After one week of illness he passed away last Saturday, the 24th, at his home near Pittsville Md. I hasten this notice so that it can come out in your next issue. A more full obituary will be furnished you hereafter. He was filling a very large place with abundant satisfaction, which will now be quite destitute.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del., April 28, 1886.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Ebenezer Church, in the city of Baltimore, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (19th), 1886, and continue three days.

A cordial invitation is hereby extended to all who desire to attend the association, both ministers and members. All those who do not know where they are to be entertained during the meeting, who come to Baltimore on Tuesday, will call at Dr. John Thorne's, No. 169 North Calvert St., where they will be directed to homes during the association. Those who come on Wednesday will come direct to the place of meeting on Madison Street, near Calvert, where they will be provided for. We hope for a pleasant and profitable meeting together in the name of the Lord.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May (26th), 1886, and continue the two following days.

The brethren and friends who come to the Delaware Association through Philadelphia will please take the train leaving Broad Street depot at four o'clock on Tuesday p. m., change cars at Wilmington, and take the train at foot of Market Street at 5.40 p. m., for Landinburg. About six of the number will please get off at Hockessin, and the rest at Landinburg. Those coming through Baltimore will all come to Newark depot, leaving Baltimore about three o'clock p. m. the same day.

Friends coming from Salisbury and on the Delaware Rail Road will get tickets for Wilson, and change cars at Porters.

We hope for and will be glad to see a goodly number of brethren and friends. We hope they will have it in their hearts to visit us, and that they will be permitted to do so.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (2d), 1886, and continue three days.

As the place of holding the Delaware River Association has been changed from Washington, South River, Middlesex Co., N. J., to Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., please insert in the SIGNS the following:

All who attend the above named association, coming by the way of New York City, will take passage on cars leaving foot of Liberty Street, and those coming by way of Philadelphia City will take passage on cars leaving Ninth and Green Streets, or Third and Berks Streets. Be sure and purchase tickets for Hopewell, as some express trains do not stop here. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us, and we shall try to make all feel that they are welcome. We hope the brethren in the ministry will not forget us at the time of our association.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (9th), 1886, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west by the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. will be met at Howell's Depot on the arrival of the way train from the west, at 1 p. m., and on the arrival of the Orange County Express from the east, which leaves foot of Chambers Street, New York, at 4.30 p. m., arriving at Howells 7.15 p. m. All will come on Tuesday to Howell's Depot, as there will be no train on Wednesday in time for the meeting.

Those coming from the north by the N. Y., O. & W. Railroad will be met at Winterton on Tuesday, on the arrival of the milk train at about 6 p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to meet with us.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church

at Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (16th), 1886, and continue three days.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord permit, with Honey Creek Church, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m., and two following days. Brethren and friends coming by railroad conveyance from the east and southeast, and coming by the way of Mansfield or Vernon, on the C. C. C. R. R., first train in the morning leaves Mansfield for Toledo, by the way of Bloomville, where all should stop, finding teams to convey them to places of entertainment and to the meeting. The second train from Mansfield arrives at Bloomville at two p. m. Those coming from the west and southwest, from Toledo to Tiffin, will come right through to Bloomville; and those that come on other roads to Tiffin will change cars at Tiffin and take train at Pennsylvania Depot, to come to Bloomville. The first train in the morning from the west arrives at Bloomville at ten o'clock a. m. The second train arrives at Bloomville at 8.30 p. m. All must be at Bloomville on Thursday to meet the conveyances which will be there to convey them to places of entertainment. On that day (Thursday) teams will be there waiting for passengers on the arrival of every train from every direction.

LEWIS SEITZ.

THE Turkey River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa, with West Fork Church, commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, and continue two days following. Hampton is accessible on the Iowa Central R. R., also on a branch called the D. D. R. R., from Waverly, Bremer County. A cordial welcome to all who love the truth as it is in Jesus.

PAUL SOHNER.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

OUR meeting at Frying Pan, Fairfax County, Va., will commence on Saturday before the third Sunday in May, and continue until time to take the afternoon train on Monday for Washington. We want our brethren and sisters to come to our meeting. Take the train which leaves Washington at 4.45 p. m., or Alexandria at 4.55 p. m., on Friday, and come to Herndon Station, on the Washington, Ohio & Western R. R.

E. V. WHITE.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

A TWO days meeting is appointed to be held at the house of J. May, near Penn Yan, Yates Co., N. Y., commencing on Wednesday before the second Sunday in May, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m. Those coming via Syracuse, Geneva & Corning R. R. to Dresden will find a train to take passengers to May's Mill Station, where the meeting is to be held. Those coming via Northern Central R. R. will find the depot of the Penn Yan & Dresden R. R. (a branch of the Syracuse, Geneva & Corning R. R.) near by, which will take passengers to May's Mill Station. Connections will be quite good on the noon train going north, and the five o'clock train going south, at Penn Yan. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

J. MAY.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

THIS work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired. Money should be sent by post-office order,

by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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 1886, 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.

Any person who is not now a subscriber, by sending his remittance in addition to the new ones he sends, can have the same advantage of these rates; but his own subscription must not be counted as one of the new subscribers.

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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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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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 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. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1886.

NO. 11.

POETRY.

LILIES.

Matthew vi. 28-30.

Behold the lilies, how they grow!
They toil not, neither do they spin;
Yet Solomon could never show
Such raiment as God clothes them in.
And you, poor souls, who weep and mourn
Because your works cannot supply
That spotless robe that must be worn
By all who dwell with God on high;
Blessed are you if you strive in vain,
And all your works no comfort yield;
For when you cease to toil and spin,
You are as lilies of the field.
And he who richly clothes the flower,
Which passes almost as a breath,
Will show his richer grace and power
In you, O ye of little faith.
Infinite wisdom, power and love
Prepared the robe that you shall wear;
And in the realms of bliss above
'Twill shine forever bright and fair.
As sun and dew afflictions come,
Making the heavenly lilies grow;
And bringing forth a lovelier bloom
Than all the fields of earth can show.
Through trials thus prepared to wear
The robe of righteousness, they prove
Their heavenly Father's tender care,
And reach the fullness of his love.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., April, 1886.

THE SPIRITUAL VOYAGE.

WHILE crossing o'er life's boisterous sea,
My vessel fills with sin;
I fear there is no hope for me
Reaching beyond the main.
Tempestuous winds have swept the deck
Of every mast and sail;
And now my ship's a helpless wreck,
Driven before the gale.
The sun and stars withhold their light
From shining on the coast;
The sea is bound in endless night,
Indeed my barque is lost.
But yet a still, small voice I hear,
Of One who says to me,
"Tis I, poor soul, O do not fear,
For there is hope for thee."
The light appears, the darkness gone,
And I am made to see
That I am not left here alone
To cross the troubled sea.
For lo, the Captain is with me;
His voice the winds obey;
His presence calms the raging sea,
And drives my fears away.
He says, "As I live so shall you,"
And gently takes my hand,
Raising me up so I can view
The borders of the land.

WALTER REED.

WAYNE, N. Y., March 1, 1886.

PSALM LXXVII. 19.

THROUGH seas and storms of deep distress,
We sail by faith, and not by sight;
Faith guides us in the wilderness,
Through all the briars and the night.
Dear Father, though thy lifted rod
In love doth scourge us here below,
Still we will lean upon our God;
Thine arm shall bear us safely through.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DECHARD, Tenn., May 4, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having written concisely on the subject of predestination, I will resume the subject; and as it and its connections are inexhaustible, I will consider a few of its features. As the will of God is rectitude itself, we should try to understand and conform to it, as far as revelation, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, leads us, and there all our inquiries should terminate. From the eternity we infer the necessary independence, immutability and absolute sovereignty of God, which extends to all his creatures and all their operations or activities, as known unto him are all his works from the beginning, or from eternity. Some say he knew, but did not appoint all things from eternity. Supposing such a thing possible, the consequence inevitably follows that just so much of his knowledge as is founded on an object or objects out of or extraneous to himself is derived from those objects, and upon which he was dependent for it; and thus we see he would be dependent upon his creatures for that much of his knowledge. And besides this, his immutability and universal supremacy are assailed; and if so, his proper Deity, as independence, immutability and absolute sovereignty are indispensable to his very being as the infinite God. Again, as God alone inhabited eternity, how could anything exist if he did not appoint it? And how could he know it if it did not exist? Therefore God appointed all he knew, and knew neither more nor less than he appointed; for of, through and to him are all things.—Rom. xi. 36. Sin then entered, and reigns according to the will and purpose of God, as he alone had knowledge to see it, power to hinder it, wisdom to counteract it, and goodness to order all for the best. This is true, or it entered and reigns counter to the will and purpose of God; to admit which, we must suppose that some or all events result either from an independent, conflicting power or agency, or from chance, accident or contingency, either of which is incompatible with the idea of a great, first cause, the record of inspiration, and the dictates of enlightened reason; for the first supposes an eternal devil, or evil, as eternity is absolutely necessary to independence. The last supposes an unreal, imaginary something, that has no existence in fact, and founded upon our ignorance of operating causes; for could we know the causes of things, chance, accident

and contingency would evaporate into their original nothingness. It will not do to suppose that God in his proper Deity is susceptible of such emotions as would imply a change of will. Why then, it may be asked, do we have such expressions of approval and condemnation, as his good pleasure or placability for some actions, and his wrath or indignation for others? Because he gave his rational creatures a law or rule of action whereby to regulate their conduct toward him, to which, as his revealed will, he requires their conformity, and every deviation from this rule meets his condemnation in such expressions as imply his wrath or indignation; but when they conform, such as imply his good pleasure, by way of approval. And as we as mere creatures know nothing of the counsel of heaven, only so far as revealed, it is our indispensable duty to seek an acquaintance with, and conform to, this written law or revealed will. But is there any seeming incompatibility between this rule as revealed, and (to us) the secret will of God? According to the plain and obvious testimony of Scripture there is. We will select a few of the harvest to evince the position. For instance, the Lord commanded Pharaoh to let Israel go, yet hardened his heart and rendered it impossible for him to obey his revealed will; for his secret and immutable will was that Pharaoh should not let Israel go. Abraham, in obedience to God's command, determined to sacrifice his son; yet the law says, "Thou shalt not kill." And God's secret will hindered Abraham from obeying his command, or revealed will. The Lord commanded the children of Israel to borrow jewels of gold and of silver from the Egyptians; yet the law said, "Thou shalt not steal." So Judas, Pilate, Herod, the Jews, and all who acted a part in the crucifixion of Christ, the most innocent character that ever lived, were guilty of the most atrocious crime ever committed in the world's history, and for which they were justly punishable; yet the whole translation was according to the determinate counsel, or will, purpose, predestination and foreknowledge of God. These instances are adduced as a sample of the harvest, which I deem sufficient to satisfy the most fastidious inquirer.—Exodus iv. 23; Gen. xxii. 2; Exodus iii. 22; Acts iv. 27, 28. The main reason why some suppose that the conduct of God in his decrees and the disposals of his providence, as instanced above, are not in harmony with his infinite perfections as a just and holy God, seems to be

for want of recognizing his absolute sovereignty and right of dominion over his creatures; absurdly supposing that he should observe the same rules or principles of equity in his government over them, as obtain among themselves, who are mere creatures and equals. For instance, one much esteemed brother says, "God saw the obedience of the saints as a fruit of his decree; and if he foresaw the wickedness of the world also as a fruit of his decree, that were precisely the same in principle as blessing and cursing out of the same mouth, and so God should abide his own [I shudder at the thought] reprovations, as in James iii. 10." To this text I refer the reader. This brother certainly did not consider the import of his language, for it plainly implies that the infinitely holy and immutably just God cannot only do wrong, but should be held accountable, and be subject to the same reproofs, and lie under the same censure as his creatures for that wrong. For if we suppose that God can do wrong, we suppose him to do right only when he regulates his conduct by some prescribed rule founded on our views of what is equitable and right; for we cannot possibly suppose that God can do wrong, and not at the same time have some prescribed rule in the mind that he must regulate his conduct by, in order to be right; and thus we would deprive him of his proper Deity; for perfect liberty of will, independence of act, and universal supremacy, are absolutely necessary to his very existence. Therefore he wills and predestinates and accomplishes his ends or purposes, not because they are right in themselves, but they are right because he wills, predestinates and accomplishes them. His will is the original source, his predestination adjusts the plan of operations, his unceasing agency or providence, guided by infinite wisdom, consummates the whole. To remove all cavil on the subject, we will now appeal to the sacred oracles of God, as the only test of right and wrong. We will first call attention to the case of Joseph, who in pursuance and verification of a promise made to Abraham, God moved to dream certain dreams, as the beginning point of one of the most important events connected with the history of Israel, as it centered in, pointed to, and had its final accomplishment in Christ, the great antitype of all the types and shadows, and the desire of the nations. When we contemplate the close concatenation of such a train of harmonious events, Joseph's dreams,

their interpretation by his brethren, their envy, enmity and murderous intent, Reuben's intercession, the passage of the Ishmaelites, Joseph being sold to Potiphar, his promotion, the baseness of Potiphar's wife, the rectitude of Joseph, his imprisonment and promotion in prison, the imprisonment of the butler and baker, their dreams and interpretation by Joseph, the king's dream and interpretation, Joseph's final promotion and settlement as ruler over the land of Egypt, who can, according to enlightened reason, conclude that there is one fortuitous link in this long train of closely connected and harmonious events? And as Joseph said that the Lord sent him, we necessarily conclude that he originated, directed and moved all things connected with, and that conducted to that end. It was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel, that he might destroy them utterly. "The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up." Eli's sons hearkened not to the voice of their father, because the Lord would destroy them. He told David he would raise up evil against him, by taking his wives and giving them to his neighbor, which he did in the sight of all Israel. He told Shimei to curse David.—Josh. xi. 20; 1 Sam. ii. 7, 25; 2 Sam. xii. 11, and xvi. 10. The Lord put a lying spirit in the mouth of all Ahab's prophets. Both riches and honor come of him; he giveth and taketh away. He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise. He taketh away, and none can hinder him. He is in one mind, and none can turn him. He does what his soul desires. He looketh to the ends of the earth. He maketh weight for the wind, weigheth the waters by measure, made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder. When he gives quietness, none can make trouble; and when he hides his face, none can behold him. He genders frost by his breath. What he pleased he did in heaven, earth, the sea, and all deep places. The preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue in man are from him. He made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. The many devices of man's heart are all regulated and made subservient to God's will; for his counsel stands. The lot is cast into the lap, and is at his disposal. He turneth the king's heart as he will. The Assyrian is the rod of his anger, his battle-axe and weapons of war, to break in pieces nations and destroy kingdoms. Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth.—1 Kings xxii. 22, 23; 1 Chron. xxix. 12; Job i. 21; v. 12; ix. 12; xxiii. 13; xxviii. 25, 26; xxxiv. 29; xxxviii. 10-13; Psalms cxxxv. 67; cxlviii. 8; Prov. xvi. 1, 4, 9; xix. 21;

xxi. 1; Isa. x. 5, 15; xiv. 24, 26, 27. This is a small sample of the many Scriptures, given in an abbreviated form, to prove the doctrine of absolute and universal predestination; and as the developments of time are an exact evolution of the determinations of God in eternity, all the Scriptures quoted are relevant to the subject under consideration.

As I have written on the subject above, as applied to God's universal government over his creatures, I wish to write on the same subject as it applies to the salvation of his chosen people.

Your brother, I hope, in gospel bonds.

JAMES WAGNER.

CALEDONIA, Mo., March 28, 1886.

ELDER WM. J. PURINGTON—DEAR BROTHER:—I do not feel competent to write anything to you to interest, edify or instruct you; but your correspondence on absolute predestination has prompted me to return you my gratitude and brotherly love for writing what I have so long believed, yet not able to express it, for the want of language to convey my ideas, owing to my illiterate and uneducated condition; but the Lord has blessed you with understanding, so that you can set forth the truth clearly. I know you are an earthen vessel, but that vessel is full, while I am a small dwarf; yet I can believe many things in God's word that I cannot comprehend; for I can only see now through a glass darkly; but it will not be long until the veil will be taken away.

"Then I shall see and know
All I desire here below."

There is another motive that prompts me to write to you, and that is for information. There are some that have crept into our association unawares, and are led by their carnal minds, as I understand, on the subject of baptism; and the result is, it has become a question in the association. The question is this: What does it require to constitute legal (gospel) baptism? Now, my brother, I hope that you will be able to gather my ideas from what I have written, and cast the mantle of charity over every imperfection; for the truth of our God is all I desire here below, and is all that will do us any good. Your advice on the subject will be heartily received, privately or through the SIGNS; and may the good Lord continue to bless you abundantly, is the prayer of your poor, unworthy brother,

WM. G. HOWARD.

HOPEWELL, N. J., April 27, 1886.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—As the wording of your letter clearly shows the spirit of candor and sincere inquiry, I feel equally bound, I hope, by the same principles to answer your questions. It would seem that gospel baptism is so plainly set forth in the New Testament that nothing but willfulness on the part of any one would attempt to change the mode; but I am aware that your inquiries involve something more than the *modus operandi*, or outward act. Right here I feel it my duty to insert some brief remarks. I have been, as

God has enabled me, telling "the story of the Savior's love," in the presence of God's dear children, as well as thousands of other persons, strangers to me in the flesh, for nearly thirty-seven years, and during which time I have written articles for publication; but I have never used a word intentionally, in speaking or writing, unless I knew its *literal* meaning; and when I deemed it necessary I have *analyzed* the same; and so long as reason remains, and I have a standing with Bible Baptists, by the grace of God sustaining me, I expect to so continue; but if such course be considered as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," or pedantic, it does not move me in the least. I do not profess to be "thoroughly read," never say "My experience" teaches me thus and so, but that so I understand the subject; have "faltered many times in the ranks," have never dared say, I "have spoken in love," or "have written in love," but have said "I have done what God enabled me to do;" never have claimed to be very "spiritually minded," but have desired that Scripture testimony should not be mystified; for "foggy" writing or preaching never has edified anything but a fleshly imagination. I have inserted these remarks, for I find it needful for me to do so.

Now, my brother, the subject of desire shall be attended to; and first, the technical terms necessary to the understanding of the mode shall be brought forward; then who are the proper persons to administer the ordinance; then to whom it pertains. Baptism is, like all other things pertaining unto the gospel, very important. The verb from which the word comes is from *bapto*, to dip; from which comes *baptizo*, to be baptized; the noun *baptisma*, which is baptism; therefore in baptism, as a mode, *bapto* signifies not only a plunging into the water, but under the water *entirely*, and the *raising* up of the body out of the water, showing that the candidate is passive, and the administrator active. It (the mode) also sets forth death, burial and resurrection.

Now there are other matters connected with the ordinance of great importance; for it not only requires the proper mode, but a subject of grace, one born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed, the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; also, a gospel administrator. But if either be wanting, it is not gospel baptism. "There was a man sent from God whose name was John;" and the same John was baptizing many persons in Jordan. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway *out of* the water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the

Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." That baptism of our dear Redeemer certainly set forth his other and terrible baptism into death; for said he afterward, "But I have [mark, it was present with him] a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened [*sunecho*, to hold together with; no such thing as separating any of his agonies] till it be accomplished." The apostle in unequivocal words declares baptism signifies to be buried.—See Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12. In both passages referred to, to be "buried with" is from *sunthapto*, and sets forth with brilliancy and glory the *vital unity* of Christ and his body, the church. Said the apostle, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Notice carefully the preposition is into, not merely to. It is compounded of *in* and *to*, and follows verbs of action, signifying the passing from the outside of a house, wood or field, to its or their interior parts; and it is a word that should not be passed over in a perfunctory manner as we examine it in the New Testament.

Now another matter connected with baptism shall be examined. About fifty years ago serious troubles began in the Baptist organizations in this country; for practices were introduced into the then organized churches which have no warrant in the New Testament; but the most fearful error was concerning the atonement made by the Son of God; and the anti-scriptural, unrighteous sentiment was advocated that it was a general atonement and special application, from which "carnal root" sprang up the tree "modern missionism," and upon that tree much fruit soon grew: and so far was it carried that the God-fearing and humble followers of Christ withdrew, because men, money and things were proclaimed, instead of Christ and him crucified; and associations more resembled legislatures, than assemblies to worship God. And very soon the line of demarcation was clearly drawn between them who could not tolerate the absurd theories thus introduced, and they who loved such idols. The result was, the Missionary or Arminian Baptists called the little remnant who adhered to the old landmarks "Old School Baptists," because they were so far behind the improvements of the age. Since the final separation, all who hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of their hope, acknowledge no act of the popular Baptists as in accordance with the law of Zion's King. Now many seem becoming tired of the husks dealt out to them by the mortal eloquence of learned and wise men after the flesh; and often persons attend the meetings of God's people, where Jesus and the resurrection are preached, and many times say, "I should dearly love to unite with you, were it not that you require me to be re-baptized, which I cannot do, as my conscience is satisfied." In reply to such we have to

say that we cannot call it re-baptism in any sense, for gospel baptism is in the fellowship of a, or the, gospel church; and so long as any one can be satisfied with the baptism, as they term it, which they have received at the hands of Arminian teachers, they are not entirely clear in the doctrine of God our Savior; and to all such I say, The visibly organized church of Christ is a home for them when they are willing to enter by the door into the visible church. Let us remember that Peter says that baptism is "the answer of a good conscience toward God;" and when the good conscience exercises us, we then shall be willing to obey God. The writer of this reply has given the hand of fellowship to a number of dear brethren and sisters who came out from the Babylonish confusion in which they have been bewildered, but to not one of them until they had been down into the "watery grave," in the fellowship of the church with which they united. As we are living in a day and time when many suppositions are made, we will now, in order to illustrate why we are particular, suppose a case for the proof of such exclusiveness, as it is termed. Supposing under the legal dispensation a man not set apart according to God's commandment for a priest, could have been allowed to put on the priestly garment, and to take the lamb or the bullock, and used the knife and the fire exactly as the authorized priest would have done, would such an offering have been accepted? No. Why? Because he had no authority to do it. Therefore the true church of God, walking in gospel order, cannot acknowledge any act of an Arminian teacher whatever; and all churches and associations which turn so far aside as to become so liberal as to receive persons into their open fellowship who have merely been immersed by them who do not love the truth, will sooner or later not only have confusion, but serious trouble.

I now close this part of the reply with great plainness of speech; and if any child of God reads this, who has been in captivity, and wishes a home in the church on the so-called baptism which such a one has received at the hands of some carnal teacher, your mind is not sufficiently cleared of the mist of carnal teaching yet to unite with that poor, despised, ignorant, foolish and peculiar people, who require strict conformity to the gospel order of the church. Question: Do you think there are no children of God amongst other organizations outside of the Old School Baptists? The subject is not concerning who, or who are not, children of God, but the order and ordinances of the church. But because children have had unsound teaching does not prevent or change the fact that they are disobedient children.

My brother, as to the pouring and sprinkling of water upon persons, especially little children, and calling it baptism, I shall say but little, for it is too absurd to dwell much upon; and one of the gross inconsistencies is, that baptism is for believers, and

they sprinkle little children who do not even know anything about the matter in a natural sense, and pronounce them baptized, yet do not give them the bread and wine; therefore how highly inconsistent to divide the ordinance. But not anywhere in the New Testament is either sprinkling or pouring used or represented as baptism. Sprinkle is from *rhan*, from which comes *rhantismos*. How would it sound to any lover of God's truth to hear some one say that such a day and at such a place so many persons were *rhantized*? There is nothing about the word sprinkle that means baptize in a gospel sense, and it is only mockery to apply it. And as to pouring, there is nothing about that word to mean baptism in a gospel sense; for *cheo* is the root of the word; and when to pour out, it is *ekcheo*.

I forbear saying more. If published in the SIGNS, read the remarks carefully.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., April 16, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERS:—I now send you some extracts from the last two letters that I received from our dear sister Ferguson. They were written in the very shadow of the grave, when her natural powers were failing; but her words then, and now, as I read them over again, seem alight with the radiance of heaven. It will always be a source of joy to me that I was favored with this long correspondence with her, and I feel great gladness that she could extend these expressions of fellowship to me. By these letters she being dead yet speaketh. Under date of Delaplane, Va., Jan. 11, 1880, she wrote as follows:

"My dear young brother, I do not know that I could be better employed to-day than in trying to write to you. You are very mindful of the comfort of an old sister, who is lingering around her earthly home. I am not able to attend our monthly meetings, but my heart yearns for the truth which I believe will be preached at Ebenezer this day. My brother James went down yesterday, and I am left to meditate upon the precious words in your letter, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.' If this belongs to me, my dear brother, it is enough to bring comfort to my poor heart of unbelief, if applied by the Spirit. But I am so faithless. I want plainer evidences of God's love than he sees fit to give me. He said, 'Wherefore do ye doubt, O ye of little faith?' And again he said, 'I go to prepare a place for you, and will come again and receive you unto myself.' I would like to have heard the sermon you preached to the old sister. I have never heard that subject especially treated upon. Like the old sister, I had thought it had reference to the departure of the saints from this world. It will bear investigation with me, because I had not thought of it in the way that you presented before. [The words that sister Fer-

guson here alludes to are in 2 Tim. iv. 9, last clause. I had spoken of it as applying to those who have his daily appearing in personal experience.] How good it is to have our minds stirred up in the truth. It makes us search the Scriptures to see if these things be so, and we are instructed and profited by so doing. The words I spoke of are found in Psalm xxxix., last verse. I thought it was the language of Job when I wrote you. O how often have these words been my cry when in deep trouble. I do not know that I said one word about it, only to make the quotation. I thought a word to the wise sufficient; but you have spoken just what the writer meant by the expression, and I think that I felt the force of it in my heart when I wrote to you. Often before and often since have I felt to beg the Father of all our mercies to hear my cry for deliverance out of self, and into his righteousness, that I might go to a city of habitation. I am so destitute of all righteousness, yet the burden of our song is, 'The Lord our righteousness,' or we have none.

"Dear brother, you have been blessed in witnessing the dying testimony of saints that God is true. That old sister that had lost sight of everything earthly, but who could not forget her best Friend, made me feel to say with you, 'O that I might live and die like her!' But you say, 'Is it not true that our God will provide for every hour?' Yes, in his loving purpose he has already provided for his children in every emergency of need. Therefore we shall not perish, but be comforted in every hour of trial. O how encouraging are the words you quote to me, in my silent hours, 'He will not leave you comfortless.' O may it be that I am one of those to whom such sweet promises are spoken! I believe they are for God's poor, helpless children, who have no strength of their own, but trust alone in the righteousness of Jesus. I do at times, I hope, realize the heartfelt truth that God has for Christ's sake forgiven my sins, and in his mercy will never leave nor forsake me. My trust, I hope, is in him who is mighty and able to save, even me, to the uttermost. You have presented the promises to the poor in a way which brought much comfort to me, and I feel that surely I have an interest in that inheritance which is in store for all that love his appearing, whether in life or in death. We do love his appearing. A glimpse, a single glimpse, delights our souls; for he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Though our fears may be very great about our interest in him, yet

'If God is mine, then from his love
He every trouble sends;
All things are working for my good,
And bliss his rod attends.'

"What a precious gift to the church to have a faithful ministry, a discriminating watchman, who turns neither to the right nor to the left, but straightforwardly preaches Christ and him crucified, as the only way of life and salvation. As unprofitable

as I feel myself to be to the church, I do not want to be away from the people with whom I hope I have been directed to live in church capacity. Yes, let me stay with them. It is sweet to linger in memory over past pleasures with the dear ones. How often we find ourselves roaming amid the past with some one whose timely words were as a soothing influence to the perplexed mind. Yes, we cherish the tokens of the way, a little here and a little there. They are all of the Lord. We cannot but know that such things are of the Lord, if we realize how helpless and insufficient we are to do one good thing. Sin is mixed with all we do or think. I feel the loss of my former privileges greatly. They were great, and I enjoyed them. The Lord has now ordained it otherwise, and I much desire reconciliation to his righteous will, that I may meet with calm resignation what he appoints for me. I am sure, my brother, that I do not know what to ask for, but I feel that our God knows just what we need before we ask. There I would love to rest, from all the suggestions of the enemy, and live in the peaceful presence of the Redeemer of Israel. But that is too good a place for such a sinner as I. David says, 'All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.' 'For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.' This, from experience, we know to be true. * * * The people of the Lord have no secrets; but 'the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant.' So all who have had this secret revealed to them are mutual in their enjoyment. * * * Elder E. V. White came to see me last fifth Sunday. He is a very dear brother. He has a good gift, and very acceptable to the brethren. I believe the Lord preserved him through the war for the very station he is now filling. I do admire and love his faithful manner in preaching the truth. With love to you and yours, I remain your sister."

At the close of this letter I wish to explain one reference which sister Ferguson has made in it. She refers to an old sister who was lost to the world, but who had not forgotten her "best Friend," of whom I had written to her. The aged saint to whom she refers was sister Jane Osbourne, relict of Elder James Osbourne, whom most of our aged members have no doubt heard of. She was a member of the Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md., when I took the pastoral charge of it. She was faithful and true, though a quiet woman. Her last illness was dropsy. A few days before the end I called to see her. I found her in her chair. She could not lie down. As I spoke to her I said, "Sister Osbourne, do you know me?" She looked up in my face and said, "No, I do not know you." I told her my name, but still she did not recall me. I pointed to her daughter standing by, and said, "Do you know this lady?" and again she said, "No." I

then mentioned the names of old church members whom she had known for years, but she did not recollect one. I then said, "Sister Osbourne, do you recollect ever hearing the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?" She looked up in my face as though she was astonished. "Why," she said, "do you think I could ever forget the name of the best Friend I ever had, my Savior?" I had written this to sister Ferguson. Was it not a glorious triumph of faith, of the spirit over the failing flesh?

The last letter that she wrote me bears the date March 22, 1880. After some opening remarks she says:

"The Lord does freely bestow upon us poor sinners, out of his fullness, great mercies, and gives us to rely upon his precious promises, and we know that firm as his throne his promise stands. You say, How full of consolation must these promises be in my lonely hours and needed strength. Dear brother, I often ask myself the question, What would be my condition in this late hour of my life if I did not feel that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins? And in his fullness I have hope, though I often feel cast down. But I remember, the Lord is the same each day, and will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. I do desire to praise and adore his great name, which is above every name, and in him alone I desire to trust for everything that I have and am. My ears have not been greeted with the sound of the gospel since last fall, by any of our ministers in Christ. But O how sweet to reflect that God is present everywhere, and will hear the cries of his needy children, no matter how remote they may be. I have a great desire to meet in the assembly of the saints, where prayer is wont to be made. Your desire for me is that I may be blessed with the gift of patience and resignation to his divine will, and with assurance of his presence. Dear brother, I felt that petition to be mine daily, and I am glad you can find it in your heart to feel for an old sister, who would love to see you once more in the flesh. But should that privilege not be granted, O may we meet to dwell in the peaceful presence of our dear Redeemer, who lived, and died, and rose again for the justification of sinners, such as you and I. The correspondence with you has been one that I have greatly enjoyed, and I cannot feel willing to give it up as long as I have power of mind and body to continue it. I know that I cannot repay you for your great kindness, but I feel assured that you will bear with my weakness. I am sorry that I did not reply to you when I felt that I had something to write you. At this time my mind is inactive, and my sight is very dim. My changes are very sudden. Some days my sight is better. I feel that I have been, and am yet, highly favored to get around the house. I do not expect ever to be strong again. I look for daily decline; and may the Lord choose my changes, and reconcile me to them. All praise must be given to his name.

"Our times of sorrow and of joy,
Great God, are in thy hand;
Our choicest comforts come from thee,
And go at thy command."

"Dear brother, you say that when resting in the shadow of the cross you can never, never doubt the love of God. How can the children of the bridechamber fast when his peaceful presence is in their midst? He can say, Peace, be still, and all is calm in an instant. I am glad you had such a pleasant trip among the brethren. You have the gift to search out the lambs and feed them. This I say for your comfort. And I believe the lambs need a word of exhortation and consolation to cheer them when they feel there is not another who feels as they do. They take courage when they find that they are not alone in the matter. I hear that brother Durand has recently lost two of his sisters by death. Truly I do sympathize with that dear brother. My brother James unites in love to you and sister Chick.

"I remain your sister,

"E. A. FERGUSON."

In closing I would say, It has been a joy to me to review these letters once more, and copy these extracts for the readers of the SIGNS. I believe the profit and comfort has been as great as when I first received them. Others have assured me that the letters which have been published have been blessed to them. May God add his blessing to these extracts also.

I remain your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

LOCKTOWN, N. J., Dec. 13, 1885.

DEAR SISTER:—Your letters I received with gladness. I wanted to see you more. You seemed very dear and near, although you were a stranger almost in the flesh; but the kindred spirit is plain sometimes. I could see that your affections were on heavenly things, and sometimes I feel that my mind is on such things very much. Then it is so easy to love and forgive and look over all fleshly or natural things, and cleave to the lovely appearance of Christ. We almost forget we are in the body. I wish I could tell you some of the happy seasons I have when alone, when my mind is not mixed with worldly things. Then I have seasons (like all others, I suppose) of rejoicing, that everything is overruled by the all-wise God. I am so glad that we can trust in a God that is able to save to the uttermost. If I had one good deed to perform, I know I could not perform it, for sin is ever mixed with all I do. If I could only praise the Lord in some way, how glad my heart would be! But this one thing I know, I desire to praise him. This is about as far as I can get. I often wonder why I was made to hear his voice, which I do not doubt. Yet it may be that I am deceived, I have thought about it so often. When my eyes were opened to see, there was so much change I cannot doubt that the Lord did it, because it seemed good in his sight. Dear sister, O that I could speak the matchless worth and sound the glories forth that in my Savior shine. It is impossible for

such poor little creatures as we are to even touch the hem of his garments. O for more love and zeal to adore and praise him! When we consider the nations as a drop of the bucket, comparatively, where are we, and how small we are! I cannot find words to tell you how very dependent I feel. But my hope is in the Lord, and none is able to take away my trust. Although I sometimes feel so weak, yet I am strong in the Almighty's power, and by his power I will be saved, if at all. I have heard one New School and one Methodist sermon since I saw you. I wonder why they cannot see some plain points; but they are so blind. I feel sorry for them, and often feel to say, O Lord, open their eyes; but not my will, but thine be done. Elder Vail preached last Sunday for us, and spoke about choosing whom ye will serve. He made it so plain, how good it was to us; yet some heard not, and will cling to the way of choosing for themselves. I think it would be so very comforting to me to hear my dear children tell the same old story that we all must know to be reckoned among the followers of Christ. This is natural, to want our near ones to believe what we think is right. Sister, you want me to write out my experience for you, which I will try to do as soon as I can. I have often thought I would like to tell it all if I could; but I cannot, and am not much of a writer at best. I do not know that it will be very interesting. I hardly dare write to one that is so good a writer as you; but I hope you will excuse all mistakes, and will get some comfort therefrom. I will try to comply soon. I thought of writing this now in remembrance of your very affectionate and sympathizing ways. Some people will seem nearer to us than others, though they are strangers to us in the flesh. And whenever and wherever I find the people I love, I am reaching my affections to them. I cannot keep from loving that Spirit of Christ, though I seem too worldly to possess anything of that nature. I am your sister in hope of eternal life,

HANNAH RISLER.

LOCKTOWN, N. J.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—According to promise I will try to tell you some of the Lord's dealings with me, as I trust. When quite young I had serious thoughts. I often wondered so much why I was such a sinner. It seemed I was continually doing wrong, and others seemed to do everything nearer right; yet I did the best I could. I wondered why I should feel so sorry for things that others seemed not to care for. Thus I passed a great part of the time, sometimes forgetting my vows to do better. I was afraid to die. I had heard at protracted meetings of a hell that seemed so terrible, I was at times afraid to be alone, for I knew I was not in the heavenly ark they were in. When I was about sixteen years old I saw some difference in preaching; but although it seemed true of salvation by grace, I rebelled against

it because of the multitude. So, in spite of the truth, I tried to believe in works. I worked with every means presentable. I read tracts and books, and thought I would get fit to enter the kingdom. I had a love for church members, and wanted to become one. I had a straight and narrow path pictured out, which appeared to me right, and I wanted to walk therein. But very often I would rouse, seemingly from a slumber, to find I had missed the path, and had not even thought on the subject for some time. Thus I went on. The more I worked, the further off I got. I began to think I was a great way off. I arose at a meeting one evening for prayer, for I felt willing to do anything to get to heaven; but O how condemned I felt! I saw very plainly that vain was the help of men. The leaders of the meeting prayed long and earnestly for me, but I felt hardened, as though it was all a delusion, and I really felt that to be one of the worst acts that I ever remembered doing. I could not lay hold on the promises they held out to me. The Bible was sealed in a manner. I thought I was lost, and none could help; that I was sinking under my great load of guilt, and could not tell it, for who was like me? I never heard of any one in such trouble. But I still clung to works, for I had no understanding of grace or of the Bible's teachings. Right here I would like to tell of my awful condition, but words fail me. I passed some weeks with my mind on these things, wondering why I was permitted to live. In that time I saw what prayer is; for my prayers were growing poorer as the dear Lord showed me my perfect weakness, until at last my prayer was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." I cannot forget the feelings I had. I thought of the worst persons I had ever known or heard of, and they seemed better than me, for they acted their wickedness, while I had the same nature and deceived others. O how I longed for righteousness! I tried to drive these thoughts from my mind, but I could not. At other times I would be afraid they would leave me. But when I was about to give up, the Lord spoke peace to my troubled soul, and I was praising him with my whole soul. O how can I tell it to you? but I know you have been there. The Bible appeared so plain, and all things were praising God for his wonderful love. O that I could speak his matchless worth! As I am writing, dear sister, I am thinking, What are we, that he is mindful of us?

I look back over the ground and see that I have left out many things I might mention, that might be interesting to you. It seemed like a school. I was taught little by little, like as a child learns its lessons. I was very ignorant. I supposed that a christian had no trouble, that they almost talked and walked with God. I soon found that I was not free from sin. When Jesus spoke peace to my troubled breast, I thought I should never have any more trouble. For two days, I think, there was not a

wave of trouble. But all at once I began to be troubled with doubts of this being the work of the Lord. I wanted my trouble back, and thought I was deceived and was mocking God. I thought his way was higher than the heavens above my way. Then I doubted the existence of a God. Everything seemed against me. But it pleased him again and again to raise my despairing doubts, and teach me what I am. But many were my trials before I found one like me. Sometimes I would meet with those that made a profession, but who differed so much with me that I wanted to tell them the way I understood the Scripture; but I soon found that I could not teach divine things. Now I began to search for a home. I felt I must tell these things, or the very rocks would cry out for me. My mind was so wrapped up in meditation I felt that I must speak of it. I felt opposed to the Old School Baptists. I did not know much about them, as I went so seldom to their meetings; and as so few went there, I said in my mind, I will not go there, for I do not want to know what they believe. I went to hear all the different persuasions I could (leaving them out), but always found I could not honestly join any of them, as I had not so learned Christ. But as my father and mother always attended the Old School Baptist meetings whenever they went (and that was quite often), I had an opportunity to go with them. Elder Conklin was the pastor at that time. I was then about to believe that I should never find any persuasion that I could unite with, and that I must be an outside one. But as mother, in her good, kind way, said coaxingly to me, "Go with us this time, it will not hurt you to hear Elder Conklin," I went. But I had so many serious thoughts, and felt so rebellious, I thought, What if they do please some? I was surprised when the Elder took for his text, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standeth thou without?—Gen. xxiv. 31. In that sermon he went over so much of my experience that it looked as though some one had told him my thoughts. I wondered how it was. I never had heard it so plain before. I could say of a truth that I loved all that said such things, for I truly loved that doctrine. My mind ran out after them with pure love. I cannot describe it. And more, I could say, I know these are my kindred. Now I felt so condemned. Besides this, I had thought them to be a hard set; that they only cared for themselves. But not so. They were the most loving and charitable people I had ever met. Thus it went on with me, until at last I felt such love toward them that I offered myself to the church. And although I thought at times I could tell a long and interesting story, I could say but little. To my surprise I was received, and was baptized about a week after. I wish I could tell you some of the doubts I had that week, I was so afraid I was deceiving the church. But when I came to the water I was carried on

wings of love. I felt that all was right. It was a great privilege to follow the Savior's command. I was made willing, I hope and trust, by the power of God, to follow him in baptism. Then the communion seemed precious. I was much troubled about eating and drinking unworthily. I knew it had great meaning. I felt very unworthy of such high privilege as the church and to call them brethren. I feared, for I felt my weakness very much. I would have to look back over the past, and wonder what made me love the brethren so much, if I was deceived and was deceiving. O the doubts and fears I have had! and always after I have seen the hand of the Lord in it all. Thus through great tribulation we enter the kingdom. We might write volumes, yet the half has never been told. I met with a very dear sister awhile before we joined the church, who was traveling the same way, and we could talk much about it. What pleasant times we had, telling each other how we had been brought through the same trials and felt the same joys; and often for each other came the sympathizing tear. I can say truly, I feel at home in the company of the brethren; and although I feel unworthy of such a high calling, yet I trust the Lord will not forsake nor leave me, but will lead me through the valley and shadow of death. I feel like trusting to providence for every needed blessing. I have found it very hard to say, "Thy will be done," in many cases; yet I know that the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. In him we have our being, and are dependent on him for everything we enjoy. Our very breath is his to give or take. The God that rules on high is our Father and our love, and

"He will send down his heavenly powers,
To carry us above."

Dear sister, I have tried to tell you some of my travels. It is very poorly written and put together; but if you can get any satisfaction out of it, it will do me good, for I have the greatest respect for you, and I can trace in all your words the true and loving principle belonging to a christian. I am glad we have become acquainted. Perhaps we may watch over each other in some way to the praise of God. I wish I could write plainer and tell you more, but I am thrown in the way of many cares, and my mind is mixed much with the world; but I try not to let it take all my thoughts. I do know that I am a great sinner, and if saved it is all of the Lord. I will now close, asking you to excuse all imperfections, and write again if you think it worth while. Give my love to your family. I remain your unworthy sister in hope,

HANNAH RISLER.

MAYSVILLE, Oregon, Nov. 29, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of Pleasant Hill Church of Regular Baptists, Linn County, Oregon, of which our highly esteemed sister Vina Weart is a member, and with her consent, I send you for publication a letter that I received from her, which we think will be calcula-

ted to minister comfort to the poor and afflicted ones scattered abroad, as it beautifully sets forth the power of God's grace in turning his children from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. It is the desire and breathing of a new born soul.

From the least of all saints, if one at all.

J. C. TURNIDGE.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Oregon, Aug. 8, 1885.

DEAR BROTHER TURNIDGE:—My mind has been deeply impressed to write to you concerning my travels, and some of my christian experience. Why did I go before the Lord and his dear children with such a mind and with closed lips? For it seems that my mind was crowded so much at that time that I could hardly speak a word; yet my heart was there, and I could not stay away. I had many trials to get to the meeting on Saturday, but I knew it was all right, and as it was intended to be. However I have many doubts and fears. Am I a child of God? Am I fit to be numbered with his children? Sometimes I think I did wrong in asking for such a blessing. Sometimes I think if you all knew me as well as I know myself, you surely could not have fellowship for me. —But I thank God (if I know how to be thankful) for the many blessings he has bestowed upon me. It bears greatly upon my mind that I could not have liberty to tell (if words can tell) what I have experienced; yet I have a great desire for the Lord's dear children to know it. But the dear Lord knows our every thought, and if he is for me, who can be against me? I love the Scriptures of divine truth, and as far as my understanding goes they are very comforting to me. I know I have never read the Bible very much, nor have I a very good understanding of it, nor will I ever have, unless the Lord sees fit to reveal it to me. But I trust in him, and all my help must come from him. I think I tried as hard as any one can, to do something toward saving myself; but I found that nothing I could do was pleasing in the sight of God. As well as I can remember, something over three years ago, I was so cast down and almost lifeless that I did not care to be with any one, and hardly cared to talk to any one. I felt that I ought to go to the woods and stay there alone. Sometimes I would wander there, feeling that I was lost and cast out alone. I thought all on earth who knew me despised me, and worse than all, that I was despised by God. I became very uneasy and afraid, yet I could not tell any one what trouble I was in. I often thought that if I only had one dear friend that I could tell my troubles to, what comfort it would give me. I would awake at midnight and think that I did have a most dear friend indeed, and that I would awake him and tell him. I knew there were none others within hearing distance, yet I could not tell him. Night after night I lay pondering over these things, and how I was

not permitted to tell my dear companion. Often on retiring to bed he would kneel down by his bed in giving thanks to God, but never would utter a word aloud. But one night I asked him to pray aloud, so that I could hear him. I knelt down beside him, but I felt like a stumbling-block in his way. Sometimes I would go off alone and try to pray for myself. I thought if my dear companion could do me no good I must try for myself. But alas! my lips were sealed; not one word could I utter. I thought, O what must I do, and what is soon going to become of me? My trouble grew harder and harder, until one night after we both had lain down I turned to my companion and said, "O! I wish I only could tell you all about it." I guess he knew all about what I wanted to tell him, for he said so good and kind to me, "O yes, tell me anything you want to." But I could not tell him now. I would think, I will have Elder Turnidge and his wife come and stay all night with us. They are despised, I know, but they are good people, and it may be they can do me some good. But no relief could they give me. I remained in this awful condition for almost a year, until at length it pleased the good Lord to reveal his love to me, miserable wretch as I was. It was a joy I shall never be able to describe, although I have been trying to tell it ever since to the dear brethren and sisters, whenever I have been with them. It is unspeakable and full of glory. It was the midnight hour when the Lord revealed his love to me. I awoke from a glorious sleep. There I saw a dear old brother leading me down into the water, and there buried me. I thought I came up out of the water shouting, and I verily believe I did shout; but it was not a shout uttered by words, for I never have been able to tell the dear brethren and sisters anything about the joy I felt when I came out of the water. O how glorious the dear brethren did look to me. They seemed to shine with that brightness which is the presence of the Lord. I felt that I could clasp them all in my arms and cling to them forever. But O how soon darkness overshadowed me. It seemed that I was entirely deceived, and had deceived the brethren. I felt that I had been acting the hypocrite in the sight of God. But I have been made to know that I awoke not from a natural dream, but from a spiritual vision in Christ; for I never could have seen such glorious things with my natural eyes. When I awoke I thought I must tell my dear companion; but I could not do so, for I feared it was nothing but a dream. I kept it to myself for weeks. In the course of a month or two it came to me again, but I thought I would not tell it to any, but would wait and see if it came true. When it came again to my mind, I felt determined to tell it to brother Levi McQueen, as he was here; but I could not tell him, and so I kept it to myself. One day being alone, and thinking much about my

dream, sister Sally Turnidge came in unexpectedly and saw that I was troubled about something. She made some inquiries about our next meeting, and I said to her, "I wish uncle Billy Matthews would come to our next meeting." She replied, "Tell them that you want him to come for your special benefit." I told her to ask Elder Turnidge to write to Elder Matthews, and tell him that they would like to have him come to our next meeting. Elder Matthews answered the letter, and said that he could not come at that time, it being so near the time of the association, but that he would come if possible, on his way from the association. O how sad I felt. I thought if he knew how much I wanted to see him, he surely would have come. I thought, If this is the Lord's work, he will come and perform the work which I saw done by him. I thought I would not go to meeting on Saturday, but would remain at home and prepare something, in case some one should come to our house from meeting, for I always thought I must have the very best for company. While I was busy with my baking, brother McQueen came in, and said to me, "You are preparing too much. You are doing too much extra cooking." Just then the words came to my mind, "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her; but Martha was cumbered about much serving." Then the thought came into my mind that the part I had chosen was the world and its fashions, and Satan and his ways, and that I was of the world. So I thought I would not go to meeting that day. But when brother McQueen and my husband had started for the meeting I was with them. When we got to the meeting, they all seemed to look the brightest I had ever seen them. Such glorious music seemed to run through my mind that I cannot tell what they sung, if they sung at all; nor can I tell anything about the sermon. There was a continued joyous sound in my mind.

"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.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine."

What the dear brethren did with me in behalf of the church, I do not know; for the sound of God's redeeming love sounded too loud for me to realize where I was or what I was doing.

Well, finding I have written more than I expected to, and knowing it would require too long a letter to try to tell you of all my travels (I never can tell them all), I will close, for fear you will tire of reading the miserable writing I have done.

VINA WEART.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Feb. 23, 1886.

DEAR SISTER MCDANIEL:—Your kind letter of the 17th instant came to hand yesterday, and I was truly glad to hear from you again. I was just

wondering why you did not write. I am still up and going, but suffer a great deal, especially nights. But I hope I am thankful that it is as well with me as it is. My children are all sick with whooping cough. It is hurting Nannie very much. My wife and myself also have severe colds, and I have a dreadful cough, which hurts me very much and keeps me very sore in my left breast. I am not able to write much. I have ten or fifteen letters on hand that I have not answered at all. I am trying to preach somewhere here in town nearly every Sunday. We are expecting to try to constitute a church here next Saturday, but may make a failure for want of a presbytery. Well, if I could, I would like to copy my talk at my brother's last Sunday evening. There were eight or nine of us who met there for prayer, and I felt impressed to talk. Brother Champion opened the meeting by reading the eighth chapter of Romans. Before he began to read, he spoke of his unworthiness, and said he felt somehow that it was wrong for him to go forward. About that time these words came to me with sweetness and power, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Brother Champion announced his chapter, and read, and before he got through the chapter he read my text. This confirmed me in the belief that God was there with us, and he had given me that text; so I arose out of my chair, and proceeded, as well as I remember, thus:

Brethren and sisters, I feel impressed to make a few remarks. I do not know that I am right in so doing, but I do not believe much in formality; but I believe that when God's people are together, and one feels impressed to speak (male or female), they ought to do so. It is a little strange that before brother Champion began to read, a text came to my mind which he read before he closed, and I as much believe that God is here in our midst this evening, as I believe there is a God in heaven. The text is this, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" God's promises to his people are and have been sure in all ages of the world. Amidst all the trials, afflictions and troubles through which they are called to pass, God is with and for them. Though they may be in the very remotest and darkest corner of this earth, or down in the very depths of poverty and affliction, surrounded by all the emissaries of Satan, God is with them and for them. The apostle exclaims, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." And in all ages of the world, and under all circumstances, God's protecting care has been manifested in behalf of his poor, afflicted people. We might refer back to Jacob, when fleeing from his brother Esau, and going toward the land of his mother's brethren. Out in the desert land, and in the waste, howling wilderness, Jacob lay down to spend the night among the ravenous beasts of the forest, taking of the stones for a pillow for his weary head, having no thought, perhaps, that God

was in the place; but during the night God showed him a ladder, extending from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. When Jacob awoke he was afraid, and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. This is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven." Brethren and sisters, if we are what we profess to be, and are assembled here in the name of the Lord, this is the house of God and the gate of heaven, and God is with us. Hence Paul says, "And hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus." O what a glorious thought! "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?" But let us refer to Daniel in the lion's den. See him as he is cast into this dungeon of wild beasts, all alone, so far as human aid is concerned. But he is not alone, for the God of Israel is with and for him; hence the lions could not harm him. So also the three Hebrew children, as they were cast into the fiery furnace. God is for them; hence the flames cannot hurt them. Look again at the child Moses. It was revealed to his parents that "he was a proper child," and he was hid three months. But when he could no longer be hid, he was laid in an ark of bulrushes, and set afloat upon the waters, subject to the appetite of the fishes, or to be borne to destruction by the current of the river. All alone in an ark of bulrushes, this little Moses is cast upon the waters; but God is for him, and who can be against him? for he is to be the temporal deliverer of the seed of Jacob from Egyptian bondage. God was with and for Jacob when he sent Joseph before him into Egypt to prepare corn for the years of famine that were to come upon the land of Canaan. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord says, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste, howling wilderness," &c. Now let us pass by many things and come down to the birth of the infant Savior, who is so closely identified with and related to his people that it is written, "As he is, so are we in this world." "If they have done these things in the green tree, what will they do in the dry?" "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also." And I tell you, my brethren, there is a union and relationship existing between Christ and his people that all the powers of earth and hell cannot dissolve. It is a blood, body, bone and flesh relationship; because it is written, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," &c. Again, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." People tell me that there can be no such thing as

union till there is a coming together of that which is separated; but I tell you that there is as much union between Christ and his church, as there is between the sap and heart of a tree; and both these grow up together. Tell me not that there is no union existing between them. Now what Jesus suffered was for his people; so we see him as a helpless babe in the manger, wrapped in swaddling bands, surrounded by the wise and prudent of this world; no room for him in the inn. But his God was with him, and he grew and waxed strong. And O! listen to the cries of the mothers when the wicked edict of king Herod was being executed. "Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not." But this fearful edict could not reach the "child Jesus," for God was for him; and his parents being warned of God in a dream, took the young child and fled into Egypt. But O how lonely Jesus must have appeared when praying in the garden of Gethsemane, and saying, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." But let us trace him to the cross, and to the dark caverns of the tomb. O! it did seem as if the enemy had secured a signal victory when he "bowed his head and gave up the ghost, and said, It is finished." But this is not all. They took him down from the cross, and laid him in Joseph's new tomb, and placed the king's seal upon it, and placed a guard of men around the tomb. But ah! what did that stone, that seal and that guard amount to? The grave could not hold him, because a prophet had said, "Therefore also my flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." God was with him and for him, and on the third morning the angel came and rolled away the stone, and the guard became as dead men. The dead Jesus arose a conquering King, coming forth conquering and to conquer. So the apostle writes, "For ye know the grace of our Lord, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." It is not through his riches that we are made rich, although the apostle says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;" but it is through his poverty that we are made rich. And O how poor! A suffering and sorrowing man. But he was made poor that we might be made rich. He became a suffering man, that we might have a place of rest with him. He became a sorrowing man, that we might rejoice with him forever. He became a dying man, that we might be made alive. He became a dead man, that we might live with him forever. He ascended into heaven, that we might also ascend into heaven, and live and reign with him forever and ever. O what a glorious hope is ours! "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

"Why should we start and fear to die?
What timorous worms we mortals are?"
How often we are ready to faint by
the way, and to give it all up. We
become disheartened and discouraged.
But why should we be discouraged?
"Why art thou cast down, O my
soul, and why art thou disquieted
within me? Hope thou in God, for I
shall yet praise him, who is the health
of my countenance, and my God."
The poet has well said:

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

Then what a comfort to the poor and
afflicted people of God, to be assured
in his word that he is for them. He
says, "I will leave in the midst of
thee a poor and afflicted people, and
they shall trust in the name of the
Lord." Also, "I will set the solitary
in families." Paul says, "God hath
chosen the foolish things of the world
to confound the wise; and God hath
chosen the weak things of the world
to confound the things which are
mighty; and base things of the world
hath God chosen, yea, and things that
are not, to bring to naught things
that are, that no flesh should glory in
his presence. But of him [of God] are ye
in Christ Jesus, who of God is
made unto us wisdom, and righteous-
ness, and sanctification, and redemp-
tion; that, according as it is written,
He that glorieth, let him glory in the
Lord." "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!" "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 also with
him freely give us all things?" O
what a glorious thing for us, that we
do not have salvation to buy. We
are too poor to buy.

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

Nothing to buy with. But, thank
God, it is a free gift, and he will freely
give us all things. "Who shall lay
anything to the charge of God's elect?
It is God that justifieth." "It is
Christ that died, yea, rather, that is
risen again, who is even at the right
hand of God; who also maketh inter-
cession for us. What shall separate
us from the love of Christ? Shall
tribulation, or distress, or persecu-
tion, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
Nay, in all these things we are more
than conquerors, through him that
loved us, and gave himself for us.
For I am persuaded that neither life,
nor death, 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."
What could be more comforting to
the saints than to be assured that
nothing shall be able to separate
them from the love of Christ? With
all assurance the apostle could say,
"And we know that all things work
together for good to them that love
God, to them who are the called ac-
cording to his purpose." So, my
brethren, it matters not what may

befall us, nor how many enemies may
surround us, nor indeed what the
circumstances may be. "If God be
for us, who can be against us?" "In
all these things," says the apostle,
"we are more than conquerors through
him that loved us, and gave himself
for us." He does not say, We shall
be conquerors; but we are now, at
this time, "more than conquerors,"
&c. Then there is nothing to fear.
He that has all power in heaven and
in earth is with and for us; and "If
God be for us, who can be against
us?" What a comfort and consolati-
on to the tempest-tossed saints.
And, dear brethren, whether we real-
ize it or not, I feel that "God is in
this place," and that "this is none
other than the house of God, and the
gate of heaven." But I will close my
remarks.

Dear sister, read this, and if you
think enough of it, you can submit it
to the brethren Beebe for publication
in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Please
write when convenient, and may the
Lord bless you and yours with every
needed blessing.

Yours in the afflictions of the gos-
pel,

H. J. REDD.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, convert-
ing the soul."—Psalm xix. 7.

There is no other law that has
power over the soul. Men by en-
acting laws and enforcing them have
some control over the actions of
those who have it in their hearts to
violate them; but the soul, mind and
heart of the man is the same, and but
for the penalty affixed for the trans-
gressor, he would act out his mali-
cious design. There is imperfection in
all that men can do. It sometimes
answers well the design of it, so far
as men can see, but they can see no
farther than the act is performed.
Hence with men the open violation is
all they have anything to do with.
That is what law is for, to protect
the innocent, by condemning the
guilty. The law of the land has to
do with the outward acts and per-
formances of the creature only.
Your so-called neighbor may have it
in his heart to steal your horse; but
if he does not commit the act the law
cannot touch him; but he will remain
a thief in the sight of the law of God,
and go unpunished, unless the law of
the Lord enters. If that law once
enters, the offense will abound, and
he will immediately be brought to
judgment and condemned as guilty.
Indeed he will confess his guilt be-
fore God, without any farther trial.
The law of the Lord must and shall
be obeyed, for it is his will concern-
ing them. There is no other tribunal
to appeal to. There can be no in-
justice shown you. Justice must be
meted out to you. You are a sin-
ner, and shall die. Every witness
on the stand testifies against
you, and you plead guilty your-
self. All the lawyers and doc-
tors can do you no good. The law
administers death as the penalty for
transgression. This is a perfect work,
cutting short in righteousness, be-
cause a short work will he perform
upon the earth. The law demands,

and we must answer; and what shall
we say? Guilty! unclean! And
with one of old we say, "I dwell
among a people of unclean lips." It
may be that we have reformed many
times, and left off many bad habits,
and in the sight of men have been
very pious; and it may be that we
have had some peace offerings at
home, got along pretty well, acting
our part, doing what we have under-
stood to be our part of the work.
But what have we done? The soul
is not converted; our heart is a sink
of sin. Even though we may have
observed all these things from our
youth, there is a lack yet. Our heart
has been living all this time in the en-
joyment of these things, and we have
simply refrained from doing, because
it seemed our part to do. If I must
sell all that I have and give it to the
poor, it will be of no value to me;
and the decision of this court, the
sentence of this Judge, is, that my
very best acts and performances
have been but the sacrifices of the
wicked, which is abomination in the
sight of God. What shall I do?
Poor soul, rich in faith, converted to
God, you can do nothing but plead
guilty and beg for mercy all the days
of your life. It is a perfect work.
You can do nothing but die. You
have the sentence of death in your
self, that henceforth you shall not
live to yourself, but to him who is
your Life, who has made an end of
transgression, and put away sin by
the sacrifice of himself. The law
was not given for you to obey or
fulfill, but that it should be fulfilled
in you, who walk not after the flesh,
but after the Spirit. The Lawgiver
is the Judge, and he has judged
righteously, and concluded all in sin
and under condemnation, that he
might have mercy on whom he will.
He is working in you (not on you),
both to will and to do of his good
pleasure. The law of the Lord is
perfect, converting the soul. That
soul now, or living man, is led by the
Spirit of God into all good works.
His life and enjoyment is in Christ,
and he has the sentence of death in
himself, and will be made to cry out
at times, in the language of the
apostle, "Who shall deliver me from
the body of this death?" The law of
the Lord is perfect, to all eternity
doing his will, in the army of heaven
and among the inhabitants of earth.

Dear brethren, I have hurriedly
penned down some thoughts as they
have seemed to come into my mind.
They are for you to dispose of. I
hope you will not publish them to
the exclusion of better matter.

Yours in hope and fellowship,
JOSEPH L. STATON.
NEWARK, Del., May 8, 1886.

TIFFIN, Ohio, Feb. 27, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—How truly like
a swift flowing stream are the days
of mortal life. Days, months and
years follow each other so rapidly
that in their successive blendings the
human mind at last can regard this
life but as a passing panorama. But
seen in all its "object lessons" of
good and evil, of purity and corrup-

tion, of truth and falsehood, of sin-
cerity and hypocrisy, of love and
hatred, of peace and strife, of health
and disease, of joy and sorrow, it be-
comes a complex mystery, too wonder-
ful for finite reason to solve. Many
are running too and fro, and knowl-
edge is being increased. Human
wisdom, calling itself science, has in-
deed traced the relations of "cause
and effect" in mere physical nature,
and by successful demonstration
proves the correctness of its conclu-
sions. Proud of its achievement, and
unmindful of the source of every good
and every perfect gift, it claims to
have discovered by diligent search-
ing the fountains of all moral good
and evil, and the rules by which
mortals may drink freely at either
and both springs. Nay, more. It
assumes even to say to the Lord of
the universe, "If thou governest not
according to these rules, proven true
and right by physical and moral
science, then depart from us; for we
desire not a knowledge of thy ways."
How different the revelation hid from
the wise and prudent, but made unto
babes. No study of moral science
ever taught a guilty sinner the de-
pravity of sin, or the damning nature
in his own case. "By the law is the
knowledge of sin." What law? The
law which under the new covenant is
laid in the heart and within the mind:
God's holy law of perfection. In the
heart it loved God supremely, and its
neighbor as itself. O wondrous love
of God! That, sharper than a two-
edged sword, divides asunder between
soul and spirit, the joints and mar-
row, and discerns the thoughts and
intents of the heart. No subtle
human skill can divide between soul
and spirit. The soul, which in vital
union with the body constitutes man
a conscious, active being, when con-
trolled by a perverse, rebellious
spirit, engages in sin, as naturally as
the sparks fly upward. In a state of
nature this evil spirit that "worketh
in the children of disobedience" is
master of the soul, and through it of
the body also. The spirit has pur-
pose and motive, while the powers of
thought and action of soul and body
are the subject of this perverse spirit,
until the quick and powerful Word of
God divides asunder between them.
O what a marvelous change! A new
spirit is given, which hates sin and
loves purity and holiness. Now the
enlightened soul is made to abhor
its former course of action, and at
once essays to do good by perfect
obedience to the holy law so clearly
revealed; but, alas! the same mighty
power has divided between the joints
and marrow, and the quickened sin-
ner, with each effort to do better,
finds that he is without strength.
Regarding justice as the crowning at-
tribute of Jehovah, he strives in vain
to bring some offering of good works
as an offset against the ten thousand
talents of debt against him. Here
again this Word of God is manifest
in discerning the thoughts and in-
tents of the heart. Not yet suffi-
ciently stripped of self, the soul
would divide the glory of its salva-
tion with its Maker and Redeemer.

But at the end of the law it is ready to exclaim, Not my will, but thine be done, O thou Savior of sinners.

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

Yes, the same old story, heard when the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. Now is seen how God can be just, and at the same time justify the believer. Now appears as chief among ten thousand he whom in the sentence of the law we had regarded as "a consuming fire," altogether lovely now; for with David we can say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," for his goodness never faileth, and his mercy endureth forever.

"I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

Ten thousand worlds like this, with all its riches and glory, could not bring the ineffable bliss at beholding a Savior and Redeemer just suited to my case, and made mine by a faith that is greater than I. The winter is ended, the Sun of righteousness has arisen with peace and healing in his wings, and now, says the ravished soul, there can never more come doubt or sorrow in the blessed sunshine of infinite love.

"All my remnant of days
Will I spend in his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul to redeem."

But our thoughts are not God's thoughts, and soon we find clinging to us still the old nature with all its deceitful lusts, as a constant thorn in the flesh. And we find, too, that he who will live godly in this present world must suffer persecution. But in the midst of bitter trials comes the sure word of God,

"The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine."

How often in the midst of pain and sorrow we are inclined to doubt the wisdom and goodness of our unseen Guide. But whether looking at the experiences of men and women in times past or present, the mingling of bitter and sweet in such unaccountable proportions is beyond human comprehension. He who rules all things after the counsel of his own will speaks sometimes in the whisper to fainting Elijahs, and anon from the rushing whirlwind to complaining Jobs, "Be still, and know that I am God," and, "Beside me there is no Savior."

Brethren, permit me to join my eleventh hour greeting for the year 1886, to all of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES family. How sweet the good news from every quarter, that Jesus Christ, once bleeding on the cross, still hath a kingdom, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail; that, true to his promise, the blessed Comforter comes still to cheer the faint, to strengthen the weak, to lift up the fallen, to heal the sick, to soothe sorrows, and lead gently by the side of still waters those little ones, dear to him as the apple of his eye. Mighty forces are to-day shaking mightily the earth; the moral scientists, with the ministers of antichrist, from press, rostrum and pulpit, continue to proclaim, "The millennium of universal brotherhood and righteous-

ness is at hand." But let us not be deceived. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." Heed not the siren cry, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. Never in the history of fallen man have the selfish and corrupt instincts of his nature been more prominent. Human greed and love of dominion are everywhere manifest. The so-called churches have a "form of godliness," but partiality for the "goodly raiment" and worldly honors, powers and possessions is in strange contrast with the spirit and early practice of christians. The mammon of unrighteousness assumes to sit in the throne of the Most High, and essays his bolts to throw. With a "face like a lamb," it is not strange that his claws like a beast of prey should be so often unobserved by his victims. O, brethren, how needful that we watch, as well as pray, lest we also be tempted or ensnared by the craft of the wicked.

But whither runs my pen? I set out simply to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, and to express my grateful appreciation of its words of cheer and comfort in the past, with a hope for its coming still in the future. Do with these lines as you think best.

Yours in the hope of the gospel,
JOHN SEITZ.

MACOMB, Ill., May, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—I have recently received a request from a friend in Maryland, for my views on John iii. 5, either by private letter or through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I shall attempt a very brief notice of the subject through your paper, by your permission. Since I became a Baptist, in 1833, I have often heard this text talked about by the brethren, and have read the views of several expressed through our religious papers, and I have found that at least three different opinions are entertained by precious brethren in reference to the word "water," in the text. Some believe that the water here means the fleshly or natural birth; others believe it means water baptism; others, again, believe that to be born of water and the Spirit applies only to the new birth, or regeneration. I have long entertained the latter view of the subject. The natural birth is said to be of blood, of the flesh, of corruptible seed, &c. But no where else do I remember of its being of water, when alluding to the natural birth. The birth of the flesh is fully and clearly explained in the connection by the Savior, without using the element of water; and in contrasting the fleshly and spiritual births, I do not understand that Jesus had any reference to water baptism, or seeing or entering into the visible church. Something more profound and important was under consideration than seeing or entering literally into a visible kingdom or church; even the awful and solemn truth of one, any one, having to be born again, born of the Spirit, born of water and the Spirit,

to enable him to either see or enter into the enjoyment of the spiritual kingdom of God. Regeneration and the spiritual birth are used in the Scriptures as having more than one effect upon the subject of it; a renewing and a washing; as, "The washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Titus iii. 5. "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."—Eph. v. 26. "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. See also Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, for a further illustration of the cleansing and renewing nature of regeneration. I hardly need refer the Bible reader to the many places in the Old and New Testaments where water is used to represent the Spirit of God, spiritual life, salvation, &c, for such illustrations abound; and I believe that Jesus was teaching this ruler of the Jews, in this fifth verse, the true washing and renewing nature of the spiritual birth, instead of his divers and literal Jewish washings. I am gratified, however, to say that, so far as I know, brethren of our own order have never fallen out about this word "water," in this verse. Why should they? All believe in both a fleshly and a spiritual birth, and all believe that water is often used to represent the salvation of God, as experienced by the regenerate people of God; and all believe also in water baptism in its proper place; and it seems to me that all who have been born again, and are acquainted with the letter of the word, should unhesitatingly believe that the omnipotent Spirit of God is the only agency that ever has or can produce the new birth. Where brethren differ in reference to the meaning of a word only, or to its use in a particular place, they should be forbearing. So far as I am acquainted with our people, I believe they are a unit upon the subjects of salvation by grace, unconditional election, effectual calling by the Spirit, the certain glorification of the redeemed, baptism, the communion, the call to the ministry, the rejection of all religious inventions, the resurrection of the dead, &c. But a short-sighted creature may relate a good experience, and be beloved as a brother, but, "Is he sound on the union question?" Well, what is sound? Five or six opinions are held on the subject. O that I knew that I was now in union with Jesus! "Do you believe in eternal children?" I would rather know whether I am a child now. "Is he sound on the new birth?" Well, as to that, look at his deportment, and see if his fruit is good. The above, and many like questions, are often stirred up, and have marred the peace of Zion, and distressed the dear little lambs. Some of the deep things of God an angel cannot sound, and should not be made a bar to fellowship.

The foregoing brief thoughts are submitted to you, brethren, and if published, to my friend at Liberty Grove, Md. In love,

I. N. VANMETER.

DANIELS' MILLS, Ga., Jan. 18, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I read many peices in the SIGNS that are very interesting. Sometimes one peice is worth all the paper costs for a whole year. I see there are a great many in a destitute condition, who only hear the gospel as it is proclaimed through the SIGNS. It makes me desire to write something to them to comfort them, although I feel too poor and unworthy to even speak to them in their lonely condition. O that they might remember that the assurance in Matthew v. 1-12 is theirs. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Dear saint, when you seem to be alone, and doubts and fears arise, and you feel that there is no one like you, remember that the Savior was acquainted with grief, and went a mourner all his days. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." When men speak evil of you, and cast you out as evil, then rejoice. The psalmist David was surely in the same condition.—Psalm xxxvii. 14. "The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation." When the bells ring, and the multitude go to the so-called churches, while you are left alone, you begin to say in your thoughts, Surely I am not a child of God; I have so many sinful thoughts. Then you grow very weak, and mourn like a dove that has lost its mate. The dove will sit and coo all the day long. There is no bird that can mourn like the dove, in its sad and lonely condition. So it is with the poor and afflicted child of God, whose strength is all gone. Paul said, "When I am weak, then am I strong." That is, weak in the flesh. When there remaineth no strength in you, then is your faith strong in Jesus, your Savior, and you may rejoice, for great is your reward in heaven, and you have this promise of Jesus, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." When I am left all alone, and no strength remains in me, I am made to look back to the year 1851, the third Saturday in September, in Fayette County, Georgia, when and where I could claim Jesus as my Savior. All my troubles and condemnations were gone, and joy filled my soul. There is my resting place; there has been my hiding place from the tempest, from that time until now.

Dearly beloved of the Lord, remember that the Savior has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Be patient in tribulation. If you do not have tribulation, if the world does not hate you, if you are not accounted the offscouring of all things, you may know that you are of the world. But if these things come upon you, then rejoice, for great is your reward in heaven. When it is well with you, remember me.

W. R. DANIELL.

E D I T O R I A L .

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1886.

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

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

DANIEL VIII. 14.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I would like to have your views on Daniel viii. 14, concerning the two thousand and three hundred days, and the cleansing of the sanctuary. More particularly, when did those days begin, and when did they terminate, if so be they have terminated? And what is to be understood by the cleansing of the sanctuary?

Yours in hope,

THOMAS H. COLE.

R E P L Y .

"AND he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

It would have been much more congenial with our feelings to read the views of our esteemed brother Cole on this text, than to write anything concerning it. Yet we will not refuse to submit such thoughts as we have, trusting that they may serve to draw out the views of others who may have received clearer light. And in what is here written it is expressly stated that we present nothing as positive truth but that which has the sanction of direct revelation. Our own thoughts are worth no more than the thoughts of any brother without the support of the inspired Scriptures.

In the first place it should be remembered that the central object of all inspired prophecy is "the testimony of Jesus." This is the very spirit of prophecy; and whatever else reason may discover in the revealed Scriptures, it is certainly not the truth which God has moved his servants to record unless it presents Christ crucified as the triumphant conqueror over death and sin; and in that glorious display of the exaltation of Jesus, his redeemed people must appear with him in his glory.—See Rev. xix. 10; Col. iii. iv. Many ingenious and elaborate expositions of prophecy have been advanced since the apostolic age, which commended themselves to the favor of natural intelligence, but they have successively been proven erroneous as time has made manifest their fallacy. In most of these cunningly devised efforts of human wisdom to comprehend the mystery of God, there has been one very plain mark exposing their error in the fact that Christ and his glory are entirely omitted from their views, while the glory of the author usually appears in the skill with which history and the letter of Scripture are distorted to sustain the theories presented. It is always an indication of error when the pride of the individual is gratified in the presentation of his theory concerning any point of doctrine or any text. When Christ appears self is humiliated, and when self is gratified Christ is forgotten. In the prophecy under the old dispensation, there is nothing recorded but that which testifies of Jesus, for so he plainly declared to the Jews who did not know

him. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39. Hence it is clear that any construction of the letter of prophecy must be erroneous if it does not bear witness to Christ Jesus. So, in the experience of the saints under the gospel dispensation, no real comfort can be found in anything but the unchanging faithfulness and love of our precious Redeemer. Hence every ray of light and every joyful emotion reflects the glory of his grace, and every trial and every sorrow testifies his faithfulness and truth. Thus whether in prosperity or adversity, in joy or grief, they find that "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.—Psalm xix. 2.

In regard to the beginning and end of the two thousand and three hundred days, on which point our brother asks more particularly, it would appear from the form of expression that the days were counted from the beginning of the prophetic dispensation after the flood, which according to the accepted chronology of the authorized version of the Scriptures was about 2,300 years before the coming of Christ in the flesh. This may be the reason for using the Hebrew *ereb* for "days," which is used in the first chapter of Genesis, signifying "evening morning," as in the margin of reference Bibles. As this is the only place in which this original word is used by Daniel, it seems to be by special design that it is selected to convey an idea not expressed by the word *yamim*, which he uses in more than twenty other places, where it is translated "days." Whether this is the true significance of this expression or not, it seems clear to our view that the days specified did terminate when the gospel dispensation was established; for it was certainly at that time that the sanctuary was cleansed. This time is declared by other prophets, as when the Lord says to Zion, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall rise 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."—Isaiah lx. 1-3. Also the cleansing of the sanctuary is foretold by Joel. "The Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."—Joel iii. 16, 17. This prophecy is declared by the apostle Peter to refer to that which was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.—See Acts ii. 16. It was when our Lord was glorified in the removal of these carnal ordinances of the legal dispensation that the sanc-

tuary was cleansed; for under that old covenant there was no discerning between him that served God and him that served him not. He who was born in Abraham's house, or bought with his money, was entitled to all the privileges and obligated to obey all the injunctions of that covenant, whose sign was circumcision. The fear of the Lord was not requisite to entitle one to the ordinance of circumcision, hence there was no distinction between him that served God and him that served him not.—Matt. iii. 18.

When the Lord did suddenly come into his temple he did thoroughly cleanse his sanctuary, as was typically shown in his driving the merchants from the literal temple.—See John ii. 13-17. Brother Cole will doubtless agree that the sanctuary, that is, "the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High," is "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Before the night of Judaism passed away at the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, there was no place clean from the pollution of mere legal obedience for justification; but in this glorious gospel day every redeemed sinner is cleansed by the precious blood of Christ, by whose one offering they are perfected forever in that righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. While they were held under the law of a carnal commandment there was no clearly drawn line of discrimination by which they who loved the truth were separated from the natural Israelites, hence the sanctuary could not be cleansed until "the fullness of the time was come" when "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. This is the joyful time to which all the shadows of the prophetic night directed the faith of the chosen people of God, which is often designated in the Old Testament as "that day." It is indeed the one day which the Lord has made by the light of his glorious presence, and no created sun is needed to produce this day. Its divine radiance glows in the midnight darkness of the inner prison, or shines above the brightness of the noonday sun whenever Christ Jesus reveals himself in the subjects of his grace. Then his sanctuary in his saints is cleansed experimentally, when the manifest glory of the presence of the Lord causes in them utter abhorrence of self and all the filthy rags of their own righteousness. Since they who are blessed with the clearest revelation of the perfection which is in the Lord are enabled to see with most vivid intensity the evil which is in themselves, it is evident that the cleansing of them as the sanctuary in which God dwells, takes away from them every vestige of self confidence, and brings them to realize the truth that "We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."—Phil. iii. 3. None can

bear this infallible mark but those who are by the holy Spirit of God sealed unto the day of redemption.—Eph. iv. 30. They who are thus sealed have not voluntarily assumed this mark; for it is their constant grief that they can find nothing in themselves wherein to trust; and when they find the indelible impress of this peculiar seal fixed upon them it causes constant grief that they cannot efface it by producing something wherein they might be entitled to trust in themselves.

The question in the verse preceding the text is evidently the occasion of this reply, on which our views are requested. That inquiry was made in the hearing of Daniel by one saint speaking to another saint, who is called in the margin "the Numberer of secrets, or the Wonderful Numberer." None can be entitled to this name but the King of saints. His name is called Wonderful in Isaiah ix. 6. He alone is empowered to reveal the truth and knowledge of God which is eternal life.—See Matt. xi. 27; John xvii. 2, 3. "The secret of the Lord" forever is "with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."—Psalm xxv. 14. There is no other way by which this secret and this covenant ever was or ever will be known by any created being but by this revelation; and when it is known it will never fail to display the infinite glory of our Lord and the perfect fulfillment of the unchanging purpose of God in Christ Jesus by which all his ransomed people are securely kept in him unto salvation and "eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2. This precious truth is the ground on which rests all the hope of every sinner who is saved by the grace of God which is in Christ. Whatever else may be hidden from our sight now, it is certain that all shall appear in the light of eternal day to every one who is now led by the Spirit of God. And while we must remain in the valley of the shadow of death his promise secures everything requisite for the good of his pilgrims, whether it be comfort or grief, pleasure or pain. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."—Psalm lxxxiv. 11. "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Phil. iv. 19. This not only includes every joyful season and every tribulation, but all requisite wisdom and grace to help in every time of need. That grace shows to the poor, ignorant babe the wisdom which is hidden from the wise and prudent; so that it is not by study or cultivated mental powers that the true interpretation of prophecy is discovered. The truth as shown by revelation can be known only as it is given to each subject of grace, and reason can no more aid the faith which receives that truth than the strength of the blinded Samson could enable him to see. Hence, we have little confidence in those interpretations of prophecy which have

been discovered by mathematical calculations with the aid of uninspired history. No amount of study could have taught Peter that the gift of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost was that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel.—Acts ii.

As has already been stated, we understand the time designated to be the time when the night of Judaism with all the glory of its shadowy ordinances and its legal heaven did pass away in perfect fulfillment by the Lord Jesus, concerning "whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Until that time all the ceremonial washings and offerings were powerless to put away sin. This is proven by the fact that while their sacrifices were offered continually, there was still a remembrance of sin every year in the yearly sacrifice of the high priest when entering the holy of holies, the typical sanctuary. This sanctuary was polluted by the iniquity of the nation of Israel, and even the priests failed to walk in obedience to the law of God, so that the divine judgment declared that there was no place clean, even in this sanctuary of God. Then the cleansing of the sanctuary could only be accomplished by the Mighty God who was manifest in the flesh, for he alone could obey in letter and in spirit all the requirements of the holy law. In his perfect obedience the law was magnified, and in his death he bore the sins of all them who are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Thus the Lord himself is the true sanctuary of his redeemed people, in which there is no pollution. So the Lord says, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."—Isa. viii. 13, 14. The sanctuary is cleansed by the cutting off the carnal Israelites and all who trust in legal works for righteousness, and the perfect justification of every one who is cleansed from all sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. In this sanctuary there can never be any pollution, for they who are redeemed are kept by the power of God unto salvation. Therefore Paul could with assurance say, "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."—Rom. viii. 38, 39.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

FROM the tone of numerous letters which we have received we are inclined to think that many are deceived in regard to the sized print in which the Church History is being run; we therefore print a specimen page on the last page of this issue. We have procured the largest and plainest-faced type that could be got on a brier body, and to run the book in any larger sized type would make two volumes of the work. While many would be willing to pay double for the work in two volumes, a large majority of those who have already subscribed are not able to do so, and we did not dare to obligate ourselves to get out a second volume for those who might prefer the work in that form. We have not yet received a sufficient amount to pay for the work in one volume. As near as we can now estimate, and we have up about 400 pages, the book will contain from 900 to 1,000 pages. We are instructed by brother Hassell to spare no necessary expense to make the work on the book complete. We have employed the best of compositors, at an extra expense of forty per cent. above the regular price paid for type-setting; and shall print the book on a super-royal calendered paper, and have it bound in handsome leather binding, making a book that usually sells for at least four dollars. To get such a book out for two dollars will take about three thousand subscribers to pay the actual cost of publication, and we are still short of that number. We doubt not but what there will eventually be at least ten thousand copies of this book published; but as we have the work electrotyped, we shall run but a small number, in the first edition, over the amount subscribed for at the time of going to press. We expect to commence the printing in about sixty days, and all who wish to make sure of a copy of the first edition should send in their subscriptions by that time; for after the first form is run we cannot increase the number in that edition, no matter how great the demand. We shall, if not providentially hindered, mail the book to subscribers within the next four months.

In compliance with a number of requests, we have decided to have the book bound in several styles of binding, but all in leather, the cheapest of which costs three times as much as cloth binding. The styles and prices will be as follows, viz.:

Good, plain, substantial leather binding	\$2 00
Extra strong, in-made by hand leather binding	2 50
Imitation Turkey Morocco, gilt edged	4 00
Genuine Turkey Morocco, gilt edged	5 00

Those having already subscribed for the two dollar book can have any of the above styles by remitting us the additional amount within the next sixty days. The two and a half dollar book is the same as the two dollar book, only made by hand in an extra strong manner, and warranted by the binder, with ordinary usage, to last a lifetime.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BROTHER George Clark was born in Washington County, Pa., November 27, 1806, and emigrated to Licking County, Ohio, with his parents, when but six years old. He was married to Miss Rachel Orr, August 6, 1829, settled in Trenton Township, Delaware County, Ohio, in December, 1820, and remained on the same farm up to their deaths, which occurred as follows:

Sister Clark died December 9, 1885, aged seventy-four years, nine months and five days, leaving her dear husband to mourn the loss of her that he had lived with, loved and cherished for over fifty-six years. But he was soon called to follow his dear companion to the grave, which he was ready and willing to do. Brother Clark died March 13, 1886, aged seventy-nine years, three months and fifteen days. They both received a good hope, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, of the forgiveness of their sins, and were both received at the same time by the Hartford Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, and baptized by Elder James W. Biggs, January 13, 1846. They remained worthy and esteemed members of said church up to their deaths, having adorned the profession of their high calling by an upright life. Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they lived soberly, righteously and godly, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, who shall change the vile bodies of his saints, that they may be like the glorified body of their risen Redeemer. Brother Clark was chosen clerk of the church May 4, 1850, which office he held and filled to the entire satisfaction of the church for over twenty-eight years, when from age and infirmities he resigned. He was sound in the doctrine of God our Savior, blessed with a deep and clear understanding of the Scriptures, steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of the same, always abounding in the work of the Lord, gifted in exhortation and regarded as a pillar in the church. They were faithful in discharging their duties in the church and to their pastor, and punctual in filling their seats in the house of worship. They leave to mourn the loss of a good father and mother, five sons and three daughters, with grandchildren and a large circle of friends and kind neighbors; and last, but not least, the church, with her pastor, in this dispensation of divine providence are called to mourn the loss of faithful, efficient and highly esteemed members. But we mourn not as those that have no hope, for we have not a doubt but what they now rest where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. The poor writer of this speaks from very intimate acquaintance of those precious saints, having tried for twenty-three years to serve that church as pastor, and was called on the occasion of the death of each, using as a text on the former, "These words spake Jesus, and lifted his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour has come;" and on the latter, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Four times in less than a year I have been called with this dear family to mourn with them. On April 11, 1885, one of their daughters, Mrs. Sarah Boyd, wife of Mr. Henry Boyd. Though she was not a member, we believe she fell asleep in Jesus, leaving a kind husband to mourn the sad loss of her that he loved and cherished. Again on August 26, 1885, death threw its dark shadow over their family circle and took for its subject their lovely daughter-in-law, their youngest son's wife, he living in the same house with his father and mother. Though she was not a member, she had a good hope in that blood that speaks better things than the blood of Abel, of the forgiveness of her sins. She was blessed with that meek and humble spirit which in the sight of God is a great price, and was perfectly resigned, if it was the Lord's will, to leave a kind husband, a lovely little daughter, and a babe but a few months old, in hope of a blessed immortality.

Yours to serve in love,

L. B. HANOVER.

CENTER VILLAGE, Ohio, April 8, 1886.

Thomas H. Fisher died at his residence in Audrain Co., Mo., June 7, 1885. He was born in Accomac Co., Va., March 28, 1827. He was baptized in the year 1846, and was a member of the Old School Baptist Church called Messongo, situated in Accomac Co., Va., until the year 1858, when he emigrated to Missouri, and united with the Old School Baptist Church called Bear Creek, situated in Marion County. He removed to Audrain County, April 10, 1866, and in March, 1867, united with the Old School Baptist Church called Berea, in Audrain County. In November, 1878, he was ordained deacon, which office he held until his death. He was loved and respected by all his brethren, and I think he never enjoyed himself better than when he was in their company. I cannot recollect that his seat was ever vacant on meeting days, unless he was providentially hindered. He always tried to not let his secular affairs keep him from this duty. And if we were without a minister, or our minister was absent, he would often lead in the services at our meeting. He greatly loved to attend the associations; for, as I said before, he never seemed to enjoy himself better than in the company of his brethren, and to converse with them on the theme that was uppermost in his affections, salvation by grace. He was as firm a believer in salvation by grace as I ever knew, having no confidence in the flesh. He firmly believed that nothing short of the Spirit of the almighty God could quicken the dead sinner, and that the Spirit, and the Spirit alone, did this work. He did love to contend for the faith. But his presence we no longer have, and we feel that our loss is great. But thanks be to God, we do have the comforting assurance that our loss is his gain. We feel assured that he is enjoying the peaceful presence of his Master, who hath called him hence. May the Lord, if it is his will, prepare each of us to meet him in that blissful clime where there shall be no more separations, nor sorrow, nor sighing, but where we shall enjoy the smiles of our Savior eternally.

MARTIN D. FISHER.

AUDRAIN Co., Mo., March 21, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It has become my duty to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary of our much esteemed and beloved brother, **W. R. Wood**. He was born in Taladiga Co., Ala., March 18, 1838, and departed this life Feb. 27, 1886. He was married to Miss M. E. Brooks May 30, 1872, and in 1877 was received into the fellowship of Ft. Houston Church, and baptized by Elder Benj. Parker. For four years I have been personally acquainted with him, and most of the time I lived a close neighbor to him, and the last two years of his life we lived together in the church, and he served the church as clerk. He was an afflicted man, but endured his affliction in patience. He was also a man prepared to converse with another on any subject, but enjoyed most to converse with his brethren. He was not easily excited. I have been with him, at times, at places where much excitement was, but he was the same cool and deliberate brother Wood. He would not quarrel with the Arminians, but would tell them that he chose rather to be saved upon the plan of salvation as it is recorded in the Bible; for said he, "I have never learned the first step to take toward saving myself." He was a man that wanted to live peaceably with all men; yet he would say, "There is no compromise between truth and error." He seemed to be perfectly satisfied with the plan of salvation as given us in the Bible by inspiration; for he said, "If it is not of God, by grace, and grace alone, I have no hope of happiness on the other side of the river." Brethren, I could tell much more of what I have heard him say, which seemed to strengthen the weak; but suffice it to say, he is gone from whence no traveler ever returns. He is gone, and the church mourns, but not as those who have no hope; for we believe that as he did bear the image of the earthy, he will also bear the image of the heavenly. He leaves a wife and two children, with other relatives and friends, to grieve after him. May God in his love and mercy shield and protect the wife and little children from all harm, and bless them with

all that is necessary for them; and may it be the pleasure of our ever blessed God to reconcile us to his divine will, that we may realize more fully that in all our afflictions and trials his grace is sufficient, for thus it is.

Yes, we rejoice when we know
Our blessed Master has gone before;
For he passed through night, and also day;
Then cheer up, brethren, he cleared the way.

U. J. BELL.

PALESTINE, Texas, April 25, 1886.

We, your committee, of the Union Meeting of the Second District of Bethel Association, convened at Sandy Branch, Weakley County, Tenn., ask leave to report the following:

Elder Reuben Ross was born Feb. 8, 1807, professed a hope in Christ when but a child, was baptized the third Sunday in December, 1819, at the age of twelve years, commenced preaching on the third Sunday in December, 1835, and afterwards by the authority of the church was set apart to the full work of the ministry. It can truly be said of brother Ross that he filled the office well. He shunned not to declare all the counsel of God, ever standing firm and uncompromising in the faith and practice of the church of God, known as the Regular Baptists. For this cause he suffered many of the privations of life. He rode through cold and heat, wet and dry, leaving his wife and children; but his trust was in his God. He departed this life in full triumph of a better life, Feb. 10, 1884, aged seventy-seven years and two days.

Resolved, by the Union of the Second District of Bethel Association, in the death of her Moderator she has lost a distinguished minister, a wise counsellor and servant, and society a shining and brilliant member.

The great loss the Union sustains in the death of a man so illustrious and beloved cannot be measured with words. We leave the impartial judgment of history to place him among the actors of his time as his talents and his services may entitle him, feeling no apprehension that the Baptists will ever depreciate or underestimate the exalted virtues we knew him to possess.

We can only extend to our brethren and sisters our sympathy in the loss we have sustained in common, and to the family expressions of condolence in their bereavement, which not time even can fully assuage.

While we deeply mourn our loss, we bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father, believing that our loss is his eternal gain.

That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the Union, and that a copy be engrossed and forwarded to the family of the deceased.

R. H. BOAZE.

J. H. EMERSON.

J. O. VINCANT.

The above resolutions were read and adopted by the Union at Palmersville, on Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1885, and ordered to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

R. H. BOAZE, Mod.

J. H. EMERSON, Clerk.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—By request I send you the obituary notice of **E. O. Hendrix**, who departed this life in Anderson Co., Texas, on the 20th day of January, 1885. He was born in Simpson County, Kentucky, Oct. 4, 1822. He was married to Louisa Lewis, in Warren County, Ky., October 4, 1846. In a short time after his marriage he came to Harrison County, Texas, and in a short time moved to Anderson County, Texas, where he spent the balance of his days on earth. He joined the Old Baptist Church in Kentucky when about twenty years of age, and after he came to Anderson County, joined old Pilgrim Church, where he remained a faithful member until his death. He leaves his wife (who is also a member of Pilgrim Church), one son and two daughters, together with the church and many friends, to mourn their loss; but we mourn not as those who have no hope.

BEN. PARKER.

ELKHART, Anderson County, Texas.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the death of brother **John Van Dewater**, which occurred on the

seventh of April, 1886, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Charles Johnson, near Lisbon Centre, St. Lawrence Co., N. Y., aged seventy-seven years. He was born in Holland, emigrated to this country about thirty-six years ago, and has ever since lived in Albany, until two months ago. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church in Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., in June, 1869, where he remained a highly esteemed member until his death. I received a letter informing me of his sufferings before he died, which were great, and of how he was waiting for the Lord to take him home. He was conscious to the last. He is survived by his aged companion and two daughters.

In christian love, your brother,

LORENZ HECKER.

272 CLINTON AVE., ALBANY, N. Y.

DIED—Feb. 14, 1886, near Jenkins' Bridge, Accomac Co., Va., Mr. **Oliver I. Chesser**. He was born Jan. 6, 1848, and was married to Mary F. Byrd April 3, 1872. He was not a member of the visible church, but showed the strongest kind of attachment to the people and cause of truth. He was an excellent citizen, a kind and affectionate husband and father. He had been in bad health for about a year, but was confined to his bed only about one week, and sank very fast. His companion, sister Mary, told me there was the greatest manifestation of the goodness and pardoning love of God in his case that she ever saw. He would rejoice aloud and clap his hands, and that filled her so full that she could not say one word to him, and was very anxious to have some one talk to him. Three days before he died he was speaking about the association at Nassaongo, and the people he met there, and said if he never saw them any more he hoped the Lord would bless them. He seemed to have a tender feeling for the saints, and was a firm believer in the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. The day before he died his companion was standing by his bedside, and he laid off both hands and said, "I am going. O Molly, won't you go? won't you go with me?" While the stroke falls very heavily upon his dear companion, her sorrow is not without hope, for she has the assurance that he is taken from the evil to come; and our hope and prayer is that she may find her God to be a refuge and present help in this time of trouble. O how mysterious are the ways of God! In this dispensation of his providence there is left a weakly companion and a little, dependent girl. But says the word, "Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them in life: and let thy widows trust in me." May God give us grace and resignation to his divine will, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake.

The funeral was attended on the following day, and a discourse was preached by the writer. His remains were then laid away, to await the resurrection.

As ever, a friend to the sorrowful,

T. M. POULSON.

DIED—At his residence near New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., April 14, 1886, Mr. **Harrison E. Beyea**, son of Galen O. and Arminda T. Beyea, aged thirty-two years, seven months and twenty-six days. By this inscrutable providence a fond mother is bereft of her only son, and the widow and four small children mourn the departure of a loving husband and father. May the Lord sustain and comfort them, for vain is the help of man. The funeral services were held at the meeting house of the New Vernon Church, on Saturday, the 17th, when a discourse was preached by Elder Benton Jenkins, from 1 Tim. i. 15, to a large and sympathizing congregation.

"The dear delights we here enjoy,
And fondly call our own,
Are but short favors borrowed now,
To be repaid anon.

'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."

J.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Benj. Powell 2. John Skinner 2. F. G. Taylor 4.—Total \$8 00.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., beginning on Wednesday before the fifth Sunday in May (26th), 1886, and continue the two following days.

The brethren and friends who come to the Delaware Association through Philadelphia will please take the train leaving Broad Street depot at four o'clock on Tuesday p. m., change cars at Wilmington, and take the train at foot of Market Street at 5.40 p. m., for Landinburg. About six of the number will please get off at Hockessin, and the rest at Landinburg. Those coming through Baltimore will all come to Newark depot, leaving Baltimore about three o'clock p. m. the same day.

Friends coming from Salisbury and on the Delaware Rail Road will get tickets for Wilson, and change cars at Porters.

We hope for and will be glad to see a goodly number of brethren and friends. We hope they will have it in their hearts to visit us, and that they will be permitted to do so.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (2d), 1886, and continue three days.

As the place of holding the Delaware River Association has been changed from Washington, South River, Middlesex Co., N. J., to Hopewell, Mercer Co., N. J., please insert in the SIGNS the following:

All who attend the above named association, coming by the way of New York City, will take passage on cars leaving foot of Liberty Street, and those coming by way of Philadelphia City will take passage on cars leaving Ninth and Green Streets, or Third and Berks Streets. Be sure and purchase tickets for Hopewell, as some express trains do not stop here. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us, and we shall try to make all feel that they are welcome. We hope the brethren in the ministry will not forget us at the time of our association.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (9th), 1886, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west by the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. will be met at Howell's Depot on the arrival of the way train from the west, at 1 p. m., and on the arrival of the Orange County Express from the east, which leaves foot of Chambers Street, New York, at 4.30 p. m., arriving at Howells 7.15 p. m. All will come on Tuesday to Howell's Depot, as there will be no train on Wednesday in time for the meeting.

Those coming from the north by the N. Y., O. & W. Railroad will be met at Winterton on Tuesday, on the arrival of the milk train at about 6 p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to meet with us.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (16th), 1886, and continue three days.

Trains leave Binghamton at 7.30 a. m., 1.00, 3.20 and 5.00 p. m., arriving at Otego 9.30 a. m., 3.10, 5.25 and 8.00 p. m. Trains from Albany arrive at Otego at 12.25 and 7.10 p. m. Trains will be met on Tuesday, and the friends cared for. Should any arrive in the night, inquire for R. R. Guerusey, living near the depot.

G. M. FRENCH, Clerk.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord permit, with Honey Creek Church, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m., and two following days. Brethren and friends coming by railroad conveyance from

the east and southeast, and coming by the way of Mansfield or Vernon, on the C. C. C. R. R., first train in the morning leaves Mansfield for Toledo, by the way of Bloomville, where all should stop, finding teams to convey them to places of entertainment and to the meeting. The second train from Mansfield arrives at Bloomville at two p. m. Those coming from the west and southwest, from Toledo to Tiffin, will come right through to Bloomville; and those that come on other roads to Tiffin will change cars at Tiffin and take train at Pennsylvania Depot, to come to Bloomville. The first train in the morning from the west arrives at Bloomville at ten o'clock a. m. The second train arrives at Bloomville on Thursday to meet the conveyances which will be there to convey them to places of entertainment. On that day (Thursday) teams will be there waiting for passengers on the arrival of every train from every direction.

LEWIS SEITZ.

THE Turkey River Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held at Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa, with West Fork Church, commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, and continue two days following. Hampton is accessible on the Iowa Central R. R., also on a branch called the D. D. R. R., from Waverly, Bremer County. A cordial welcome to all who love the truth as it is in Jesus.

PAUL SOHNER.

THE Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with the Harmony Church, near Dayton, Columbia Co., Washington Territory, on Friday before the third Sunday in June, 1886, at 11 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

J. A. BULLOCK, Mod.

T. G. FLANARY, Clerk.

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FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

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We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

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We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshipers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

SILAS H. DURAND.

P. G. LESTER.

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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 ob-
served 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 send-
ing us a remittance for several subscriptions,
his own being among them, for when his cred-
it 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 sub-
scription not being included among them.

In the last instance it will be necessary for
the person sending the remittance to be par-
ticular 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 be-
low, 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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CHAPTER IX.

the Christian ages, and is still affirmed by the highest scholarship of Christendom, Oriental, Roman Catholic and Protestant." The Greek Catholic "Church," which certainly ought to understand the meaning of the Greek word *baptizo*, has always immersed and still immerses, even in the severe climates of Russia and Siberia, all its members, both infants and adults, and uncompromisingly declares that every other form of the rite is essentially invalid. Contrary to Eph. iv. 5, triple or trine immersion is practiced by the Greek "Church," and was the usage of the most of Christendom from the end of the second to the end of the twelfth century. The Roman Catholic "Church" at first allowed sprinkling or pouring only in the case of sick persons (*clinici*)—the first recorded instance being the case of Novatian, of Rome, about A. D. 250; but the sprinkling of well persons "gradually came in," says the Encyclopædia Britannica (Ninth Edition), "in spite of the opposition of councils and hostile decrees. The Roman Catholic Council of Ravenna, in A. D. 1311, was the first council of the 'Church' which legalized baptism by sprinkling, by leaving it to the choice of the officiating minister." The first pope that sanctioned sprinkling for baptism was Stephen II., A. D. 753. In England and Scotland immersion was the ordinary practice till after the "Reformation." "What principally tended to confirm the practice of affusion or sprinkling," says the Encyclopædia Britannica, "was that several of our Protestant divines, flying into Germany and Switzerland during the bloody reign of Queen Mary, and coming home when Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, brought back with them a great zeal for the Protestant churches beyond the sea, where they had been received and sheltered. And having observed that at Geneva, and some other places, baptism was administered by sprinkling, they thought they could not do the Church of England a greater service than by introducing a practice dictated by so great an oracle as Calvin." It is proper here to state that Calvin, in his *Institutes*, says: "The word baptize signifies to immerse; and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church." In his commentary on Acts viii. 38, Calvin says that "the Church granted liberty to herself to change the rites somewhat." In 1643 the Westminster (Presbyterian) "Assembly of Divines," through the influence of John Lightfoot, voted for sprinkling instead of immersion by a majority of one—24 voting for immersion and 25 for sprinkling. In 1644 the English Parliament sanctioned their decision, and decreed that sprinkling should be the legal mode of administering the ordinance. The Independents, or Congregationalists, adopted sprinkling from the Presbyterians; and the Methodists, in the eighteenth century, from the Episcopalians. John Wesley says: "The ancient manner of baptizing was by immersion." The "form" of baptism was regarded by all these Protestant bodies as non-essential, as though the term "baptism" was an indefinite one for the application of water in general, which it is perfectly certain that it is not; or as though man has the right or power to change an ordinance of Christ, which he has no more right or power to do than he has to change the

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 sub-

scribers 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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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VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1886.

NO. 12.

POETRY.

MARK IX. 24.

"LORD, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

Dear Lord, can I indeed be thine?

My soul oft asks in grief,
And often cries, "Lord, I believe;
Help thou mine unbelief."

From painful doubts and gloomy fears,
In vain I seek relief;
Savior, if I am truly thine,
"Help thou mine unbelief."

When floods of doubt rush o'er my soul,
Like breakers o'er a reef,
Distressed I cry, "Lord, I believe;
Help thou mine unbelief."

When darkness, sin and fears assail,
Then, like the dying thief,
Helpless I cry, "Remember me."
"Help thou mine unbelief."

Here, like a barren tree I stand,
With neither fruit nor leaf;
A useless cumberer of the ground;
"Help thou mine unbelief."

If thou dost show thy smiling face,
'Tis joy, however brief;
But when withdrawn, I fainting cry,
"Help thou mine unbelief."

If thou didst suffer, bleed and die
For sinners, e'en the chief;
Then surely, surely, I can hope:
"Help thou mine unbelief."

ABBY G. CLARK.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., May 13, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—My mind has been led of late to think much upon exhortation, as one of the good gifts which God has given to his church. The word is used twelve times in the New Testament; but were it used only once, still it would be important, else had not the Holy Ghost used it that once. It is recognized as a special gift.—Rom. xii. 8. It is a gift which may belong to the ministry.—1 Tim. vi. 2; Titus i. 9. Or it may belong to any of the brethren.—Heb. x. 25. It is intended for the good of the church.—Heb. xiii. 22. These and other expressions show the importance of this gift in the church. And from these Scriptures it seems that it was recognized as a special gift, and that, like all the other gifts, it was for the edification of the body of Christ. If it should be neglected, or thought lightly of, the church must suffer loss. I have been thinking of this gift in connection with my own ministry, and with a feeling of solemn, prayerful inquiry as to whether I have been faithful in this matter. I know that I have not, at least always, been so. I have learned one thing, I think, during these past nineteen years, and that is, that the flesh finds it very crossing to warn, reprove and rebuke, and to speak needful words of exhortation. Crossing, often, because of the fear of alienating some whom

we love in Christ Jesus. I used to think it an easy thing to obey the Lord's command to show unto Israel her transgressions and her sins; but in practice I find it is not so. It is an easy thing to denounce errors from which those to whom we preach are clear; easy to show up the sins of Arminians who are not the Lord's people; but not so easy to preach about the wrong doings of the Lord's own people; that is, not easy to the flesh. And yet this is the command; and the very basis of exhortation is the fact of failure and shortcoming in believers, who are the subjects of exhortation. Another thing I have found to be true, and that is, that it is an easy thing to speak in a general way, and say, "We are sinners, we come short in all things, we are all out of the way," &c., &c.; but not so easy to point out the special, individual faults that need correction. We do not feel hurt if we hear all day, in a general way, that we are full of faults; but to be told that we have said or done this particular thing wrong, to have the hand laid right on the sore, and the leprous spot uncovered, makes us ashamed, and sometimes angry. And yet before a brother can be exhorted to forsake his fault, there must be a definite idea of what the fault is. And this I find a great shrinking in me from doing. Surely I do not love my brethren well enough, or I should not hesitate as I do. Love would cast out *all fear*—the fear of the brother's resentment, and the fear of myself degenerating into a mere faultfinder in the house of God.

We must turn to the Scriptures for the matter and manner of exhortation. It is not a commandment. God only commands. In a natural family or school it is the parents' or teachers' place to command; but the children, or the scholars, may exhort each other. The exhortation may take the form of an entreaty, a beseeching (see Rom. xii. 1), or an appeal, based upon motives which may be presented; but in all cases it is the word of a friend or brother, who seeks our good and the glory of God. The matter of exhortation in the New Testament embraces every commandment of the Lord. The apostles exhorted their brethren in everything which would be for their obedience to the faith. In one place it is called the *stirring up* of their pure minds to the remembrance of the things which had been taught them. And the manner of their exhortations to their brethren was not dictatorial or overbearing, as though they claimed dominion over

the churches; but gentle, kind and loving, as though they desired to be helpers of their joy. In all cases the exhortation was a direct appeal to their brethren to obey the will of God revealed to them, in whatever way that revelation had come. I have heard some objections raised to the idea of exhortations at all, which I will call attention to for a moment. I have heard it said that the Spirit of God in all cases shows us the way, and impels us to walk in it (which in one sense is a most glorious truth), and that therefore there is no need of mutual exhortations (which is false as false can be). God does indeed guide and instruct us by his Spirit. If he has not done so first of all, the exhortation will avail nothing. But it is precisely because he has quickened us, and made us alive unto God, who before were dead, that we *need* exhortations, and *can* hear and profit by them. The dead need no exhortation, and it cannot reach or profit them. But the living can hear and obey the word spoken. Here is where the Arminian makes his mistake, and misapplies the word of the Lord. He imagines that the exhortations and the commandments of the Bible belong to all men indiscriminately, while in reality they belong to the believer, or those who have been made alive unto God. Thus the apostles addressed men and women who were capable of hearing and capable of obeying, but who often did not obey, and so received reproof and correction. It is truly God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure; and because this is true, Paul exhorts his brethren to work this out with fear and trembling. Though God worked so effectually in them, Paul thought it none the less needful to exhort them to work this out, or act it out. The Lord has provided his people with an armor; and because this is so, and it is theirs, Paul exhorts them to put it on. There was a liability of their not doing so, therefore there was need of exhortation. The soldier must have no will of his own, if he be a good soldier; and yet he has a will of his own, which may be in opposition to that of his commander; and therefore commands and warnings and exhortations are addressed to him, to conform him to the will of his commander, and thus become a good soldier. It is so with the soldier of Christ. He has the mind or will of Christ, and as far as he is in complete subjection to that will, he is a good soldier. But he has also a mind or will of his own, which must be brought into subjection, and which, often, is not in sub-

jection; and therefore he is the subject of command, of warning, reproof and exhortation, and in the Scriptures is so addressed. And in the same Scriptures we are commanded to warn, reprove, rebuke, entreat and exhort one another, to stand fast in this warfare to which we are called. The work of the Spirit of God in the heart can never be too plainly set forth, nor too earnestly relied upon to teach and guide us. It does fill us with the fruits of righteousness, and creates within us a love to God and man, which is the very substance of all that God commands. But yet our Father in heaven did not think this was sufficient for us. He also gave us the written word, and the ordinances of preaching, baptism, &c., for our help while we stay in this world. When we get beyond this world these ordinances shall cease, because we shall not need them then. But here we do need them. It is true that the word spoken or written is of no use to us without the Spirit dwells in our heart; but it is equally true that having the Spirit, we are built up and comforted, and by the sincere milk of the Word we grow. It is true that the letter killeth; but if we have the Spirit in our hearts, the letter is no longer a letter, but the words become spirit and life to us. And so with exhortation. I never heard a *living* christian object to exhortation to do the will of God, but I have heard *dead* christians (who, having lived after the flesh, have died) object very strenuously to it. A loving brother once said to me, "I love to hear preaching that tells me my faults." Sometimes the doctrine of the two natures in the christian has been pushed to such an extreme as to shut out all exhortation, or reproof, or warning. It is said, "The new man cannot sin, and therefore needs no exhortation; and the old man never can do anything else but sin, and therefore it is of no use to exhort him." It is sufficient to say in answer to this, that Paul does exhort *you* and *me* to put off the old man, and to put on the new man. The old man is not exhorted to put on the new man, nor is the new man exhorted to put off the old; but *you* and *I* are told to do both the one and the other. We must not carry the doctrine of the old and new man so far, nor in such a direction, as to say that exhortation has no place. The terms "old man," "new man," are simply figurative expressions, and mean just the same as when Paul again said, "I find a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity," &c. The two laws here are the

two men of the other text. There is but one man, one Shulamite, in the person of each believer, and there never is but one; and this one is the subject of exhortation. But in this one man we see a great company; and when we examine this great company, we find that it is not a united company, but a divided one. There are two armies, opposing each other. In the one army are found love, joy, peace, faith, &c., and in the other are found hatred, wrath, strife, unbelief, &c. And these are personified, and in one case called armies, and in the other case are presented under the name of *men*. But nevertheless here is the man still, the redeemed sinner, and he is exhorted to follow the Spirit, and not the flesh. Any theory that shuts out direct exhortation is a false one, and should at once be abandoned.

In exhortation there is one other thing that we should watch unto prayer against. We should watch against the feeling that in this one thing we are superior to our brother. If this feeling be in us, though concealed from our own selves, we shall not be able to conceal it from others. Our most careful speech and most guarded manner will be tinged with it. The ointment of the apothecary may be never so precious, but this one dead fly will spoil it. If self-flattery be in our speech, our words will be of no avail. They will do harm rather than good. We may have a spirit to rejoice in exhortation, and to joyfully receive reproof, but yet we resent these very exhortations and reproofs, if he who utters them seems to say to us, "I am free from blame in this matter." This spirit in us may be wrong, but yet it is our nature. I should like to have a spirit to accept the truth, even though spoken in envy by one who thought to harm me. I think this would be Christlike, and I think I have felt at times to pray for it. But yet I have not attained to it, and must confess my failure. Once I thought I had, but by bitter experience I soon learned my error. And since I find this disposition to be in me, I fear and hesitate to exhort and reprove others, lest I should appear to say, "I am better than you," and so spoil the effect of words that might be true and good in themselves. O for wisdom to speak the truth in the right way, and to hear the truth in the right way!

But what I started out to say is this, that spite of these fears and imperfections and weaknesses we are still commanded to rebuke, reprove and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. If we wait till we are sure that our spirit is all right, we shall never take one step in any direction. And if any one is now saying, "My spirit is all right," it is pretty sure that his or her spirit, instead of being "all right," is all wrong, and he or she is self-deceived. And perhaps at the time when we think that we are all wrong, we are nearer being all right than we ever were in our lives. We do not know our own spirit, but the Lord knows. I think that I can rejoice in this.

In conclusion, dear brethren, think of these things. I hope that the spirit of exhortation may be revived in us and in our ministry. It does seem to me that to exhort not only means the describing of the christian experience and the christian walk, but also the saying, "I beseech and exhort you to walk therein." The bride through the word of exhortation says, "Come," to those that hear, as well as the Spirit.

I see in the last SIGNS that a sister asks me to write upon Rev. xiv. 13. I will say that I should be glad to comply, but I have never felt fully satisfied as to what the text does mean. I have heard views which I should not like to dispute, but which yet did not satisfy me. If it is the Lord's will, I shall see what it means some day, but I do not see it now. When I need it, the Lord will give it to me, either directly or by the word of a brother or sister; but this is not yet. I should like for the aged sister to write to me, and perhaps another brother can write upon it.

Our spring associations are near at hand. I hope that they may prove to be blessed seasons.

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

VIRIDEN, Ill., April 14, 1886.

ELDER WILLIAM J. PURINGTON—
DEAR BROTHER:—I have never seen you with the natural eye, but hope sometimes by faith I see as you do. Fifty-one years ago I was made to see myself a sinner lost, and had no power of my own to believe, or to relieve me. Some time after, there was a light shone around me above the brightness of the sun, and that same light, at times, still animates me. I joined the Missionary Baptists, and lived with them eighteen years; but I became impressed in my mind to read the Scriptures for myself. Then I saw the great God as having all power in heaven and on earth. Then what could I do, only to believe what he said? I cannot make any apology for him, and he does not need any. I left the Missionary Baptists and joined the Old School Baptists. But some say I have gone over too far; but if I have, you have. You cannot tell how high your communication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on the "Absolute Predestination of All Things" lifted me. Take that doctrine away from me, and my hope is gone. One thing, my brother, I would like for you to do for me, and that is, give your views on Mark xvi. 17, 18. That Scripture has been on my mind for twenty years, and I cannot harmonize it with the believer of to-day. I know you are taxed too much. If you comply with this old sinner's desire, send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May God bless you, my dear brother. Yours truly,
ENOCH HALL.

THE Scripture to which brother Hall refers, reads as follows: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it

shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

"And these signs shall follow them that believe." "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel, from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion." Also, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." That the last quotation from Isaiah pointed directly to the reign of Christ and the rule of his inspired apostles during the gospel dispensation, will not, I presume, be questioned by any real believer of gospel truth, as recorded in the New Testament. The real followers of our Lord Jesus Christ have been to the carnal world of mankind signs (*semeion*, mark, signal) and wonders (*mopheth*, miracle), not only in the early state of the organized gospel church, but remain so to-day; for they are the only characters who set forth God's justice, as well as mercy, and testify faithfully to fallen man's true condition; therefore are signs. Also, every one who is so unspeakably blessed as to be born again, is a miracle of God's abounding grace; but none have been inspired to do and record what the apostles did; for the declaration was, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." The word bind, in this connection, is of awful import, and is recorded only in one other place in the Old Testament from the same word, which is *tsarar*, to straiten, compress; therefore there is no appeal from the straitened and compressed testimony of the inspired apostles concerning the doctrine of God our Savior. Said the Son of God, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." There is no authority to sustain any one in attempting to show that any miracles have been performed by the church upon the physical body of mortals since the apostles passed away; and our God gave them that power, as the *absolute* signs or tokens of their special position as judges on the "twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" and in the sense that God's servants cannot now heal the sick, cure the lame, nor raise the dead, night has certainly come. Said the apostle Paul, "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." It should be carefully noticed that all those signs, wonders, miracles and gifts are according to God's will.

"In my name shall they cast out devils." "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. * * * Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names [personal election in the strictest sense] are written in heaven." See also the following: Acts v. 16; viii. 7; xvi. 18,

and xix. 12. These quotations and references positively show what power Israel's God gave to those ancient disciples and apostles, thereby positively attesting the call of God as bestowed upon them, and the gifts, as no others have had. But, brother Hall, in a gospel sense, faithful, discriminating and God-honoring preaching still has a "casting out" power; and Jude exhorts that we "should earnestly contend [not simply talking in a pleasing, flowery manner, but contend earnestly] for the faith which was once delivered to the saints;" and the reason given is, "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 [*aselgeia*, signifying excess, licentiousness—what a fearful meaning], and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." About fifty years ago, when the separation was taking place in the Baptist denomination in the state of Maine, a true, tried and faithful minister was preaching from the words, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and a large assembly was present; and up got one man, and out he went, in somewhat of a hurry. Then the faithful servant of God said, "I am satisfied this is the gospel, for one unclean spirit has gone out, both soul and body." Therefore it is evident that gospel preaching, without any mixture of legality, draws the line of demarcation, and soon, if any are not at home in the church, will be heard the following: "He is too severe, too doctrinal, not enough charity," &c., &c. It is not possible for any more severe language to be used concerning hypocrites than the dear Savior and his apostles used; and if the truth is too severe, such are not at home. David said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." This declaration of the psalmist is restricted to "all ye that fear God;" and Paul 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." In the deep and glorious sense of the gospel, the most ignorant and illiterate person, when brought by abounding and reigning grace to openly triumph in the salvation of our God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, speaks with a *new tongue*, and sings a new song; not the old one remodeled; yet the same fleshly member is used; and how often in the happy moments of the first deliverance the person sees the glorious way of life and salvation so clearly that such thinks, Now I can certainly make my friends understand this great matter; but he soon learns that natural persons cannot understand this new tongue, or pure language God has given him; and the promise was, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language [in this place the word is *saphah*, lip, and is recorded seven times only in the Old Testament from that word, with precisely the same meaning in each case],

that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." A remark upon the last word in this quotation, and this clause of the text will be dwelt upon no more. Consent is a remarkable word as used here, for it is from *shekem*, one shoulder, and it is only recorded in one other place from the same word; and, meaning shoulder, shows that there is no dividing the pure lip in praising God in the great matter of salvation. My brother, it has been shown from Scripture testimony that our God enabled the apostles to speak with tongues as none have since; but every dear child of God speaks with a new tongue in our day, when he gives God all the glory in the salvation of ruined sinners; and there is no Ashdod language in it, but the pure language.

"*They shall take up serpents.*" That they could take up literal serpents and receive no harm, is clearly set forth; for when the viper came out of the heat and fastened on Paul's hand, "he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm." And the minds of the barbarians were suddenly changed, for they had just "said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. * * * But after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god." God's dear children in this day, through reigning grace, are enabled to shake off vipers yet; for often when the viper fastens on them, in the person of some bitter opponent of God's truth, and they can say as did Michael, the Archangel, "when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee," it shakes the viper off into the very fire out of which he came, and the child of God receives no harm. And the ingredients which keep the fire in which the vipers live, burning, are revenge, malice, hatred, wrath, strife, sedition, &c. And when all are burning, the fire is very hot indeed; for wicked men were called vipers by our dear Redeemer; and while here on earth, how often in their malice did they fully intend to harm or destroy him; but the truth uttered by our Immanuel always shook them off, and into their own fire; therefore it is evident that vipers are shaken off, and God's children remain unharmed.

"*And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not harm them.*" The power of the Savior did neutralize any and every poison that they might drink; and so to-day, when some of God's children drink some of the old traditions, he keeps them from being hurt thereby, though for a time they may be sick; but all shall redound to his declarative glory and their good. Many deadly things are prepared in this day, and many of God's dear children are placed in positions where deadly things are dealt out literally; and in some cases the vessels are so beautiful in which such "wild gourds"

are presented, that if not a full potation is taken by a child of God, he is very apt to taste; but to the man of God anciently exclaimed they who were eating, "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot." The meal neutralized or took away the death out of the pot; so grace can take away or subdue the power of the wild gourds, gathered in fancy wide domain, that a servant of God may attempt to feed the children of God with. And adored be our heavenly Lover, when any of the dear lambs of the flock have taken a drink from that pot, when ornamented with wild gourds, grace will prevent any fatal results. This clause might be dwelt upon at length, and not exhaust the subject; but enough has been said as a key to unlock with, as we have merely entered the vestibule.

"*They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*" "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one. Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison." We should notice carefully that the apostles were the persons empowered to heal the sick. Carefully peruse the rest of the chapter from which the quotation is made, to see what wonders God wrought through the apostles. Upon another occasion the apostle Peter was enabled to perform a surprising miracle on the "man lame from his mother's womb;" for the man, "seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee. In the name [reader, notice carefully the wording] of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength." Did Peter claim any power of his own, as a man, to perform the miracle? No; but said he, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" Then follows the awfully sublime description of "the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob," &c. And in the sixteenth verse he says, "And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man

strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Many quotations might be made, showing the power given the apostles; but one more must suffice, and then with some general remarks the reply be closed. James says, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith [not merely a formula of words] shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." That there was power given the apostles to heal, has been proven from the Scriptures, if words have any meaning. And there is a kind of sickness, at times, in churches in this day, painful at times to behold; but when God's time comes for healing such diseases, it surely will be done.

In closing this reply, it seems very important to state that the inspired apostles never boasted of what they, as men, had done, but gave all the power and glory to God, which excluded all boasting; and it must be evident to every real and humble follower of Christ, and every true believer of the record made in the Scriptures, that since the apostles passed away miracles ceased; but alas! there are some so under the hallucination of the carnal mind as to be advocating faith cures to-day; but the condition that such ones are in themselves only shows the sad frame of the mind controlling them. This subject might be extended to a great length, but I forbear writing any more; and if published in the SIGNS, brother Hall can read and compare the same with the Scriptures, as well as others who take the time to read the communication, and reject all that is not according to the law and to the testimony.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 3, 1886.

RIMER, Ohio, April 24, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been reading with deep interest the many communications written for the SIGNS by able brethren, on predestination, unity of Christ and the church, and the resurrection, and have taken up the pen a number of times to write the burden of my soul; but not being able to write what I wanted, I would condemn it and cast it away, and then wait for the next number of the SIGNS, hoping that some brother would be directed to write what I wanted, better than I could, which I thought would satisfy me. Now I want it understood by the brotherhood, if this is published, that it is not written as a standard of right above their views, or above divine inspiration, but as my own, as the Bible teaches me, if I am not deceived. But I know that if I write anything that is not in harmony with the Scriptures, then I am deceived, and it would be kindness in any brother to call my attention to it, for the truth is what I want. The awful necessity of preaching the gospel is laid upon

me, and I do not want to be influenced by traditions or commandments of men, which I know would be the case, if not taught of God. The God-exalting attribute, predestination, has been ably discussed in our paper, and I am truly glad to know that we are not alone in trying to advocate it, in an unlimited sense. The word absolute is objected to by some, because it is not a Scripture word. It means, positive, certain, sure. God did absolutely create all things; and with more wisdom than our mechanics, he knew before what he was going to make. This is foreknowledge. Now, shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Here is destination. And the fact of God's knowing before what he was going to create, and the created thing having nothing to do with its creation, gives us predestination of the things created, at least, and the Arminians are welcome to all they can find outside of what God has created. "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."—Col. i. 16. Now, since it is impossible for anything to be created without predestination, it remains that all things are predestinated, absolute, certain. There is no other way for anything to exist, either in heaven or in earth, visible or invisible.

I wanted to write on the unity and relation of Christ and his elect, the only heirs of the eternal inheritance; their condemnation, his right of redemption, and the resurrection. God, after creating the subjects in his own image, or likeness (only natural, however, not being related to him spiritually), gave them a law as created beings. This law only required natural obedience. The penalty was, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." This law was broken, and death laid hold upon the Adam man as he was created. The law said, "Thou [Adam] shalt die." Now, it is impossible for the law to be satisfied short of its demands, and justice will not give it more. No substitute can be received instead, or the life of beasts would have atoned for him. On the other hand, an angel or a spiritual body would only be a substitute, and could do no more to satisfy the law than the offering of a goat or heifer; for none of these are in or under the transgression. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The Adam man, as the law found him, no more nor less, is the only subject that will meet the law's demand. So death passed upon him, and his posterity that were in him, and they all became helpless victims of the grave, of relentless justice, and must remain there until this debt is paid. But thanks be to God, he has made provision for the elect seed, his only begotten Son and his body; not by disregarding the law, but by the suffering of death which the law required; and in that offering must be found the very Adamic man that the law said, "Thou

shalt surely die." Now, I understand that in the person of Jesus Christ this man appears, together with the eternal Sonship or Godhead, upon which Godhead the law had no demand, it being another seed, not related to Adam. The Savior said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Also, we are informed that everything brings forth after its own kind. Now, with this evidence, together with the evidence that he took on him the seed of Abraham, which seed he could not have received of the Holy Ghost, for it is not of that kind, we understand that his (Christ's) human nature came from his mother, Mary, and was as nearly related to the seed of Abraham as Eve was to Adam, who was taken out of Adam, without an earthly father, as was Christ. Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." This accounts for why Jesus left his throne of glory and came to his wife, because they are one flesh. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." Not the nature of angels, as a spiritual body, but the seed of Abraham. It is not necessary for us to prove that the children of Abraham were under the curse, for that is not disputed, to my knowledge; neither is it disputed that the children who are partakers of flesh and blood are under the curse also. However, it is disputed that Christ is made like his brethren, but possessing a superiority of flesh, by being spiritualized, or not having a fleshly mind, and such like. But 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 his people. This he can do, if the Adam upon which the sentence of death passed can be found in him; but if not, the law would have nothing to do with him, for he never transgressed it. Transgression could only be imputed to him through the flesh that transgressed in Adam, which must be the man part of him; the same as righteousness is imputed to the transgressor, by or through the Spirit, which is the God part of them. Now, to prove further that Jesus was made like unto his brethren, he was tempted; and this temptation was not merely in form, for you cannot tempt a man with food who is not hungry, nor with water who is not thirsty. But we see Jesus, after fasting forty days, was an hungered, and was tempted to "command that these stones be made bread." Yet he sinned not, being able through the Spirit to keep his body in perfect subjection. Also his brethren, who are transformed to his image, are likewise commanded to put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which they cannot always do. But they can come boldly unto the throne

of grace, that they might obtain mercy. For they have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.—Heb. iv. 15. Now we notice that after Mary had conceived of the Holy Ghost, it was said, "That holy thing which shall be born of her shall be called the Son of God." A holy seed. This is not the seed of Abraham; but this holy seed took upon itself the seed of Abraham, through his mother. Both natures were in the one child, instead of two persons, as Jacob and Esau, by the one father and mother. In case of disagreement, Jacob and Esau could go apart, but in this case two natures are joined to make one man, and cannot go apart to prevent warfare, of which every child of grace is acquainted, they being in that particular conformed to his image as full brethren, and not half-brothers, as were Isaac and Ishmael, who had different mothers; one a bond woman, and the other free; in which case the one child could not be heir with the other. But Christ and his brethren are of the same parentage on both sides. Christ is the first-born. Hence his right to redeem, being a near kinsman of the possession that is involved. And after suffering death, which was the price of redemption, the body was his, clear of law, which body he raised from the dead.

Yours in gospel bonds,

URIAH TRUMBO.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, May 12, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having received the SIGNS for May 1, I see over the signature of our beloved brother, S. H. Durand, a reply to my communication in the SIGNS for April 15. It is impossible for both of us to be right, seeing we differ; but it is possible, and even very probable, that we both are wrong, on so mysterious a subject as the incarnation of the Son of God, or God manifest in the flesh. In reading brother Durand's reply to my communication, I find that I did not express my belief on that subject clearly, so as to be understood; and by your permission I will, in as brief a manner as I am capable of doing, give an explanation of my meaning in my former letter. I have always been opposed to the dividing of Christ into parts, as some brethren, both in America and in England, are doing, telling us what part of Christ is human, and what part is divine; and asserting that when Christ was nailed to the cross, his divine nature forsook, or was separated from, his human nature, which caused him to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Now, according to that idea, his was no more than a human sacrifice; but I thank God that it is not true; for were it the case, it would be impossible for it to put away sin. I firmly believe that in his incarnation he was both God and man in one individual Christ. In his Godhead he is eternal, unbegotten, underived, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but in his mediatorial character he is the

only begotten of the Father. As it is written, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. "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." "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. 14, 18. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."—1 John iv. 9. Thus "God was manifest in the flesh." The words, "only begotten," occurring so often, shows conclusively that no other being on earth or in heaven was begotten after the same manner that he was. And Jesus himself saith, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."—John xvi. 28. Now, these several quotations, to my mind, have special reference to his conception and birth. Now, in his eternal, underived, unbegotten Godhead, he neither suffered nor died; but in his conception and birth he partook of the nature of both his Father and mother, and in both natures he was offered up a sacrifice for the sins of his people. As he saith to his Father, "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." This is a body prepared especially for that occasion, as a sacrifice for sin. There never was such a body prepared before, and never shall be again, because by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. And being partaker of both natures, he was a successful Daysman between God, the offended, and man, the offender, in order to reconcile his elect people unto himself, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, according to the will of God. Now, you perceive what I said in my outset, that I do not like the idea of dividing Christ into parts. I believe that there was an invisible union of both natures, human and divine, in his miraculous conception, and in both natures he lived, and in both natures he suffered and died. And the body thus prepared was that which the apostles saw with their eyes and handled with their hands. Now, if we say that this, and, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" also, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world," is merely figurative language, then we make the whole Bible a book of figures, and Jesus Christ himself merely a figure. O, my dear brethren (for I speak to one and all), we should be exceedingly careful how we deal in figures; for I know of no Scripture text but what would bear a figurative construction as readily as the above quotations; and by putting a figura-

tive construction on all facts recorded in the Scriptures, we destroy the whole Bible, and make it a book of fables. Now, my dearly beloved brother Durand, you ask, "Is not the bread used at the communion supper a figure of Christ's flesh?" Yes, truly it is. Christ and his apostles used temporal things as types or figures representing spiritual or heavenly things; as Paul saith, "It is therefore necessary that the patterns of the things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."—Heb. ix. 23, 24. But you, my dear brother, have reversed it. Christ's flesh was not a shadow, a mere phantom, but it was a reality. Now, my dear brother, you see that bread was the type, pointing to Christ's flesh as its antitype; which flesh, being the Word of God, was made flesh in his incarnation, or conception, and united with the seed of David in a fleshly relationship. Hence the Word of God was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.—Rom. i. 3, 4. This is a profound, incomprehensible mystery, which caused an inspired apostle to exclaim, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. Neither Christ nor his apostles ever used spiritual or heavenly things as types, shadows or figures of temporal things. The Lord Jesus is the great antitypical centre unto which all the types, shadows and figures of both law and gospel point as their antitype; and in no case can Christ be a type or shadow of anything. My dear brother, you say that Christ's body was not spiritual until after his ascension to glory, because the apostles handled it with their hands. He appeared to John after his ascension in this wise: John saith, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. * * * And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. * * * And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not: I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."—Rev. i. 10-18. Now, if the body of Jesus was ever spiritualized, it was when he laid his right hand upon John: and I have thought that the scars, or nail prints, will be visible in those heav-

enly hands and feet, as a pledge of his love to his elect people, to swell the song of salvation to all eternity.

Now, my dear brethren, in conclusion I desire to impress upon your minds this important truth, that the living bread which came down from heaven is not typical bread, but is a divine reality. When Jesus had broken the temporal bread at the communion supper, it was then a true type of his crucified body. Jesus saith, "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world."—John vi. 32, 33. This "true bread" which came down from heaven must necessarily be the antitype of common or temporal bread, and not the type or figure, as has been represented. Then it follows that it must be a divine reality, and not a mere phantom. Dear brethren, bear with me, for my feelings are such that I cannot dismiss this important subject without further endeavoring to impress this most solemn truth upon the mind of the dear reader. The apostle saith, "Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us," &c.—1 John ii. 18, 19. Verse 22, "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." At the time of the writing of this epistle, Arianism was beginning to gain an entrance into the churches, which was a denial of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, asserting that he was merely a good man. And the apostle, being exceedingly solicitous for the truth, introduces his epistle thus: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen [not by faith; if it had been, the apostle would have said so; for 'faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;'] but] with our [natural] eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." Now, these are not mere figures, but they are divine realities. And I cannot conceive how the Word of life could be manifested to mortal man other than by a fleshly manifestation. "God was manifest in the flesh."

With these remarks I will close this imperfect letter; but imperfect as it is, it is nevertheless what I conscientiously believe to be the truth. I feel that I am going down to the dust rapidly; and ere these imperfect lines reach you, this feeble and trembly hand that is now guiding this pen may be still in death, and this be my last and dying testimony concerning the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, my dear brethren Beebe, I do not ask you to indorse what I have herein written, but I ask you in meekness to publish it as coming from a poor, ignorant sinner.

Yours in the afflictions of the gospel,
JOHN STIPP.

GEORGETOWN, Kentucky.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of April first, current volume, and have felt highly entertained, and I trust edified and comforted, while perusing its richly laden columns; especially so with the communication of Elder Wm. M. Smoot. The first words of his communication arrested and riveted my attention, "We are standing on the verge of a great conflict for truth, that must eventually shake the Primitive Baptists throughout the length and breadth of our land." This expression is so in harmony with my own feelings and apprehensions that I cannot dismiss it from my mind with a mere passing thought. For some time past I have felt that I could see in the dim distance the lowering clouds of threatening devastation hovering around the horizon of Zion, the city of our habitation; and from her lofty towers, awe-stricken and trembling, I watch the rolling out of the clouds, dark and impenetrable folds, like the multiplied darkness of night; and from the distance I watch the mutterings of its bellowing thunder, while electric flashes play along its dark border with demoniac glee. But above the din of conflicting elements, the roaring thunder, hissing lightning and howling winds, the voice of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will is heard, soothing my mind and quelling my fears. It comes like sweet manna, fresh from the I. A. M. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Poor, trembling one, what a secure refuge! "A hiding place from the wind, a covert from the storm." Safe, though scorned by the world; safe from the rage and violence of wicked men; safe from the perils by land (though passing through the wilderness); safe from perils by sea (the deep of iniquitous intrigue); safe, though betrayed by the kiss of a Judas, or devils incarnate; for "he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Abiding there, in that haven of rest, with unbounded serenity you watch the approaching storm, hear its reverberating sounds, feel the trembling, shaking earth and heavens. For, "I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Abiding in the light, you see the bow he has set in the cloud. "And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature, of all flesh that is upon the earth." So if the earth and heavens be shaken, it is only to remove those made things, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. The underlying principles, the doctrine and order of God's house, the church of the living God, will never be shaken or removed; but the shaking will develop the fact that "The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of

the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity." God has divided to them their inheritance, and has set the bounds of the people. Every effort to alter his eternal decree will fall still-born; and as soon as the shaking ceases, it will be developed that "They that turn aside to their wicked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity." This, I think, is the antitype of those that fell in the wilderness, gathered into captivity. Those thus led forth are cut off from the fellowship of the church, become dead to the church, dead to her best interest; dead to her welfare and peace. Death always brings sorrow to the family. It is the living who mourn when they follow to the grave those who have in life been so dear; but when dead, they know that if they are not buried out of their sight their bodies become offensive. Who could live, sleep and eat with a putrefying corpse always in their presence? Such thoughts are revolting, and yet are but a faint illustration of the condition of a church with a member who is a continuous offense, and who will not follow after those things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. For "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." This work of righteousness is not a work performed by men, but by him who came to do the will of the Father which sent him. Therefore David, speaking by the Spirit, says, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly. Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps." Those who turn again to folly are the characters to whom the inspired apostle wrote when he penned that memorable language to the Galatian churches, "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? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" The world is still full of those bewitching, Judaizing teachers, who can never get away from a perfection of the flesh, or that in some way it must be considered; and they certainly do show the works of the flesh in their contention against God's eternal truth. "For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh;" and whenever one of the Lord's servants preaches that "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," they begin, like Ishmael, to mock; and they cry out, "There is nothing done for the sinners, and you have got a family of little gods," or almost anything else that comes from the carnal mind, or the black catalogue of the works of the flesh. And now, in contradistinction to the works of the flesh, and vain jangling of men, the apostle admonishes his brethren to "Beware

lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." Again, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; and not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." Whenever the Lord moves one of his servants to lift up his voice against an intrusion into those things by characters who have never seen them, the war-whoop of the enemy is heard all along the lines of their camp, and the religious world stands ready to confederate in crying him down, while non-professors will pat them on the back, and urge the persecution. No matter, however. God's eternal truth must be heralded; his servants must cry aloud and spare not, whether they hear or forbear. This is not the servant's business. His business is to "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." This is always done in meekness, and yet with unflinching boldness. Your blessed Master is with you, dear, faithful servants, who bear the banner of eternal truth; and though "he clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering," yet hath he given you the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to him that is weary. "He wakeneth morning by morning; he wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned." And now, dear, tried one, you are clothed like your once humbled, but now exalted Master, who says, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me, therefore will I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." You may be ashamed of your own weakness, ignorance, and simple way of presenting these glorious things, but never ashamed of their beauty, as seen by you in the holy mount of the Lord's house, now established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills. The mountain ranges of earthly wisdom and glory will never reach the exalted heights where God has chosen his dwelling place. The rising hills of science will never convince the spiritual-minded that anything born of the flesh is anything else than flesh. Here God has stretched the line of demarcation. Here is the territorial line, so to speak, over which the devil is ever disputing; and the nearer he can approach this line, the more boldly he strikes. But it still remains that "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "And here is the mind which hath wisdom."

We are sometimes told that these points should not be made a test of fellowship. They are a test, whether men make them so or not. John says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us [not for us]; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." And wherever this testimony, "the testimony of God," is faithfully declared, it traces the line of demarcation that God has drawn. Sever that line, and you sever the bond of unity of Christ and all the elect of God. Behold your standing, your life, your all, dear yoke-followers and heralds of this testimony. "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." The upholding of that one is the upholding of all; the election of that one is the election of all; and it has always been so.

"Its bonds shall never break,
Though earth's old columns bow;
The strong, the tempted, and the weak,
Are one in Jesus now.

"With joy lift up your heads,
Ye highly favored few,
When through the earth destruction spreads,
For what shall injure you?

"When storms or tempests rise,
Or sins our peace assail,
Your hope in Jesus never dies,
'Tis cast within the veil.

"Here let the weary rest,
Who love the Savior's name;
Though with no sweet enjoyment blest,
This covenant stands the same."

Dear brethren, I fear that I have extended this to perhaps a weary length to others; but I sometimes write just to relieve my mind of dark forebodings, or to tell the sweet joys I experience in contemplating the un-failing counsel and purpose of God in unfolding the sublime mysteries of his kingdom, which cannot be moved.

In love to the household of faith,
J. TAYLOR MOORE.

P. S.—Before I quite finished this communication, Elder Smoot arrived at my home, and I laid it aside until since he left. He visited those of the churches that I serve in my humble capacity, as God gives me help, and other churches of our association. I can assure you, dear brethren, that he came among us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. His preaching was with power, and in demonstration of the Spirit.

J. T. M.

CENTERBURG, Knox Co., Ohio, March 2, 1886.

MUCH ESTEEMED BRETHREN BEEBE:—If one so unworthy as I am may dare to address you by this endearing name. If I know my own heart, I do love the fellowship of the Spirit and the union that does exist between God's children. O what union is like this? What love is equal unto the love of God? If I am not deceived, it is this love that

prompts me to write a few words of encouragement in your labor of love for our Father's family. I feel that you have much to try you. Perhaps just what few words I try to write may try your patience, for I know what I do will be very imperfectly done, and I have to leave it for your correction and discretion. I do hope our brethren and sisters, one and all, may be aroused to our several duties in regard to supporting the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Now those of us that have never been deprived of the privilege of hearing preaching, little realize the great comfort derived from the SIGNS. I do not want to put anything ahead of my Bible, but I will place the SIGNS next to my Bible, and I feel that it is a work that our Father has upheld and protected for the comfort of his children. I feel that he has given us able ministers of discretion, such as are and have been able to discern both good and evil, to carry this work on so far. I will ask any candid thinking lover of truth to go as far back as he may in the old numbers of the SIGNS, and see how much change you can find in them. If there is any I cannot see it. We have them here in my mother's house back to the year 1850, and my mother has made it her daily labor this winter to peruse them. I can see no difference in doctrine nor discipline thirty years ago. It is just the same to-day as it was then, as far as our judgment goes. But I do see a change in some that once supported it and held it in high esteem, and were not ashamed to be called a "Beebeite." I see them now supporting another paper. The question comes to me so often, Why is it thus? I did not expect to write what I have; my design was only to send you a letter for publication that I received from sister Coddington, of Nebraska. I feel that it belongs to the household, and I should not withhold it. It will explain itself. I have her consent to dispose of it as suits me.

Your sister in hope.

SARAH C. BOYD.

FREMONT, Neb., Jan. 20, 1886.

MRS. SARAH C. BOYD—MY DEAR SISTER IN HOPE:—The card you so kindly sent me as a way of introduction, acknowledging that we are but strangers in the flesh, was most thankfully received by me in due time. Yes, I presume that was proper, as far as conforming with the ways of the world; but as for me, I have myself been made such a sufferer by yielding my body a servant of unrighteousness. But, my dear sister, do not think by this that I mean in any manner to lay such a thing to your charge. No; God forbid that I should do so. But when I see one of the dear children of God with anything of a feeling of restraint, to mar the sweet christian fellowship that ought to exist in this free and sacred family, I am quite apt to forget the beam that is in my own eye, and say, Is this right? Please pardon. If God in heaven be our Father, Jerusalem which is above and is free our

mother, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our elder Brother, are we not one sacred family? No more strangers, but citizens of the household of faith. Our heavenly Father calls Christ and his members one; we the young children of his love, and he the first-born Son. Did not the blessed Savior, in his great anxiety and compassion for this blood-bought family, when he was about to yield up that precious life, in prayer to his Father, say, "They are not of this world, even as I am not of this world. Holy Father, keep them through thine own name, those that thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one?" It is in the fellowship of this blessed union that I feel to address you as sister. God said by the mouth of his servant, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat of the good of the land." But I am as one that strayeth from the footsteps of the flock. I wander in the wilderness, in a solitary way. How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud. Yet he knoweth the way that I take. Though he cause grief, yet he will have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. It is good, we have found, if we hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord; for in his love and pity he redeemed us, and hath not forgotten Calvary and the travail of his own soul. In all our afflictions he was afflicted, and with his stripes we are healed. Who hath saved us, and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us, my sister, honor his precious name by holding fast the profession of our faith, nothing wavering, nothing doubting; for he is faithful that has promised, and is able to perform. Brought safely by his hand thus far, how can we now give place to fear or distrust? His promises are yea and amen. "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace." But these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Since I have commenced to put some of my thoughts on paper, and through the kindness of brethren Beebe they have been scattered throughout our family, I have received many letters, and each one bearing some kind word of christian fellowship for me. And O how much I have needed their encouragement. May God reward them as I cannot. How much I do wish that I could be more grateful, as I know I ought to be, and not murmur over little trials, and in my own imagination turn a mole-hill into a great and high mountain, and then weep and lament because I am not able in one leap to surmount it, and mockingly say, Aha, what a great miracle I have performed. I know that each and every trial is chosen of God in love, for where would my unrestrained nature carry me? To what extent would I

go, if I did not daily experience that the love of God is an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast?

"Did I meet no trials here,
No chastisement by the way,
Might I not with reason fear
I should be a castaway?"

Daily experience teaches us that we cannot do the things that we would; but it is our earnest desire to follow patiently, and as far as we may be made to understand, in the footsteps of our Redeemer. We have found it true and effectual in our own individual experience, and it is a faithful saying, that the servant shall not be above his Master.

"His way was much harder and rougher than mine;

Did not my Lord suffer, and should I repine?"

But, my dear sister, at times dark, threatening clouds hang low and heavy over my head, the angry, turbulent waters are upon the face of the deep, everything about me is tossed by the pitiless waves, so that I find no resting place for the sole of my feet. But there is an almighty Power whose watchful eye is over all the works of his hands, and in pity and compassion he turns about the poor, fluttering, weary dove, who having found the vanity of all other dependence, looks with longing towards the sure refuge, the Ark of safety, whose windows are always open to receive the poor, tempest-tossed soul. And so it is that from time to time, with faith as an abiding principle, we are driven toward our strong tower, even the name of the Lord, in whom we have righteousness and strength; and like Jonah, we acknowledge that salvation is of the Lord.

I have already written quite lengthy, and I have failed to say anything upon the subject which you wanted to talk to me about, the ordering of our steps, and selling our birthright. Paul said, "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for a morsel of meat sold his birthright." It may be that we unwillingly have become subject to vanity, or for some worldly motive we have failed to appreciate our privilege in the church, which is the birthright of every one that is born of God. If so, then Esau's course represents ours. And when God is pleased to give us repentance, like him we earnestly seek for a blessing. But we do not understand this to conflict with our spiritual life, so far as being eternally secured, for that is hid with Christ in God. Nor do I understand that Esau was ever in possession of that eternal life, although he received of his father a blessing, as well as his brother. But it is well for us to note between the two blessings. Esau's only pertained to a worldly blessing. "Thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and by thy sword shalt thou live." Here is plainly represented the covenant of works. And remember it was by faith that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. And here Esau immediately shows this spirit. "And Esau hated Jacob, because of the blessing, and said, Then will I slay my brother."

Now let us search the prejudice, so to speak, of Jacob, "Esau's brother," and we can easily notice the difference in the two. And God said to Abraham, "As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations." But Abraham had two sons, only one of them being the child of promise. "With Isaac he renewed his covenant," saying, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This covenant, this promise, was not given to Ishmael; and it was continued to Jacob, but not to Esau. "It was said to Rebecca, The elder shall serve the younger." And so it is also written, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Here is plain and unmistakable language as regards the doctrine of personal election. "I am God, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Now, my sister, do we really believe in the absolute predestination of all things? And when we say all things, we mean all things, not a part. How can we read the holy record of divine transactions without seeing the eternal purpose of God as purposed in himself before the world began? And again, we have only to look at things as they exist, and they all agree with this fact. Nature is under one law and one control. The power that sustains, regulates all things. Yes, I do believe in the absolute predestination of all things, and do believe they are under a wise control. Yet by no means do I boast that I am at all times willing to yield to the supreme mandate. O that this could be mine to say. No, mine is in the language of one of old, "Not so, not so, my father." What comfort could we find in the thought that Esau was a subject of God's grace, and then by one foolish act had forfeited that life? What assurance would we have that we also might not in our blindness lose the inheritance, which we believe to be sure to all the seed?

"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will."
Now, my sister, let us as kindred in Christ search this will. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." But, says the tempter, what evidence have you that you have an interest in that will? "Ye are my witness," said Jesus. And he sealed the will with his blood. It is now an open will, for it has been proven. Now let us search and see in whose favor this will is drawn. Who are the heirs to this inheritance? The poor, the lame, the blind, the weary, those that are without strength, the poor sinner. What a poor, helpless set this is. Yes, they do indeed need a place of refuge. Our name is unmistakably to be found among them for whom this inheritance is in reserve. "Reserved in heaven for you." In what safe keeping. We cannot squander it by riotous living. But thank the holy Giver, we are permitted to eat from time to time of its precious fruits, as he seeth we have need, which are love, joy, peace, &c.

I will now bring my letter to a close. I hope you will excuse my being so tardy in replying to yours. It was not because I did not have a desire to do so, but my mind has been so shut up in regard to seeing anything as I ought, or as I thought I ought, that I could not. I found it impossible to write at all. It is very seldom that I can write anything of my mind, and never as I would wish. Although I do at times have sweet communion and fellowship with my glorious Redeemer, yet I have to say, It is only mine to enjoy, not to impart. I have thought what a blessed privilege and consolation it must be to those who are of a ready mind and pen. Yet I do hope I feel thankful for the small gift I have in that way. What a comfort I have found it to be since I came here, that I could at least tell some of my mind. And that sweet messenger of peace, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, brings news to me from a far country, which finds a ready response in my heart, but sometimes only as the wind upon the summer threshing floor, which gathers up the chaff and it is gone. When you answer this, tell me what church you attend, and who is your pastor, and if there are many of you, &c. I have not seen the face of a Baptist since I left New York state nearly one year ago. This is a barren land. Starvation and famine stare me in the face. Yet it has been good for me. We do not appreciate a thing until we have been brought to know its value. I hope you will answer this, and be able to do much better than I have done.

I am your sister, I hope,
ABBIE CODDINGTON.

ALBANY, Mo., May 15, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—Much is said in the professedly religious world about the gospel of Christ. I have thought that, generally speaking, there is not much misunderstanding, among the different orders of the day, as to what the gospel is; but as to its design, effect and continuance, the world abounds with verified proof that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. Therefore we need not wonder at the effort put forth among men to transmit and perpetuate their various teachings, all conceived in the prolific minds of those that Paul said were ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.—2 Tim. iii. 7. It is true, though rarely, that graceless persons may have correct views on doctrine in word only; but none but the saved are subjects of the power and grace of the gospel. To each one the words of the poet have no small significance, and are full of meaning,

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him."

The gospel is Jesus Christ and him crucified. This was what Paul was determined to know among his brethren.—1 Cor. ii. 2. And in preaching the gospel, he used great plainness of speech. His preaching was "not with enticing words of man's wisdom,

but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—1 Cor. ii. 3-5. He first tells us what was the burthen and theme of his ministry, and then tells what it was not: to confirm the saints with testimony which could not in the light of the spirit be misunderstood. Of Christ, Moses and the prophets did write, and he (Christ) with all his matchless fullness, the Spirit with all his diversities of operations, has revealed to God's chosen people in all ages of time. The faith of God's elect reveals unto them Christ Jesus, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This is all "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."—Eph. iii. 11, 12 The heavenly herald announced his advent into the world, and Jesus, the anointed of God, comes to save his people from their sins. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This heavenly visitor or man comes, is approved of God, fulfills the law for his elect, and as the good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;" "having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him."—Eph. i. 7-10. Thus we have in the above the design and effect of the gospel strongly set forth by the apostle. The same truth is presented by the same apostle to the church at Corinth. "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea."—2 Cor. i. 19. By these quotations we see that the object or design of the gospel is to gather in one all things in Christ, and that in this glorious work the immutable character of God is set forth in Christ Jesus, being preached by the gifts which God has given to the church for her edification, in his divine ministrations of righteousness, and all the promises of God in him are yea and amen, to the glory of God by him. How sweet and heaven-like are the tidings of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ to the poor sinner! The weary and heavy laden, oppressed with guilt and condemnation, find in him peace and joy, and more so as they read and comprehend the promise of God, that in him (Christ) should dwell the fullness of him that filleth all in all. His inheritance in the saints and the riches of his glory (Eph. i. 1-18) are displayed, an exhibition of his absolute power made known unto them; in whom they have obtained an inheritance. Thus not only have the saints an inheritance in Christ, but he also has an inheritance in the

saints. Precious truth to the poor, feeble soul that hopes in God. The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, and is not offered to, but given to, the sinner; not conditionally, but unconditionally, as a correct scriptural knowledge and the experience of the believer in Christ teach. The sinner could not be a proper subject of the gift of faith, of life, of peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and yet possessing virtue prior to his salvation, destroying the very idea of a gift, being freely bestowed upon him. To the self-willed and will worshipers this may appear strange; but to those unto whom the gospel of Christ comes, not in word only, but in power and demonstration of the Spirit, sealing instruction, comfort and joy, no other witness is needed. It is their privilege to drink of that stream that makes glad the city of God, and that proceeds from the throne of God, clear as crystal. O let him that glorieth glory in the Lord. The God-dishonoring thought is often taught from the pulpit that the gospel is now in the hands of the church to perpetuate or continue its publication as the liberality and generosity of men would warrant. Can this be true? How would the glory of God be displayed by leaving his work in the hands of poor, sinful mortals to carry on for him, jeopardizing all his eternal purposes, all the sufferings and ministry of Christ, all he has promised to the saints, and all they hope for in him? Certainly the very thought that God has thus delegated to poor, puny man the power to continue to herald forth his salvation, is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. The apostle says, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."—Gal. i. 11, 12. Here the truth is presented to us in unmistakable language. Paul received not the gospel from man, and therefore could not hand it down to his successors. He says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."—2 Tim. iv. 7. But nothing is said about the church, nor theological schools, nor himself, selecting one to succeed him in the ministry. The Lord alone could do this, or send whomsoever he would to feed the church. That which is received of man could in the very nature of things be transmitted by man to man; but not so the gifts of God, whom he hath given to edify the saints. The wisdom of God is displayed in all this; that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. The diversities of gifts that are given to the church all tend to edify the body of Christ; all work to accomplish the will of God. The good fight, the course finished, the faith kept, is the result of grace given, and the revelation of the Son of God in Paul, as is also accomplished in those whom God calls and qualifies to preach the gospel now. Those that minister should do so with the ability that the

Lord giveth, remembering that he that called them is faithful and holy; laboring in meekness and love, in weakness, fear and trembling, that the faith of the saint should stand alone in the power of God. Vain ambition and pride become not the servant of the meek and lowly Jesus; neither does contention, only in love, characterize him whom the Lord has chosen as a messenger of peace and glad tidings. The humble boldness of the primitive saints bore testimony to their enemies that they had been with Jesus and learned of him, thus reflecting the image of Christ in their lives. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ abide with us all. Amen.

Submitting what is written to you, dear brethren Beebe, and then to the household of faith, in love I remain yours in hope of the gospel,

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

"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.

The inspired writer informs us in verse two how we may know the Spirit of God: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." The question here arises, Are we to take as true testimony the confession made with the mouth only? In the fifteenth verse of this chapter the writers says, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." There are many in the world to-day that do confess with the mouth that Jesus is the Son of God (and they may believe it, too), and yet they are as destitute of the grace of God, or the love of God shed abroad in the heart, as the most ignorant Hottentot upon the footstool of God. Paul declares to the Corinthians that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."—1 Cor. xii. 3. Jesus saith unto his disciples, "Whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Then it must be by a direct revelation from God that we can confess "that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh," in the true sense that the evangelist intends to be understood. "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." Whenever we attempt to patch up a system of religion or worship that does not render unto God the glory due to his holy name, are we not antichrist? If we have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, we deny the Father and the Son; and the evangelist declares, "He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."—Chap. ii. 22. There is another kind of spirit which I have seen manifest even among us, which we should try, whether it is of

God. I wish to say here that I speak from my own personal knowledge when I say there are those among us, the Baptists, who, if we converse with them upon experience, practice, and many points of doctrine, will confess with us that "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh;" but when we speak of absolute predestination as one of the divine attributes of Jehovah, they are ready to cry out, as did many of the disciples of Jesus, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" They will tell us that such hard doctrine will drive away the hearers; that it is not profitable to preach such doctrine. Although they may seem loath to deny that it is truth, they want to modify the doctrine, and say that part is predestinated, and part permitted, of God. It thus becomes less offensive and more profitable in their gathering hearers, if not in their pockets. My mind reverts back to a few years ago, when I was appointed by an association to write a Circular Letter. I took for a subject, "The Eternal Vital Unity of Christ with the Church," and from scriptural testimony showed that Christ was the living head of the church, and the church was the body, and then asked the simple question, "How can a living head exist without a living body?" The committee to whom the letter, after being read on the stand, was referred, met without my being present, and concluded to reject the letter, and so informed me. I asked their objections, and they informed me that "The subject was one which had been controverted among the Baptists, and if the letter should appear in our minutes, it might hurt somebody's feelings." If the Scriptures of divine truth establish the predestination of all things, as well as the eternal, divine, spiritual unity of Christ with his people or church, to be the eternal truth of God, all the powers of men, devils and hell combined cannot overthrow it, and all who oppose it are but in error, and will not bear the test by which we are to "try the spirits." He who has been set apart to the ministry of holy things of the temple, and fails or shuns to declare all the counsel of God, is, to say the least, an unfaithful steward. The evangelist addresses the saints as "little children," and says, "It is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now there are many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time." Beloved, I feel that "It is the last time" now, and I firmly believe that if we "try the spirits," many will go out from us because they are not of us. Poor, weak, mortal man as I am, I feel to admonish the faithful in Christ Jesus, to "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." That is, whatsoever the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, has revealed to you in the Scriptures of truth, that proclaim, no matter how unpopular it may be. 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, whose voice then shook the earth;

but he has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." "Yet once more" signifieth the removing of those things that are made, such as false doctrines, made up of theories, by the spirits of antichrist, that those things which cannot be shaken (the eternal truths) may remain: Judging from the signs of the times, I believe that the time is near at hand that the shaking here spoken of must and will take place, and when those things that are made, are removed, then the Zion of our God will look forth as the morning, as fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

I submit these few thoughts for the perusal and consideration of the faithful in Christ Jesus. If it is the truth, receive it for the truth's sake. My heart's desire, if I am not deceived, is to know the truth. May the Comforter, whom Jesus sends, lead us into all truth.

I am, if a saint, the least of all,

J. H. YEOMAN.

SILVER CLIFF, Col., April 15, 1886.

TYRONE, Ky., Feb. 17, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The apostle 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." Now it makes some of the Arminians mad to tell them that they are sinners; but this dear apostle, after years of preaching, and when almost ready to lay his armor by, calls himself the chief of sinners. Just so with all God's children, who feel to be the greatest of sinners, and if saints, the very least of all. Like one of old they say, "I am a man of unclean lips." "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Our Savior says he came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. Just such sinners as Paul, and as all that are born of the Spirit of God, feel themselves to be. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." And again, the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. And he finds them just where he found Jacob, in a waste, howling wilderness. His banner over them is love. Now, brethren, do we believe that Jesus has saved these sinners, or, in other words, his people? If we believe the Bible, we are bound to believe they are saved, and saved with an everlasting salvation in the Lord. The angel said unto Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Not in them, nor out of them, but from them. Just as far from them as the east is from the west. He bare them into a land that is uninhabited. Then how can they get back, as there is no one there to bring them back? Then there is no falling from grace, as some would have it. They fall from their works for the want of grace. Jesus says, "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." How comforting and comforting to the child of God, to know that they are in safe keeping; although when the dark cloud of sin hovers over our minds, and we are shut up in total darkness, we feel like our Savior had forsaken us; but when Jesus reveals himself to us as our only hope of salvation, then the cloud is vanished away. Our Savior says he will never leave thee nor forsake thee. He will be with thee in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake thee. And the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. This "all" means all that the Father hath given Jesus, even all that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. And he says again, "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 he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." And he most assuredly will do what he says he will do; for he says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." Brethren, let us stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Let us strive for the things that make for peace, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Brethren Beebe, if you see anything in this poor scribble worth giving space in the SIGNS, you can do so; and if not, cast it aside and all will be right.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. J. WATERFILL.

SILVER CLIFF, Col., May 3, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Some time ago I wrote you, asking you to put a request in the SIGNS, asking for correspondence with Baptist brethren in southern Oregon, as I contemplated emigrating to that part, &c., since which I have given up my contemplated move to Oregon, so that you need not insert my request in the SIGNS. I write this to save you trouble in publishing, and the brethren in Oregon from the correspondence asked. I have long since learned that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." We may fully determine in our mind to do thus and so, but often some unforeseen circumstance is brought to pass, and our mind is changed. So it is with me at least.

I am yours in hope,

J. H. YEOMAN.

CENTER VILLAGE, Ohio, April 3, 1886.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I notice in the SIGNS a request from brother Alexander Joyner for my views on Song of Solomon viii. 8. I desire to say to that dear brother that I have never had any meditation on that important text until since I saw his request; but for fear that I might use words without knowledge, I hope he will excuse me for not making the attempt to write.

L. B. HANOVER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1886.

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

BALM IN GILEAD.

WILL you confer a favor on me by giving your views on Jeremiah viii. 22?

M. TAYLOR.

MORROW, Kansas.

REPLY.

"Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"

The word of the Lord by Jeremiah, of which this text is a portion, was addressed to the chosen nation of Israel, and had no application to any of the nations surrounding them, nor even to the Gibeonites who dwelt among them. The sin of Judah and of Benjamin is specifically charged upon them, and according to that legal covenant under which they were held as a peculiar nation whom God had chosen, they had brought upon themselves the fearful punishment provided in their law. The Lord said to his national people, the fleshly Israel whom he brought up from the land of Egypt, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. Accordingly the severe chastening suffered by that rebellious people in their transgressions is recorded in all their history as given in the Scriptures. The whole prophecy of Jeremiah witnesses to the justice and truth of God in his judgment against the sinful tribes, as well as his goodness to them in sending his warnings before bringing upon them the calamities due to their sins. Yet their iniquities were not restrained by all the messages of admonition, nor did they heed the solemn thunder of that law in which they trusted. In consequence of their perpetual rebellion and idolatry they were brought into captivity and suffered most cruel oppression; and in this affliction they were made ashamed of the vanities to which they had ascribed divine power, while their distresses compelled them to confess their sins against the God whose favor had given every good thing which they enjoyed. Under that dispensation the judgments visited upon the transgressors were administered nationally, and so the prophets who, like Jeremiah, had denounced the sins of their brethren, were yet made to suffer with them in the consequences of their evil deeds. So this prophet was compelled to endure the bitter captivity to which Israel was subjected for the very sins which the Lord had sent him to denounce. In one respect, at least, it seems that the suffering of the prophet exceeded that of the idolaters; he was cast into prison for testifying the unwelcome truth, while his greatest grief was for the affliction of his people. There is no account that the sinful Israelites felt this grief at all. So in the imme-

diately preceding context "the cry of the daughter of my people" is assigned as the cause of the heart of the prophet being faint in him even when he would comfort himself against sorrow. That cry asks, "Is not the Lord in Zion? is not her King in her?" But the reply of the Lord charges the whole sin of Israel upon that guilty nation, "Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities?" In consideration of this fearful accusation, to which they are compelled to plead guilty, it is not strange that they feel their case hopeless, as expressed in their desponding cry, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."—Jer. viii. 20. Then the prophet says, "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me." In this expression the Spirit of Christ which was in Jeremiah testified very clearly of the sufferings of Christ. It is for the hurt of the daughter of Zion that the Lord of life is brought down to the suffering of death. He who is perfectly glorious in holiness is made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. It was then that he was black with the pollution of all the sins of his people by divine justice laid on him, and astonishment extorted from him the cry, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

"Is there no balm in Gilead?" The form of this inquiry implies an affirmative answer. But it will be profitable for us to consider closely the important significance of the question. As the language of the Captain of our salvation when he was treading alone the awful winepress of divine wrath, the joy that was set before him constituted the healing and stimulating balm which sustained him in the depth of his suffering, when in dark Gethsemane "there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him."—Luke xxii. 43. The angel of the presence of God strengthened him to do and suffer all that was written of him in the book of that eternal purpose of God "which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." The testimony of that Spirit of the Lord God which was given without measure unto him, was the healing balm by which he was enabled to survive even the fatal stroke of the sword of divine justice, which smote him as the Shepherd of Israel. Sustained by that unerring witness, he triumphed over sin and death, and brought life and immortality to light in his glorious resurrection and ascension; in which the life of every member of his body was securely kept to eternity in the heaven of the manifest presence of God.

As already intimated, we understand the "balm in Gilead" to be used in the text as a symbol to express the comfort and strength of established testimony, as the name Gilead literally signifies, "hard, stony region; hill of witness." There is rich exper-

imental truth contained in the text when it is not merely translated into English, but by the Holy Spirit shown to the saints as the testimony or witness of Jesus. Both these definitions of the name are included in the truth as experienced by our Lord and his followers. The world into which he came when he "was made flesh," was to him indeed a "hard, stony region." Foxes and birds of the air have shelter and rest here, "but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." When the saints are cut off from all trust in self, and find no earthly assurance in which they may trust, they think their hope is cut off, and when they cannot find even one good thing in their flesh, it is to them a "hard, stony region," which gives no promise of food or rest; but when the Comforter shows them the path marked by the footprints of their Redeemer, stained indeed with his precious blood, yet bearing the sacred savor of his "good ointments" (Cant. i. 3), they feel within themselves the witness which is established as mount Zion, the holy hill of God. This heavenly balm is always in Gilead; but when the saints would take it to themselves they find only a "hard, stony region." It may be that in some particular passage of Scripture, or in hearing some divinely sent preacher, we have found such clear witness that we think it will always yield the same assurance to us; but when we have attempted to take to ourselves the precious balm of sweet assurance, it has proven to us but a "hard, stony region." Then with earnest desire we have sought to find some cooling stream or healing balm in the testimony presented, but all is to us dry and barren. How well the inspired prophet has expressed the inquiry of the mourner in Zion under this severe trial! In this very "hard, stony region," where nature could afford no prospect of supplies or comfort, we have found in former experience a "hill of witness," which has been an unquestionable support to our faith and hope; but now we see nothing but the barren stones, forbidding all hope of sustenance or rest. Vainly we search the hill of witness now; we find no balm there, and the hard stones seem to present unquestionable evidence that we never did receive any healing balm from that hill. Still the evidence of all the things which are seen cannot utterly remove the truth of past experience, and the anxious inquiry arises, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" The testimony of abiding faith within assures the troubled saint that even this hard, stony region is the hill of witness which yields to the weary pilgrim the comforting balm of abundant and permanent assurance in the everlasting faithfulness of the Savior of Israel. Every manifestation of the grace and mercy of God is revealed in the time when the subjects of divine favor are utterly cut off from all resources; so that their very destitution is converted into an everlasting witness of the amazing riches of almighty grace as revealed in their own salvation.

Thus each recipient of the gift of God in salvation is a competent witness to the fact that it is exclusively by grace that sinners are saved; and of this truth each of them can with Paul refer to himself as the chief memorial.

"Is there no physician there?" As in the first question, the answer is in this also clearly implied in the affirmative; indeed, this form of interrogation is the strongest expression declaring the fact stated; as in the preceding context already cited, asking, "Is not the Lord in Zion?" The great Physician dwells in Zion, and reveals himself in Gilead. It is in the day of trouble that he reveals himself as a stronghold unto the troubled one, and it is then and there he is a very present help.—Nahum i. 7; Psa. xli. 1. If the tried saints could feel this truth in times of darkness, there would be no trial in the gloomy seasons; and consequently they would never be in the condition to witness to the faithfulness of God in delivering them out of their distresses. So faithful is this Physician that he not only carefully and effectually heals all our diseases, but "himself took all our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."—Matt. viii. 17. Then the suffering of the afflicted and poor people whom God has chosen is not from the absence or inefficiency of this physician. At his word even sin, the cause of all sufferings, is purged, and the sinner is made holy. But while it is true that the blood of Jesus has cleansed his people from all sin, it is also true that he has given to his ransomed ones the privilege of feeling the exceeding sinfulness of sin in themselves, that they might know the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.—Phil. iii. 10.

"Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" This most earnest inquiry has arisen in the hearts of the saints in all ages; and it is not in the power of created intelligence to explain the mystery. It is beyond question true that the love of God is fixed upon his suffering ones, here designated as "the daughter of my people." Even while they were yet sinners, God commendeth his love to them in that Christ died for them. Yet they are still subject to continual conflicts, and when they would do good evil is present with them. The Lord says to his own people, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."—Isa. xlviii. 10. The fire in this furnace must burn to consume the corruption of his people and to purify them, and when the fire has accomplished the purpose of the Refiner, they will not suffer another moment. It is only in affliction that the saints learn their own weakness and the infinite power of redeeming love and grace. The Lord does not need to subject them to suffering that he may know their frailty; for all their thoughts are naked and opened before his eye; but in affliction and under temptation the tried saints learn their own weakness and insuffi-

ciency. David says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."—Psa. cxix. 71. Therefore it is written, "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. Beyond this we cannot comprehend the purpose of God, for "He giveth not account of any of his matters." As the sins of the nation of Israel were the cause of all their calamities, so the disobedience of the saints, which is sin against the Lord Jesus, brings upon them the chastening rod. But as no sin could dissolve the tie which identified all Israel as the children of Abraham, so no action of them who are cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ can bring them again under the law of sin and condemnation. In their relation to Christ as their Redeemer no sin can attach to them; but in themselves they are all polluted, and have no righteousness. While they rejoice in the perfection which is given to them in the Lord, they yet feel to be full of sin and pollution in themselves. In this experience their health is not recovered while they are burdened with the body of this death. But they are saved from despair by that hope which abides in them, bearing witness that they shall awake with the likeness of their Lord, and shall be satisfied when, free from sin, they dwell in the presence of his glory forever.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

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

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

We have now over 500 pages of the Church History in type, and the work is progressing at the rate of about fifty pages a week, which will complete the work in about eight weeks, and if no unusual delays occur, we will be able to mail the book to subscribers in three or four months. For further particulars see advertisement on last page.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

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

MARRIAGES.

MAY 12, 1886, at the residence of Woodford Crossfield, in Anderson County, Ky., by Elder J. E. Newkirk, Mr. Joseph L. Mizner and Miss Martha S. Crossfield, both of Anderson Co., Ky.

At the residence of Wilson T. Clark, near Woodhull, Henry Co., Ill., May 6, 1886, by Elder Smith Ketchum, Mr. George Crosson, of Pleasant Plain, Warren Co., Ohio, and Mrs. Sarah C. Butler, of Woodhull, Henry County, Illinois.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At his home in Anderson Co., Ky., March 22, 1886, **J. J. Wilson**, aged seventy-four years, five months and fourteen days. The subject of this notice was born and raised in Woodford Co., Ky., was married to Nancy Woods, of Anderson Co., Ky., Feb. 14, 1839, after which he settled in said county and lived to the time of his death. He was received into the church at Goshen on the third Saturday in January, 1861, and baptized by our dear Elder, J. H. Walker, deceased. Truly he has remained a true and faithful member ever since, never failing to fill his seat unless providentially prevented. And not only so, but he was always ready to pay his full portion in all our church expenses, and also in defraying the expenses of our ministering brethren when visiting us. Brother Wilson stood in high esteem with our church, and also the churches of Salt River and Little Ploek, which he visited quite often. But none (outside of his family) will miss him like I shall, for there was scarcely a week during the year that we were not together, either at his or my house, and hardly ever failing to have a pleasant talk on the all-important subject of Christ and his kingdom. But I wish to be reconciled to God. His health had been failing for several years, but he was generally able to attend meeting until within the last six months, when he became too feeble to ride on horseback to the church, which was about two miles. Though he kept quite cheerful all winter, yet he would have little spells at times from which he never fully recuperated. He complained mostly of his stomach, but I think it was a general giving way of his whole system. I saw him Friday before he died, and he thought he was getting along very well; but on Sunday night about twelve o'clock he was taken with shortness of breath, when his physician was sent for. But alas! he found him in a dying condition. He then had congestion of the lungs. I received word about eight o'clock a. m., and hastened there. On entering his room he held out his hand, but could not speak. After being there a little while, I asked him if he felt reconciled to God, to which he nodded his head several times, and then said in a low whisper that his time was short. He appeared quite calm, and knew everybody to the last. We could see no change, only his breathing was a little shorter, until about two o'clock p. m., when his breathing ceased, and he gently fell asleep in Jesus. I have witnessed many deaths, but never saw any person die so easy. Brother Wilson was a kind husband and affectionate father, a good neighbor, and the church has lost a faithful member. Our dear brother leaves an aged companion, two children and five grandchildren to mourn; and although his wife has lost a kind and faithful husband, his children and grandchildren have lost a loving and affectionate father and grandfather; they should not mourn; for we verily believe that their loss is his eternal gain.

Elder P. G. Lester preached an able discourse on the occasion, from Job xiv. 14, after which his remains were deposited in the Lawrenceburg Cemetery. And now may Israel's God prepare each and every one of the family to meet him in that world of glory, where sin doth never enter.

As ever, yours in tribulation,

A. J. BICKERS.

DIED—Near Newark, Worcester Co., Md., April 24, 1886, **Mr. Daniel Holloway**. I have been well acquainted with Mr. Holloway for many years, having been a partner with him in business, more or less, for several years,

and always found him honest, conscientious and persevering, and ready to help those who would try to help themselves. He never made a public profession of religion, but has been for many years attending Old Baptist meetings, going but little, if any, to any other. He gave good evidence that he understood and loved the truth. I remember once, at a meeting at his house, of which there were many, that he gave vent to his feelings, and expressed himself as having a good hope through grace. I feel to say much more of the effect of grace on his heart, but will forbear, lest I make this notice too long. He has been in poor health since April, 1884, frequently having severe attacks of pain in his stomach, which terminated in death. The family say that his last days were calm and composed when not suffering pain. He talked to them cheerfully of his departure, made all necessary arrangements, told them that death had not the terror to him that it once had, and spoke of having those severe attacks thirty-five years ago, when he dreaded death more than anything else, but that now he felt willing to go at the Lord's time. His last suffering was only for a few hours, when he passed away calmly and peacefully. In his death the widow has lost a kind husband, the children a devoted and loving father, the church a warm friend, and the vicinity in which he lived a good, honest, faithful citizen.

May the Lord console the bereaved ones, be a husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless, is the prayer of one who feels the affliction.

He leaves three brothers, older than himself, he being in his sixty-fifth year.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DIED—At her residence in Montoursville, Lycoming Co., Pa., March 7, 1886, **Mrs. Lizzie Lundy**, in the thirty-fifth year of her age. The deceased was a native of Prince William Co., Va., having moved a short time since to Montoursville. She had been sick for several months, but not confined to her room until a few weeks previous to her death. She bore her sickness with that fortitude which grace inspires, passing through the "valley of the shadow of death," to the glorious life and immortality which lies beyond. Mrs. Lundy never made a public profession of religion, but was blessed with a rich experience of gospel grace. A sense of her natural unworthiness of the high favor of a place among the saints attended her constantly. I have talked with her many times, and knew her well as a precious child of gospel grace, a meek and devoted follower of the blessed Jesus. I was told that in her sickness her mind constantly turned to the brethren in her native land, her thoughts were of them, and of the precious moments that she enjoyed in their company. She died, in some respects, "a stranger in a strange land," yet in holy confidence fell asleep in the arms of her God. I attended her funeral March 10, in answer to a telegram from her husband, using as a text Hebrews xi. 12, 16. A large congregation was present. The deceased leaves her husband, who never wearied in his faithful attendance in her sickness, and in his kindness and devotion to her; also other relatives, to mourn their loss. We buried her in a beautiful cemetery overlooking the town of Montoursville and adjacent valley. I can see yet the view as I stood by her grave, the view in the valley below, with its many sights and sounds of life, while a solemn power fell upon my mind as I lined the words at her grave,

"Asleep in Jesus! far from thee
Thy kindred and their graves may be:
But there is still a blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

May the Lord graciously grant, as far as it is embraced in his will, the sustaining power of his grace to her husband, parents and family, that they may lean upon his strong arm, who alone can bind up the broken-hearted.

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCOQUAN, Va.

DIED—At the insane asylum, our esteemed brother, **Elder Louis Kagy**. Elder Kagy was born August 18, 1831, and died April 6, 1886, aged fifty-four years, seven months and seven days. He united in marriage to Julia A.

Spitler, Sept. 30, 1851, who still survives him. He was received into the fellowship of the Pleasant Run Baptist Church on Saturday, Oct. 20, 1855, and was baptized the following day by their pastor, Elder Jesse Stith. He was liberated to exercise his gift four years prior to his ordination to the work of the gospel ministry. His ordination took place at the Pleasant Run Church, July 19, 1863. Elder Kagy was one of the Lord's faithful servants, traveling and preaching wherever God opened a door; always at his post, under smiles or frowns. In his deportment he was pleasant, kind and courteous. Even those who were enemies to the doctrine he advocated, said he was a christian if any one was. He was honest, upright and true. Truly brother Kagy was one of the precious of the earth, a great lover of peace and order wherever he went, always laboring for peace and harmony. Physically he was a very weakly person, being afflicted nearly through life with a complication of diseases, being afflicted with dyspepsia, spinal affliction, and other ailments, which pressed so strongly upon his physical system that five of his last years on earth were spent in the asylum in Columbus, Ohio. While there, his Bible was his companion even in his demented condition, and the writer of this notice heard him at different times treating upon some of the deep things of God, beyond what ever he heard from any man. Insane as he was, his mind appeared clear upon the things of God's sovereignty.

His funeral took place from the family residence near Hadly Junction, Fairfield County, Ohio, on April 7, 1886, and a sermon was delivered by the writer from a text selected by brother Kagy in his lifetime. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" He also composed a verse to be placed on his tombstone, as follows:

"My body lies here under ground,
And shall wake at trumpet sound;
Then from the dust triumphant rise,
To join my soul above the skies."

He leaves a beloved companion, two sisters and many friends to sorrow, but they have every assurance that he has gone to his better reward.

G. N. TUSING.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Please give notice of the sudden death of my dear companion. She breathed her last breath sweetly away at seven o'clock in the morning of April 21, 1886.

The subject of this notice was born in Wilson County, Tennessee, Dec. 29, 1843, being at the time of her death aged forty-two years, four months and twenty-two days. Her maiden name was Evaline Frances Halbrook, daughter of W. A. and Katie Halbrook. On April 7, 1867, we were united in the holy bond of matrimony, and we lived happily together until death divided the happy union. She professed a hope in Christ about the year 1862, and joined the church of Christ in Tippah County, Miss., in June, 1871, since which time she has lived in full fellowship with her brethren and sisters, and with the doctrine advocated by the editors and contributors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was a noble wife, a good neighbor, and a true-hearted christian woman in every sense. In fact she was good and kind to every one, and therefore had the esteem and good will of all. And now, dear brethren and friends, while the stroke rests more heavily upon the writer than any one else, I feel resigned to my great loss, feeling very certain that she is gone to rest, never again to feel the pain which she endured in this life. And while I know the utter impossibility of her returning to comfort me in this world, I have a good hope of meeting her again, to join with her in singing everlasting praises to the Savior of sinners. Her funeral was preached by brother Berry, of Blue Mountain, Tippah Co., Miss., using for a text John xiv. 1-3, after which her remains were laid beside her four little babes which had preceded her in death. She leaves a father, mother, five brothers, myself and seven children, with many friends, to mourn our loss, but her gain, as we fully believe.

It has been my lot to lose in death two noble-hearted wives, much better than I

deserved, the first leaving no children to be a comfort to me. Now I am left with four boys and three girls, the oldest eighteen years, and the youngest seven years of age. I feel in duty bound to remain at home with my children, therefore I can visit the churches but little until my surroundings are different. I do not feel that the Lord has called my wife from me because of my disobedience, nor because I staid with her so much for twelve or more months before her death. I believe that in all the Lord's dispensation with us his purposes are fulfilled, and we are to be still and know that he is God. While I desire to comfort God's people by proclaiming the gospel to them, I know that God requires of me to take care of my family of little children, which I must do, God being my helper. I accept the sympathy of all who have experienced the loss of a companion, which I know they will freely give.

T. L. MORTON.

RIPLEY, Tippah Co., Miss.

Mrs. Kizziah Rowlett was born in Trimble Co., Ky., Aug. 1, 1807, and after a painful illness of three months died, March 20, 1886, aged seventy-eight years, seven months and nineteen days. Her maiden name was Burnett, and she has many relatives (but no brother nor sister living) in Kentucky. She was married to Peter J. Rowlett in 1825, and lived on an adjoining farm where she was born, until they moved to Missouri in 1856, and settled in Harrison County. Mr. Rowlett died July 5, 1857, aged fifty-one years, ten months and fifteen days, leaving his wife with twelve children, five of whom are still living. She remained his widow until death, and language would fail to tell of the hardships and trials that were her lot in life, being a continual struggle and toil against adverse circumstances. But it was hers to leave a host of friends, who gathered around her to love and care for her in sickness. She joined the United Baptists in Kentucky years ago, before the introduction of Missionary and other innovations, and continued consistent unto the end in faith and work. Her sickness was a complication of diseases, and towards the close of her sufferings she would sometimes become impatient to go and be at rest, expressing herself as being ready, and fully leaning upon the strong arm of the Lord. She believed that her rest would be in a world where all would be peace, joy and love. She talked calmly on the subject, and desired her affairs all honestly settled. Thus passed away one of the excellent of the earth. I was with her much, and can truly say, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

A large concourse of friends and relatives attended her funeral, and the poor writer tried to preach from 1 Thess. v. 9-11. May the Lord bless all who mourn.

Your brother,

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It has become my sad duty to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary of our dear mother, Sallie W. Boatwright, who died at her residence near Darlington, Gentry Co., Mo., Sept. 13, 1885, aged seventy-nine years, two months and fourteen days. She was the daughter of Jacob and Susan Gates. Mother was born in Buckingham Co., Va., June 29, 1806, and moved with her parents to Madison Co., Ky., in 1809. There she was married to Wm. V. Boatwright, in March, 1824. In October, 1858, they moved to Graves Co., Ky., where they remained until 1851, when they moved to Platte Co., Mo., thence to Gentry Co., Mo., where she resided until the time of her death. She leaves one brother, James A. Gates, near Dukedom, Tenn., and one sister, Mrs. Celia Hudspeth, near Hickory Plains, Prairie Co., Ark., eight children, fifty-four grandchildren, and about sixty great-grandchildren, to mourn their loss; but we mourn not as those without hope. Mother had been in very poor health for several years, but was as usual till within an hour of her death. Mother is gone, and we miss her sadly, but we hope and believe she is now at rest in heaven. She often spoke of her departure, and left many bright evidences that she was going to rest. About forty-five years ago she was received into the

Predestinarian Baptist Church called Hope-well, in Weakley Co., Tenn., and was baptized by Elder W. A. Bowden, who was then pastor of that church. She had been a subscriber for the SIGNS for many years, and took great delight in reading it, as she was almost deaf, and could not hear any preaching. We laid her away in the family burying-ground, by the side of father, who preceded her about eighteen years. There they will rest till the morning of the resurrection, where they will be raised incorruptible, to meet the Lord in the air.

SUSAN F. SCAFF.

OUR father, Isaac Hobensack, died at my residence in Davisville, Pa., Dec. 23, 1885, aged eighty-seven years and five months on the day that he died. Our father never made an open profession of religion, but he was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. He said that no other would do for him. As mother was a member of Southampton Church, he went with her. He often told us that he had attended that church for over fifty years, and believed the true doctrine was there held forth. He survived our mother about twelve years. He was lonely without her, and had a desire to depart whenever it pleased the Lord to call him home. His sickness was short. His mind was very wandering much of the time. He would often ask where he was, and would say that he wanted to go home. Our pastor, Elder Durand, called to see him when he seemed quite delirious, but on that one subject his mind seemed quite clear. When he asked him where his trust was, he told him it was in Jesus. He said his trust had been there for many years. He said he was helpless within himself. He seemed to talk with much feeling on the subject. But very soon after, he was unconscious, and would ask where that man was that he had talked to. 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 to hope that our father is now enjoying that rest which he longed so much for.

Elder Durand spoke on the funeral occasion words of comfort to a large assembly, and the relatives were many; children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren being present to take the last look at the dear departed.

R. F. HART.

Elder Amiron St. John departed this mortal life at his residence in Watkins, Schuyler Co., N. Y., on Sunday a. m., April 4, 1886, aged seventy-three years and eleven months. He had been in declining health for several years, but was able to meet all his appointments until about two months before his death. His disease seemed to be catarrhal fever, and his suffering was mostly from difficult breathing. His end was peaceful.

Elder St. John was born in the town of Berne, Albany Co., N. Y., in 1812. He received a hope in Christ in early life, and was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry in Lexington, Green Co., N. Y., and has ever since been identified with the Old School, Predestinarian Baptists. He was experimental in his preaching, and was esteemed generally as a sound and faithful minister of the New Testament, worldly things being a secondary thought with him. He preached his last sermon only a week or two before his death.

Elder St. John was twice married, and besides his grief-stricken widow, leaves one son and three daughters to mourn the departure of a kind husband and loving father.

The funeral was held at his late residence on Thursday, April 8, and his body was laid to rest in Glenwood Cemetery. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

DIED—In Wells, Maine, Feb. 22, 1886, Mr. Isaac Getchell, aged about seventy-six years. He was sick but a short time, and passed away easy. He never made an open profession of religion, but always contended for what the Old School Baptists preach and believe. A little before he died he said, "By the grace of God I am saved." He has left to mourn three sons.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CHURCH CONSTITUETD.

PURSUANT to a former appointment, a presbytery and council met at May's Mill, Yates Co., N. Y., May 5, 1886, at 10 o'clock a. m., to take into consideration the propriety of organizing the following named members into a Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, to wit: Thomas Manby, Ann Manby, J. May, Mary J. May, Evangelia B. West and Alfred Jensen. (Two have been added by letter since the church was organized).

After praise and prayer by J. May, Elder M. Vail was chosen Moderator, and H. B. Elliott Clerk.

Names of churches and messengers enrolled as follows:

- Abington Church—A. B. Russell.
- Burdett Church—Deacon H. Ayres, A. Ayres, A. B. Dickerman, Walter Reed, H. B. Elliott.
- Canton & Columbia Church—Deacon D. T. Skudder.
- Charleston & Sullivan Church—Elder Wm. A. Campbell, Deacon L. H. Elliott.
- Otego Church—Deacon C. Reynolds.
- Ricker's Hollow Church—Deacon Weld Graves, Deacon Edward Drake, Levi Drake.
- Chemung Church—Elder M. Vail.

Finding them desirous to be constituted into a church, proceeded to examine their letters, which were found in order and received.

Examined their Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum, which were satisfactory.

Elder M. Vail gave them the right hand of fellowship.

The Moderator then declared them to be a Regular, Old School or Primitive Baptist Church.

Benediction by Elder Wm. A. Campbell.

The Clerk was requested to send this constitution to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

M. VAIL, Moderator.

H. B. ELLIOTT, Clerk.

The church then agreed to choose Elder Charles Bogardus to be their pastor, and J. May to act as Deacon and Clerk.

The church also decided to meet on the fourth Sunday in each month for preaching; church meeting on Saturday previous.

The church invites ministers, brethren and sisters to come and see us. We hope it will be a welcome place for any of the household of faith.

J. MAY, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (9th), 1886, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east or west by the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. will be met at Howell's Depot on the arrival of the way train from the west, at 1 p. m., and on the arrival of the Orange County Express from the east, which leaves foot of Chambers Street, New York, at 4.30 p. m., arriving at Howells 7.15 p. m. All will come on Tuesday to Howell's Depot, as there will be no train on Wednesday in time for the meeting.

Those coming from the north by the N. Y., O. & W. Railroad will be met at Winterton on Tuesday, on the arrival of the milk train at about 6 p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to meet with us.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (16th), 1886, and continue three days.

Trains leave Binghamton at 7.30 a. m., 1.00, and 5.00 p. m., arriving at Otego 9.30 a. m., 2.40, and 8.00 p. m. The 5.25 p. m. train does not stop at Otego. Trains from Albany arrive at Otego at 12.25 and 7.10 p. m. The trains will be met on Tuesday, and the friends cared for. Should any arrive in the night, inquire for R. R. Gurnsey, living near the depot.

The friends attending this association will have a reduction of two-thirds of the regular

fare on their return trip, so they will get their return tickets here at Otego.

G. M. FRENCH, Clerk.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord permit, with Honey Creek Church, on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m., and two following days. Brethren and friends coming by railroad conveyance from the east and southeast, and coming by the way of Mansfield or Vernon, on the C. C. R. R., first train in the morning leaves Mansfield for Toledo, by the way of Bloomville, where all should stop, finding teams to convey them to places of entertainment and to the meeting. The second train from Mansfield arrives at Bloomville at two p. m. Those coming from the west and southwest, from Toledo to Tiffin, will come right through to Bloomville; and those that come on other roads to Tiffin will change cars at Tiffin and take train at Pennsylvania Depot, to come to Bloomville. The first train in the morning from the west arrives at Bloomville at ten o'clock a. m. The second train arrives at Bloomville at 8.30 p. m. All must be at Bloomville on Thursday to meet the conveyances which will be there to convey them to places of entertainment. On that day (Thursday) teams will be there waiting for passengers on the arrival of every train from every direction.

LEWIS SEITZ.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Marion Thompson 2, Caleb Thurston 2, Sam Hansbrough 2, Samuel Dennison 2, L. A. Hall 2, J. D. Linton 2, Miss Anna E. Jenkins 2, K. M. Myatt 2, T. P. Hensley 2.

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HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

THIS work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order, by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

Owing to the delay in the typographical work, the Hymn and Tune Book will not be ready to send to subscribers till the last of June. Please observe carefully the above directions for sending money. Do not send checks, nor postage stamps, nor post-office orders on any office but Philadelphia.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

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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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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 1886, 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 SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1886.

NO. 13.

POETRY.

MARK X. 14, 15; ISAIAH LXVI. 13.

LET the little children come;
Suffer, and forbid them not;
In my kingdom they have room;
None of them shall be left out.

For these little ones I died;
They are precious in my sight;
And with me they shall abide
Evermore in realms of light.

All my people come to me,
Weak as little children are:
Only such my kingdom see;
Only such its glories share.

In their weakness is their strength;
All their wants a cry makes known;
And in all its breadth and length,
In each one my love is shown.

In each sorrowing, painful breath,
I am with them; and as one
Whom his mother comforteth,
So I comfort them alone.

Blessed are they now in me,
Resting in my arms of love;
Blessed shall they ever be
In the world of bliss above.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May, 1886

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., April 6, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I believe the following letter will speak to the heart of many a dear trembling one whose hope is in the Lord. For the writer of it I had sweet fellowship as a child of God; and so will the brethren and sisters have, when they have read this letter. I believe she is now at rest in heaven, where she understands all that she so earnestly longed to know while here, and has fullness of joy. I will give some extracts from a letter written by her sister, to sister Lowe, of Salisbury.

"We are sure if Martha could know it, and thought her letter could be a comfort to one, she would be willing it should be published. And as we know Mr. D. to be a better judge than we are, we agree that he shall use it as he wishes. Martha died Nov. 5, 1884. She was conscious to the last; was only in bed three days, and was bright and cheerful as long as she lived. I can never tell you how she loved the Old School Baptists. I often told her I did not think she was as friendly with them as she ought to be. She would say, 'You do not know. I do not want to deceive them.' She never said she expected to join with you, but you have none in the church who would contend more earnestly for the faith than she. Martha was an earnest reader of the Bible from childhood, and always quiet; not the least contentious; but if one of the 'workers' stirred her up, she could talk fast enough, and repeat Scripture to prove what she said, so fast

that they would be glad to leave her alone. She did not speak of her hope, but I think it was only because she had no one to ask her about it. But she often spoke of her death in a cheerful manner. About a week before she died she said there was some writing she wanted to do, but had put it off too long. Next to the Bible she loved the SIGNS. It had been coming to her seventeen years in October. When I was going to renew the subscription (always in advance), and she told me to have it sent three months only, I begged her to have it a year, but she would not agree to have it more than six months. I believe only one paper came before her death (Nov 1). She had the paper propped upon the bed on Monday, and was reading a piece written by Wm. J. Purington, on 'Divine Strength.' After awhile I saw that she seemed to be reading one part over and over. I looked to see what it was, and I saw these words, 'O my Lord! be still and wait thy Maker's will! For all things are working together for thy good and God's declarative glory.' She did not seem at all distressed; and I believe she is at rest. I am glad and thankful that Mr. Durand said the same. Please remember us to him when you write. We will always think a great deal of him, not only for his own sake, but because he was loved by those we have loved and lost. Not many days before Martha's death she had a lot of old papers, and asked me if I did not want to read over all the obituary notices of Mr. Durand's family. I told her yes, and we read them all together."

Sister Nellie Bounds says, "I talked with her about religion four or five weeks before her death. She seemed better satisfied in her mind than I ever saw her before. She said the most of her time was spent in doubts and fears. She said it was true she had some little seasons of enjoyment, but she had never had such a bright evidence as she heard some speak of. She was only fourteen when she first became interested. She said that all that kept her from the church was her unworthiness. I think she must have been fully satisfied at the last, she died so calm and peaceful."

The letter which follows has been very touching to me, and stirs my heart with a deep feeling of love and fellowship in a precious Savior. I would like to say much concerning the deep and tender feelings she expressed, both here and in my conversation with her, but forbear. May

those who were so near and dear to her know of those precious heavenly things, and satisfying evidences of their interest in them.

Your brother affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

RUSSUM, Wicomico Co., Md., Jan. 23, 1884.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—KIND FRIEND:—After all your kindness to me, I really think I owe you some kind of an explanation, though I know I shall not be able to make it as I would. I have often been reminded of a remark I heard you make in preaching, years ago. I do not remember the connection now, but suppose you must have been speaking of those who make great professions of humility and dependence, and yet by their deeds deny it. I do not know about that, but I know you said, "Now a man need not tell us he is sick, when we see him well, and going about." So I think it is folly for me to speak of having thoughts and feelings of which my whole life has been a contradiction; but I cannot say I never had such, and tell the truth; but they have been so mixed with others that I cannot remember clearly. If not in heart, I know I am changed in mind. Once I read the law right through. The New Testament was only an addition. Once I thought the old man was to become a new creature. Now I know, and have long known, that is not to be; but if the old man is stronger, and even more active and lively than before, why wish to profess that the new man is there? Once if I heard any say that self is our greatest enemy, I thought if I had nothing else to trouble me I could get along as well as I wished; but I do not think so now. Then if I heard any say that to them of all wonders the knowledge of their salvation was the greatest, I thought that was strange. They believed in a God who does all things for his pleasure, and as he had declared he would save some, why should they wonder that they were included? Now I am not surprised that they think it a wonderful thing. Once I thought if I were only a deaf mute, I should not be a sinner. I have long known that if I were deaf, dumb, blind, and bound hand and foot, I should be the same sinner. You tell us that earnest desire is prayer. While there is in my heart, I think I may say, continually the desire to know the Lord, that he would reveal himself to me as he does to his people, that I may know something of the joy of salvation, right along with it I seem to hear the words repeated in rapid succession, and in a

mocking tone, "To the unknown God." Then I think I am only trying to deceive myself. I read that God is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth, and I have had the thought that it is not their call that brings him nigh, but he is already nigh, and that is why they do call in truth. I believe the promises are sure to all for whom they are intended, but I cannot accept them for myself. I do not think I can (and do not wish to) do anything to secure his favor; but I think those who are blessed will have some evidence. You and others have asked me, "Do you love the brethren?" and times without number I have asked myself the same. The only answer is another question: How can such a heart really entertain that feeling? And yet I think the feeling I have for that cause and people, I could not make another understand. To you I can say, It is not just the same sort of feeling toward all who bear the name, but I do know it is not any condition in life or natural tie that could make me a respecter of persons in mind. Often when thinking of this feeling, I have tried myself in this way: What if I could know it really is love? What if I were willing to offer up my life for the people? I could not be baptized in the name of the people. Then it seems to me I can feel the darkness. I think I know what I would see—the end of the law; but unbelief, like a black curtain, comes between. Let me try to thank you for writing to me. I asked Mrs. L. to write and explain the cause of my strange conduct, but I am sure I did not ask her to send you the letter. After you wrote as you did, I tried to recall to memory what I had said, but could not. Of course I knew what I was writing about, but could not remember just how I expressed it. I had no idea of receiving a letter from you. I should have considered myself fortunate if you had noticed my request to write for the SIGNS. When I hear others speak of having a hard heart, I think that surely they cannot know the meaning of the words. When I read your good letter, it seemed to me that so much unmerited kindness, even from an earthly friend, ought to be enough to break the heart that could be broken. I could see nothing in it all but self. O if I could only believe what you seem to! But that has always been the trouble. When I was a child it seemed to me that all that others needed was a little persuasion to believe what they were told they ought to; but try as I might, I never could believe what I wished to. An old

missionary man used to call and leave tracts. I remember one day he was handing them around, and I noticed one he gave a sister, with the heading, "I Can't Believe." She threw it down, and I do not suppose she ever read it; but it was the very thing I had been wishing to see. I felt sure it would begin with the protest, and end with instructions as to how to proceed to obtain belief. As soon as I could, I took it and went up stairs to be alone while I learned that important lesson. Sure enough, it was just what I thought it would be. Now whether I faithfully followed directions or not, I do not remember; but if I did, I was too hard a case. This evening I am sure I am just as anxious to believe as I was then, but I do not expect nor wish to be taught it of men. Often I have had the thought, I would give anything to possess saving faith; and immediately came the thought, No, I do not want to give anything for it; I want the faith that is given. While to my mind the first great commandment has always been the basis of religion, I suppose there was a time when I was putting it last, thinking that if one would keep the law, that would be the result. Though I may never know what I wish to, I can look back on my foolishness. Sunday, that day that was so holy, I have even tried to have thoughts that I then supposed were not my own. I think I need not fear to say that I am as free from all such notions now as you are. But while I think I believe differently, yours is the faith through which you can say, "I know." I can be pleased, can be glad, in a sense, but I know it is not the gladness that has been put into your heart. I have felt that if I could once know something of the emotion of joy, I could not doubt again. There could be no mistake as to the cause. I have never known the joy of earth. If I could be as sure that I love the things that do not belong to the world, as I am sure that I do not love the world nor the things of it, I would be satisfied. I would then really know that I am not of the world. In your letter, speaking of thinking of the plan of salvation, and things connected with it, you say, "It is a comfort." I was glad you did not use some stronger word, for then I might have felt that I did not quite understand. I cannot tell why it should be so, but I am sure it is the greatest comfort I have, even if it is in thinking of it for others. Some persons tell that they listen to sermons, and every word seems intended for them. I am always an outside case; nothing is for me. I have tried to accept it as though I were addressed personally, but could not; yet I think I have felt glad that it did comfort others. When I read your letter, I was all the time asking, Is this to me? Is he really addressing me? When I have the feeling that I am "shut up," it seems to me I have been tried, condemned, and imprisoned for life; but being without feeling, deaf and blind, I do not know when the just sentence was passed. How do I know now? I do believe that sight has been sufficiently

restored to enable me to read the letter. And when I ask, Is there no hope? the answer seems to be, Not in this life; that if such a sinner can be reckoned among the redeemed, through the redemption, because of wickedness and sin I am not to know here. But if I could know beyond a doubt that when called from earth I shall see, feel and know all I would now, that would not satisfy the longing I have to know while here. And when I ask why I would know, and the answer is, That I might by confession offer praise, and so glorify the Father, I am astonished at my presumption, to think that such a creature as I should think of trying or wishing to honor the Lord, whom I cannot say I know. Yet I do believe in heart I can acknowledge his mercy, without which I should have been destroyed long ago. If my wicked heart could be laid bare to mortals, I think I might plead the remainder of my days to be recognized as an equal, but would only be treated with scorn and contempt. Yet I think if I could come into the presence of your God, who already knows all, I should find forgiveness. But I cannot approach. I know, too, what it is to feel that if I had called, and he had answered, I could not believe. I am glad you wrote that "Trial of Job." The reading that I could not understand before, seems very plain to me now. Some Scriptures have been made very plain by reading or preaching; and some I have heard explained, but it did not seem clear to me, until something would occur to bring it to my mind. Then I have thought I really knew the meaning of it. If I have any wish to stay here awhile longer it is because I would know these things; that I may gain strength (I cannot recover what I have not lost) before I go. While the feeling often is, not fit to live, ashamed to die, again I think the only dread I have is having to go in darkness. You asked me to answer one question, but did not ask me to try to tell you everything I ever thought. Will you be surprised if I tell you that I have not? These are a few of my thoughts and feelings. It would take a long time to tell all, if I could remember them; but if it were possible that I could, it would take a much longer time to tell of all the wicked and vain thoughts I have had; for I cannot think that mortal has ever lived, no matter how great the age attained, who has ever had as many such. You asked me, "Tell me, what have been the exercises of your mind since you first thought of these things?" That I cannot possibly do. If you ask, How long? I am not afraid to say that some of the same feelings I now have, have been with me more than twenty years. As to feeling as I now do, lest I should make a mistake, I will only say ten. But I think I have seen more of my ignorance and vileness for two years than ever before, and I think that is only a glimpse, just enough to show me that I do not begin to know what I really am. I do not remember when I did not in some way have thoughts about the Creator, and of things that do

not belong to this life. Just forty years of natural life I have been in this wilderness, and I have to conclude that just as I am here, I must fall. But because I talk to you in this way, please do not think I mean to be ungrateful, or that I regard you as one of the common people. I certainly do not. But I know that if I were inclined to fall down before you, and implore you to show me the things that have been revealed to you, you could only send me away, or try to direct me to where you had to go yourself; else I have not understood your preaching, or have been mistaken in thinking it agrees with the way I read. If you receive this, I would be glad if you would write another good letter for the SIGNS. I think you might allude to this in a way that no one else would understand. You will take that as a hint not to write to me. I really would be glad to hear from you, but must tell the truth. I really am ashamed for any one to see my letters. Pardnable pride you will allow. Constitutionally nervous, writing has always been a task; and instead of trying to improve by practice, I have avoided it as much as possible. As to correctness of speech, I am dependent upon judgment. I do not pretend to understand the rules that govern it. Again, I do not feel satisfied to receive a letter and make no reply, and sometimes for months it seems impossible for me to write at all. Your letter came on the third instant. I wanted to write immediately, but was sick, and have been waiting to feel better. I feel as well now as I need expect. Still using remedies for deafness, I can hear a little better at times, but there is no decided improvement. My head has never been quiet, but the sounds are not so rasping and unpleasant. George and Annie wish me to say that they remember you kindly. I am sure they think that what you preach is more consistent than anything else they hear; but if questioned, I am sure they would not hesitate to say that they do not understand and love it. Like those who broke the law before they had received it, I tried to rule it out before I had ever heard it. I think it was in 1858 that I commenced reading, "They shall," instead of, "All may, if they will." In all the wanderings of my mind, I have not a single doubt about what is written; but the doubt is all about myself, whether my desire to know is really sincere. Often I have to conclude it is not; because I do not believe there is any failure of the promises to all who are sincere. To a few others I can speak as freely as I have to you, but could not to all. Sometimes at meeting, when you have shown a disposition to converse with me, I have been sorrow I could not speak as I wished. Now when you come to talk to us in this way, you ask for the secrets of our hearts; and if not inclined to falsehood, we must give them up. While I am willing to do that to one whom I can trust, I do not feel willing to take my heart around on the sleeve, to gratify curiosity. I have observed that those

who really feel no interest in such things exhibit the greatest curiosity to hear all they can, that they may pass it to others; and nothing is ever lost in the transfer. Now I do not think that is a disposition confined to any particular place or people, but think it must be so the world over with all whose sympathies are not with you. While I do not wonder that it is so, and think I am glad to believe that your mission is not to please men, and know you must be reproached, it certainly is in my heart to ward off all I can.

But all this "me, I myself," must come to a close. You said you would be glad if I would write, and now I am afraid I have made you sorry. Looking over it, I find it all so disconnected, and so many mistakes, I dread to send it; but I do not feel able to write another. I hope you can read it, and will excuse it. If you ever come down again while I am living, and will come, I will be glad to see you in our humble home. If through ignorance I have said things to you I ought not, I will take it as a kindness if you will reprove me.

With best wishes, I remain gratefully and respectfully your friend,
MARTHA E. ROBERTSON.

GEORGETOWN, Copiah Co., Miss.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—For some time it has been on my mind to write to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, having read communications from brethren that made my heart glad. There is a text that has borne upon my mind for some time, and it seems that I must have somewhat to say from it. "Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah: the Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie."—Jer. xxviii. 15. In the first place we see that the decree had gone forth from the eternal God that the children of Israel should be led away captive by the king of Babylon, and should serve him until the very time of his land come; and also, all nations should serve him.—Jer. xxvii. 7. God had decreed that seventy years was the appointed time of their captivity.—Jer. xxix. 10. Now Hananiah rises up and prophesies that in two full years the Lord would bring back all the vessels of the Lord's house, and also Jeremiah and all the captives of Judah, from the captivity of Babylon, in two full years, and said that he had "Thus saith the Lord" for it. But he lied. We see Jeremiah turn to him and say unto him, "The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him." But to the text: "Hear now, Hananiah: the Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie." Yea, Hananiah broke the yokes of wood; but God said, "Make yokes of iron." The decree had gone forth that the very time of his land should come; the seventy years must be fulfilled. But Hananiah had timed himself so well that he had brought the decree from seventy years to two. What a lie! So at this present time

there are false teachers preaching the very doctrine of Hananiah. They tell us that the preaching of the gospel is the ordained means in the hands of men to quicken dead sinners, and that they can with money enough bring all the vessels of the Lord's house back from captivity; and they can break the yokes of wood, but there is a yoke of iron. They are timing themselves as Hananiah did, that in two full years, with money enough, they can bear them safely back to Jerusalem. We will see how the above so-called doctrine will stand when tried by the word of God. Romans i. 16: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." And again, 1 Cor. i. 18: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." And again, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." And again, "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." By this array of Scripture it is manifested to every heaven-born soul that regeneration (what they call converting) is the direct communication of the Holy Ghost; for the preaching of the gospel saves them that already believe. One might ask, How is that? In preaching the doctrine to believers, the power of God is set forth, and it saves them from walking after the flesh, from the beggarly elements of the world, from seeking to be justified by the law of works, and (to sum up the whole matter) from false doctrine and from trusting in a lie. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." If man by the preaching of the gospel could quicken or be instrumental in that operation, he could by the same application quicken every soul on earth. But, thank God, the Scripture says, "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." And again, "You hath he [not man] quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." So then it is the power of the Spirit of the invisible God that quickens dead sinners, and brings them up out of the miry clay, and sets them upon a rock. The devil is walking about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. The apostle Paul says, 2 Cor. xi. 13-15, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteous-

ness; whose end shall be according to their works." So they, as Hananiah was, are capable of making this people trust in a lie; for it is clearly manifested that some of the dear children of God are trusting in the Arminian doctrine that is set forth by them. But in the fullness of time God will bring them back from captivity; for they are shut up under the law, unto the faith which shall afterwards be revealed. So men cannot, with all their cunning craftiness, make any deliverance, but to bring forth wind. They say that the money is somewhat lacking at present to bring the world to God. According to their own statement they have raised the number of proselytes from thirty thousand to two millions, and of that immense number there is not yet one God-called preacher among them, but the lily-fingered dandies of America. Certainly if God had a finger in the arrangement, out of two million proselytes there would be some God-called preachers. They have compassed sea and land to make two million proselytes, and after they make them they are two fold more the children of hell than themselves; because they tell the poor fellows a lie, and then make them trust in it. In their preaching the salvation of the world, they say that Christ by his atoning blood has placed all human beings in a salvable state, or more plainly, in a salvable fix. According to that doctrine, there is some of the blood and grace of no effect; for if Christ brought them half-way, and said, as they say, "you can make the balance of the way yourself," and some do not get through, that much of the blood and grace is of no effect. According to that doctrine, he was too weak, after making the atonement, to accomplish the purpose he had in it. But the Scripture says, "He shall save his people from their sins." And again, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son; and he to whom the Son will reveal him." "As thou hast given him [Christ] power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him?" "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." "Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." "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." This is sufficient to expose the doctrine of deceivers and false teachers, and to show the true believers that their salvation is of God, and that it is finished. God did not tell the children of Israel, when they

came to the Red Sea, to go to work and build them galleys with oars and gallant ships to pass over, and that he would keep the Egyptians from them until they could make the boats to be propelled with oars. But what said he? "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." And so when they came to Jordan, they had no gallant ships to pass them over, but the power of the eternal God caused the waters to separate, and they passed over dry shod. And when the Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace, they came forth without the smell of fire on their garments; not by the aid of man or his money, but by the power of God; for he was with them. Poor, puny, weak, sinful, degraded man has the audacity to say, and that in the face of the Scriptures, that he can be instrumental in quickening dead sinners, when he cannot create as small a thing as a living gnat. But when we set forth this iron-bound doctrine, it brings about no small stir; for the silversmiths must make shrines for the god of the Arminians as Demetrius did for Diana of the Ephesians. When the doctrine that is contained in the Scriptures is set forth, their craft is endangered to be set at naught, and their god despised, and his magnificence destroyed, whom all America and the world worshipeth. It is now, as it was when the apostle preached to the Ephesians on that occasion: they could not understand the preaching of the wisdom of God, because it was preached to them that were perfect. But they were natural men. "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." And even at this present time they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. And why? Because they know nothing of the righteousness of God. But there is one thing the devil's ministers do know, and that is, when shearing time comes around. They are like Isaiah's greedy dogs, which can never have enough. It is for filthy lucre that they preach a gospel which is not the gospel, but the commandments of men. They have become, as Paul said to Timothy, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." They say that they can send their youths to Clinton, or some other theological school, and they will come out polished shafts in the hands of the Lord. But my view is that they come out as polished calves in the hands of men. They throw them (the youths) into the fire of theology, as Aaron did the gold, and they come out a polished calf, after the graving tool has been put on them. And when they come forth, they say, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that will bring us up out of Egypt." So of their own lusts they heap to themselves teachers (or gods), as did the Israelites at the foot of mount Sinai, when they ordered the

calf made. These are the same kind of prophets that Hananiah was. They go, as soon as they hear of one of the polished calves being turned out, to have their ears scratched; for they do itch to hear of a god (so-called) being ready to deliver them from bondage; and they must ascribe to him honor and power, a great name, and much gold *per annum*, according to contract.

My brethren, let us stand fast in the faith, quit ourselves like men, and be strong. Let no man deceive you by any means; for there are many means used by Arminians to deceive the people of the living God. But thanks be to God, we will come off more than conquerors through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I remain yours in the bonds of christian love,

S. M. EDWARDS.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, Mich., May 27, 1886.

IT IS recorded of Israel, that when they were in captivity, they remembered all their pleasant things; and how truly pleasant were the things they had to remember. To them had been given the "pleasant land," with all the blessings attendant thereto; a land that flowed with milk and honey; a land of olives and of vineyards; a land of beautiful valleys, rivers, mountains, seas and plains; a land presenting all the varieties of scenery and fertility, of beauty and of resource for all that could gratify and please the mind. It was the "promised land," the chosen and good land, the place prepared for and given to the chosen people or nation of our God. It was a land literally to which my mind has always turned, as to some place of enchantment. It is often called Palestine, the Holy Land, Judea, &c. Always the calling of a word that brings that land to mind stirs in the heart an emotion of sacred remembrance; for is it not truly a land shadowing forth the gospel Canaan, the sweet land of promise and of rest, given to the new spiritual children, or chosen ones? And then it was the willing and obedient who did eat the good of the land. So it is now. Those who are living after the Spirit do indeed live in the full enjoyment of the spiritual blessings which are given to the children who compose the church here below, where are pleasant things indeed, things of which those of the ancient land were but a shadow. It is here we feed upon the high places. We are sometimes called up into the mountain of holiness, where we forget for a little time that ever we knew sin or sorrow. It is here we feed in the green pastures and rest beside the still waters. We drink the pure blood of the grape and feast upon the old corn of the land. But Israel of old in prosperity forgot the Lord, forgot him "from whom all blessings flow," and grew so accustomed to plenty that they realized and prized it not; forgot how pleasant was their land, and the place the Lord had given them. So the Lord brought adversity upon them, and laid their land waste, and

gave them over into the hands of their enemies, who carried them captives into a strange land. In their captivity they remembered all their pleasant things. Jerusalem, with its glorious temple and most imposing worship, came up before their minds. They remembered the sweet incense that was accepted of the Lord, and all the glory and beauty connected with their sacred and solemn ceremonies. They remembered her not in her desolation, but in her most pleasant state. How sweet was every remembrance of her in their now desolate and captivated state. They remembered all their pleasant things; those mountains and valleys, those palms and cedars, olive yards and vineyards, with many pleasant fruits, and fruitful fields; all symbolical in themselves, if we only had wisdom given us to discern the pleasant things they shadowed forth. Job's great affliction was but a sore captivity. In that captivity he remembered all his pleasant things, so that he could say, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me; when I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil; when I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street! The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, and stood up. The princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth. The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." He had afflicted none, but by the Lord preserving him, he had done good to all. "Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and shall multiply my days on the sand." "I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners." All this was pleasant to remember. But now captivity had come upon him. "But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock." They were children of fools, yea, children of base men; they were viler than the earth. "Now they have me in derision. I am their song, yea, their by-word." King David had much the same experience. There came a time when he had to say, "I am the song of the drunkard." They made faces against him, and said, Aha! These trying, humiliating things are brought in contrast with the days of

honor and peace, when pleasant things were possessed. Even so we, as children of God, do often mourn in captivity, bound with fetters and chains. It may be some soft, silken fancy; some dreamy illusion, that has taken possession of the mind, so foolish and vain, yet how securely it holds us captive. It is so pleasing to all the natural affections. It is just what the carnal mind revels in. It may be the strongest enemy we have to contend with. It firmly holds us back from all spiritual enjoyment. It robs us of the evidence of the living witness within. We have just enough life and light to know that we are in bondage, to sigh and groan beneath this cruel oppression. Now we remember the pure, heavenly light that once shined in the heart, giving us pure, heavenly love, joy and peace. Were they not pleasant things? But this bewitching illusion has brought a shade that darkens all. It has always been the most besetting sin, the most heavy weight. But when the glorious light of heavenly liberty shined in the heart, we thought it forever slain. We thought always to soar aloft in heavenly light and peace, forever set free from all the allurements and enchantments that lead captive the silly mind. Now we are in captivity again, but we know it. We know the contrast between life and death, light and darkness. O how pleasant it was when we were so sweetly free from all earthly desires, when a palace would appear but a toy; the wealth of all the world was as nothing; we were rich in faith, were living in the bright evidence that we were heirs of a kingdom that is incorruptible and that fadeth not away. O how pleasant it was to find in the heart a fountain of gratitude for the least blessing. Anything God was pleased to give us was as received by the undeserving. Had we been a beggar upon earth, in the heart was a song of melody that a thousand worlds could not buy. How pleasant it was when we took our place in the house of the Lord, and every word was precious unto us; when his fruit was sweet to our taste; when from the heart went up sweet incense to the Lord; when we could truly say, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." But now we are afar off. We may formally take our place there, but the illusion is upon the heart. The incense will not arise. The true spirit of worship is not there. O how we long to break our fetters! "Turn our captivity, O Lord." "Turn us, and we shall be turned." The enemy comes up before us, saying, "Where is now your comort in those things that you thought were to never fail? Where are those bright, beautiful and pleasant things that you thought could never fail to give the most perfect delight? Where is your victory over my power, your scorn of my most subtle fascinations?" Indeed his mouth is opened wide against

us. We can answer nothing. Helpless captives! Yet we remember the years of the Most High, remember when he set us free, remember how he led captivity captive, remember how he first delivered us from all the power of the enemy; how he undertook for us when as yet we were blind, and dead in sin, and in bondage; how he quickened us, and gave us life; how it was he who made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We remember when

"In vain the tempter spread his wiles,
The world no more could charm;
We lived upon our Savior's smiles,
And leaned upon his arm."

How near we drew to the wounded side, wounded for us, and we almost heard him say, "I am he that was dead, and am alive forevermore," and, "Because I live, ye live also." Remembering this, we still feel to say, "Turn our captivity, O Lord."

KATE SWARTOUT.

P. S.—If it would not appear like making myself too consequential, I would like to say that my private address is Mrs. Andrew J. Swartout, there being a lady of my own name at this place.

K. S.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Some of the dear sisters of our Master's household have urged me to again write a line for our precious messenger, the SIGNS; but could they know how very weak I am, both physically and spiritually, how very poor and sinful I feel myself to be, they would certainly not expect it. When I read the precious and able articles in the SIGNS, and then think of my poor, imperfect letters that have appeared from time to time, how I feel my cheeks blush with shame: so imperfect do they seem, so like and so full of my poor, imperfect self. But will not you, kind editors, and you, my dear kindred in Christ, patiently bear with me, and kindly overlook the imperfections of my letters, most of which have been private, and written with no thought that they would ever meet the eyes of others than those to whom they were addressed? I feel that my time in this world (although it has ever been a world of beauty, it has been a world of sorrow to me) is short, and that whatever there remains for me to do must be done quickly; and O that the few remaining days of my stay may redound to the glory and praise of our dear and risen Savior, who gave his life a ransom to save poor sinners, of whom I truly feel myself to be the chief. How glad I am that he has told us that he "came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance;" else my poor soul could never have found the balm in Gilead, the kind Physician there, whose arm is not shortened, that it cannot save, and whose ear never becomes heavy, that it cannot hear. Years ago, as I trust, having felt the healing power of this sweet, heavenly balm of Gilead applied to my poor, sin-sick soul by the kind, the wondrous Physician there, who has ever since tenderly nursed and cared for me, as a friend that "sticketh closer

than a brother," ever as willing as he is able to save to the uttermost every sin-sick patient that comes unto God by him, is it not deplorable to confess that often and often I grieve this blessed Being, and as I fear, crucify him afresh; that notwithstanding his many and sure promises, chief among which is the cheering one that he will not leave us comfortless, I do in doubt and unbelief become comfortless and forlorn, not doubting his ability or power, but doubting the witness he has given me that I am his child, chief among which is, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." How often, too, do I allow my afflictions to come between me and the light of his blessed countenance, and allow my mind to be filled with questioning against a being so holy, so lovely, so infinitely good and kind. Only a few days ago, amid great pain and darkness and perplexity of mind, I cried, "O Father, show me what I have done, what sins I have committed, that I am made to suffer so;" when immediately there came, as one speaking, "Dost thou not know that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and that if ye are chastened not, then are ye not sons, but bastards?" O how I felt rebuked, and how ashamed, for thus grieving my blessed Lord with distrust and unjust questionings. Ever since I first found Jesus, the one altogether lovely, the fairest among ten thousand, my constant prayer has been, "Nearer to thee. O for a closer walk with God." And if he answers my prayers, and brings me into a more sacred nearness to himself, by cutting me off from the vanities of earth, and brings me into a closer fellowship through the fellowship of suffering, am I not a wretch, an ingrate, to be filled with doubt, with complaints and with wild and vain questionings? Ah, his wise and loving dispensations! A kind lady said to me a few days ago, "I do not think Jesus will let you suffer much longer." And then she told me that the Sunday before, in her city-home, she was with a Catholic lady, who sat in her chair, dying of dropsy. When some one suggested, "Could not her sufferings be alleviated," she quickly answered, "No! no! Let me die thus. Jesus died nailed to a tree. I want to suffer, that I may be made worthy to reign with him." And with a look of ineffable sweetness she passed peacefully away. This willingness to suffer the lady said, sweetly manifested itself through a long and painful sickness. Whilst the relation of this incident put me to shame, it gave me thoughts and filled me with a desire to wait, like her, patiently for the end, when the long, dark night may end, even for me, as it doubtless did for her, in one gloriously bright and eternal dawn.

Seeing so many associational notices in the SIGNS, my mind reaches out to the Lord's peculiar people throughout the land. How much we are in need of fearless and faithful watchmen upon the walls of Zion, who will shun not to declare the whole

counsel of God; because our dear Zion is at present, without doubt, surrounded with great delusions. The Lord, in the first chapter of first Peter, calls his people "a peculiar people;" and I can but believe that peculiarity is one of the beautiful garments, and a striking characteristic of Zion, or the church of the living God; and just so soon as she ceases to appear peculiar, as different from the world and Babylon the great, just that soon is it important for her watchmen to cry aloud and spare not. O may the dear Lord bless and strengthen the feet of them who publish peace, and who bring good tidings to the poor! May the word preached reach the breasts and feed the souls of the needy and the hungry poor, and may the assembling of yourselves together be fraught with much good to yourselves, and be for the furtherance and spreading of the blessed gospel of Christ. When you of the dear household of faith are thus feasting upon the rich dainties of the gospel, will you not give a thought to those who, like myself, are deprived of these choice blessings? Our dear sister Brigs, dear father and mother Myers, sister Sabin, and many of the aged and decrepit, are with you all at your various meetings in spirit, if not in presence, or the flesh. What a blessing that God does not confine himself to place or places, but that he is omnipotent, omnipresent, and that the Comforter, the blessed Spirit, will come and abide and sup with his little ones anywhere. I have been so impressed with the idea that we are nearing the last times, or when the second coming of Christ is to appear. The wonderful signs in the planets, and the mighty roaring of waters, men's hearts failing them because of fear, as spoken of in the twenty-second chapter of Luke, seem very like the mighty wonders taking place in our land now. Terrific lightnings, awful thunder storms, storm clouds, reaching from heaven to earth, mighty water-spouts, swallowing up peoples and towns, and whole cities uprooted by mighty winds and terrific cyclones. Men's hearts are indeed failing them with fear, and women and children with pale, tear-stained faces, rush hither and thither, not knowing what moment the storm king may hug them in its awful embrace. Would it not appear that these awful wonders in the heavens and in the deep are indicative of something important about to transpire? How blessed are they who, feeling a quiet trust in the dear Redeemer, can lie down upon their beds and sleep peacefully, as do they who trust in the Lord, who are as "Mount Zion, which cannot be removed," and who feel that amid the roaring of the storm king they are in the hands of a more mighty King, whose everlasting arms are underneath them.

With warmest heartfelt love to all who in patience and christian charity bear with me, I am the very least of all.

MARY PARKER.

SUNDAY, May 23, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I will just write a few lines of business matter; *i. e.*, that I prefer a \$2.50 Church History; and as the SIGNS for June first contains so much, I would like two or three numbers for distribution amongst those who, I believe, desire to know the truth, but are still under carnal teaching. As Elder John Seitz truly remarks, "it has a face like a lamb;" and therefore, as your father observed, the Protestant priesthood is more harmful than the Catholic.

And now I will continue, the Lord directing me, to give for our family paper, according to request, a rehearsal of God's dealings, I trust, with me, although I am so unworthy of a name and place among God's people. I have committed many sheets to the flames, fearing I had no right to send them; but I cannot find companionship in the world, much less among the Arminian ranks; and although I find a few who may be of the "dry land fraternity," still they are rather under bondage to their Articles of Faith, Heidelberg Catechism, and cling to some very dry formalities; so I am not at home there.

To those who love the truth, the truth that giveth liberty, after having read my communication, may one or more feel inclined to write me words that may be for my comfort and encouragement. Do we not read, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ?" Again, "Every one shall bear his own burden." But again, we have this precious promise, that we may not sink under our load, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

I will write from the time when I had passed one decade, for at that age I began studying the Scriptures, to see what authority there could be for sprinkling; and, as my father practiced it (being a minister in the "True Reformed or Seceder Church"), I dared not question its validity; but at that time he received a letter from one who had become a Baptist, and I must feel impressed that God's directing hand was there, for I was encouraged to express my views; and having thought so much on the subject, we discussed it for some time, until my father remarked, "You may be right, but it is not essential to salvation." O how I pondered on that word, "essential!" I thought (for I was a strong Arminian) I must do and live, do and live. Still I had been so strictly taught that Christ died for the elect, and they alone could be saved, that I was in great confusion. And now to tell all my varied experience, much of which I distinctly remember, would fill volumes; but my purpose rather is to show how for thirty years I was searching for and could not find a church in gospel order. After seven years I met a Polish lady, and we became very intimate friends. She was conversant with the "dead languages," and I broached to her the subject uppermost in my thoughts. She became so

interested in it, and so well satisfied as to the form, that she left the Episcopalians and united with the Baptists. I was not permitted to attend any other meeting but the "Seceders," up to this time; and there was no other near, excepting the "Reformed," from whom the others had separated, and between whom there was a very unfriendly feeling. They preached "Hopkinsian" doctrine, that Christ died for the elect, but that all can be saved if they come on "gospel terms." This seemed to me more inconsistent than Arminianism. The "Seceders" profess to be Calvinists. As I grew older, when visiting from home I occasionally attended Baptist meetings. I did not approve of written sermons, and although my reason instead of my heart was being exercised, I felt very sad to think there was no church organization to be found where I could see the observance of the apostolic practice. When about thirty years of age I was residing in Newark, N. J., and was directed to a small company of Baptists, where I enjoyed the preaching of an aged man from Troy. I cannot recall his name; but he was soon called from earth, and one of the company, named Walker, led the meetings. I did not feel at home then, and then I tried the other denominations. O how hard I tried to be a Universalist, and then an Episcopalian. I met with enough encouragement, but I was kept from joining them by an overruling providence, I trust. At last I was persuaded, with what then seemed very forcible arguments, to unite with a "Calvinist Baptist Church," and spent three long, long years there, under great condemnation. I could not express my views without giving offense, and then the burden of my cry was, "Lord, direct me." I was living in New York City at the time, and had visited a number of so-called Baptist churches, but was not satisfied. I returned to the "Seceder" meetings, but it seemed so formal that I went out of the meeting and entered a drug-store and searched the directory. I found in a long list "Ebenezer Baptist Church," West Thirty-sixth Street, and there I found, when forty years of age, the church in gospel order. I feel as if I could write many pages of the Lord's great goodness to me, and of the dear ones whose letters of encouragement and sympathy have been so sweet to me; for I felt to recognize the hand of the Lord in it all. Many who were dear to me for the truth's sake have been called to lay this armor by in the past fifteen years. In 1871 I was given a name and a place with the Old School Baptists, and O that I could look back and say, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holy, justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you," &c. But the Lord pitieth them that fear him, and he is all my trust.

My present stopping place is 26 North Main Street, Paterson, New Jersey. Amongst all my relatives and acquaintances I am, and always have been, alone in my views. The SIGNS is very welcome.

M. HELLINGS.

VIRDIN, Ill., May, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have several times in my life felt some inclination to write my christian experience for publication. A few days ago I had such a forcible impression that I at once yielded, and penciled down the following, which you will publish or not, according to your judgment.

From my early childhood I remember to have taken a deep interest in hearing persons relate their experience to the Missionary Baptist Church, of which my parents were members, and I often heard the remark that such a one was trying to get religion. I made resolves at different times to get religion, and would often go to some secret place, and prayed, as I thought, and made up my mind to pray every day. But I sometimes forgot to pray during the day; then, if I did not forget it, I whispered a few words of what I thought was prayer, after lying down, often getting into a slumber before getting through my form, and often becoming careless, and forgetting to pray for weeks at a time; but when startled by a sudden death or a destructive storm, I would make another start, with about the same result. How often this was repeated I do not remember. When in my fourteenth year one of my school-mates, younger than I, died. I then thought of my broken vows, and thought they alone were enough to cause the anger of God to rest upon me. But I yet hoped that by my prayers, and the prayers of God's people, and the good life I resolved to live, and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, I could be saved. I could have no other hope, for that was the only gospel I had ever heard. From that time I always went to the anxious seat when an invitation was given. I also searched the Scriptures earnestly, to learn my duty. Light gradually broke into my benighted mind, and while I was doing the best I knew how, and trying to follow the advice given me by preachers and others in whom I had confidence, I gradually saw more and more of my depravity and guilt, until all my hope of salvation by anything I could do was gone. But I still hoped that in some way that I could not see, God would at some time for Jesus' sake forgive my sins. This was now my only hope. But soon the mountain of my sins and guilt seemed to rise so high that even this hope left me, and despair seized me. I was in this state of mind a few days, and then I felt some little hope, because I was told that the sacrifice of Christ was infinite. This feeling lasted two or three days. After eating my dinner on Sunday, I took a hymn book and walked out. When out of sight I opened it and commenced reading a hymn, and soon came to these words,

"Hath Christ expired upon the cross?
And is he not thy friend?"

My burden was gone, and my joy was unspeakable. I then knelt down and gave thanks to God for what he had done for me, and prayed to him to reveal himself to others. Soon after this I related the substance of what I have written to the "Means Church,"

and was received and baptized. I lived with these people in different places many years. When I was about twenty years old I was living in Cadiz, Ky., and I then heard Elder Payton Nance preach the first sermon I ever heard preached by an Old School Baptist. The first time I went to my father's after that I told my mother of it, and told her he preached my experience, and I liked to hear him. I never saw her countenance look as it did then. She said to me, "You are young, and better not listen to preaching outside of your own denomination, until you are established in doctrine." I did not answer her, but I thought if I had another chance to hear him preach I would not miss it; but the chance never came. I soon met a young brother in my church and told to him what I had told my mother. He said to me, "Old man Nance said in the Muddy Fork meeting house, 'There are infants in hell not a span long.'" This kept me from this people for a long time. I remained with the Missionary Baptists in different places until after the commencement of the civil war. I think it was in the second or third year of the war that the church of which I was a member invited the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches of the town of Virdin, Ill., to attend in a body the ordination of two ministers, and their pastors to take part in the ordination. The invitation was accepted, and the ordination took place. At the next meeting I withdrew from them, declaring nonfellowship from them, even refusing a letter, telling them I would not do an act that would recognize them as a church of Christ. Brother Enoch Hall left the same church about the same time. He first found our church at Girard, four miles south of Virdin, and attended some of their meetings, and told me he had found a church that he was pleased with. But the preaching of infants to hell still haunted me. He told me they suited him, and I told him, that what suited him had generally suited me, and I would go and hear them, which I did; and if there was ever an anxious seat, I filled it then. I did not find any fault with anything I heard or saw. I attended their meetings regularly for some time, and enjoyed them, but could not settle the all-absorbing question, Is this the church of Christ? But finally, when riding alone through a large prairie, my whole soul was absorbed in the subject of what it takes to constitute a church of Christ, and of what I had learned of the church at Girard, and how it compared with the church of the New Testament. After becoming wearied with the searching investigation, and my mind apparently seeking and even finding rest, but no decision, suddenly a light flashed into my mind with such force that I spoke in an audible tone, The Old School Baptist Church at Girard is a church of Christ. I went to their next church meeting and told them more than I have written here, when they cheerfully received me, and soon after baptized me. I am fully satisfied that

I have been regularly baptized, and have lived in a gospel church from that day till now, and nothing has disturbed my sweet fellowship with the church in all that time, for which I cannot feel sufficiently thankful. For the continuance of this sweet fellowship I sincerely pray. During my membership with this church I have had the most severe trials of my life, and through them all their sweet fellowship and the grace of God have sustained and comforted me.

C. ADDISON JACKSON.

DAVISVILLE, Pa., Feb. 19, 1886.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I have not much talent for writing a letter, but I will make the attempt. I feel as though I would like to write a little of my experience. In January, 1876, I was sorely afflicted by the loss of two dear children. Often when retiring for the night I would look at them while they were sleeping, and say to myself, What a blessing to have two such precious treasures in my possession! But I did not fully realize the love and attachment I had for them until the Lord had taken them to his fold. They were both buried in one grave; two lovely girls, one aged eight years, and the other four. I felt that God had dealt heavily with me. It seemed as though my grief was too great to bear, and that I must look to the Lord for support. It was nearly ten years before I could put my trust in him, and say with a clear conscience; He is my all.

"Oft has my soul in secret blessed
Affliction's painful rod;
It weans me from a creature's breast,
And brings me near to God."

Elder Purington preached the funeral sermon of my dear children, January 27, 1876. His text was, "Be still, and know that I am God." I was deeply moved at the time. He told me to read the New Testament, which I did for a time; but I gradually grew cold, and did not read it at all. I only went to meeting a few times for a period of eight or nine years, seldom attending any meetings but associations and funerals. In the fall of 1884, when you came to be our minister, I was led by the divine Spirit to attend very regularly on Sundays, when it was convenient for me to do so; but I did not attend any week-day meetings. Dear sister Fenton would tell me of the good week-day meetings they were having, and ask me to come. I would excuse myself by saying it was not convenient; but in my heart I was in fear that I might be converted. I feel that I strove against the power of God; but in time I was made to bow in humble submission to his will. I came before the Southampton Church, and was baptized November 29, 1885. I feel that I received a hope about five months before, when my mind was exercised during your explanation of the text, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." I feel that I have received a glorious reward, for in God's favor is life. "O Lord, thou hast been my refuge and defense in the day of my trouble." The first thanksgiving sermon I ever heard

was by you on Thanksgiving Day last fall. Your text was, "In everything give thanks." I did enjoy it very much, although I was suffering greatly with trouble at my heart. I gave part of my experience to the church on Sunday before. I was not entirely relieved of trouble at my heart until after that thanksgiving sermon, during which my afflicted heart was soothed and healed. I had been home from meeting that day but a short time when these words came to my mind, "Be still, and know that I am God." I stood in a maze for a little while, not realizing what it meant. I had not seen this expression in the Scripture, neither had I heard any one repeat it for the long period of nearly ten years. All at once it came to my mind that Elder Purington had explained it at my children's funeral nearly ten years before. My heart was relieved and I was well. How I did rejoice! I felt that I was walking in a new path. I feel, O Lord, that thy word has been a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. In the latter part of January I was visiting relatives in Philadelphia. While on my pillow in the darkness and stillness of night, I was aroused by these words: "The path of the just is as a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." There appeared before me a beautiful path, beautiful beyond description, so very bright and shining, straight and narrow, leading from me heavenward. Although my eyes were closed, I imagined it dazzled them with its brightness. It was a very sweet experience to me. My feelings were, had it been the Lord's will to have taken me home, I could have gone peacefully. I felt that I was visiting my relatives for the last time, and I had not the least fear or dread of death. I felt that I was safe in the arms of Jesus. During the ten long years of trials and afflictions, I was often aroused while on my pillow by these words: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Your sister in a christian hope,
REBECCA A. YERKES.

NORTH BERWICK, Me., March 7, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is a very pleasant morning, but I cannot meet with the dear saints of God today by reason of infirmity of body. I have been confined to my room mostly for about four weeks with rheumatism. For two weeks I could not walk a step; but at present, through the goodness and mercy of the Lord, I can walk from one room into another, with a cane in each hand. I feel that I ought to be very thankful that it is as well with me as it is. I have received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for March first, and have read it over and over again, especially the communication over the signature

of A. Shepherd, which seems so much like my experience that I thought I must try to write a little, though in a broken way. I am in my seventy-first year, and my nerves are in such a condition that I can hardly write at all. I feel that I am useless to myself and everybody else. The Lord has seen fit to afflict me heavily, and sometimes my burden seems more than I can bear. But

"It is the Lord who can sustain,
Beneath the heaviest load;
From whom assistance I obtain,
To tread the thorny road."

"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." That is all that supports me. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I have nowhere else to trust. I need all these trials and afflictions to win me from the vanities of earth. How vain are all things here below! how false, and yet how fair! But I am of the earth, earthy, and nature clings to earth. I am cast down, and walk in darkness most of the time, and I fear it is because there is no light in me. But when the SIGNS comes, with something written on purpose, seemingly, for poor me, I can but think of the handfuls that were dropped in the field of Boaz for Ruth. Language fails me to write what I enjoy while reading the SIGNS. May the Lord bless those who write for it, and those who read it, and those who publish it, is the sincere desire of one of the weakest of the weak, poorest of the poor, and vilest of the vile.

JOANNA C. STAPLES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please mention in the SIGNS that I have removed my office for the sale of Dr. Horton's Miasma Antidote to No. 44 Cortlandt Street, New York. All orders for the medicine will receive prompt attention, if sent to me at the above address.

Gratefully and affectionately yours,
T. E. WELCH.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

WILL our dear brother John Stipp please give his views on the fifth chapter of Revelation? What book was sealed, and what are the seals?

Your friend and brother, I hope,
W. B. McADAMS.

INFORMATION WANTED.

WILL some of our brethren and sisters in western Texas send me their address, that I may correspond with them, as I expect to move to that section next fall?

W. B. McADAMS.
SALLIS, Mississippi.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

WE have now over 600 pages of the Church History in type, and the work is progressing at the rate of about fifty pages a week, which will complete the work in about six weeks, and if no unusual delays occur, we will be able to mail the book to subscribers in about three months. For further particulars see advertisement on last page.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Primitive Baptist Association called Baltimore, in session with the Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, Md., May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1886, sends greeting unto the churches composing the same.

"BELOVED" BRETHREN:—We are reminded of time by passing events, and the return of another associational meeting, by which our mind is led to the above expression, "beloved." We will, with the help or direction of God, try to write something of what seems to us to be embodied in the word. The expression, "beloved," as recorded in the Scriptures, contains all that can be signified by any word or expression to set forth the manner of love with which the apostle John was endowed. He is sometimes spoken of as the apostle "whom Jesus loved." All other expressions of love are swallowed up in the word "beloved." The beloved John frequently uses the word in addressing his brethren, and also others of the apostles, with the same meaning. And it is used in speaking of the "Lord of life and glory." "My beloved." And we find it is a family name, and we propose to call it a name, and the interpretation is "Jesus." There is in this presented to our mind a solemn and impressive thought or question. Why beloved? "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. Herein is set forth a love that is peculiar, and different in its application and effect from all other loves; and we are called upon to behold, take notice, see the difference, and the peculiar effect it has on all them that are exercised by it. This love is from God, and always returns to him again. To the natural mind this love is incomprehensible. It cannot behold, receive, nor understand its solemn and spiritual signification. It is bestowed on the beloved, on those for whom Jesus died. In nature we love others because we see something in them attractive to our natural eyes; but they do not always return our love. But this peculiar love or manner of love, that the apostle here speaks about, is from God, and is God, and is a given love. When anything is given, it is received, and it cannot be said to be given unless it is received. And the effect of this given (not offered) love is always to return. Not that God loves you, and you love God in return; but the very instant that God manifests his love to you, or in you, that instant you love him with the very same love; not another, for there is but one love. Another peculiarity of this love is, that in bestowing it on his own, it is not because they are better than others, for we are "children of wrath, even as others." "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." There can be no choice with God because one is better than another. There is none good, no, not one. You are chosen because of electing love. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen

you." You love God because he first loved you. It is impossible for any one to know anything about God, or this mysterious love, until it is revealed as such. All men in nature are ignorant of God in regard to his character as a Savior. They may and do form some idea of a God, but always on an equality with themselves, or rather subservient, and reverse the true order of things, and make the head subservient to the body. But the body is always governed by the kind of head it has. "But I would have you know, brethren, that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of every woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God." This is all in relation to the "church of Jesus Christ," where it alone belongs, and has no reference to the worldly mind, but is of faith. In nature a parent loves his own children, and it is impossible to love another's child as his own. And so with God; he loves his own with this peculiar love, and none others. Christ being the only begotten of the Father, all his children were chosen, elected and begotten in him, and are sure to be "made manifest [as the sons of God] by the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Being "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Then this love will be made manifest. Not that it comes after the birth, or in consequence of the birth, but after it: in fact, it is the birth. The birth is love, because born of God, a spirit of love, born or manifested in us; for a birth is nothing more than a manifestation. If we say a spirit born of a Spirit, we mean a spirit manifested of God. It may be love. "God is love." The love of nature is born with us in our natural birth or manifestation, and that is all the love we are capable of exercising, until born of God. Our love to God and spiritual things, and the brethren, is born with us in our spiritual birth, and is inseparable from it; and the effect of this birth of love is to love all that are born of God.

There is still another peculiarity of this manner of love. It reaches to the remotest parts of the earth, or of God's kingdom. It reaches to and includes every member of his body, no matter whether we ever see them in the flesh or not. God is eternal, and everything that proceeds forth from him is eternal. His life, his power and Godhead, his glory, his salvation and redemption, and everything pertaining to him, are eternal. And so his love and all his works are perfect, and will ever remain so. He never changes, therefore all he does is done forever. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." We are often complaining that God has withdrawn his love from us. This cannot be; but he hides his smiling face, and he is hid, as it were, for a moment. Why do you, doubting and trembling one, so much desire the return of your precious Savior? Because you love him. If he had withdrawn his love, you would not

have any desire for him. He would be as a root out of dry ground, without form or comeliness. No, beloved, God's love is eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, "without variableness or shadow of turning." Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. viii. There seems to be such a oneness in all this that it looks like eternal unity. His love and his life are eternal and one, therefore the unity of Christ and his body (the church) is eternal; so it must be a living or vital unity of Christ and the church; not a union, because they were never-separate. If we could separate the head from the body, would it not destroy both? Would it not separate that which the apostle says even death cannot separate? Vitality pertains to life; and if the vital part be broken or separated, life ceases to exist. Therefore we prefer to call this unity a vital and eternal one; and we think we have adduced sufficient Scripture to prove our position. But a little further. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die."—John xi. When this electing love, this love of God, is shed abroad in our heart, it covers or takes in every member of his body. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." We must not look at this very deep and important matter lightly, or by the natural eye or reason, for we cannot comprehend it. We must see it by faith; and faith is a partner with love. One cannot exist in this time state without the other, and both are necessary to reach hope. No one in nature can realize this love; neither can one born of God love another with this peculiar love, be they ever so dear by nature's ties, unless they can see the image of Jesus there. Some brother or sister may say, "I can see the image of Jesus in my brethren; but how they can see the same in me is more than I can tell. They express their love for me, and manifest so much forbearance toward me in my waywardness and ignorance, that I cannot understand how it is." To such we would say, You could not realize or feel any love for your brethren unless you were born of that same love, and could not see the image of Jesus in them unless the same was in you. Like begets like. We may and do meet brethren, and do not know it until we hear them lisp the "name of

Jesus" (and the name of Jesus means much), and then our love goes out to that one, and he is beloved. Did we just then commence to love that brother? We think not. It is not even necessary that we should see a brother or sister to realize our love for them. We read an article in our family paper from the pen of one we never heard of, a perfect stranger in the flesh; and while reading, our heart or love goes out to that one, and we realize that he or she is a beloved brother or sister; and the gentle tear of love trickles down the furrowed cheek as well as the smooth. This is God's love, and permeates the whole body. It matters not how far north, south, east or west these beloved of the Lord are scattered, their love is a unit. "Beloved," we were sons of God before we knew it; but when faith came we cried, "Abba, Father." When did we begin to be the sons of God? We cannot tell by time, but with God. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." There is just one love pervading the whole body. If one member suffers, all suffer; if one rejoices, all rejoice. If one member goes so far astray as to lose his standing in the church, does the fellowship we had for that one cease to exist? or rather, does it not live on? We cannot fellowship their walk and conversation, neither can we cease to fellowship with that love of God, that unity of love, and they are still spiritually beloved. Remember, this love is like its author, eternal. To prove this, suppose one who has been excluded from the privileges of the church comes again on bended knees and asks to be received, how soon we feel this love, this fellowship, manifesting itself. It does not simply return, but was there all the time, and we have never ceased to entreat this one as a brother in our prayers. Beloved, this is wonderful, yet true; and this is the work of God. "How think ye? If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."—Matt. xxiii. Let us therefore be careful to maintain good works, and manifest our love to God. If a man says that he loves God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother, whom he has seen, how can he love God, whom he has not seen? In this we are not manifesting our love to God. We hear men of the world calling each other brethren, while by their works they do not manifest any knowledge of God or his love. It is much better to manifest our love by our works, than by merely calling each other brethren. Not that we should fail to salute our brethren thus, but that we should let the quality of the tree be known by its fruit. James says, "Faith without works is dead." If we manifest our love to the brethren, we show our faith by

our works. God manifested his love to us by sending his only begotten Son to die for us. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live." "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." When we remember the many wonderful works of God in our behalf, because of love, we ought to remember the many obligations we are daily brought under to him and to each other. In love we were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began. In love God sent his only begotten Son into the world, where he had not where to lay his head; no place in the hearts nor homes of the people; but as a root out of dry ground. They could not see his precious life. In trials, in temptations, in hunger, in buffetings, crowned with thorns, spit upon and crucified. What for? For you, beloved brethren; all for the great love he bore you, even when you were dead in sins. He was obedient unto death. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This is man's love. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in [that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "The gift of God is eternal life." And this life he has given us. Can we call all this to mind, and not remember how little we have served him, how little we deserve at his hand, and how many obligations we are daily brought under to him and to each other? "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." He is continually watching over you, he never sleeps nor grows weary in watching, and always for good, and in love. We should remember to exhort one another in love. Having manifested us as his chosen, his children, the sons of God, that we should be to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, and hath quickened us together with Christ, how important that we should be found obedient unto the commands of our God. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Thus manifesting that we are beloved in the sense in which the apostle John addressed his brethren. Beloved, we feel to remind you, with ourselves, of some things in connection with our profession in the Lord Jesus Christ; not in a spirit of fault-finding, but in love, because it is so impressed on our mind. In the first epistle to Timothy we have set forth the qualifications of a bishop or pastor, and what is required of him, what his character must be, and his ability to govern, &c.; and also the requirements of a deacon, and all those over whom the pastor shall have the oversight. The obligation of one is no more binding than the others. Each must take his place in the body. One cannot exist without the other. But we are so apt to not be willing to accord to our pastor the same weaknesses that we are guilty of. If he is not on duty, present at all appointments of the church, for any cause, and we hap-

pen to be there, we soon begin to find fault. If he is on duty, and we are not, that seems all right. Or our pastor may come, or some visiting brother in the ministry may come a long distance, and be weary and unwell, and does not preach just as we would like, or he may advance something in which we are not fully established. We commence to find fault, and say, it may be, many ugly things about him, most likely behind his back. Is this brotherly love? Then again, our pastor may come to a Saturday meeting and find but few, very few indeed, present, which is very discouraging. And if we are reminded of our obligations to attend these appointments, how soon we find plenty of excuses. "I had some worldly business to attend to, which if neglected would bring pecuniary loss." Or, "I had some friends to visit me, and I could not leave them, and I knew others with the pastor would be there." When Sunday comes, it may be too warm, or too cold, or we expect company, or we must rest, so as to be ready for a busy week's work. So we stay at home, and expect all the brethren and the pastor to be on duty. This, beloved brethren, is all wrong, and is not fulfilling the law of God. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Let us, and each of us, do our duty, and attend every appointment of the church, and consider every such appointment ours, and be there whether any one else is or not. We cannot excuse ourselves. "For-sake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." This is a command to his beloved. And if we so meet or assemble (for to assemble means more than to meet), we will soon find that the preacher does not preach so bad after all, that the wrong is in ourselves, that we have been wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and did not know it. And if our pastor attends all appointments, when not providentially hindered, and when possible visits the brethren at their homes, and so spends most of his time, is it a great thing if we should visit him occasionally, and cheer his heart with our presence, if but for a short time? We would then be able to see with our own eyes how he is getting along, whether he has need of any of our temporal things, and not wait for the deacon to come and tell us what is needed for his support. Our pastor, no doubt, would be just as glad to see us come, as we are to see him. Beloved, we ought all to feel it our duty, as well as privilege, to assist in all things pertaining to an organized church, and we know you so feel it. But we should manifest that feeling of interest in the welfare of each other, "and so fulfill the law of Christ" within our hearts. To be found walking in the path of obedience, in all the commands of our God, is a strong evidence of our love to God and the brethren; and unless so found, it is useless to say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "Love is of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth

him also that is begotten of him." "By this we know we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments." "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."—John xiii. 34, 35. The Primitive Baptists are a peculiar people, differing from all others by the love they bear for each other; yet we find ourselves sometimes not manifesting that love as we ought, when we are negligent of our duty and privileges in the house of God, in the assemblies of the saints. Beloved, the time is short, and we need to watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation. The world is full of subtlety, and we are liable to be drawn into the vortex. When our ears begin to itch, we are in a dangerous situation, drawn away of our own lusts. O how bewitching! "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits [which are within] whether they are of God." Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. But "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." "Let brotherly love continue."

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

The Delaware Baptist Association, to the several churches represented, addresses the following letter.

BRETHREN BELOVED:—Having come together from different sections of the surrounding country, the representatives of a number of separate church organizations, being all with one accord in one place, and having been accustomed thus to meet annually from year to year at some convenient point previously selected, it will not be deemed amiss to inquire for the reasons why we should thus meet in sessions like this, and what warrant we have from the New Testament for so doing. It might seem at first thought as though the propriety of saints assembling for worship, for the enjoyment of the love and fellowship of each other, and for their mutual edification and comfort whenever and wherever they feel so inclined, would not and could not be called in question, and that no argument of any force could be brought up against it. But as every point of gospel doctrine, or church order, has been questioned at one time or another, so associational meetings have come in for their share of discussion and opposition. As all will be ready to admit that New Testament saints did at stated times assemble themselves together, and that they were admonished and exhorted so to do, it will not be expected here that any argument will be urged on that point. The only point that needs now to be considered is whether there is anything objectionable or unscriptural in the character and design of the assembly, or in the exercises in which the assembled saints engage. Church organizations, and the assembling of church members at stated times, for

the maintenance of public worship and the administration of the word, we will assume to be admitted to be scriptural and right. Then where does the question arise, or on what grounds is there doubt about such meetings as those which we call associations? We might inquire first, What is a church? The literal signification of the term is simply a congregation. Israel in the wilderness was a congregation. Still it was not merely a mixed multitude, promiscuously thrown together. They were a congregation in an organized and permanent sense. They were spoken of and addressed as a congregation a great number of times. Once, at least, they were called *the church*. In the New Testament, wherever the disciples were congregated at one place, they are spoken of as the church in that place, without reference to any particular church organization. *The church of the Thessalonians* appears to embrace all the believers in that region of country. On the other hand, we find individual brethren and sisters addressed, and *the church that is in their house*. The amount of this is that brethren and sisters met and worshiped together without being fettered by the limits of organizations, or observing the particular formalities that distinct organizations seem to impose. Organization is not essential to acceptable worship; yet it is essential to the well-being and comfort of worshipers. It is for the maintenance of discipline, and for the inclosing within the stakes and cords of the tabernacle of those who are called to be saints; shutting out whatsoever defileth and worketh abomination. It is for the preservation of the worshipers in peace and gospel fellowship, and their protection from errors and disorders, and from the presence and mischief of all workers of iniquity. This organization and discipline is a prerequisite to all associations and assemblies of saints, such as we now speak of. Otherwise there could be no known recognized saints to assemble. The Israelites must be known as belonging to the congregation before they could be admitted to participation with it. While therefore there is and needs to be organization, a number of brethren and sisters entering into covenant together for the purposes above named, we may bear in mind that it is still *one church* and *one fellowship*. As the members of churches are under special obligation as church members to meet together at the stated appointments of their respective churches, so we understand that as the members of Christ's body they are the subjects of his constraining love to meet together with the saints whenever and wherever they can. They are not restricted by the limits of their church organization; but the Lord their God is King over all the earth. In this gospel day they have one Lord, and his name one.—See Zech. xiv. 9. The churches clustering together in this arrangement for an association or general session once a year might, perhaps with no impropriety, be con-

sidered as one church, made up of so many several branches. The observance of such order in some sections of the country has been accepted as right and proper. The annual session then would properly be held with a central branch, or else take its turn with the several branches; so that all might at least at some time enjoy the privilege. The members of an organized church may meet together for the purpose of transacting business and attending to matters of discipline, and in such meeting only the members of such particular church would participate. But the same church may meet for prayer and praise, and in a meeting of this kind the members of any and all churches within reach, if sound, orderly churches, may meet and worship and commune together. The latter meetings are for enjoyment, for cultivating and extending our acquaintance and fellowship, for our furtherance in the divine life and the knowledge of divine things. In them we expect both comfort and profit. But whatever there is of profit or enjoyment in the coming together of saints to mingle in devotional exercises, is based upon and results from the organization of churches, and the faithful maintenance of their order. The measure of spiritual enjoyment in an assembly of saints will always measurably depend upon the spiritual condition of those churches whose members they are. The enjoyment of christian love and fellowship in thus sitting together in heavenly places being the grand end and object had in view, why not provide an extra feast for ourselves whenever we feel to desire it? Let the desires of our heart and the measure of our profit be our guide in this respect. Instead of objecting or dissuading, should we not rather exhort one another, and admonish one another, and so much the more as evil abounds, and the evil day approaches? In this view of associations, not as organizations to maintain church discipline, but as the coming together of a goodly number of worshipers, no argument can be urged against them that would not equally bear against brethren ever meeting for worship at all. Perhaps it ought to be beneath the occasion to notice objections on account of the expense of providing, the burden of entertaining, &c. If such arguments were sound, it would bear against all manner of religious privileges. To those who would argue thus we would say, Let the reflection fall back upon themselves, and let them bear the shame of their own stinginess and worldly-mindedness; let them not reflect upon those who take great pleasure and delight in entertaining the Lord's people. If there are those who object on this ground, let them object; but let them acknowledge frankly what their real objection is, and let them know at the same time that associations to some are among the greatest privileges of their lives, and that the time and event, with whatever cares it may bring, is anxiously waited and longed for as the crowning event of a happy

year. Such general meetings of brethren, with all the safeguards of church organization and discipline surrounding it, is still liable to be imposed upon. In such cases an association of worshipers have the right, in common with all congregated assemblies, to protect themselves. If to shield themselves from imposition and disorder, some disturbance should result, the association or assembly should not be held responsible for it. Let saints continue to meet together, and let them sometimes lengthen their cords and strengthen their stakes; not confining themselves in their church privileges to the circumference of one little branch of Zion, but break out on the right hand and on the left.

The customary limits of a Circular admonish us to stop. As the most satisfactory and unanswerable vindication of our course in regard to associational and all other convocations of those who fear the Lord and desire to worship him, let the name by which we may be rightfully called from this day forth be, "The Lord is there."

J. L. STATON, Mod.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Ebenezer Church, of Baltimore City, May 19th, 20th, and 21st, 1886, to the several associations with whom she corresponds, sends christian greetings.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We desire first of all to thank God on your behalf for the good news which your messengers have brought us, that you stand fast with one mind in the faith of the gospel, and that peace and love abound among you. We desire also to thank God that we can inform you that the reports from the churches comprising our body are to the same effect in all cases. They also report that many among their congregations seem to be seeking after the old paths, and desiring a home with the people of God. Our churches also stand fast in the doctrine which they held fifty years ago, when the division took place, the main points of which were published in the first prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The doctrine which embraces predestination, election, special atonement, effective calling, final perseverance, the resurrection of the body, and final glory, is still dear to us all. And we desire to walk in love with all who love these principles of truth.

The present session of this association has been especially delightful. We have never had better or more spiritual preaching at any previous session of our association. The preaching has been very close and discriminating, and yet full of the spirit of love. God has enabled the brethren to preach what the children know by blessed experience. And we are glad to say that no new things have been presented. The same principles of truth that were preached in our sessions fifty-four years ago are still held and rejoiced in by us, and we have never felt like giving place to more modern sentiments, though

they may have seemed plausible to modern reason. We trust that the God of love and faithfulness may so keep us and you all that we shall never leave the old path. We do rejoice to believe that by the power of God alone we who were dead in trespasses and sins are made alive unto himself, and that he has formed Jesus himself in us the hope of glory, who was and is and ever will be the life of all his chosen ones. He says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." And again he said, "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."

Brethren, we desire a continuation of your correspondence, and may continued love abound between us.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the church at Warren, when and where we hope again to meet and greet your messengers. The time is on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1887.

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, convened with the church at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., May 26th, 27th and 28th, 1886, to the several associations and meetings with whom she corresponds: Greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Time, in its rapid flight, has brought us once more to our annual meeting in our associational capacity, and we take this opportunity to write to you regarding our state. You will see by our minutes the statistical record of the several churches composing our body, to which we refer you. We would also refer you to our Circular, that you may judge where we stand in doctrine. Yet we would add that the churches composing this association are a unit, standing shoulder to shoulder upon all points of the glorious doctrine of God our Savior. We trust we stand upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone; that foundation which God laid in Zion, which cannot be moved, nor can they who are builded thereon ever be moved, nor even shaken. We are told that they that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever.

We have received your messages of love with rejoicing that you still esteem us worthy of your correspondence, and we sincerely hope you will continue the same. Such is our desire.

Your messengers have come laden with precious things, bringing good tidings of great joy to our hearts. Our meetings have been well attended, and good attention has been paid to the preached word, and we feel strengthened in our faith and hope by the interview. We feel that the Lord has been with us, and in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures forevermore.

May the peace of God be with you. Amen.

J. L. STATON, Mod.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1886.

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

THE RAINBOW OF THE COVENANT.

"AND God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."—Genesis ix. 12, 13.

If some fanatical mortal should attempt to paint a rainbow upon the natural clouds, his folly would be so manifest that every one would consider him demented; yet the world admires and approves that system of religion which assures to condemned sinners the ability to gild the black clouds of sin and death with the eternal glory of the Sun of Righteousness. This is the basis of the whole fabric of natural religion; and at this point the faith of the redeemed people of God is distinctly diverse from all that religion which is commended by the carnal mind. In the beautiful symbol presented in the text, the testimony of Jesus is clearly recorded, and when the blessed Comforter takes that testimony and shows it unto them, it is distinctly revealed in the new heaven to the faith of the saints, as is the natural rainbow to the sight of men. The record given by inspiration concerning the destruction of the old world by water represents the universal death which reigns by sin. The preservation of the family of Noah, with the favored creatures saved in the ark, shows definite, sovereign, effectual election. There is nothing in the inspired Scriptures which is fully and correctly understood until it is seen to bear witness to Jesus Christ in that wonderful unity with his people which constitutes him their Life, and develops them as his body and members in particular.—1 Cor. xii. 27.

It should be especially observed that the covenant in the text is not after the manner of covenants between men, in which the performance of specified work by one party is dependent upon the action of the other party. There was no conditional obligation enjoined upon Noah, and he had no part in the making of the covenant. It was unalterably complete as it was given to him without asking his consent, even, to receive it, as the law was given to Adam without consulting his wishes. This absolute sovereignty of God in all his dealings with his creature man is just the principle against which sinful pride rebels. Man bears witness to the justice of the divine judgment against himself by the very opposition which rises within him against the declared condemnation of the law of God; so that while sinners complain that they are involved in death by the sin of Adam, their very complaint proves them to be unreconciled to God, and

therefore equally involved in sin with their earthly father; and as sin is the sting of death, it follows conclusively that in Adam "Death passed upon all men, for that (or, *in whom*) all have sinned."—Rom. v. 12. Then there could be nothing done by the sinner which could satisfy divine justice, since it required the life of the sinner, and could accept nothing else. Here the saints find that they can have no hope of salvation except through the grace of that God who is revealed in the Scriptures and in their own individual experience as "the God of salvation." There is no other being in earth or heaven to whom that name belongs. Even the worshipers of imaginary gods confess that their idols cannot save without the sinner's aid. But in this they admit that "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."—Deut. xxxii. 31.

"*And God said.*" Whatever God said, it is that word of the Lord which forever is "settled in heaven."—Psa. cxix. 89. While all created things must pass away, "the word of the Lord endureth forever." They whose only hope is in that word cannot afford to allow any caviling in regard to this vital principle, the absolute, unlimited, immutable truth of that word which is spoken by our God. The first assault of the tempter in the garden was with the suggestion that this word was not true; and he still annoys the trembling saints with the same temptation. Yet they ever find that all the words that God has spoken are just and true. None of his promises have ever been forfeited; and his faithfulness is unto all generations.

"*This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you.*" It has already been noticed that this covenant was complete when it was given to Noah, and he was as passive in receiving it as was every other living creature concerned in the promise. It was alone of sovereign favor that God said this to the man whom he had "by water" saved from the flood.—1 Peter iii. 20. The token of the covenant here given can never be erased or counterfeited by the enemy of the saints. He may deny its testimony, but it is still sustained by the truth of God. It is not a testimony which must be retained in memory by tradition from generation to generation, that is, from parents to children; but it is "for perpetual generations." The many thousands of years which have passed since this token was given have not dimmed its testimony.

"*I do set my bow in the cloud.*" This is the first appearance of the rainbow in the natural heavens, of which there is any account; and the promise of which it is a token has never been revoked, although the wickedness of man has been a continual witness of his enmity against God. As man has no part in setting this bow in the cloud, so he can claim no merit in himself as the inducement which moved God to write upon the

dark cloud of universal condemnation the bright pledge of salvation from sin through the blood of the atonement which is in Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness. Here is that great mystery of grace which is beyond the comprehension of saints and angels, that God, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look on iniquity, should commend "his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. v. 8. This heavenly light revealed in the face of Jesus Christ shines in living glory upon the gloom of deserved wrath which overspreads the heavens, shutting out from the conscious sinner every ray of hope. It is only when the subject of divine favor has been brought low in conscious guilt, so that there is no hope in himself, that this awful cloud is lighted with a glory never before seen. The life which is the light of men is revealed in the bright bow which the Lord himself sets in the cloud. None ever saw that bow of promise while retaining any confidence in the flesh, and it is clear that none can see the beauty of that holy pledge of divine love and mercy until God has given to them life and sight. Then it is certain that all who see the perfection of beauty in Zion as the glory of the Lord shines in her, are themselves living children of that everlasting covenant of which this antitypical rainbow is the token. It can be seen by none until it is the pleasure of God to set it in the cloud in their personal experience. Absurd as is the suggestion, the tempter often annoys the saints with the question whether they did not themselves set in the cloud the bow whose brightness brought hope to them. In nature reason would at once reject such a thought, but it often gives "great searchings of heart" to the tried saints. Was that bow of promise indeed set in the cloud by the hand of God? If so, then it is a token of peace which is assured "for perpetual generations." But unbelief says this promise is too bright to be true; and the tempter says the lovely vision is a delusion. The trembling little child of grace, bewildered with fears, looks again at the cloud, and failing to see the bow, is ready to perish in despair because he cannot at will produce that token of promise. But it is the good pleasure of God to give the kingdom of heaven to these little ones, and it is only through much tribulation that they can enter into that sacred rest.—Acts xiv. 22. They who enter into the kingdom of God in this experimental sense, are already manifestly disciples of the Lord Jesus, who follow him in enduring afflictions and trials. Often their soul faints in them with earnest longing for a renewed manifestation of the promise seen in the bow of God. In answer to that prayer the gloomy cloud is made to overshadow them; for without the cloud the rainbow cannot be seen. Then, when all is to them dark and terrible, the light of their Redeemer's presence sets his

bow in the cloud, and all is joy and peace. Then their heart burns within them while by his Spirit the Lord talks with them, and opens the Scriptures to them.

The darkness of the cloud can claim none of the glory manifested in the rainbow, although that glory is more distinctly seen in contrast with that darkness. So there is no merit in the sin by which just condemnation is brought upon the sinner, although without that dark cloud the bright rainbow of promise could not be seen. The power which inscribes the bow upon the cloud is all in the light of the sun; so in the experience of the saints, it is only the brightness of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ by which their sorrows are turned into joy, enabling them in the depth of tribulation to rejoice with the assurance that "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 Corinthians iv. 17, 18. But it should be remembered that the Lord who forms the light, also creates darkness.—Psalm xlv. 7. As he does his will in all things, it must follow that even in the most gloomy clouds which he brings over the earth there is a display of the glory of God; and that glory can never be seen except as it is revealed in unity with the good of his people. To their reason it seems that the clouds and darkness which are round about the throne of God are impenetrable barriers forbidding their cry of utter weakness to come to the ear of him in whom is all their trust; but to faith the sweet assurance of his infinite love is clearly written in the very darkness of these thick clouds; and in the threatening storm which excited their fears they experience his protecting presence. Before they entered the fiery furnace the three Hebrews believed in that God they worshiped as the God of salvation; but when they were walking in the midst of the fire, and realized their Redeemer's presence as their protection, then they were qualified to bear witness to that precious truth, as none could do without enduring affliction. Their reason could not have expected such deliverance as they experienced in the fire. So the Lord is often pleased to show the power of his salvation to his trembling saints in such a way that the very cloud which threatened their destruction is made bright with the heavenly radiance of the rainbow of divine love and mercy which is "for perpetual generations."

As the natural covenant in our text is given by the Lord to all the earth, so in that more glorious covenant of which this is the figure. The bow of promise which encircles the throne set in heaven includes all that new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. In nature a rainbow is never seen be-

tween the observer and the sun; so in the case of the bow of eternal assurance every one is included in the sacred circle of the everlasting covenant to whom its inexpressible beauty is revealed. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."—Psalm xxv. 14. It never was the privilege of any creature to see this hidden glory of God until he is pleased to shew it unto them whom infinite love has encircled within the bond of the covenant; and all who have seen the beauty of the Lord thus revealed must dwell within the circle of that rainbow whose light is the throne of God and the Lamb; and the bow on the thick cloud of their sins is the token "for perpetual generations" that the great love of God has removed their transgressions from them "as far as the east is from the west." As long as sin remains exceeding sinful, and the glory of perfect righteousness shines in the face of Jesus Christ; so long this bow of God must remain in the cloud for a token of his covenant of salvation to all them whom he has included in its glorious circle.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—April 24, 1886, at his residence near Pittsville, Md., Elder John W. Timmons, aged forty-one years, one month and seventeen days. His sufferings were short, but severe. He attended the yearly meeting at Little Creek on Saturday, but was very unwell, and the next Saturday at eleven o'clock he passed away very calmly. His faith was fixed on things divine, and his mind seemed to be filled with the Scriptures. His disease was, I think, typhoid fever. He appeared very patient and humble all the time. The last he was understood to say was, that the everlasting arm was underneath, and spoke of the beautiful city walled in with the eternal wills and shalls. Just before he breathed his last a most lovely smile brightened his face, and he looked sweetly at his companion, and fell asleep.

Brother Timmons was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Indiantown, in October, 1868, by Elder George W. Staton. He was not only a remarkable man, but had been a remarkable boy. It is said that in a certain sense he never was a boy, having always sought old, settled company. He was a distinguished boy by his moral character, and grew to be a distinguished man by the same; and after he became a member of the visible church I do not believe there ever has been the least thing in his life that led to suspicion of his christianity, not even by the world. How often has the writer of this coveted the meekness and submission of our dear brother. After exercising his gift in public for some time, the church thought it right to grant him license to speak wherever a door should be opened for him. After a faithful trial the church called for his ordination, which was responded to by Elders E. Rittenhouse, J. L. Staton and T. M. Poulson, with the messengers from the several churches. The ordination took place at Indiantown, on Wednesday before the third Sunday in July, 1882. There was a large expansion of his gift, and he traveled quite extensively among the churches, and greatly endeared himself to his brethren. A short time since a church was constituted at Forest Grove, and brother Timmons was unanimously called to the pastoral care of the same. The church felt well fixed, but how soon were they shrouded in disappointment and distress. May God enable them to look beyond the shepherds.

The writer attended his funeral, and thought he never saw such signs of endearment in all his life, not only among the family, relatives and the churches, but also among those who were not members, weeping like children. At the time of his death he was serving three

churches, and also preaching at Delmar. His remains were laid in the yard at Forest Grove, the day following his death, when almost the entire community were gathered together to show their love and respect.

O how mysterious are the ways of God! Why was our dear brother taken away in the midst of his usefulness? Who can tell but God? All his ways are known to himself, and we must submit. "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."

He leaves a heart-stricken widow, two sons and one daughter, the oldest being fourteen years of age; also a dear, loving, aged mother, and several brothers. The bereaved ones have our sympathy and prayers, and we would commend them to God and to the word of his grace.

Your brother in affliction and hope,
T. M. POULSON.

DEAR BRETHREN:—At the request of bereaved friends I send the following for publication.

Thomas Anthony Smart was born in the state of Tennessee, June 26, 1813, and departed this life in St. Mary's Township, Hancock Co., Ill., Jan. 15, 1886. The deceased came to Illinois in 1832, and settled in Morgan County, and there was united in marriage with Miss Elizabeth G. Milsted. In 1836 they located in Hancock County. Here he professed a hope in Christ and united with the Providence Church of Regular (Primitive) Baptists, many years ago (date not known), and continued a faithful, firm and beloved member of the same till removed by death. Seven children were born to them, four of whom (two sons and two daughters) survive their parents. His first wife, sister Smart, died July 8, 1857, and in January, 1858, he married Mrs. Louisa N. Hicks, who died Oct. 18, 1871. Brother Smart was one of Hancock County's valuable and highly esteemed citizens, having long been a resident among them, and will be much missed by them, by his children and by the church. Our brother was weakly for some months, but was confined to his bed only a few days, and met his death resigned to the divine will, in his seventy-third year. He was a reader and lover of the SIGNS. His children and the brethren appointed a meeting in memory of him at the Providence Church on the fifth Sunday, instant, when a large audience met; after singing, Elder Thomas Jones offered a solemn prayer to God, and the writer spoke from Psa. lxxi. 9, 18. Elder Jones followed briefly, and Elder B. R. Warren closed by appropriate remarks. May the Lord bless the bereaved.

ALSO,

At the request of Elder Warren and others I forward the following and imperfect notice of the decease of a highly respected sister.

Elizabeth Messmore, daughter of Peter Lionberger, and relict of Albert Messmore, was born in Licking Co., Ohio, and departed this life March 22, 1886, in (it is believed) the seventy-fourth year of her age. Sister Messmore joined a Primitive Church in Ohio called Hog Run, and about nineteen years ago joined the Providence Church, in Hancock Co., Ill., by letter, where she continued to live a faithful and highly esteemed sister till death removed her to her triumphant state. She left several children to mourn the loss of an affectionate and beloved mother. Elder B. R. Warren spoke at her funeral, on March 23, from 1 Cor. xv. 21, after which her remains were borne to the grave.

ALSO,

DIED—May 16, 1886, **Stephen D. Messmore**, son of the above sister, in the twenty-eighth year of his age. His disease was consumption. He died highly esteemed by all who knew him, and especially by his associates, for his many virtues and noble and manly principles. Elder Warren spoke at his funeral from Job xiv. 14.

Affectionately yours,

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, ILL.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I now send you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of our dear sister, **A. A. Hefner**, wife of Elder Wilson Hefner, which

occurred on the sixteenth of last March. She was born Oct. 18, 1826, in Cobb County, Ga. Sister Hefner's maiden name was Smith. While she was quite young her parents moved to north Alabama, and in 1841 they moved to eastern Texas. On the second Sunday in May, 1842, she was baptized in the fellowship of New Hope Church, by Elder M. Bennet. She was married June 16, 1846. Some time after this she moved with her husband to Hunt County, Texas, where there was no Primitive Baptist Church convenient; but in 1850 a church was constituted in her house, she and her husband being members. Her husband was chosen deacon in 1852; and while he served in that capacity, sister Hefner was very faithful in discharge of her duty as deaconess. In 1858 they moved to Arkansas, and by letter joined Bethlehem Church. In 1875 she moved to western Texas and settled in Brosque County, near where she died. The first church she joined in west Texas was twenty-five miles from her home; but a few years ago a church was constituted in her neighborhood, and her dear husband was called to the care of it, and has served the church ever since. This church was constituted with only five members, sister Hefner being among the number. Though it is yet few in number, I can truly say that it is a faithful little flock of God's humble poor. Our dear sister's house was a home for Old Baptists. She was always glad to have the brethren come to the church meetings, and frequently preaching would be at her house, which she seemed to enjoy very much. She has been a constant reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and was well pleased with the reading matter it contained. Of our sister's last illness I can say but little. Her disease, which was typhoid pneumonia, caused her to slumber, especially toward the last, so that she said but little about her condition. However, we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we feel sure that she sweetly sleeps in Jesus. She leaves a fond husband and five dear children (two sons and three daughters) to mourn. One of the daughters has been afflicted in both mind and body from her infancy (about seventeen years), never having walked a step in that time. May God comfort the dear family and Little Flock Church.

W. L. ROGERS.

ACTON, TEXAS.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—If it is not asking too much of you, please publish the obituary of my dear father, **Lewis A. Biddle**, who died of consumption, in Pittsylvania Co., Va., Nov. 10, 1879, aged fifty-three years. He obtained a hope through grace about five years before his death. Although he never joined the church, he believed the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and had no use for the do and live system. I have often heard him use this Scripture, "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Many other passages of Scripture would he quote of like import. When conversing on the subject of religion, he would say, "It is grace, and grace alone." His hope was in the righteousness of Christ alone. He lived with my dear mother twenty-four years; but he has left me in this weary world, with my dear mother, one sister and two brothers, to mourn, but not without a hope that

He is in a heavenly home,
Where no suffering e'er can come;
But eternally he will rest
In the mansion of the blest.

ALSO,

My dear brother-in-law, **Albert G. Stone**, died of heart disease, in Campbell Co., Va., April 8, 1884, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. The subject of this notice joined the New School Baptists when quite a young man, but withdrew from them, feeling that he was trying to feed "on the husks which the swine did eat." He never connected himself with the true church, always saying he was too unworthy, and if he was saved he would be a poor sinner saved by grace. I have seen him weeping when reading the Bible, and he often shed tears when hearing the gospel proclaimed. He would sometimes read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES (which my husband has taken since the year 1840), and remarked, "What good gospel truth this is." It can

truly be said of him, A good man has gone. I reckon he had as few enemies as any man, and as many friends. He was a dear, good brother, uncle and friend, and in every relation of life filled a good part. He was a friend to the poor, never sending any empty away. God has seen fit to take him from our home, where he has lived with my husband (his oldest brother) for thirty years. He leaves three sisters, two brothers and myself, with many relatives and friends, to mourn his decease.

J. A. STONE.

Gilbert Roy Paxton died at Alvarado, Texas, of bronchitis and typhoid fever, April 14, 1886, aged six years four months and sixteen days.

Roy, the youngest child and only son of Mr. Gabriel B. and Mrs. Georgia B. Paxton, was born in Weatherford, Texas, Nov. 29, 1879.

He was a sweet bright child, almost idolized by his parents, and petted and caressed by all their friends. He exhibited remarkable intelligence for one of his age, and a disposition so sweet and affectionate as to be remarkable to all who knew him.

The patience with which the little sufferer bore his sickness of eight weeks, hanging between life and death the greater part of that time, was truly remarkable. He uttered no complaint, and seemed near the close to desire to die, believing that he was going to a brighter home beyond. He said to his heart-broken mother, who watched him in his lingering sickness, with a mother's purest and deepest devotion, "Mamma, I see the angels; I see up into heaven." He was indeed the light of the home circle; but now his innocent prattle will be heard no more. O how deeply did he entwine himself around their hearts, and how like tearing the heart-strings was the separation! But they are christian parents. Though deeply afflicted, they murmur not, believing that little Roy is without doubt in the bosom of his Father, God, in the enjoyment of pleasure perpetual and unalloyed.

In the past week two bright-eyed boys were snatched from our midst, leaving desolate their once happy homes. But oh! if we could only push the heavenly gates ajar and stand within their pearly portals and see all God's workings within, we should see that a wiser hand than yours or mine poured out this portion for our lips to drink.

And now I would say to the bereaved friends, Weep not for them, for God doeth all things well. For here we see through a glass darkly, and things are not what they seem.

Written with respect and sympathy, by
ELLA COX.

SISTER Elizabeth Masten, beloved wife of Mr. Jacob Masten, fell asleep in Jesus about five o'clock p. m., May 31, 1886, at the family residence in Wurtsboro, Sullivan Co., N. Y. Sister Masten was born December 29, 1823, and was therefore aged sixty-two years, five months and two days. She was married to Mr. Masten on September 15, 1842, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. She is survived by her husband, two sons, three daughters, and two brothers, who, together with the church of her membership and the whole community, feel that their loss is very great. She received a good hope in the Savior of sinners a number of years ago, and was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and has ever been regarded as a meek and humble follower of the Lord Jesus, proving her faith by her works.

Her funeral took place on Thursday, June 10, and was attended by a large concourse of mourning relatives and friends, when a discourse was preached by Elder Benton Jenkins, from 1 John iii. 1-3.

"Why should we mourn departed saints,
Or shake at death's alarm?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to his arms."

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with New Hope Church, at Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., to begin on Friday, at 4 p. m., before the third Sunday in July. Elder P. Sawin, of Ind., and others are expected to be with us.

I. N. VANMETER, Pastor.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please publish in the SIGNS that a two days meeting is to be held by the Old School Baptists (the Lord willing) at the Middleburgh Church, in the town of Broome, N. Y., on the second Saturday and Sunday (10th and 11th) of July 1886, a. m. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, especially to ministering brethren.

By order of the church,

M. P. COOPER.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE fiftieth annual session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, by divine permission, with the Occoquan Church, at their meeting place at Oak Grove, eight miles from the village of Occoquan, in Prince William Co., Va. The meeting will commence on Wednesday, August 11, and continue the two following days.

The trains leaving Washington, D. C., from the depot of the Pennsylvania R. R., corner Sixth and B Streets, Tuesday evening at 4:35 o'clock, and Wednesday morning at 6:00 o'clock, will be met at Woodbridge Station, on the Alexandria & Fredericktown R. R., and about twenty-four miles from Washington. These two trains leave Alexandria, Va., twenty minutes after leaving Washington.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to attend.

WM. M. SMOOT.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

David Wanford 3, J V Winchel 2.50, Horatio Grant 2, Mrs B F Herrick 2, Mrs Ophelia Hill 2, J B Leurs 2.50, Amos Bartley 2.50, James A Bullock 2, Mrs Cranfiel 2.50.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

W C Hagan 50c, Elder F M McLeroy 50c, A S Cook 50c, Mrs Maria Knapp 50c, W M Clark 50c, Wm Bannister 2, James Bannister 3, F K Cooper 2, Frank Latham 50c.—Total \$31.00.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

THIS work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order, by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1886.

NO. 14.

POETRY.

PSALM LXXXVI.

Bow down thine ear, O Lord, and hear
And hearken to my cry;
For I am poor and needy, Lord,
Do thou my want supply.
Preserve my soul, for I am thine,
Thy favor is to me;
Now save thy servant, gracious Lord,
Who puts his trust in thee.
Be merciful to me, O Lord,
From sin and guilt set free;
For this I daily sigh and cry,
Do thou in love hear me.
Thy servant's soul rejoice, dear Lord,
And make him glad in thee;
Give comfort from thy precious word,
And lift his soul to thee.
For thou, O God, art good and kind,
And ready to forgive;
Thy mercy, too, is plenteous,
Which praying souls receive.
Give ear, O Lord, give ear, and hear
My feeble, broken prayer;
Be thou attentive to my voice,
My supplications hear.
In trouble's overwhelming day,
When gloomy death appears,
I'll call on thee, on thee, my God,
For thou wilt answer prayer.
Among the gods there's none like thee;
O Lord, there's none like thee;
Nor works like unto thy great works
Of might and majesty.
All nations, Lord, whom thou hast made,
Shall come and worship thee,
Shall glorify thy precious name
And own thy sovereignty.
For thou, O Lord, art very great,
Thou doest wondrous things;
Thou'rt God alone, and reign'st supreme,
The mighty King of kings.
Teach me thy way, O Lord, my God,
Then in thy truth I'll walk;
Unite my heart to fear thy name,
Of wisdom's ways to talk.
Thee, thee I'll praise, O Lord, my God,
With my whole heart I'll praise,
And glorify thy holy name
Through everlasting days.
For great thy mercy is, O Lord,
Toward poor sinful me;
Thou hast redeem'd my soul from hell,
To dwell in heav'n with thee.

GIVE ME CHRIST, OR ELSE I DIE.

GRACIOUS Lord, incline thine ear,
My request vouchsafe to hear;
Hear my never-ceasing cry,
Give me Christ, or else I die.
Wealth and honor I disdain;
Earthly comforts, Lord, are vain;
These can never satisfy;
Give me Christ, or else I die.
Lord, deny me what thou wilt.
Only cleanse me from my guilt;
Suppliant at thy feet I lie;
Give me Christ, or else I die.
All unholy and unclean,
I am nothing else but sin;
On thy mercy I rely;
Give me Christ, or else I die.
Thou dost freely save the lost;
In thy grace alone I trust;
With my earnest suit comply;
Give me Christ, or else I die.
Thou hast promised to forgive
All who in thy Son believe;
Lord, I know thou canst not lie;
Give me Christ, or else I die.
Father, dost thou seem to frown?
Let me shelter in thy Son;
Jesus, to thy arms I fly;
Come and save me, or I die.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?"—2 Cor. iii. 7, 8.

The apostle Paul is the writer of the foregoing words. The epistle was written from Philippi, to the church at Corinth. Previous to the language under consideration, Paul was speaking to the church of the new covenant, or ministration of the Spirit, and of its superior excellency, and of himself and fellow-laborers as servants of that ministration of the Spirit. In the subject matter under consideration Paul was comparing the two ministrations or covenants; the one the ministration of death, the other the ministration of the Spirit. The circumstance referred to in the text is found in the thirty-fourth chapter of Exodus, where God told Moses to hew two tables of stone, and to come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai, there to present himself in the top of the mount. Moses did as the Lord commanded, and the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. There in the mount God wrote his law, for the government of his people Israel, on those tables of stone. And the narrative further states that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in his hand, he "wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him." And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come nigh him. And until Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. This is the circumstance referred to, as the ministration of death that was glorious. The ministration of death, as the apostle calls it, was that law written on tables of stone while Moses was in the mount with God, and which he brought with him when he came down from the mount. Paul says in the text, "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious." Moses was the mediator of that ministration or covenant. A mediator is one that goes between, interposes, or intercedes. Moses, standing in the relation of mediator, received the law for the government of God's chosen people Israel. Whatever God said or did to the people, it was through or by Moses. When the people sinned grievously against God, Moses, who stood between, interposed for them. Moses said (Numbers xiv. 19),

"Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy." Such was Moses as a mediator, in his relation to God and his divine law. As soon as the children of Israel were delivered from the power of the Egyptians, and started for the land which God had promised them, in their father Abraham, they began to be rebellious; therefore a law was necessary to govern them. They soon forgot the great deliverance God had wrought for them at the Red Sea, where they saw their enemies drowned in the sea, and sang with Moses, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously." "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation." They began to denounce Moses for bringing them out into the wilderness to starve, and rebelled against God. So the Lord God called Moses up into the mount, to receive this law for the government of Israel. Now Paul calls this law the ministration of death. We ask, Why did the apostle call it the ministration of death? We answer, This law was given, as before stated, for the regulation of his people Israel. If they were obedient to God's law, they were prospered, and their enemies were driven out before them, and they enjoyed the good land of Canaan, flowing with milk and honey. But if they broke God's law, they suffered the penalty. And when they did violate that ministration, they fell in the wilderness, and were not permitted to enjoy that good land. So we see this law was only temporal in scope and requirements. It only promised earthly blessings to the obedient. The keeping of that covenant could not elevate them to that innocency which they possessed before the fall. They could not regain what they had lost in the transgression of their federal head, Adam, by the observance of that law given to them on Sinai's fiery mount. There was no such promise of God's favor and blessing in this life. Hence there is no life in it, nor hope of an eternal life by its observance; for the apostle says, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law."—Gal. iii. 21. So we see why Paul calls it a ministration of death; because it (the law) could not give life. If they fulfilled its requirements, they could obtain no higher benefits than temporal blessings of a natural life. They were still sinners, still under the sentence of death and condemnation which God pronounced in Eden. This law afforded no relief against that death, for that law could

not give life. The apostle Paul further says that the covenant from Sinai gendereth to bondage.—Gal. iv. 24. No life or liberty was in it. Paul, in the eighth chapter of Romans, calls it the law of sin and death. So we find it was truly a ministration of death; no hope of deliverance from sin by keeping its precepts; nothing but blackness and terror for the condemned sinner. We now come to consider the glory of that ministration. The first thought we present is, that it possessed a glory, in that the great and awful Jehovah was its author and giver. There in the top of that lofty mountain, standing there in all its gloomy grandeur, towering up three thousand feet, piercing the clouds, God wrote that law. So great was the glory while God was in that mountain giving that law, there was thunder and lightning and a thick cloud, and the whole mount quaked greatly by reason of the presence of the great God. In Exodus xxiv. 16, 17, we have an account of God's glory on the occasion of the giving of that law. "And the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days." "And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." So we see that the ministration of death possessed a glory, in that God wrote it. And such awful glory attended its promulgation that the mount was a blaze of glory. And the children of Israel were terrified at the sight. Secondly, it possessed a glory, in that it was a transcript of the divine mind. For Paul says, the law was holy, just and good. Yes, the law was holy, like its author, perfect and just in all its requirements. So great was the glory of that covenant in its promulgation, that it was stamped on Moses' face; and the reflection of that glory was so great that the people could not look steadfastly into Moses' face, and he had to wear a vail while he was speaking to the people. Again, this ministration had a glory in its tabernacle and service. After God had given the law, he ordered Moses to have a tabernacle built of fine wood, linen, costly material, the vessels of pure gold, a crown upon it, the mercy seat of pure gold, the cherubim and golden candlesticks, the costly robes of the priests of fine linen, chains of gold around their necks, the breastplate of twelve precious stones, the diamonds flashing as the priest moved about before the altar. All the appointments of that service were magnificent. Again, we notice the glory of that

most holy place where the awful presence of Jehovah dwelt, between the cherubim of gold. The high priest going into that most holy place, once a year, with his costly robes, with golden bells and pomegranates at the bottom of his robe, what glory and magnificence were attached to that service of the ministration of death. Again, we notice the glory of that covenant in its sacrifices, which were offered on the altar. Every bleating lamb or lowing bullock offered as a sacrifice had a glory attached to it, as a symbol of something hidden beneath it of a more noble sacrifice than they. So we see there was a glory of that ministration in its promulgation, in its ritual and service; which glory, the apostle says, was to be done away. Yes, that shadowy dispensation was to pass away, with all its glory and service. When the substance was come, the shadows were to flee away. When the true tabernacle, which God pitched, and not man, was come, the tabernacle made by men was to be taken down. When the great High Priest of our profession was come, the high priest that stood before the mercy seat in the tabernacle made with hands was to cease his ministrations with the blood of beasts, which glory was to be done away.

We now come to consider the next part of the subject, the ministration of the Spirit, which exceeded in glory, or, as Paul calls it, in the ninth verse, the ministration of righteousness. We now consider what that ministration of the Spirit is. It is the new covenant, that which contains life, that in which life and immortality are brought to light. In it is righteousness. This covenant was faintly shadowed forth in the garden of Eden, when God said that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, which seed is Christ. God proclaimed that covenant to Abraham when he said, "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." The old covenant or law could not give life; it was a law that condemned the transgressor. But this covenant contains mercy and hope for the guilty. The law condemns; the Spirit gives life. In this ministration of the Spirit is brought to light immortality. In the former, sin was punished; in the latter, forgiven. In the new covenant no bullocks are offered as sacrifices for sin; for God says by the prophet, in relation to the new covenant, "I will be unto them a God and they shall be unto me a people; and their sins and their iniquities I will remember against them no more forever." In the old, there was a remembrance of sin, and continual sacrifices were offered; but in the new, God remembers their sins against them no more forever.

But we proceed to notice the glory of the ministration of the Spirit which exceeds the other in glory. Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, had the glory of that covenant stamped upon his face. That glory was as the moon's light, a reflected glory. The true source of that glory lay hidden beneath that covenant. Jesus Christ

was that true and unsullied glory from which all the glory of the old Mosaic covenant proceeded. Moses put a veil over his face, so that the people could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished; that is, could not see the end of the law in the person of the coming Messiah, the Mediator of the better covenant. We notice first that the glory of the new covenant exceeds in antiquity. It was promulgated four hundred years before the giving of the law by Moses, to Abraham. Again, the mediator of the law covenant was a man, and died on mount Nebo, and passed away; but the Mediator of the new was the Lord Jesus Christ, possessed of an endless life. So did he exceed in glory the man Moses. Again, it is more glorious in that the sacrifices under the law could not make the comers thereunto perfect; but the sacrifice under the new covenant, the great Redeemer, who was that sacrifice, perfected forever them that are sanctified. No need of continually coming to the altar of sacrifice. The blessed Redeemer by one glorious offering satisfied divine justice. All claims were met and paid that were against his body, the church. So we see superior glory in the priestly service. The priest under the law had to offer sacrifice for his own sins, and then for the people; showing that the priest was a violator of law as well as the people. But the Priest that ministered at the altar of the new covenant was pure, undefiled, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. How far did this exceed the glory of the ministration of death, the old only shining with reflected glory. In the law dispensation the tabernacle and the most holy place were made with hands; it was a worldly sanctuary; but the other was made without hands, and the most holy place is heaven itself. So in all the comparison, the ministration of the Spirit exceeds in glory all the types and shadows, from the garden of Eden, where the beasts were slain to have the skins to make a covering to clothe Adam and Eve in, which appears to be a type of that covering of righteousness which the Lord Jesus Christ clothes his people with, to present them without spot before his Father's face. All the sacrifices offered, from the transgression of Adam till the last one offered before the coming of the Lamb of God, who was to cleanse from all sin his beloved people, pointed to and shadowed forth the glorious service of the better covenant. When the Sun of Righteousness arose in all its splendor, the moon or law dispensation was eclipsed, never more to be the light to guide the spiritual Israelite in his course. The apostle says in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, speaking of the new covenant and the church of God, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darkness; but ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," the city where the Lord Jesus Christ

is the light, the glory, the priest, the sacrifice, the altar, and the all and in all to the beloved dwellers in that city. The glory of the dispensation of righteousness is so great, those that behold it are changed into the same image, from glory to glory. The people of God are free from the law and its service. The adorable Redeemer has forever satisfied the demands of justice, by entering with his own blood. Now the mercy seat is accessible to every humble believer; there he can find grace to help in every time of need. The dear Savior sits upon that mercy seat, with radiant glory crowned; and while the saints of God contemplate that exceeding glory of the better testament, they are led to wonder and adore the grace and mercy of God toward his church. Amen.

E. S. CULY.

LEBANON, Ohio, Jude, 18, 1886.

GHEENT, Ky., Jan. 2, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—In a letter from sister Theobald, of Sadieville, Ky., which came to hand a few days since, she asked me to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some thoughts on Matthew xxvii. 52, 53: "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went unto the holy city, and appeared unto many."

The pen of the historian has sought in vain to present any scene of a character so wonderful, and fraught with matters of such profound interest, as the scene described in this chapter. Man had been created in the image of his Creator. It is written, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 27. God gave to his creature man a law, the penalty of which was death. By the violation of that law man became involved in all the consequences of the penalty. In after ages the apostle said, "The wages of sin is death." Then the consequence of its violation was death. The magnitude of the offense is appropriately determined by the penalty attached to the law. Death is the extreme penalty of all laws. No penalty can reach farther than the life of the violator of the law. Then man was guilty of the highest offense known to the law, and hence the highest penalty rested upon him, and not upon him only, but upon all his posterity; for he was not only a representative man, but in him was the germ of all who in all coming time would people the earth. They all being one with him; yea, being in him when he violated that law and incurred its penalty, became involved in the same condemnation, which was death. The apostle says, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Aadm 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."—1 Cor. xv. 21-23. The prophet asks this question, "Is there no balm in Gilead? is

there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" This solemn inquiry is answered by the apostle, "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." When the great Physician appeared in Gilead, he came with that balm—with his own precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin. By the shedding of that blood was the health of the daughter of his people recovered, and death, the penalty of that law, was forever removed from them that are Christ's. Then the lamentations of the prophet were silenced forever, who said, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." The gloom that enveloped the old prophet was the same that pervaded the mind of John on that lonely island when he said, "And I saw a strong angel, proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." It was that Lion of the tribe of Juda who by reason of his eternal unity with his people had a right to and did remove the curse of the law from his people by offering himself without spot unto God, and thus the health of the daughter of his people was recovered. In that little book was written the things that must shortly come to pass. Things concerning his people; the sorrows, persecutions and afflictions that must befall his people on the earth, and their certain, final and glorious triumph through the risen Lord over all the powers of darkness. He could recover the health of the daughter of his people. He could and did become the first-fruits of them that slept, and thus secure the resurrection of his people, and he could loose the seals of that wonderful book, and reveal to John, and through him to his saints, the wonderful things that must shortly come to pass. His right and power to do all these wondrous things was made manifest when he took that body that was prepared for him, and in it suffered the fearful penalty of the law amidst those appalling scenes described in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters of Matthew. When the great Creator of the vast universe suffered in his glorious person the penalty of that law about which we have been talking, which suffering is described by the sacred historian in this manner, "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and

the rocks rent." Amidst darkness was this awful convulsion of nature. From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. Mark well this language and awfully solemn scene described. That darkness was over all the land while the glorious Son of God was suffering the pain, the torture and the anguish of that death which under the law was due to his people. Death being the penalty of that law, and his people being one with him, he by that suffering redeemed them from that penalty. But the earth, the workmanship of his hand, was shrouded in darkness while he who was its Creator was thus suffering the just for the unjust. At the ninth hour that darkness ceased; for then he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And "when he had cried again with a loud voice, he yielded up the ghost." Then the penalty of the law was fully met, and his sufferings ended. Now the darkness subsided, and the sun sent forth his rays upon the brown face of nature; for its Creator and the Savior of his people had ceased to suffer. Yea; and the earth had ceased to quake, but only for a short time, for another scene must soon be enacted. While the first was filled with gloom, darkness and suffering, the second was the brightest and most glorious that men or angels had ever witnessed. It was the triumphant resurrection of him who said, "I once was dead, but behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen." He had said to Mary and Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life." Now he could point back to the tomb and say, "O grave, where is thy victory?" Having manifested his power in his own glorious resurrection, it was surely appropriate, yea, and most glorious, for him to manifest that power in the immediate resurrection of many of the saints which slept. Hence the sacred historian says, "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." It was after his resurrection, for he was the first-fruits of them that slept. He being the resurrection of his people, it was fixed in eternal wisdom that at this wonderful period many bodies of the saints should arise, and come out of the graves after his resurrection. Prophets had foretold his resurrection, and he had declared it to his wondering disciples. He said to them, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—John xiv. 1-3. He went to prepare a place for them; yea, for all his redeemed. He went to Calvary's summit, he went down into Joseph's new tomb; but glory to his exalted name, he came from both. He came walking in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save. And thus

by his omnipotent power he prepared a place for them. That place is his church, in which are many mansions of rest for weary saints. There he will reign over them. The prophet says, "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." The man Christ Jesus is that King that reigns in righteousness. The kingdom in which he reigns is his church, and he reigns there of right, for he gave himself for it, "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."—Eph. v. 27. Then surely it is a glorious habitation, one in which all the promises of the gospel are food for weary and hungry saints. The promise that "This mortal shall put on immortality" is one of those glorious promises which strengthens and sustains them while here below. They have the glorious assurance that that promise will be fulfilled; for after the resurrection of their glorious Lord, "the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose." They not only arose, but they went into the holy city, and were seen of many. The particulars of their ascension into glory is not recorded, for the reason that at the great day of the resurrection, when all the redeemed will come in triumph from the tomb, they will already be clothed in that glorious immortality which will be given to all the redeemed. The ascension of our Lord is described for the comfort, edification and building up of God's people on earth; and his second coming is declared. Jude says, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints." All this is left on record for the comfort of the saints while clothed with mortality, and is regarded by all spiritually-minded as the richest treasure that was ever bestowed upon any that dwell on the earth. They are doubly assured that the grave will be dispossessed of its victory, and that this mortal shall put on immortality. This great truth is revealed to them by the declarations of prophets, apostles, and by our Lord. Thus, dear saints, your glorious and triumphant resurrection, secured to you by the resurrection of your Lord, is so established that you by faith can say with one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." What holy city was that to which they that arose went? This is an inquiry which some, perhaps, will make. It was not that Jerusalem that was then, and was in bondage with her children; for her destruction was foretold, and the time was not remote when she would drink to its very dregs the cup of affliction that awaited her. But that holy city was just what the name implies; it was the home of the redeemed who are disrobed of mortality. It is there, dear saint, that you ere long will behold your Lord in all his wonderful glory—that glory which you will share with him

when he comes with ten thousand of his saints to call his redeemed from their long resting-places. You will share that glory with him, for you are a joint heir with him to all the ineffable glories of his kingdom. Then you will be like him, for you will see him as he is. But we may imagine that our Lord had another great purpose to accomplish in the resurrection of those saints after his resurrection, and of their going into the holy city. It is written, "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; which also 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. 10, 11. These men were in white apparel. It is written, "To her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Their apparel bore the evidence that they were sent, and prepared to be sent, on a mission, and their mission was to the saints who appeared at his ascension, and the message they bore was that he, their Lord, would come in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven. May it not be true that these same blessed messengers were two of those saints who arose after his resurrection and went into the holy city? Our Lord had a purpose in their resurrection, and is it not fair to conclude that part of his purpose concerning them was to send them back to their brethren with the glorious news of his second coming? The apostle says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"—Heb. i. 14. No doubt those two were angels, and ministering angels too, for they came to minister to those dear saints who beheld the ascension of our Lord, and also for all throughout coming time; for they assure all God's people that our Lord will come again in holy triumph, and call his saints from their long resting-places to dwell with him in glorious immortality throughout eternity. There were many angels appeared to John to reveal to him the wonderful things that should shortly come to pass. Those angels were prepared and sent on their great mission. They were "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." John does not leave us in doubt as to who they were. He says, "And I, John, saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."—Rev. xxii. 8, 9. It was the bodies of the saints that arose after his resurrection, and went into the holy city. They were prepared by sovereign power and grace for the work whereunto they were sent. With this view of it we are made to extol the power, wis-

dom, mercy and goodness of our great, glorious and all-exalted Lord for his wonderful works in the redemption of his people, and the great promises he has made for their comfort on earth, and their eternal joys beyond these scenes of earthly sorrow.

If these poor, rambling thoughts are published, sister Theobald will please accept them as a token of my christian love; and you, brethren editors, will please dispose of them as you may deem best, and, believe me, affectionately yours,

H. COX.

LEXINGTON, Ore., June 5, 1886.

ELDER WILLIAM J. PURINGTON—
DEAR BROTHER:—I have read your reply to brother Howard's inquiry in the SIGNS as to what constitutes legal (gospel) baptism. If I understand brother Howard, it has become a question in the association—mark, he does not say it has become in the church. In the course of your remarks you say, "About fifty years ago serious trouble began in the Baptist organizations in this country; for practices were introduced into the then organized churches which have no warrant in the New Testament." I do not think associations were then introduced; but as I am not versed in history, I do not know when they were introduced. As I see "no warrant in the New Testament" for them, I suppose they must have been introduced since the time of the apostles. If you know when they were introduced, please inform me, or point out to me the "warrant in the New Testament;" for I think, if it may please the Lord to show, I greatly desire to know whether they are "from heaven" or not. Now I desire to state a case and ask a question, or some questions. I am a member of Mill Creek Church, and said church is a member of Nodaway Association, which constitutes me a member of Nodaway Association. If this is not true, I do not understand the case. Before I was baptized I was not a member of Nodaway Association; but upon being baptized I was a member of Nodaway Association. Then was I not baptized into Nodaway Association; that is, did not my baptism constitute me a member of the association? The association does not claim to be a church, neither do I believe it is a church; therefore if I had been baptized by the association, as an association, I would not have been a member of the church. Would not that prove that the association is superior to the church?

ELEAZAR HARRYMAN.

I HAVE not transcribed all of brother Harryman's letter, because the residue of it has the same object in view as the portion copied; and as he expresses anxiety for me to answer, I shall do so in as brief and concise a manner as I can; and as he wishes the reply through the SIGNS, or by private letter, I think it proper for me to answer the same publicly; for many, like brother Harryman, misapprehend the real meaning of the term association.

As to when churches began to use the term, I am not prepared to state; but the church with which I am now connected has been organized one hundred and seventy-one years, during which time there have been associations. The word associate is not in the New Testament, and but twice is recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures; for it is from the verb, to associate, that the noun, association, comes; and it simply means, to join in company, as friends, companions, for mutual satisfaction, &c. Old School Baptist Associations are not plenary councils, assembled to *dictate creeds, formulas to be observed, &c.*; neither are they *convocations*, to dictate how, where and when preachers shall go abroad; but they are simply assemblies of brethren and sisters from various sections to hear the welfare of the churches and associations thus in correspondence. In some sections of our country they are called "yearly corresponding meetings," in other sections, "yearly conferences," and in other sections, associations; and those who are favored with the privilege of thus meeting are glad to hear of the peace and prosperity of the churches, yearly meetings, conferences and associations with whom they are thus in correspondence.

In ancient days "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." And the same God-fearing and God-honoring doctrine is clearly and *positively taught* in the epistles recorded in the New Testament; and whether we call such assemblies yearly meetings, anniversaries of the churches, or associations, does not in the least change the fact of the important words, "And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." This great and glorious principle of truth is taught in all the epistles.

There is much said about the *independence* of churches, or that a church is independent; but writing or speaking on that subject, we all ought to be very careful and guarded in our expressions, and not give too much latitude. A church is independent, as the term is used in common parlance, as to the hour and day of the week she sets apart for the members to assemble for worship outwardly and visibly; how often or how many times in the year the ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be administered; what kind of a house they may assemble in, &c. But she is not independent, in that she can introduce false doctrine, or the doctrines and commandments of men, counter to apostolic authority, and still claim fellowship with sister churches who are obeying the commandments recorded in the New Testament Scriptures.

This will now bring us to the sub-

ject that, doubtless, troubled brother Howard concerning the association. Brother Harryman admits that a visibly organized church is composed of individuals, men and women, whether young or old. Now we will say a church is composed of fifty members, and one of them becomes so contentious, and violates so grossly the order of the church, that after due labor and all efforts to reclaim such one fails, for the peace of such church and the defense of the truth it becomes necessary to withdraw fellowship, is it not according to Scripture to do so? Most certainly; for the declaration of the inspired apostle is, "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." I am aware that most of the churches use the term exclude, but it is unauthorized. Brother Harryman does not object to that course in a visibly organized church, because an inspired apostle *positively* commands it to be done.

As it has already been plainly defined what an association is, and what it is for, such an assembly is composed of a "family" of churches, the same as churches are composed of individuals. Now, an association has, for instance, six churches in it; and one church becomes so independent in her position as to claim that she has the right to receive into her fellowship persons who have not been baptized according to the order of the gospel church; that is, have been plunged or immersed by men who have no standing in churches that take the New Testament Scriptures for their guide; yet such church persists that she has such right, and still claims that she is in order. What must be the consequence with the other five churches walking in gospel order? Can they continue in fellowship with that disorderly church? No; neither have they any more right to tolerate such disorderly church in her course than a church has to continue to hold a disorderly member. I would say to my brother that we do not baptize by the authority of the association, as an association, nor by the church, simply as an organization, but according to apostolic authority; and any church assuming to be wiser than the apostles must be in a dangerous position; and strictly speaking, any organizations not bearing the seal of apostolic authority are not churches in the strict sense of the word, but merely organizations.

My brother, I have written in plainness, and I hope faithfulness, upon the subject; and when you, as well as others, read the reply, if published, weigh the matter well, and doubtless you will see the difference between an association for mutual comfort and edification and a convocation or plenary council; for it is important that we understand both sides of a proposition, in order to judge impartially; and I think that by carefully reading this reply, you will discover the difficulty that troubled brother Howard, as well as many others.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 23, 1886.

SMITH'S STATION, Ala., March 30, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish again to say, I appreciate the SIGNS very much, for I regard it sound in the principles of the Baptists, which I believe to be the doctrine of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And here allow me to say that I had often read brother Chick's letters, but until recently they never reached my heart; but his last communication in the SIGNS not only reached my heart, but sank deep; and believing him to teach the word of the Lord, and to sow the seed in the morning, and in the evening not to withhold his hand, for he cannot tell which will prosper, this or that, or whether they both alike shall be good, it has found a lodgment in my heart, and I hope it may yield fruit to the glory of God. I have not singled out brother Chick, but other letters from the dear brethren have strengthened and established me in certain truths in God's word. I am glad that brother Chick has come out and declared his faith, and has appeared at this important time among the witnesses of the truth on a special point, sometimes opposed even by believers in Christ. You have all doubtless judged that I mean the doctrine of predestination, so constantly and ably defended and set forth in the SIGNS. It affords me abundance of relief to know that I am not alone on that point; for I have felt that way since my eyes were opened, and I could see the mountain covered with angels and the chariots of God. And the Lord is also evincing that there are several thousand who stand with me on that point, while many good and humble brethren do not admit it. I can believe it is from the fact that it seems to them that God would be inconsistent with himself in so doing; but I am satisfied that if those brethren refuse to accept or preach it because it is mysterious, they might refuse to preach Christ on exactly the same principle; for if we reason on Christ in his incarnation, as some do on this doctrine, we would reject him. We are to walk by faith, and not by sight. Thus there is an evidence of walking by sight when we want all the mystery explained away before we believe it. But if we accept Christ by faith, he being the mystery of godliness, how easy it is for us to accept this doctrine upon the same principle. There has been Scripture after Scripture cited to prove it, but I have never seen any Scripture to oppose it; for every portion of the word of God is vitally connected with this; and take out this, and the balance falls apart as a rope of sand. This is the foundation doctrine of all doctrine. While we often admire the building with its beautiful windows, its ornamental outward appearance, and the inward beauty and its utility, we must not forget nor ignore its base, nor despise its foundation; for the ornamental, inward and outward beauty and utility of the building rests upon this base, which will stand forever. Then let us remember the many allusions to this base, and for-

get not the rock from whence we are hewn. The prophet spoke of two mountains of brass, between which the chariot of God came. Jonathan went up between two rocks, and gained a victory. God made Jacob suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. God's universal purposes are continually set forth, and what are his purposes but his predestination? What if the word predestination does occur but once in the Bible? would that be any argument against it? Since purposes and predestinate mean the same, and the prophets shewed the universality of his purpose, is not that enough? did God purpose in time what he did not purpose in eternity? does he change? The Bible teaches that whatsoever he purposed, that he did. He is in one mind. He has declared the end from the beginning, and the things which are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" and whatsoever he doeth, that shall stand. He is immutable, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. This doctrine is exceedingly unpopular. It is like Christ, "despised and rejected of men." But it is the flinty rock out of which God's Jacobs suck the oil which makes their faces shine. While the world is astonished that a rock could yield such, the child of God can appreciate the blessed doctrine of Jesus, when he 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." I regard it as a golden chain, which holds together all the golden truths of Jesus our Savior. I bless his name that it is so. And if I felt it would or could be destroyed, I would be miserable. But, bless God, it is a rock which has been lashed again and again by the waves of rebellion from the human mind; but it stands in all its grandeur as in the beginning, and resists the same with sublime silence. It is the grand rock which proves fatal to all Arminian hope, upon which all the barks of human power are wrecked; and we learn to fall on the rock and be broken to pieces. Of this same rock David said, God had taken him out of the miry clay, and placed him upon the rock, and put a new song in his mouth, even praise to God. This doctrine serves as a battering ram to Babylon; it also proves to be "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Sound it forth as taught in the word of God, and the Midianites, like grasshoppers for multitude, flee. I bless the Lord that he has given us such strong meat in his word, and through patience, trials, afflictions and tribulations his dear people have an appetite to partake of the same. Paul truly says that strong meat belongs to them who are of full age, who have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. He also says to the Corinthian brethren, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it; neither are ye now able." Because they were

carnal and walked as men. Carnal reason and divine revelation are far apart. Right here let me say, brother Beebe, I did appreciate your editorial on that text about vain deceit, being beguiled through philosophy, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. It was in unison with my faith on the same point. I am led to believe that "we suffer reproach because we trust in the living God." But it consoles us to know that "God always [makes or] causes us to triumph." The truth is mighty and will prevail. Paul, it seems, fed the Romans on meat, when he said that the children being not yet born, neither having done any good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. The rejection of Esau, as well as the choice of Jacob, proceeded from his sovereign pleasure. And this despised doctrine stands in such relation to and in such harmony with his sovereignty, that I love it as the doctrine of God. I do not love it because I can see through and understand the mystery connected with it, but because God has taught it in his word of divine truth. Some brethren asked me if it had anything to do with my being dealt with. I told them that it did not enter the charge, and I did not so understand it. And knowing how I stood before, had I declined? I answer, not in the least. I believe it with all my heart. It is the truth of God. Yea, I love it upon the same principle I love the Lord Jesus; and I hope I offend no true saint by such a declaration; nor am I inclined to force it upon any one, for we can accept it only by faith; and without faith we cannot please God in accepting it. But some may lack that measure of faith which it may please God to grant yet to the good of his cause and the glory of his name and the union of his saints. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith." "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." I have many Scripture texts upon this point of doctrine, but I have already been lengthy and will not introduce them now; but should I feel an impression to do so at any time, the Lord willing, I will try to do so. May the Lord bless his poor, afflicted children, and give them the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world seeth not, to guide them in the way of *all truth*. I wish again to thank the dear correspondents of the SIGNS for their edifying communications, without naming them. And I say in conclusion, "But to do good and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Remember those in adversity, seek the peace of Zion, and may the God of peace prosper us in every good work; for we are told that "God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."—Heb. vi. 10. The practical effect of the belief of the glorious doctrine of God excites us to the active discharge of our duty, for we do so upon the ground of the Spirit, which is the

spirit of love to God and to his people. It does not license to sin, but being dead to sin, we live unto God.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., June 11, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN.—Ever since our association, three weeks ago, I have felt like writing a few lines for the SIGNS, expressive of the joy and gladness that I felt then, and have felt ever since, in the meeting, and in all that was connected with it. Brethren editors, you were present, and know how lovingly the brethren associated together, and how united they were, and how spiritual and experimental the preaching was. There was not one discordant note in all the business and in all the preaching. Salvation by grace, embracing election, predestination, the special atonement, the calling and regeneration of poor, lost sinners, and their final preservation to glory, were all fully and clearly and experimentally set forth and sustained by abundant scriptural testimony. At the end I felt that all had been said, and I could do or say no more than to respond amen to it all. I had looked forward to the association with a great deal of anxiety in various ways. But I thought when it was past how needless it was to borrow trouble. Why can I not cast all my care upon him who careth for us at all times? The little church in Baltimore feel greatly revived by the coming of their brethren, and by all that was said and done. Being few in numbers they had feared that they could not make all comfortable, but in this they were pleasantly disappointed. Many without were refreshed and revived, and made to speak of their hope in Christ and love to his cause and people more boldly. One dear sister from Washington, D. C., who has walked doubtfully and fearfully for several years, having a hope and yet fearful-hearted, was so strengthened at the association by all that she heard and saw that on Sunday after she was enabled to tell the church of her hope and of her desire to follow her Savior, and she is to be baptized the next fourth Sunday. I trust that we shall have others coming and telling the same story ere long among others of our churches. It was good to hear the expressions of gladness and joy from the lips of this dear sister as she told of what the association had been to her. The Lord had given her there an assurance that she had desired for years. To her and to others, myself included, the association was a pentecostal season, I verily believe.

Personally I was busy, and anxious to see that all went right, and that nothing was forgotten that ought to be said or done at the meetings day by day, and yet when any brother got up to preach I could forget all else and listen without any interruption of mind. And it was the same when I could get opportunity for conversation. I am not often favored that way for three days in succession. I felt it to be a special blessing from the Lord. Perhaps my feelings about

the preaching being so good was partly because I could listen and feed better than usual, but still I do not believe we ever had so much rich preaching, in which no flaw could be found, at one time before. And this is the general feeling of all whom I have seen who were present. There seemed to be an entire absence of the spirit of fault-finding, and there was an entire absence of anything to criticize.

Brother F. W. Keene, from Canada, preached most excellently and experimentally at the association, and afterwards on Sunday at Black Rock, to the joy of all that heard him; showing that God taught his ministers in the Queen's dominions just as he teaches them in the United States. We believe him to be a minister of Jesus Christ, taught both in word and Spirit. The ministers from our own country present were Elders Beebe, Jenkins, Purington, Durand, Rittenhouse, Staton, White, Lester and Eubanks, besides our colored brother Reed and Elder Grafton and myself, belonging to the Baltimore Association. Ten sermons were preached. I would like to speak of them all, but cannot here except as I have already done, in saying that all were good spiritual presentations of truth. I never saw more clearly how each principle of truth centres around the cross, and derives all its value from the atonement. New theories and speculations were not even once alluded to. The church of Christ, the members of his body, were described so clearly that poor sinners were enabled to discern these marks in themselves, and to read their title clear to mansions in the skies. Christ, as the one life of quickened sinners, living in them and walking in them, was clearly set forth, and in him we were shown where our union and fellowship as believers are found. In him are all the treasures of grace and glory. We receive nothing out of Christ. He is the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In him is found all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In him is found life and every spiritual blessing, treasured up for poor sinners, who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, and who make up that glorious body called the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. These principles of truth were kept in view all through the meeting, and I could but rejoice in them, and do rejoice in them still. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I felt like saying, God forbid that any firebrand should be thrown among us to mar our peace and joy in the Lord. But I must close. I felt like thus expressing myself through the SIGNS. May God add his blessing.

I remain, as ever, your brother in Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., June 3, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—You have thanks for still sending the dear old SIGNS, in which are so many dear and familiar names and good

things. I first began to read it when a youth in my father's home, more than forty years ago, and I was interested in it there; for as a convicted and mourning sinner I was seeking for truth, light and comfort. My father, who was an able minister of the New Testament, occasionally wrote for the SIGNS then. With him many, very many of the old and tried and true soldiers of Christ and able correspondents of the SIGNS have been called from the militant church, with its gifted and long-tried and beloved editor, your father. There are times when memory goes back and reviews the long line of God's true witnesses of those years, who gave their testimony and left us to sorrow for our loss, and the remembrance makes me feel desolate. But then the assurance comes that they are not dead, but with Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, and that in spirit we are with them in our Father's kingdom. It is a most blessed assurance that, whosoever liveth and believeth in the Son of God, shall never die. And so the very many precious saints we have known, and sorrowed because they have left us, are only entered within the veil, to die no more. And now their example inspires us, their children, brethren and companions in tribulation, to still hold fast our faith without wavering, and cast not away our confidence in the Lord. "For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." And when the Lord comes, he will bring all his saints with him. Then death and the grave shall be swallowed up in victory, and the warfare of all the redeemed of the Lord shall be ended in glory. For there is an appointed *end*, when time shall be no more, and we shall dwell in glorious eternity! This is true, for the Lord hath spoken it. Then let us hope and wait and look for the coming of the Lord, when all the redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, shall appear with him in glory. Unto this blissful *end* God has predestinated his foreknown people, and this will be the consummation of our faith and hope, the fruition of the love of saints, and the crowning glory. This is the promise of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, and unto this promise both our fathers and we hope to come. The Lord will save his people, whom he foreknew. He calls them by name, and leads them to himself. He adds to the church such as shall be saved. Last month I was with the Gilgal Church, one hundred miles south, three days, and baptized eight penitent believers in the Lord, and there was much joy in the church. There is much interest there, and others are being drawn with the loving-kindness of the Lord. Last Sunday I witnessed the baptism of a worthy young brother at the Pleasant Grove Church, near here. O may the Lord revive and bless his people, and make them joyful in his salvation. It should be the endeavor of the ministry to comfort his people; for they are poor and afflicted.

In tribulation and hope, yours,
D. BARTLEY.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, June 21, 1886.

DEAR EDITORS:—I feel like troubling you again by requesting you to correct a typographical error in my last communication as published in No. 12 of the present volume of the SIGNS, page 136, third column, about two-thirds way from the top, where you make me to have said, "Now you perceive what I said in my outset, that I do not like the idea of dividing Christ into parts. I believe that there was an *invisible* union of both natures, human and divine, in his miraculous conception," thus inserting the word "invisible" instead of the word "indivisible," which is the word I used, which signifies, incapable of division. The word "invisible," in this case, is a misnomer; it has a wrong or inapplicable meaning. My intention was to enforce the idea that when Christ hung bleeding on Calvary's cross, no separation took place in respect to the human and divine nature of Christ; in contradistinction to many who affirm that when Christ suffered in Gethsemane's garden, also upon Calvary's cross, his divine nature forsook, or separated from his human nature, which caused him to exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Therefore I used the proper word, "indivisible," in order to convey my idea. Now if, as they affirm, there was no more than the Adam man, the mere clay vessel, that was offered on Calvary's cross as a sacrifice for sin, I cannot see why the sufferings and death of Adam would not have made as good an atonement as that of Christ; and then it would have had the preference, because it would have atoned for all his born and unborn race; for they were all flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. Now let us use temporal things to illustrate spiritual things. Suppose that I were owing you, brother Beebe, one thousand dollars, and I had a purse containing that amount of money in gold; and when you would require payment I would offer you the purse containing the gold, would not that be accepted on your part in full payment for the debt? Justice on your part could require no more. But suppose that when you would require payment, I were to withdraw or separate the gold from the purse, and offer you the bare purse, would this satisfy the debt? Would you accept this empty purse in full payment for the debt? Most assuredly you would not. You would still require at my hands the thousand dollars. Again, I ask, would the purse be any more valuable because it once contained the withdrawn gold, than though it never had contained it? I answer, It would not. So, in like manner, if the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in Christ, what did it profit if, when he cried out upon the cross, "It is finished," his divine nature had forsaken his human nature, and the offering was nothing more than an empty earthen vessel? I ask, Could divine justice accept of such an offering? No. Full payment must be made and full satisfaction rendered, or our eternal damnation is sealed.

Were I to believe to-day that the sacrificial offering upon the cross of Calvary was no more than the offering of an Adam man, a mere earthen vessel, I should lie down in despair. But was he not the "Lamb of God," the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world?" Is he not "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever?" Is he not "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise *God our Savior*?" He it is of whom Paul in his pathetic address to the Elders of Ephesus spake, saying, "Take heed 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." It is very essential that we have a truthful understanding of this important, though mysterious, subject. But I will trouble you no further at this time. I would not have written to you now, had it not been for that typographical error which occurred in a former number of the SIGNS. And may God of his infinite mercy graciously grant us wisdom that we may rightly discern the truth as it is in Jesus, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

JOHN STIPP.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, Mich., April 30, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As the time has gone by for me to send my remittance for the SIGNS for another year, and as I very well know my inability to add anything to its columns, when I see there so many that are eloquent, whom the God of heaven, I believe, has given an eye and ear to detect between truth and error, it is no wonder that such a poor, trembling one as I am should forbear; but yet the dear Lord did say, that where there is little given, there is but little required, and so pardon me for my intrusion. I would like to say this much, I do like to read the precious and soul-cheering communications from different ones scattered up and down on this great globe of ours. How many times has my poor heart been made to cry out, as I see some dear one tell my own trials so much better than I could myself; but yet our sighs and groans and tears are all heard by the God of heaven, and that is what makes the poor weak ones rejoice, and makes them want to speak one to another. Truly I do know that I can say that the good Lord has, I hope, in gone-by days, visited this poor, sinful heart, and given me to hope that when done with this life, he will say, "Child, come home." Sometimes my heart is big with hope, and then again I only dare to hope.

I would say, Please remember us, a little band, here in Michigan, in the midst of a great many enemies; but "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Yours in hope, desiring to see the truth as it is in Jesus.

M. P. LEWIS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 8, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I feel that I must write and tell you of the accident to my wife at Hopewell,

while attending the association there. She, sister Mattie Polkinhorn, and my sister Sallie were in company. While out riding Friday morning, the front wheel ran off, which frightened my wife, and she sprang out, breaking one ankle and badly spraining the other. Another lady, Mrs. Rittenhouse, sprang out and dislocated her shoulder. I received a dispatch of the accident and started immediately, arriving at Hopewell that evening at 8 o'clock; the accident occurred about 8:30 a. m. We brought Lillie home on a cot, leaving Hopewell about 9 a. m. Saturday, and arriving home at 3:30 p. m. She stood the journey remarkably well, and is now doing as well as could be expected; her spirits are good, and she bears her sufferings very patiently. The Lord has been very good to us, to spare her life to her family. His mercy continueth to the end.

I thought if you would put a notice in the next issue of the SIGNS, it might be a satisfaction to the many kind brethren and friends who were at Hopewell and witnessed the accident, to know that my wife is doing nicely. Her limb seems to be knitting all right, and she is gaining strength. I wish to say to the many kind brethren and friends who were so kind and attentive, and also to brother Cook's family, who spared no pains to make my wife comfortable, that they all have my deepest gratitude for their sympathy and kind care. We are all poor, dependent creatures. May the Lord grant us grace to be submissive to his most holy will.

I hope you and your family are well, and that you are having a pleasant meeting at New Vernon.

Yours in brotherly love,
J. T. CAMPBELL.

A PATRIARCHAL BLESSING.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a complimentary notice of brother T. P. Dudley's birthday reception, May 31st, 1886; for he yet lives, by the grace of God, and also in the hearts of the brethren, friends and public. He is strong in the faith he so long preached, and is filled with the Holy Ghost, preaching, praying and singing to the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ the Lord. What a wonderful vision of heavenly things he seems blessed with, and many envy him his place of happiness, as well as the expectant place of heavenly rest.

Respectfully your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. W. ROYSTER.

LEXINGTON, Ky., June 6, 1886.

AT THE reception given by Elder Thomas P. Dudley to his friends on Monday, his ninety-fourth birthday, among other callers was Dr. Bartlett, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, of this city, who approached his host and said that as far as he knew or believed, Mr. Dudley was the oldest christian minister in the world, and had labored so faithfully, and lived such a blessed life, that he came to ask his blessing; and kneeling before the aged patriarch, who

turned his sightless eyes to heaven, and placed his withered hand upon the head of the suppliant, and gave him his blessing in true patriarchal style, invoking heaven's choicest mercies upon him, and upon all those who did him the honor of remembering him in his old age. It was one of the most touching scenes possible, and brought tears to the eyes of more than one of the spectators.

DUTTON, Ontario, April 26, 1886.

TO MR. AND MRS. CASE—MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN THE PATH OF TRIBULATION:—I cannot tell you how glad I was to receive a letter from you. I have been thinking of you, but I thought myself to be such a poor, vile sinner that no one cares for me. I think if the Lord's people knew me as I know myself it would be no wonder if they had no affection for me. I feel that every one is so much better than I. Often I feel afraid that I have deceived the Lord's people. Then a cry will spring up in my heart, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. If I am deceived, undeceive me. If I am not right, do put me right." O! is there any one like me? I am so much like the woman you spoke of in your letter; in place of getting better I get worse. I feel myself much worse since I joined the church, and I could wish I had never said a word about these things to any one. I often wonder where the scene will end. When I try to do good, evil is present with me; and the things I would not, those I do. I find every day that I cannot even think a good thought, only as it is given me of the Holy Spirit. I long for the Lord's visits to be more frequent.

"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?"

These words are often in my mind, "What if my name should be left out?" I seem to be such a slow learner in Christ's school. I am not much of a talker myself, but how I love to hear others talk of Jesus. O how I desire the company of the Lord's people! There is no other people that I care anything about. Sometimes I have such a view of myself as a sinner that I feel God would be just if he sent me to hell. I am often comforted in hearing Elder Pollard preach the gospel of Christ. He tells my longings better than I can. But I feel so unworthy. At times I feel that I am not fit to have a name or place among the people of God. I often fear I shall prove a hypocrite, at last, and I fear bringing disgrace on the cause of Christ. O how I beg of the Lord to direct me in the strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life! O that I could have one look from Jesus! It would make darkness light. I seem to be so much in the dark. One thing that tries me very much is, I cannot pray. I know not what to pray for as I ought. I often fear I am not right on this account. When about the house, feeling my helplessness and weakness, I feel that if I could pray all would be right.

Dear brother, remember me in your

prayers. I will bring my letter to a close, for fear of wearying you. We are all well, and hope this will find you and yours enjoying the same. Our quarterly meeting begins on Saturday, when I hope to see you.

From your affectionate friend,
C. L. LILLY.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

I WILL just say in regard to the forthcoming History that I long ago sent on the money for three copies, one more is paid for, and others are spoken for. I shall want not less than twenty copies to supply about here. I will have them, as I have had the other books, to sell as called for. I have feared all the time that you would not strike off enough of the first edition.

The book ought to be advertised in other papers of more general circulation, as the book will be extensively called for if known.

I wanted to have attended your association this spring, but failed to make it. I cannot do the things which I would.

Yours to serve,
E. RITTENHOUSE.

PINE, Linn Co., Ore., May 15, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find postal order for two dollars, which please place to my credit. I am just a month slow, but I have done the best I could. Accept my true regard for yourselves and your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The editorials are good; they are both food and drink. My mouth is often filled with laughter, and my tongue with singing, while reading the truth so beautifully set forth in the editorials. Excuse my weakness, if it be weakness; for I may be carnal in that respect; for I make a difference, or have a choice. The correspondence is all good, and all put together is a feast of fat things in every number. But I must say that I am heartily glad to see such a spirit manifested by my very highly esteemed brother, Elder Durand, in replying to the old wheel-horse of Oregon, our old, beloved brother, Elder John Stipp; but Elder Stipp certainly is correct in his views on the resurrection. Farewell.

J. P. ALLISON.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

WILL Elder John Stipp, of Oregon, give his views on Rev. ii. 4, 5, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and oblige a friend?

W. E. MOTHERSHEAD.

Best, Ala., June 12, 1886.

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CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Warwick Association of Old School Baptists, in session with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1886, to the churches embraced in our union, sends greeting, with love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:—There is nothing which can more profitably engage our attention than the inspired word which is given to light our path through this dark wilderness, in which as pilgrims we sojourn until our gracious Lord shall call us home to rest in his presence forever. In this written word the man of God is perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. In the admonition to the elect strangers scattered abroad, it is written, "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."—1 Peter iv. 7, 8. The importance of this direction cannot be overestimated, as it is predicated upon the approaching "end of all things," which agrees with the declaration of Paul that "The fashion of this world passeth away." The essential truth of both these assertions is embodied by our Lord in his instruction to his disciples in that wonderful sermon on the mountain.—See Matthew vi. 19-34. Knowing the strength of earthly attractions by which his followers are beset in their sojourn in this world, their dear Redeemer has given repeated instruction for their guidance, which clearly shines in the Scriptures and in the personal experience of his saints. Since all earthly things are so fleeting that they perish with the using, it is folly to look to them for enduring comfort, or to seek their evanescent light. The present moment is all of time that mortals may claim. The past cannot be recalled, and the future is not ours. So it is ever true with us that "The end of all things is at hand." Even though we be permitted to see the light of to-morrow's sun, who can retain the thoughts and feelings of to-day? Far less can any mortal be assured of a future hour of natural life. Upon this fact is based the admonition, "Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." The serious consideration that is presented as the ground of this charge must give it solemn force to every one to whom it is applied by the Spirit. Even sound reason would forbid that they who are called to be followers of God as dear children should be intoxicated with the transitory joys which earth can offer. As pilgrims and strangers, who "have in heaven a better and an enduring substance," they should never forget that they are called to be saints, and to walk worthy of that vocation. It is not enough that they should refrain from the drunkenness which results from excessive use of liquors; they may be far from sober without tasting of alcoholic stimulants. Perhaps no form of intoxication is more dangerous to the subjects of temptations than the insidious

working of pride by which they are prompted to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, which is always accompanied by "despising others." When the truth that "The end of all things is at hand" shines upon this fabric of self-esteem, it is withered like fig leaves in the burning sunshine. Hence the importance of the admonition "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."—Rom. xii. 3. When we are tempted with the honors or wealth of this world, a true estimate of their value will be found in the reproof of the rich man, to whom God said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"—Luke xii. 20. True sobriety will never fail to prompt the saint to "watch unto prayer." This is not merely to have set times for engaging in vocal prayer; it is the necessary result of this sober realization of our utter helplessness, that we are continually obliged to call upon the name of the Lord. This prayer is not a form of studied words; it is the cry of necessity, as when Peter said, "Lord, save me!" It was no formal utterance when Jonah cried unto the Lord out of the belly of hell. Such is the prayer unto which the saints in soberness watch.

Then they fulfill the most important injunction given them by their Lord, in having fervent charity among themselves. They cannot live after the flesh, and at the same time have this fervent charity; for it is not the result of voluntary effort on their part that this heavenly principle is manifested. It grows from that divinely implanted seed, the love of God, which "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." That love cannot fail to embrace in its grasp every one in whom the Spirit of Christ is manifested. This is fervent charity. It will always discriminate between those who live after the flesh and such as walk in the Spirit. That is not genuine charity which cannot discern between those who bear the mark of the Spirit of Christ and those who are conformed to the world. It is not required of the saints to decide who are included in the salvation of God, but they have the witness in themselves by which they know who is embraced in that fervent charity which is inseparable from the fellowship of the Spirit. Very many can witness to the experience of that fervent love (or charity) to some one whom they have never seen or known, except as they have witnessed in that one the manifest grace of our Lord Jesus. There is no natural attraction to call forth such love. This is the "fervent charity" which is enjoined in the text. Its existence is certain evidence both that its object bears the divine image, and that they are led by the Spirit of Christ to whom that image is lovely. This testimony is very essential to the com-

fort of the saints in their individual experience, and it is indispensable to their fellowship, as it "shall cover the multitude of sins."

It is among themselves that charity shall cover the multitude of sins; for it is evident that it cannot cover anything beyond the limits of its own existence. It is not this "fervent charity" which would presume upon the grace of God as an apology for continuing in sin, or would use the liberty of the gospel for an occasion to the flesh. The Spirit of Christ, of which true charity is the fruit, can never love sin. The effect of this heavenly charity among the saints is to make each esteem others better than self by showing each one the evils of his own heart so painfully real that he feels unworthy of the love of those in whom he sees the righteousness of Christ. Under this feeling he will not seek for faults in his brethren, but will be ready to endure all things rather than interrupt that holy harmony in which the saints rest when they keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It is in this way that charity covers the multitude of sins; there is no personal offense or trespass which this perfect love will not cover when the Spirit of Christ rules in the heart of them that love him. On the other hand, that love will ever forbid the saints willfully to sin against their Lord by despising or lightly esteeming one who trusts in his grace for justification of life. Hence the importance attributed to this fervent charity among the saints is for their own profit and comfort while here in time.

Evidently none can have this fervent charity but those who are led by the Spirit of God, and all such are the sons of God. Therefore, in the exercise of this love we are confirmed in our hope in Christ. So John says, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby WE KNOW that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." May the grace of God enable each of us to heed this important injunction, and to his name be glory evermore through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

The Chemung Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Otego Church, Otego Co., N. Y., June 16th, 17th and 18th, to the Associations and churches with whom she corresponds, sends christian love and fellowship.

WE, according to our custom, write a Circular Letter to you, that you may know something of what we as an association are advocating. We believe in the absolute predestination of God in all things; that God did in the beginning create the heavens and the earth, and all that there is therein. No one can deny that he is before all things, and by him all things consist. By him were all things made that are made; and he, the Lord God, hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. He declares, "I form the light and create

darkness: I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." He does not say, I suffer or permit evil to exist. Such expressions as suffer or permit, dishonor God, and emanate from the carnal mind of men. He made the smith that bloweth the coals; he also made the waster to destroy. He positively raised up Pharaoh for a certain, definite purpose; that he might show his power in him, and that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. Even the wrath of man shall positively praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. Judas fulfilled his mission, as well as those who crucified Christ, which was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. No suffer or permit in the matter. And can there be a more wicked, hellish act mentioned in all the annals of crime than this? It was just as much the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that man should transgress, and suffer the penalty, which was death, as that Jesus should be taken by wicked men and slain. This was the channel that mercy was predestinated to run in, and there is no other. "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." He 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." And

"Though men and devils aim to kill,
They can't exceed our Father's will.

"Though plagues and death around me fly,
Till he commands I cannot die;
There's not a single shaft can hit
Until the God of love sees fit."

"Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds, that he cannot pass." Again, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And who has authorized us to supply the words, all good things? Let us be careful, brethren, how we add to or take from. Yes, we repeat it, we do believe in the absolute predestination of God in all things, good and evil. As God is under no law, he cannot be judged. He did create the serpent and the dove, and called them both good. He has given no one authority to say unto him, "What doest thou?" "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." If he needs a Judas, a Pharaoh, a leviathan or a devil, he

has him, and he will accomplish his will and pleasure with them. Yea, the powers that be are ordained of God, and he did not ordain a power that he had no use for. In view of these plainly marked facts, let us be still and know that he is God.

We wish to call your attention to three more essential points of doctrine. First, what is termed eternal vital unity, or life unity. We believe it to be the solemn, sacred truth that the church spiritually had a standing in eternity; that the body and the head are of the same age. Jesus is declared to be the head of the body, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. He says, "I am the true vine, my Father is the husbandman." "I am the true vine, ye are the branches." In the seed planted in the ground is embodied the life of the vine and its branches. As it germinates and springs forth, it develops the life hidden in the seed; not another life. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." The apostle says, "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." The apostle again says, in presenting the unity of Christ and the church, "For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of this body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." A body with many members, yet one life, vitally united together, and that life is eternal. "I give unto them eternal life." Again, "The gift of God is eternal life." Again, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Again, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear," &c. As we know nothing of a dead union, and as vitality and life are synonymous terms, we will say that the Scriptures plainly teach the glorious doctrine of eternal vital unity of Christ and the church.

Second. We also contend that the new birth does not change the nature of that which is born of the flesh. It still remains Adam every whit. The old man is still an old man, not remodeled; and for this reason the child of God cries, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There could be no warfare if that which was natural was changed to spiritual; but it is not. Hence, "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies."

Third. A few words in regard to the resurrection of the dead, and we will draw our letter to a close. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. It is plainly the teaching of the apostles. The apostle declares that if the dead rise not, then is your faith vain, and our preaching is also in vain, and ye are yet in your sins. And if only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and

become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man [Christ] came also the resurrection of the dead." Again, the apostle declares, "Who shall change [not exchange] our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." "There is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon, and another of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Brethren, please notice where the little word "it" stands. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." In regard to Lazarus, Jesus said to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha said unto him, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." How natural it is to speak of the dead as though they were in a time state, especially when speaking of the resurrection. But Jesus removes all that natural theory in his answer, "I am the resurrection and the life." Absent from the body, and present with the Lord. Death is the dividing line between time and eternity. We can only follow our friends to death. What there is beyond we hope to know far more perfectly when time shall be no more with us.

And now, dear brethren, in the language of the apostle we would exhort you, "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." Amen.

BALAS BUNDY, Mod.
J. C. BEARD, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have great reason for gratitude to the Lord that we can greet you in unbroken and unmarred fellowship, and that we can tell you of another pleasant and profitable meeting that we have been permitted to hold. We have received your messengers and messages of love with gladness. Our session has been harmonious, and our business attended to without any discord. We hear of no trouble in any of our churches, but their condition appears to be one of peace, and generally of prosperity. We have had a less number of ministering brethren at this session than we generally have, but the preaching has been peculiarly clear, discriminating and comforting. The trumpet has given a certain

sound, and under it many of the dear saints have experienced, we trust, a preparation to the battle.

Our next session is to be held with the church of Kingwood, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1887, when and where we hope again to receive your messengers and messages of fellowship and love.

WM. J. PURINGTON, Mod.
G. M. FETTER, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at New Vernon, N. Y., 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, and in listening to the ministration of the word, as it has been preached to us by your messengers. Through them the Lord has blown the trumpet, which has given no uncertain sound, and we have been comforted and strengthened. We hope for a continuance of the profitable and pleasant correspondence which has so long continued between us. We refer you to our Minutes for information respecting the business that has been transacted during our present session.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church in Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1887, when and where we hope you will again favor us with your messengers and letters. Farewell.

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.
BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

The messengers composing the Chemung Association, to the associations and churches with which she corresponds, sends christian love and salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We have once more been blessed with one of our gatherings, at which we have listened, we trust with hearing ears, to the gospel truth, as proclaimed with no uncertain sound by our able ministers of the grace of God.

We have enjoyed unbroken fellowship, and no unpleasant word or thing has arisen to mar the pleasure of our meeting. May we be enabled by God's love and grace to so live that each shall esteem others better than himself.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence and fellowship, and send you this token of our love and esteem for you in the fellowship of the spirit of truth.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the church at Grover, Bradford Co., Pa., to begin on Wednesday after the second Sunday in June, 1887.

BALAS BUNDY, Mod.
J. C. BEARD, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1886.

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

ISAIAH LXV. 20-22.

"DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to have your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Isaiah lxv. 20-22, particularly the expression, 'For as the days of a tree are the days of my people.'

J. F. SUTTON."

R E P L Y .

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."

The announcement from the Lord, of which the text cited by brother Sutton is a portion, proclaims the purpose of God to create new heavens and new earth which shall so far exceed the glory of the former creation that there shall be no memory of it to the rejoicing people who shall dwell in the new creation. This signifies not merely that the former creation shall pass from their recollection as a forgotten circumstance, but that the new creation promised shall be entirely separate and distinct from the former or old heavens or earth. This fact was beyond the comprehension of the natural Israelites, and it has never been understood by any carnal religionists who look to their own works for righteousness. All such as seek for the favor of God by the works of the law of Moses declare by their action that they know nothing of this new creation. Their trust being in themselves, they look for divine favor by their own merit, and the highest conception they have of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus is that his mercy will supply the little which they may lack of fulfilling all the demands of that law. By such a system the former legal heaven and earth is continually remembered, and is indeed the very basis of all their hope. Under such perpetual bondage Jerusalem and her people could never rejoice; for there was no possible compliance with the demands of that law which could make the comers thereunto perfect. It required perpetual and unceasing obedience in every jot and tittle, and he who failed in one point was guilty of the whole law. "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. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them."—Gal. iii. 10-12. In the new created heavens promised in this prophecy there is none of the

material of the old creation used. The former righteousness does not enter these heavens, for it could never exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees who sat in Moses' seat, and one of whom at least could claim that "touching the righteousness which is in the law" he was BLAMELESS. No obedience to legal demands could exceed that, yet with such a righteousness "Ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. v. 20. That former system is entirely vanished away in the superior light and glory of this new creation, as the dim light of moon and stars is lost in the superior brilliance of the noonday sun. Therefore the reason assigned for the rejoicing of the saints in this new creation is not that their services under the old legal covenant are rewarded in the final rest, but the Lord says to them, "Be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying." In this cheering declaration it is to be observed that there is no change in the absolute perfection of the Lord. He does not rejoice in the sins of his people; and while it is true that he loved them even when they were dead in sins, that love did not embrace their sins. It saves them from their sins, and justifies them in the righteousness of their holy Redeemer. Then they are indeed "a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."—Isaiah lxii. 3. The Lord does not change his perfect holiness in order to rejoice in his people; he purifies them and cleanses them from all sin, that they may be reconciled to him, and be the subject of his love and joy in their own experience. While their sin does not commend them to the favor of God, yet that great love wherewith he loved them could not be withdrawn, even when they were dead in sins; for this cause he has by himself purged our sins by the one offering of our Lord Jesus, and so he has purified unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Beholding them as free from sin in Christ, the holy God joys in his people, and rejoices in this heavenly Jerusalem which is above the law and is free from condemnation; so that "The voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying." Although the portion of this highly favored people is tribulation in the world, and in living godly in Christ Jesus they shall suffer persecution, yet in their Lord they have peace; for in him they are complete in righteousness and strength. However they may weep and cry in their own experience of personal unworthiness and suffering, their sorrow is turned into joy at the voice of Jesus, which translates them out of self and into this holy Jerusalem, where

"His own soft hand shall wipe the tears From every weeping eye;

And pains, and groans, and griefs, and fears, And death itself shall die."

It is in this new created Jerusalem that "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days." Under the old legal dispensation there were special observances required for particular days and times. The labor which was enjoined for the first six days was forbidden on the seventh day. So there were distinctions in their months and years. And their ordinances were all regulated by time, necessarily making a distinction between the infant of days and the old man. In the new creation this distinction shall not remain, for when the old heavens and old earth were dissolved, the announcement was made that "Time shall be no longer." Hence, in looking forward to the glorious day of gospel rest and liberty the Spirit of Christ moved the prophet to record this important difference. Under the former heaven special duties were enjoined upon the several classes in natural relation. Especially it was required that every male child of an Israelite must be circumcised the eighth day. Necessarily this duty must be performed without consulting the will of the infant, who was born under that legal covenant. His natural birth was that which constituted him a subject of the Mosaic law, and nothing more was required to qualify him for all the privileges and duties pertaining to that covenant of which circumcision was the sign.—See Gen. xvii. 9-27. As the infant was thus born under that legal bondage, and received the seal of that perpetual yoke while yet unconscious naturally, there was special provision for the authority of parents, and implicit obedience was legally required of children; and this duty was incorporated in the solemn injunctions by the finger of God written on tables of stone. Under that law parents were punished for the wickedness of their children, as in the case of Eli.—1 Sam. 11-14. Then the law of God recognized the infant as subject to paternal control, and not directly responsible for his actions, as one whose age liberated him from filial obligation to obedience. Under the new heavens the law of God is put in the inward parts of his people, and he writes it in their hearts, saying, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for 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."—Jer. xxxi. 34. Then, each one of the subjects of divine grace under this new covenant is directly under the instruction of the Lord, and led by his Spirit into all truth. In this sense we understand the direction given by our Lord to his saints, "And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven."—Matt. xxiii. 9. Every one of the

disciples of Jesus is individually responsible and must give account to him, not in the commonly accepted idea of the judgment in eternity, but in this present world. It is to saints whom he calls spiritual brethren that Paul says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Gal. vi. 7, 8. The one law applies to every one of the subjects of this heavenly kingdom without reference to the distinctions recognized under the former heaven of Judaism. The child is recognized as of full age, and the sinner is not excusable in consideration of his long life. This must refer to the transgression of the law of Christ by those who are the subjects of his salvation; as in the judgment of God death has "passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12), and in that respect there is no difference, the saints being "children of wrath, even as others."—Eph. ii. 3. But it is to saints beloved of God that 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. In this sense the sinner is "accursed," that is, in being dead to the enjoyment of obedient saints, without regard to his age in temporal standing in the visible church. The obedient child realizes the answer of a good conscience toward God as clearly as the aged saint; and the chastening of the disobedient is not graduated according to their years. The personal experience of the saints illustrates this truth more clearly than words can tell it.

"And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat." In personal experience the saints realize the fulfillment of this provision of the new covenant in the enjoyment of that perfect rest in the Lord which is given to them that trust in him. They find the truth as Moses says, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations."—Psalm. xc. 1. This is the house where they abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Kept by the power of God unto salvation, they shall never perish; neither shall their rich provision of gospel food and comfort, as represented by abundant vineyards, ever be taken from them. The Lord prepares their table in the presence of their enemies, yet not a fragment from that table can those enemies take away from them, much less can the natural man eat a morsel of their heavenly food. It is utterly impossible that the carnal mind should even desire that food which nourishes the saints, as it was impossible for man to approach the tree of life after the Lord God "placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—Gen. iii. 24.

"For as the days of a tree are the days of my people." On this portion of the text our brother wishes us to dwell more particularly; and if it were in our power it would afford us great satisfaction to comply with his request, as well as to give the correct view of every portion of Scripture submitted by those who seek to know the truth. But we have been privately admonished that "The wisest and best answer ever given by our departed father, the founder of this paper, was when he once said, 'I do not know.'" Now, this answer would in some measure apply to every question on every subject submitted to us, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part."—1 Cor. xiii. 9. But we feel that such light as we have belongs to the whole household of God; therefore even though it expose our own ignorance we will give the understanding of this expression as it is presented to us. It is not the natural term of years which may be requisite for the growth and decay of a tree, which constitutes the similitude here used; for in this respect there is great variation. Perhaps no two trees would be alike in duration. The days of a tree naturally are the same to every branch and sprig; the life that is exhibited in the shoot which only yesterday appeared, is the same life which germinated in the seed from which every root, and the trunk, and all the branches, were developed. No limb of the tree can claim more early relation to the tree than another, however much earlier may have been its manifestation. Thus, the saints who were dwelling in time before the coming of our Lord in the flesh, are not older in their relationship to him as their eternal life than the subjects of his grace who are now on earth. Their life is one life, developed indeed in Abel before the patriarchs were born in time, but given to all the elect of God when they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world (not to be taken to heaven in their sins, but) that they "should be holy and without blame before him in love." The vital unity of the saints in Christ Jesus is very clearly illustrated by this comparison. If a tree has stood for centuries, and a branch is developed this year, it is not a new life, nor yet a new tree. The life of the branch is the same with the life of the root. The growth of a tree develops no life but what was in the seed. A dead seed would never produce a tree at all.

"And mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." This declaration confirms the view presented of the preceding clause, as it speaks of the whole election of grace collectively, and gives assurance that they shall be preserved in their joy. It is only as identified in unity with the living Root of David that the elect branches can bear fruit. They never originate any life, but in bearing fruit they manifest the life which sustains them. So the elect of God have no work of their own hands to enjoy, but such works as God worketh in them both

to will and to do of his good pleasure.—Phil. ii. 13. Their enjoyment of these works is not measured by natural time. They long enjoy this precious work, though it may be but for a moment of natural time that they experience that joy; because it is not a temporal but an eternal joy, they who enjoy it, though but as the dying thief in the agonies of expiring nature, yet have that everlasting joy which outlives all the ages of time.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

OWING to the Church History having made about twice as much reading matter as anticipated in the Prospectus, it cannot be furnished bound in leather at two dollars a copy without incurring a loss, even on the cheaper leather binding, to Elder Hassell of twenty-five cents on every book; and we are satisfied that the subscribers would not be willing to have him sustain this burden in addition to the thousands of dollars he has already sacrificed in the preparation of the work. We have therefore concluded to bind the two dollar books in superior imitation Morocco cloth; and those who desire the book in the in-made hand binding in leather can obtain the same at two dollars and fifty cents per copy. These prices merely cover the expense of getting the book out, and do not leave any margin for Elder Hassell. We shall also bind a few hundred copies in the gilt-edged imitation Turkey Morocco at four dollars per copy, as well as the genuine Turkey Morocco, full gilt, at five dollars per copy. Those having already sent on their subscription can obtain any of the above styles by remitting us the balance by the fifteenth of August. We now have (July 7th, 1886) 800 pages in type, and expect to have the books ready to mail to the subscribers by the first of September. The two dollar and fifty cent books are bound in what is called "laced in," or "in-bound," binding, and are as strong and durable as it is possible to bind them. Address, G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

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

MARRIAGES.

ON May 13, 1886, by Elder S. Hawkins, at the bride's residence, in Spencer County, Mr. Spencer P. Shelburne and Miss Martha J. Shelburne, both of Spencer Co., Ky.

IN the new Baptist meeting house at Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., May 26, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Mr. Henry C. Ker and Miss Emma J., daughter of Wm. S. Marvel, all of Delmar.

APRIL 11, 1886, by Elder B. Bundy, at the home of the bride's parents, in West Windsor, Broome Co., N. Y., Mr. Albert Barnes and Miss Agnes Bishop, both of Windsor, Broome Co., N. Y.

By the same, at the home of the bride, June 9, 1886, Mr. Arthur P. Clark and Miss Bertha J. Bundy, both of Sidney Plains, N. Y.

AT Lutheran Chapel, Reisterstown, Md., Jan. 5, 1886, by Elder F. A. Chick, Mr. Herbert B. Hull, of Bedford Co., Pa., and Miss Lillie V. Ebaugh, of Baltimore Co., Md.

By the same, at his residence, Reisterstown, Md., June 10, 1886, Frank Erb, of Carrol Co., Md., and Mollie E. Johnson, of Baltimore Co., Md.

ON the evening of April 22, 1886, at the residence of Mr. B. H. Carter, in the city of Walla Walla, Washington Territory, by Judge Whitman, Mr. George Ackles, of Island City, Grand Ronde Valley, Oregon, and Miss Edith S. Hanna, formerly of Wrightsdales, Lancaster Co., Pa.

By Elder Benton Jenkins, at the residence of the bride's parents, near New Hampton, Orange Co., N. Y., June 30, 1886, Mr. Charles W. North of Summitville, N. Y., and Miss Lizzie C. Brome, daughter of Mr. Thomas M. Brome.

JUNE 16, 1886, by Elder S. Hawkins, at the residence of Mr. Stephen Arnold, in Mercer County, Ky., Mr. J. R. Paxton and Miss Mattie L. Arnold.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEATH has again entered our family circle. For several years my mother, Mrs. Ann Smoot, has been failing in health, and since the death of my sister, over a year ago, this decline has been very rapid. This was a shock from which she never recovered. We had watched with much anxiety of mind, hoping that it might be the will of our heavenly Father to arrest the progress of disease and spare her to us for some time to come. But she seemed to have a premonition of her death, and constantly affirmed that her departure was near at hand. My mother was a woman of vigorous mind, and one of the firmest and most uncompromising Primitive Baptists that I have ever known. Blessed with a rich experience of gospel grace, her faith laid hold of the deepest things of eternal truth; yet there was a constant fear in reference to her personal interest in these things. This kept her from making a public profession of religion until late in life. She was baptized by the late Elder R. C. Leachman, Aug. 30, 1868. She came to the church after a long and weary struggle, under a sense of her natural unworthiness of a place among the saints, and among them found the one desire of her life answered, in their holy and blessed fellowship. I cannot forget the gatherings of brethren at that time at my home, and of the precious fellowship experienced among them. Nearly all of these have preceded my mother to their long, eternal home. They, like her, are done with the things of earth, and have entered forever the portals of rest. A precious company of Baptists they were, children of conflict and of care, devoted to the truth of their God. Of the ministers serving churches that she attended since her mind was first exercised upon the subject, Elders Trott, Kidwell, Leachman and Joseph L. Purington have been called from their earthly labors to wear the heavenly crown. Two generations, like billows upon the great ocean of time, have borne their precious freight to the immortal shore. The deceased was born in Prince William Co., Va., June 19, 1811; and was married to Mr. Wm. H. Smoot, June, 1837, and died the 27th of this month, about half-past four o'clock in the

morning, in the seventy-fifth year of her age. For the few months preceding her death she suffered very much, and her sufferings increased toward the close. For many years she had struggled with the thought of death, knowing well what a fearful thing it is to die without sustaining grace. This peculiar fearfulness of death is experienced alone by those who are born of the Spirit of God. One ignorant of the righteousness of God will rush on, like the unthinking horse into the conflict. Bunyan informed us that when Christian entered the river he trembled exceedingly; but Ignorance came rushing on in proud, Pharisaic style, and was hurled back from the gates, to the regions of despair: The blessed Jesus in the sixty-ninth Psalm, as the Head of the church, expresses the experience of the members of his body: "I am come," he says, "into deep water, where the floods overflow me;" referring to the crucifixion, when all the waves and billows rolled over his devoted head. I am assured that I saw this precious truth fulfilled in my mother's experience, when the waves of death rolled around her, and she met the fearful shock. "Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord," was the cry of her soul. "Would it not be a great blessing," she remarked to me in an agony of pain, a night before she died, "to be delivered from all this suffering?" The Lord graciously prepared her for the closing scene. There were no visible signs of suffering or conflict for several hours previous to her death, and she gently fell asleep in the arms of her God. I look back over her long and faithful pilgrimage, her devotion to her family, the sufferings of her sickness, her calm and peaceful death, and realize that the space allowed in your obituary department would fail to portray my feelings. Her words of encouragement and comfort, so often heard in conflict and trial, can be heard no more; her cherished form and features can be seen no more among us; her voice is silent in death. But faith looks beyond the grave. The resurrection of the dead in holy, glorious, immortal light rises above its fearful gloom. There the weary are forever at rest. No mortal pain, no doubts or fears, no sickness or death. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The king of terrors has met the King of kings, and lies vanquished at his feet. The eternal curtains are lifted, the everlasting doors are opened, and a weary sufferer from the shores of time enters the peaceful and eternal joy of unending rest.

"And when thy gentle spirit fled

To realms beyond the azure dome,
With arms outstretched his angel said,
Welcome to heaven, home, sweet home."

The funeral took place the 29th ult. Eld. E. V. White was with us, and preached a comforting sermon. We desire to express our thanks for the many kind and tender expressions of sympathy received from friends of truth in different places.

Yours in gospel fellowship,

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va., June 9, 1886.

Aurora J. Olmsted was born in Simsbury, Hartford County, Connecticut, June 11, 1802, emigrated to Franklin County, Ohio, in the year 1810, and died at the residence of his son, S. A. Olmsted, at Norton, Delaware County, Ohio, May 19, 1886, aged eighty-three years, eleven months and twenty-three days. He was married to Mrs. Eliza Wilson, formerly Eliza Bush, on Christmas eve, 1827. To them were born four sons and two daughters, one son and one daughter having preceded them to the grave, leaving three sons and one daughter to mourn the loss of a true, kind and faithful father, with relatives and a large circle of kind neighbors and warm friends to mourn the loss of him they loved and esteemed as a good man. The deceased received a good hope through grace of the forgiveness of his sins, in that blood that speaks better things than the blood of Abel, was received by the Old School Baptist Church called Melbourn, and was baptized by Elder Martin, in the year 1839. He was sound in doctrine and steadfast in the faith of God's elect, to the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness. At the time of his death he was a member of the Refuge

Predestinarian Baptist Church; and while we mourn the loss of a worthy member, esteemed by his brethren and kindred in Christ, we mourn not as those that have no hope; for he, like a shock of corn fully ripe, was ready and willing to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord, which is far better. The funeral services took place at the Melbourn meeting house. After singing the 125th hymn of Beebe's Collection, as appropriate, Elder L. E. Thomas made the opening prayer, when the writer, by special request of our dear old brother, tried to preach a discourse, using as a text, "But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Elder L. B. Sherwood made a few appropriate closing remarks, and then the mortal remains were laid by the side of his dear companion, in the Melbourn Cemetery, to await the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God, when the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible. Sister Olmsted died January 12, 1885. She had been a subscriber to the SIGNS for many years, and at her death he had me order it. In their deaths the SIGNS has lost true, warm and devoted friends.

ALSO,

DIED—At his residence near Johnstown, Licking County, Ohio, May 23, 1886, brother **Jesse Evans**, aged seventy-eight years, four months and three days. The deceased was the first white male child born in Monroe Township, Licking County, Ohio. He leaves a widow and two daughters to mourn the loss of a good husband and a kind and tender father. For nearly half a century he was a worthy and highly esteemed member of the Old School Baptist Church called Monroe. He was blessed with that meek, humble and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. The funeral services took place at his house, when the writer tried to comfort those present with that blessed assurance that all was well with him. His mortal remains were then laid in the Green Cemetery.

"Spring and summer, fall and winter,
Each in swift succession roll;
So my friends in death do enter,
Bringing sadness to my soul."

Yours in love,

L. B. HANOVER.

CENTER VILLAGE, Ohio.

DIED—At the residence of her youngest daughter, on the old homestead, where they settled in 1836, my dear mother, **Kitty Reed**, on the morning of Thursday, Feb. 18, 1886, aged ninety-six years. Her last birthday was May 24, 1885. She was taken with her last sickness the first of January, although she had been a great sufferer for a number of years. On Monday before she died she had a stroke that paralyzed one side, and she could not speak to tell how she felt after that. She had been blind for eight years, and kept her bed most of the time after that, saying she felt safer there. Her mind was good for one of that age. She was naturally strong minded and cheerful, and bore her afflictions without a murmur. When spoken to of the goodness of God, she was all bright on that subject. Age had not dimmed that heavenly vision. The last months before she passed into her Savior's presence, she was often heard praising her Savior and asking him to come and take her home. She was truly a spiritual-minded woman ever after the Savior spoke peace to her soul. She has been a great care on my sister for many years, and yet she was loth to give her up when she saw she had to go. We have an assurance that our loss is her eternal gain. She was born in Scotland, came with her parents to America in her seventh year, landed at New York, and remained there a short time. From there they moved to Virginia and settled near the Potomac River. There she lost her father. Her mother, with her family of ten children, moved to Kentucky, where mother was married to my father, John Reed, son of James and Rachel Reed, whose maiden name was Wallingford, sister to Joseph Wallingford, deceased many years ago. My mother's maiden name was Weight. My father and mother both professed a good hope through grace sixty-seven or sixty-eight years ago. Father joined the church called Mt. Gilead. Before mother joined, she learned that that

church had an Arminian minister preaching for them, so she went to the Wilson Run Church, was received, and baptized by a minister by the name of Johnston. He was at that time old and feeble, but was her choice. Father soon joined the same church. (I am writing thus particular for the benefit of our relatives in Kentucky.) She was the mother of nine children. Father and four of the children passed away before her, all leaving an evidence that they were accepted by the sacrifice of the crucified and risen Savior.

A poor old sister, I humbly hope, in the bonds of christian love and fellowship.

MARY WITTY.

TONICA, Ill.

DIED—At his residence near New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., June 8, 1886, of dropsy, **Oliver M. Comfort**, in the seventy-first year of his age.

Brother Comfort was born Dec. 27, 1815, was married to Mary Jane Jordan Feb. 5, 1841, professed a hope in Christ and united with the church at New Vernon about thirteen years ago, being baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. His wife departed this life March 30, 1885, since which time our brother has often said that he longed for the hour of his discharge, although he awaited with patience the appointed time. He expressed a desire to attend the Warwick Association this year, which was held at New Vernon, but was too feeble to do so, and his spirit took its flight, on the evening of the first day of the meeting, to the realms of immortal bliss, where congregations never break up, and the song of praise shall never end. He was a brother dearly beloved, and we sorrow most of all that we shall see his face in the flesh no more. For him to live was Christ, and to die was gain.

He is survived by one son, two daughters, two sisters, and numerous other relatives and friends.

The funeral was held on Saturday, the 12th, at the New Vernon meeting house, which was filled with mourning relatives and sympathizing friends, and a discourse was preached by the pastor, Elder Benton Jenkins, from the text, Hebrews vi. 18.

"My soul, come meditate the day,
And think how near it stands
When thou must quit this house of clay,
And fly to unknown lands.

"O could we die with those that die,
And place us in their stead,
Then would our spirits learn to fly,
And converse with the dead:

"Then we should see the saints above,
In their own glorious forms,
And wonder why our souls should love
To dwell with mortal worms.

"How we should scorn these clothes of flesh,
These fetters and this load!
And long for evening to undress,
That we may rest with God.

"We should almost forsake our clay
Before the summons come,
And pray, and wish ourselves away
To our eternal home."

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

CLOVERVILLE, Delaware Co., N. Y.,
Wednesday, May 26, 1886.

PURSUANT to a call of a number of brethren and sisters of the several churches of the Lexington Association residing at this place, for a council to take into consideration the propriety of being organized into a church, the meeting was opened by Elder D. Earl reading a hymn. Elder J. Miller followed in prayer. Elder L. Gass preached from 1 Peter ii. 6.

The brethren then organized for business by appointing Eld. I. Hewitt Moderator, and John A. Morse Clerk.

The several churches of the association were then called on, and the following messengers answered to the call:

Lexington—Elder L. Gass, W. P. Kirk.
Second Roxbury—Elder I. Hewitt, R. Kilpatrick, N. D. Vermylia.

Halcoit—Elders J. Miller and D. Earl, J. H. Scudder, C. W. Mead and Wm. Hubbard.

Olive & Hurly—Elder I. Hewitt, W. Winn, Peter Elmandorf, J. D. Osborn.

South Westerlo—No information.
Jefferson—Elder J. Miller, E. Hix, licentiate.

Schoharie—Elder D. Earl.
Middletown—Elder I. Hewitt, Wm. R. Sanford, R. W. Sanford, M. C. Sanford, R. Hull, John A. Morse.

Middleburg—No information.
Gilboa—Elder D. Earl, John Clark, licentiate, D. M. Leonard.

Andes—Elders J. Miller and D. Earl, Anson Jenkins.

After a recess, sang a hymn. Prayer by Elder I. Hewitt. Resumed business by calling on the brethren and sisters for their letters of dismission from the several churches to which they formerly belonged, which were presented and read. The following are the names of the brethren and sisters: Elder James Miller, Isacher Woolhiser, Russel Peck, Andrew Green, Orvil Ballard, Sarah Streeter, Polly Ann Miller, Emeline Scudder, Catharine Hanly, Rebecca J. Green, Mary Sanford.

The Articles of Faith of the Lexington Association were read and adopted as the Articles of Faith of these brethren and sisters.

Motion made by Elder L. Gass and seconded by Elder D. Earl to proceed to constitute them into a church. Carried.

Motioned and carried that the Moderator declare them organized into a sound Old School Baptist Church; and as they have a regularly ordained Elder, the Moderator gave them the right hand of fellowship for the church.

The members of the church decided to call this the CLOVERVILLE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH.

The council voted to have these proceedings printed in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.
Sang hymn 823, Beebe's Collection.

THURSDAY, May 27.

The church, after singing and prayer, proceeded to elect their officers. Brother Orvil Ballard was elected Clerk; brother Andrew Green to prepare the elements for communion.

Elder I. Hewitt preached from Acts ii. 41, 42.

The church, together with all the brethren and sisters from other churches in good standing, went forward in communion.

I. HEWITT, Mod.

JOHN A. MORSE, Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

J D Hardy 2, Miss Mary A Lefferts 2.50,
J R Respress 80, W H Mahurin 2, Mary Jackson 2, A D Loud 2, Mrs James Pearce 2, W A Shelby 2, L G Warner 2, C B Reeves 2, John A. Campbell 2, Miss Hattie Toon 2, Eld J V Kirkland 2, David W Clark 2.50, Elizabeth Corbin 2, Ellis Kelly 4, R T Farthing 4, Wm Barnes 2, J C Rossen 4, M B Weeden 4, Mrs A M Thomas 2, John A Lynn 2, Jas M True 2, James M Sims 2.50, A Owens 2, John A Mallory 2.50.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

F W Keene 50c, W C White 50c, Wm Biggs 50c, Miss Eva Sayer 2, Mary Witty 2, Mrs A M Jefferson 50c, Mrs M L Pettibone 50c, James McIntyre 50c, John W Squire 2, B J Sanders 50c, Samuel Brady 50c, J L Davis 1, Giles Reeder 50c, Paul Sohner 50c, Mrs James Ripy 50c, E J S Lee 50c, John Welton 2, P D Gold 1, Gen Josua Barnes 1, Elder Wm Woodard 1, J W Thorne 50c, G H Morgan 50c, Seth Woodall 50c, W R Daniel 50c, J J Smith 50c, G W Fulkerson 1, Sarah C Boyd 50c, Susan A Biggs 50c, W H Wicks 50c.—Total \$163.00.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please publish in the SIGNS that a two days meeting is to be held by the Old School Baptists (the Lord willing) at the Middleburgh Church, in the town of Broome, N. Y., on the second Saturday and Sunday (10th and 11th) of July 1886, a. m. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, especially to ministering brethren.

By order of the church,
M. P. COOPER.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with New Hope Church, at Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., to begin on Friday, at 4 p. m., before the third Sunday in July. Elder P. Sawin, of Ind., and others are expected to be with us.
I. N. VANMETER, Pastor.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Licking Association of Particular Baptists will hold her next annual session, the Lord willing, with the Bethel Church, near Clay Village, Shelby Co., Ky., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1886.

It is the wish of the church for all that can come in their own conveyance to come in that way, as the Louisville & Lexington Rail Road is nearly twelve miles from the church, and the most of the members are three or four miles farther than that. Three or four families, myself with that number, live fourteen miles from the meeting house, which will make it very inconvenient to convey many from the railroad. Ministers and members who wish to come by rail, will write to Wm. Stone, Clay Village, Wm. Vannatta or Wm. Sleadd, Shelbyville, M. V. Money or myself, Finchville. Write in time and give the number as near as you can, so we can arrange to bring all. It is too far to leave any. Those coming from the east, from Lexington, will get off at Bagdad, Thursday evening. Those coming from the west, or Louisville, can come to Shelbyville Friday morning in time for meeting. A full attendance is desired, especially of preachers.

By order of the church.

J. A. MONEY, Clerk.

THE fiftieth annual session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, by divine permission, with the Occoquan Church, at their meeting place at Oak Grove, eight miles from the village of Occoquan, in Prince William Co., Va. The meeting will commence on Wednesday, August 11, and continue the two following days.

The trains leaving Washington, D. C., from the depot of the Pennsylvania R. R., corner Sixth and B Streets, Tuesday evening at 4:35 o'clock, and Wednesday morning at 6:00 o'clock, will be met at Woodbridge Station, on the Alexandria & Fredericksburg R. R., and about twenty-four miles from Washington. These two trains leave Alexandria, Va., twenty minutes after leaving Washington.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to attend.

WM. M. SMOOT.

THE Salem Association of Predestinarian Baptists will begin on Wednesday before the fourth Friday in August, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m. Brethren and sisters are respectfully requested to attend. All are invited, especially ministerial brethren of our faith and order. Those coming from the east, west or north will come to Cincinnati, where they will take the train on the Cin. Southern, or the L. & C. Short Line, for Walton, where they will be met. Those that come from the south will stop at Verona the day before, or go to Walton, where they will be met. Should any come to Verona on the late train, they can inquire for J. S. Ransom, J. E. Ransom, or J. R. Johnson.

J. H. WALLINGFORD, Mod.

J. R. JOHNSON, Clerk.

THE thirty-fifth annual meeting of the Western Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Little Flock Church, seven miles northwest of Knoxville, Marion Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west will be met at Pleasantville, and those coming from the east and southeast will stop at Knoxville, where they will be met on Friday before the meeting. The Iowa Central R. R. runs to Knoxville from the east; also the branch road of the C. B. & Q. R. R. running from Albia to Des Moines. All those who love the truth as it is in Jesus are invited to meet with us.

WM. J. REEVES, Clerk.

THE Morgan Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet, the Lord permitting, with Middle Fork of Apple Creek Church, in Greene County, Ill., twelve miles east of Roodhouse, at ten o'clock a. m., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1886. All visiting brethren will be cordially received.

GILES REEDER.

THE Tygart's Valley River Association have appointed their next session to be held with the Mount Olive Church, Barbour Co., W. Va., to begin at 11 o'clock a. m. on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1886.

THE Little Piney Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold her next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with Little Hope Church, Osage Co., Mo., to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1886, and continue three days.

THE Brazos River Association of Primitive Baptists have appointed to meet with the New Mount Zion Church, seven miles east of Graham, Young Co., Texas, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1886.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association, by divine permission, will meet with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1886.

THE Redstone Old School Baptist Association has appointed to hold her next session with Indian Creek Church, Monogalia Co., W. Va., to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, at 11 o'clock a. m.

THE Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Sulphur Fork, Henry Co., Ky., on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1886, and continue three days.

THE Pocatalico Old School or Particular Baptist Association will hold her next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Providence Church, near Byrnside, Putnam Co., W. Va., on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, to begin at 10 o'clock a. m.

THE Union Primitive Baptist Association have appointed their next session to be held with Antioch Church, Lafayette Co., Ark., to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, and continue the two following days.

THE Mad River Predestinarian Baptist Association will meet this year with the Thompson Church, six miles west of Columbus Grove, situated on the D. & M. R. R., in Putnam Co., Ohio, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1886.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

This work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order, by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

Owing to the delay in the typographical work, the Hymn and Tune Book will not be ready to send to subscribers till the last of June. Please observe carefully the above directions for sending money. Do not send checks, nor postage stamps, nor post-office orders on any office but Philadelphia.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

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Is now in press, and progressing at the rate of 50 pages a week, over 800 being now in type. The book will contain nearly 1,000 pages, arranged in such a manner as to make it most convenient for reference. It will have a full and complete Table of Contents in the front part, and an Index in the last part, which, with the running heads over the pages giving the chapters, will enable the readers to turn to any subject or part of the book with the utmost convenience. There will also be a superior steel engraving of Elder C. B. Hassell in the front of the book, and the whole bound in Imitation Morocco Cloth and Full Leather Binding of extra quality, at the following prices:

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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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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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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.

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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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1886.

NO. 15.

POETRY.

THOUGHTS OF JESUS.

I LOVE to hear of Jesus,
Who lived and died for me,
And bore my cruel sins away,
Upon the accursed tree.

I love the name of Jesus,
My Husband and my Friend;
Though oft forgetful I have been,
His love can know no end.

'Tis sweet to talk of Jesus,
Who faithful is and kind;
He many a loving word has spoke,
To ease my troubled mind.

This meek and lowly Jesus,
When troubled, did me tell,
Fear not, for thou shalt surely be
In heaven, not in hell.

I love those words of Jesus;
All those who thirst, he said,
And hunger after righteousness,
They surely shall be fed.

This precious, lovely Jesus,
Died for his people's debts,
And arose again triumphantly,
The first of them that slept.

I long to be with Jesus,
As he hath promised me;
And he will give a crown of life,
And I his face shall see.

I long to be with Jesus,
Who for his bride hath wrought
A spotless robe of righteousness,
In which she shall be brought.

I long to rest in heaven,
From sin and death set free;
With Father, Son and Holy Ghost
Forever there to be.

THE mighty conqueror, Jesus,
Reigns over sea and land,
And sits a Prince and Savior,
His throne at God's right hand.

There, for the people of his choice,
Through life their cause he'll plead,
And listen to their plaintive cry,
And for them intercede.

And when their days on earth are o'er,
Their spirits he'll set free,
And land them on the blissful shore
Of bless'd eternity.

There, with the ransomed gone before,
That blessed, happy throng,
They will their heavenly Friend adore,
In one harmonious song.

Up to those heavenly hills,
When we can lift our eyes,
Our wondering souls are filled
With rapture and surprise.

There, in that happy place,
Our dear Redeemer dwells,
And saints who there behold his face,
With joy their bosom swells.

For God in love and mercy hath
Forever hushed their fears,
And with his own almighty hand
Hath wiped their falling tears.

Soon the appointed time will come
When he to us will say,
Come hither, my beloved ones;
Make haste and come away.

Then in his presence we shall dwell,
From every sorrow free,
And praise our bless'd Immanuel
Through all eternity.

REBECCA WELLS.
BRANTFORD, Ontario, Canada.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DECHERD, Tenn., June, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having written concisely on the subject of predestination as applied to God's universal government over his creatures, I will in continuance write on the same as it applies to his elect people. As the Lord, according to the determinations of his own will, gave being to all his creatures, for the manifestation of his own glory, as they were created to that end, so he determined their times and state of being, as to the circumstances attending them, from the beginning to the end of their existence in time; also their final destiny in their several generations. And this is the original cause of the difference between some and others, both as to time and eternity. So the apostle inquires, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" We conclude then that all those qualities or gifts, physical, mental and spiritual, are the gifts of God, and universally exist as marks or evidences of distinction between individuals. We ought never to suppose that our adorable Sovereign created and governs the world in order to enhance or add to his eternal glory, for that was absolutely perfect before. So, had he not created the world, and had no creatures to govern, he would be the same spotless and pure Being he is. Though by his works he makes a display of his infinite perfections, yet they neither add to nor detract from them. As the will of God is perfect in his rectitude, and the original source or cause of all his acts, therefore his acts are right, and to be such must be free, and to be free must not be conditioned upon anything in the object on whom the act passes. As God is necessarily good in his very essence, to be such he must be free in communication, as his goodness would not be supreme if he did not act voluntarily; for it is alone compatible with his holiness to be absolutely free as to where, when, to what extent and by what methods he dispenses his favors. As the testimony of Scripture assures, he has mercy on some, and hardens others; appointed some to wrath, and others to salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. To evince the correctness of the premises above, I will first call attention to the chain of blessings enumerated by the apostle Paul in Romans viii., who, as a preface, has the following: "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."

Then we inquire, Upon what is such positive and assured knowledge founded, if not upon the fact that in the apostle's view the Lord actuates, moves, governs, directs, and so disposes all things as to make them subserve his will and conduce to the good of his chosen people? And as there is a great variety of character or quality in the many things to which his people stand related, and by which they are more or less affected, he is the dispenser of both the good and pleasant, and the evil and calamitous, and they alike are for their good. Some, however, absurdly suppose that the "all things" here are confined to the spiritual kingdom, in the operations of grace, and that God is not the dispenser of the evils or calamities that befall his people; and thus they would rob God of his universal supremacy, overlooking the inseparable connection between the material and immaterial worlds, and that the existence, preservation and coaction of the first is absolutely necessary to the existence and development of the latter. That view of the subject also supposes that God borrows power from his creatures, upon which he is dependent for the success of his government over them. The rational and Scriptural view of the subject, however, seems to be that God, according to the good pleasure of his will, determined to create and people the earth as a dwelling-place for his elect children, in view of their relation to and unity with the eternal Son, their spiritual Head; and for their sake, benefit and use the world is preserved; and that all things to which they are related and by which they are affected, of every character, work together for their good, being worked to that end by their Creator and Preserver; and in that sense he foreknew and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. Though God's absolute knowledge extends to all things, yet his knowledge of favor or approbation, as in this instance, embraces only his elect, as in John x. 14, he says, "I know my sheep;" that is, he knows them with favor. In 2 Tim. ii. 19, the apostle says, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his;" that is, with approbation. And as this knowledge is eternal, the foundation of it is not in the objects known, but in God himself; for whom he thus knew favorably, he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, their spiritual Head; are predestinated to the adoption of children by him, appointed to salvation by him, and

blessed with all spiritual blessings in him; and in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And he is given to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, in whom all fullness dwells. "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 3-5; ii. 22, 23; Col. ii. 3. Though the apostle says, "All things work together for good to them that love God," he does not teach that their love to him was the foundation or cause of his love to them; for then the love of the creature would be antecedent to, and meritorious of, the love of the Creator; than which nothing can be more absurd and blasphemous; for, besides impeaching the independence, immutability and supremacy of God, it subverts the relative order in which the chain of blessings referred to stand; for God predestinated his elect to the conformation of his Son's image, and chose them not because of, but to, a state of holiness. Being chosen in eternity to happiness, they could not deserve it as a cause in time. Though God predestinated and chose his people in his Son to holiness and happiness before time, yet it was in view of their fall and condemnation in time. And as he declared the end or final consummation of all things in eternity, so he provided all the agencies, which he so disposes and directs in their operations in time, in order to the accomplishment of the determinations of eternity, all of which he executes by the incessant and universal agency of his ever-active providence. The fall and condemnation of mankind was not therefore an unlooked for or contingent event, as the whole plan of man's salvation and eternal happiness is founded on it. We conclude then that the fall itself, with all the circumstances that led and conduced to it, were appointed of God, as a co-operative and necessary link in the chain of events in the conduct of his government over his creatures in general, and the salvation of his elect in particular. As the whole plan of events was drawn by infinite wisdom, in order to the salvation of the Lord's people, so the same in time is executed by omnipotent power; for if God as a sovereign has all power, and the right to exercise it, and wisdom and goodness to direct and order all for the best, is it not reasonable to suppose he so disposes his power, as to time and place, in such measures and by such methods as will answer his own ends, as his counsel stands, gives shape to, and is the unerring regulator

and prompter of all things in general and everything in particular, as the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord?—Prov. xvi. 33. And as God in eternity determined the state of the blessed, and provided all the means or agencies in order to that state, so he determined the state of those left, or non-elect. And as there is much unnecessary caviling on this point, may the Lord possess my heart and direct my pen while investigating this momentous subject. As God makes his own sovereign will his rule, the cause of any difference in his creatures, either as to time or eternity, cannot be in the creatures themselves, seeing God's will and determinations with regard to them had their rise in eternity. Though the sins of the non-elect are inseparably connected with their condemnation and future punishment, yet they are neither the original nor main cause; for if God wasself-moved, and his determinations originated in eternity, his acts cannot possibly be conditioned upon the acts of his creatures in time. If we could suppose such a thing possible, we would have to suppose there is no necessary connection between predestination and final accomplishment, and thus subvert the entire system or plan of God's universal government over his creatures in general, and the salvation of his people in particular; deny the infinite perfections of independence, immutability and absolute supremacy of the eternal God; and this would be denying God himself, as they are indispensable to his very being. The eternal will and decrees of God are immutably fixed. Then nothing can arise in his mind which would imply a change, either as to men or things, his pleasure being always the same. And as nothing conduces to his pleasure but such things as are in harmony with his will, therefore he appoints and directs all things to that end. Some brethren argue as though there was no difference made between some and others until after their fall and condemnation; for they say, "If God chose some, and not all of Adam's race, to salvation and happiness, those left have no ground of complaint, as God leaves them where their sins placed them." I would ask if the sins of the elect did not place them in the same dilemma. And if the sins of the one is the cause of their condemnation and punishment, why not the other? "Because," say they, "God chose, and that in eternity, his elect to salvation." Again I would ask if God's choice was not the sole cause of the difference between the elect and others. As the choice of God determined the state and number of the elect, by reason of that choice he as certainly determined the state and number of the non-elect, unless we suppose the number of the elect can be augmented or diminished; for if you add to the one, you diminish the other, and *vice versa*. The kingdom of glory was prepared for the elect, and everlasting fire for the devil and his angels. And as the elect will enjoy the first, so the non-elect will suffer

the latter. The apostle says, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his;" that is, his elect, whom he knows, and eternally knew, with favor and approbation. Not so, however, with others, of whom it is said, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."—2 Tim. ii. 19; John x. 26. And as brethren seem so very tender in their endeavors to screen their Sovereign, as to his holiness, I would ask, Would he be less partial and unjust (were such a thing possible) in allowing the non-elect to fall into sin, and then punish them for it, than to determine their punishment in eternity, and before they sinned, seeing he chose his elect to salvation and happiness in eternity, to which their sins in time was no hindrance? And if we suppose the sins of the non-elect are the original cause of their punishment, we have the act of God in their punishment conditioned upon the acts of his creatures in time; whereas all his determinations were from eternity, upon which the acts of his creatures in time could not possibly have any effect. Thus he loved Jacob, and hated Esau, before they were born or had done either good or evil, which demonstrates beyond doubt that the cause of the difference was not in the children themselves, but must be ascribed to the sovereign will of God, as he has mercy on some, and hardens others; prepared some for glory, and fitted others to destruction; made some to honor, and others to dishonor; appointed some to wrath, and others to obtain salvation. The elect of God obtain salvation, and the rest were blinded.—Rom. ix. 11–21; xi. 7; 1 Thess. v. 9.

In the foregoing we have pointed out some of the blessings to which the Lord's people are predestinated. In our next we wish to show how they are put in possession of those blessings.

Yours in hope,
JAMES WAGNER.

DECHERD, Tenn., July 9, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I some time back gave notice that I expected to move to Texas next fall, but failed to state where I expected to locate, since which time I have received letters from many brethren, inviting me to move to their portion of the state. As I have two daughters living in Blanco County, and one son in the adjoining county of Hayes, I expect to move to Blanco. I have also received letters from many of your patrons, expressive of their approval of my views on the subject of predestination as published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and as I fully believe that the Scripture doctrine of absolute and universal predestination is both glorifying to God and is the very foundation of happiness to man, and as your columns are open, and have ever been, since my knowledge, to the dissemination of this glorious truth, I wish to say to my brethren and friends scattered abroad, in order to their dissemination, and also to counteract the baneful effects of a

lame or perverted gospel, we should unite our energies in the encouragement and circulation of the SIGNS.

Your brother, I hope, in the faith and fellowship of the gospel,

JAMES WAGNER.

WADE'S MILL, Ky., June 12, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Often when my affections seem to go out to the dear people of God with increased warmth, I feel an impulse to take up my pen, and in a manner becoming one so poor and ignorant as myself, endeavor to communicate some of my reflections through the medium of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by permission of the brethren editors. But (perhaps fortunately for its readers and for its editors) I am most of the time restrained from making the attempt, by a humiliating sense of my insufficiency. In the years which have gone by since some time previous to my connection with the Particular Baptists, I have often contemplated with sadness and grief the state of isolation and non-fellowship existing between those who had formerly mingled together in precious bonds of christian fellowship. At the first, I only considered the fact that such a state of things prevailed, and greatly wondered; for I was sure I loved all God's dear people so well that I could hardly conceive of anything transpiring which could lessen that love. Later on, I have come to see that what I regarded as so strange and unaccountable, has not been an unfrequent occurrence during all the history of the church; for the word "army" implies war. Sword, helmet, shield, breastplate and shoes, imply active engagement, both offensive and defensive. But be it ever remembered that none of the weapons of the church are carnal, but spiritual. The issue is truth against error. None are efficient soldiers unless shod, and kept shod, with the preparation of the gospel of peace, armed with the sword of the Spirit, shielded by faith, which is Jesus, and canopied with salvation. The church is the ground and pillar of the truth. From time to time there have been offshoots from the church, into error, those going out always claiming that they occupy Bible ground. It was so when the separation took place over the doctrine of special atonement, and the unconditional salvation of sinners by grace, and by grace alone; when, perhaps, the greater majority were on the side which embraced gross error. Then faithful adherents to truth and gospel order had to suffer a storm of persecution, being too rigid, too illiberal, uncompromising, narrow jackets, cold and harsh, and regardless of the feelings of others. Again was it so, and again was the same persecution raised, the same accusations hurled, with perhaps more bitterness and fierce determination, to destroy, when the going out from the church took place over the Bible doctrine of the semi-natural existence of the church in a dual sense. In the first Adam in time, her natural progenitor; in the second Adam from everlasting, her spiritual

progenitor. These, as manifested in each believer, are fitly represented in Song i. 5, 6, by blackness, the emblem of sin; and whiteness, emblematic of purity, holiness; in Isaiah lv. 13, by the thorn, the brier, comparable to the Adamic nature; contrasted with the fir-tree and the myrtle, which are evergreens, comparable to the Christly nature in each one of the redeemed. In the same sense, the thorn and thistle, evil trees, are contrasted with the vine and fig-tree, good trees.—Matt. vii. 16–18. The pure mind contrasted with the carnal mind.—Rom. viii. 7. The first Adam contrasted with the second Adam.—1 Cor. xiii. 45–48. The children of the flesh contrasted with the children of God.—Rom. ix. 8. The generations (in the plural) of Adam contrasted with the generation of Jesus Christ.—Gen. v. 1; Matt. i. 1. Scripture setting forth this truth being so abundant, so varied and so full, it has seemed strange that any careful, spiritual minded reader should refuse to believe that while each individual member of the church of Christ is a child of Adam, he is also just as truly a child of God. That as a child of Adam he is yet sinful, yet carnal, yet depraved. That as a child of God he is holy, harmless, Christ-like. That as a child of God here in time he is enabled to bear those holy fruits enumerated in Gal. v. 22. As a child of Adam, in the same connection we have enumerated the works of the flesh. This compound man is truly the only one who is or can be a proper subject of gospel exhortation. For were he only Adam, without spiritual life, he would be incapable of any spiritual obedience. What an amazing wonder! the child of God tabernacling with the child of man! The child of Adam in a state of sin and ruin, in a state of enmity and rebellion against God, in a state of that death which is the opposite of spiritual life, this child still remaining in that undone condition during his stay in time, brought into inseparable connection in the same body or temple with the child of God, the younger brother of Jesus, henceforth to continue in antagonistic relation, till the resurrection power of God shall summon all that is mortal of the redeemed ones from the grasp of the conquered grave, to a perfect and complete conformity to the likeness of Christ, which will be the finishing work of adoption.—Rom. viii. 23. Adoption applying, as is evident, to the child of Adam, who is an alien, a stranger to the family of God.—Eph. iii. 15. I said, antagonising relation, and so it is; for what is more opposite in nature than flesh and Spirit? than Adam and Christ? Hence no wonder that the afflicted one, hating self and sin with the same hatred God hates it with, only different in degree, has forced from him the cry of distress, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Experiencing, as he does every day, that the flesh so lusts against the Spirit, that he cannot do the things that he would. We

are warranted in expecting more than a mere worldly, a mere fleshly life from those who have given evidence that they are not only children of Adam, but children of God; that they are not Adam-like, but Christ-like. And O how we love them when exhibiting the divine attributes of meekness, long-suffering and forbearance; when suffering wrong at the hands of men, or when willing to suffer the loss of all things in defense of the truth as it is in Jesus; overcoming evil with good; showing by their acts that their mission is peace on earth and good will to men. The motives which actuate such heaven-born, free-born ones are infinitely above mere slavish bondage to the law, mere carnal service to purchase an imagined salvation. God's children live good, for pure love of goodness, irrespective of heaven or hell or its result; looking as a faithful bride to her husband, as having paid all her debts, because of his legal right, by reason of oneness. And in this case the obligation going farther, takes the life of Christ as the head of his church. Her life being Christ's life, and Christ's life being her life, it behooved him to grapple with death and hell, to extricate himself with his church. Hence in this way only could justice and mercy have met together, or righteousness and peace kiss each other. This being evidently Bible truth, plainly and abundantly set forth therein, that the spiritual life of the church is the life of Christ; and it being, though holy, sinless, involved under the law, when the children are partakers of flesh and blood (Heb. ii. 14), could he have possibly failed to meet the awful demands of the law against him as the head, with his body, the church (though himself holy, harmless, undefiled), sin and hell would have prevailed over heaven, and Jesus would have been dethroned. But glory to God, his arm was mighty to save. He goeth forth conquering and to conquer. "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 am aware that I have done very inadequate justice to this exceedingly important, interesting and profitable subject; but my consolation is that very able pens and tongues have in the past (and I believe will in the future) clearly and comfortingly set it forth to the edification and profit of God's dear people. I hope I may be pardoned for desiring to contribute my little mite of testimony to so sublime a truth. And may all God's dear children be strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man, and be enabled more and more in daily life, together with the humble writer, to make their calling and election sure.

In tribulation, but in hope, mingled with fear, of a glorious resurrection.

CHARLES E. STUART.

P. S.—Any person or persons desiring to locate near one of the churches of Licking Association, in the beautiful state of Kentucky, can be informed of a chance by writing to me.

C. E. S.

WASHINGTON C. H., Ohio, May 1, 1886.

ELDER WILLIAM BEEBE:—PRECIOUS BROTHER IN THE LORD:—It is in much fear and trembling that I attempt to write you. But I am never free from the impression to write to you, and to communicate with the tried and tempted ones of our Father's family, through our family paper, and amidst fear and hope that these impressions may be from my heavenly Parent to his poor, weak and ignorant child, whom he has often comforted and helped, as well as severely chastened. I know I have received much in this way. And if it is for me to comfort others, even as I have been comforted, then it must all be of him; for I am a child, and of unclean lips. There is nothing good in me, and when I look within and see the vessel, I am filled with shame. How could a refreshing draught come from such a place? These have been my thoughts, and excuses for my silence. But instead of finding rest in them, and release from duty, I feel, added to my already loaded heart, a sense of guilt that I cannot bear. Everything in my way reminds me of my duty and neglect; and, as a confirmation of it, most of my brethren are urging me to give vent to the exercises of my mind. I cannot tell the comfort I derive from my private correspondence; but I feel I am the one benefited. This does not seem to be all that is required of me, and to-day I stand before my Judge, guilty. If any one has been in my place, I need not try to describe my feelings to them. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. And what greater punishment could he inflict than to entirely withdraw from us the light of his countenance? We can bear all things else which may come upon us, if we can only behold the face of the King. I have been of late trying to serve with my hands, that I may live honestly in this world. This is right in itself; but is this all? This is mammon. And when we serve the flesh, to the forgetfulness of our duty in spiritual things, then we are out of the way, and become lost and bewildered. I fear very much to write anything for publication, and have always shrunk from doing so. I wrote what I was led to hope was my experience, about three years ago, which was published in the SIGNS of July 15, 1883; and now, as I feel I must make another effort, I will try to continue the relation of my experience. I cannot think we should stop where we become a visible member of the church; for surely the enemy does not by any means leave us there, but rather attacks with renewed strength. It was after the Savior was baptized that Satan assailed him; and so with his followers, they must get more acquainted with the enemy of truth. How many have gone forth in the path of duty, following the Master in the ordinance of baptism, and felt that joy of soul, the answering of a good conscience toward God, and thought their trouble was at an end,

saying, "All my days will be joyous now." Ere they were aware, all joy was gone, and in its place the dreadful feeling of fear that with their own deception they had deceived the church. They grope their way in darkness and sorrow, feeling as if there was no reality in what they had hoped was a new birth. Looking in to see the evidence, they find corruption, and say, Surely there is no evidence of life there. Yet as they go mourning day by day, they recognize the light in others, and desire and crave a glimpse to reassure them that their "Lord is risen and gone before." How silent and lonely they feel, each crying to himself, Can there be any one like me? I have known what it is to be in this state, and it is a great comfort to me to be found by such. Such descriptions always find me, and surely it all belongs to the christian experience. I was left to travel this dreary way for about eight years. I have been identified with the Old School Baptists sixteen years last January. My sun shone but a few months, until it became dusky, and a drowsiness came over me. I seemed to know of the Lord and of his kingdom, but I could not enter in. I could hear others describe what was within, and felt it must be true, but I could not see for myself. I availed myself of every opportunity to meet with brethren, in hope that I might hear some word of comfort, or see some waymark, to assure me that I was a child, and was in the way. But it seemed it was all an empty, formal work on my part. Feeling but little spirit of prayer, and no comforting word from a divine source, I could not find my way, and almost gave up in despair. I have often wondered why I did not turn back. A fear sometimes came over me lest I might fail. I desired and craved, but I could not have told for what. I verily believed I was different from any one else. I was ashamed to ask, or to tell any one how I felt. All seemed to be in the light but me. The Scriptures were sealed. I surely thought I could not be a christian. I was passing through many trials during that time, without a realizing sense of any place of refuge or rest. But at the end of eight years a change seemed to come over me; my mind dwelt more on divine things, and that which had been so hidden from my view began to appear, but so dimly at first that I could hardly believe it to be a shewing of the Lord's hand, until I was suddenly overtaken with a great affliction of mind. Then, as my mind darkened as to the result of temporal trial, my spiritual vision brightened. So sudden was the change that I could not believe the Lord was so near; as it was with Manoah, when the angel appeared in promise, "Surely I cannot live, for I have seen the Lord." Never can I forget a few months of my experience here. I then had a great desire to read the Scriptures, and often stopped in reading to wonder and gaze in surprise at the opening up of this sealed book. Not only

did the Lord cause me to read with the spirit and the understanding, but in my extremity, when it seemed that the raging waves were about to overflow and dash my frail bark to pieces, he would appear, walking upon the water, saying, "It is I, be not afraid;" causing the storm to cease. How precious to me was Jacob's travel at that time. When all alone in the darkness, with the stones of the place for his pillow (a hard resting place), he had a revelation of the way of salvation. Heaven was opened to his view, and he was willing to set up the stones on which he lay, as a pillar of remembrance. The Lord revealed himself to him as his God. It is one thing to read, "The Lord will provide," but quite another to feel that that promise is sure. Here is where the blessing of the poor shows so plainly. How could we know how to appreciate the blessed provision of a kind and overruling providence, were we not in our poverty and need compelled to wait for it? And as with all of God's ways, contrary to ours, we are invariably found, when the blessings come, with our eyes turned in the wrong direction, as if we would dictate the source from whence it should come. Why cannot we learn to trust him? It is possible for us to trust the Lord for our eternal salvation, and all things pertaining to it; but some cannot see how our temporal salvation is entirely dependent upon him as well. I have heard some claiming that they believed that God predestinated all things in regard to his church or people, but not everything else. If he is not able to perform what he has promised, that he will care for us while journeying here in this wilderness, then how can we believe that he is able to give us eternal life? Is it not here that we fall so much by the way? When the Master sojourned on earth, he had a body like unto ours, and had need of the things of this life the same as we. But did he forget the Father's will in his desire to serve the body? He was reproved for his forgetfulness of earthly obligation, by those who had fleshly love, and were sadly grieved that they could not find him where nature had placed him. The reply he made his mother Mary, when she chided him for his neglect of duty, has often been of inexpressible comfort to me in severe trials and temptations, when I seemed to walk alone, with not one to encourage me, but instead, with some to chide me. And yet I dared not turn aside. Being led by an unseen power, I traveled alone, with only the footprints in the burning sand to assure me of the course, and that I was not lost. "Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Jesus walked, that we might follow. Our first duty is to him, who gave us existence, life, strength, repentance, and a hope in his mercy. Our Pilot says, "Come, follow me." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these

things shall be added unto you." Is he not able to make his promise sure? These blessed words are to his own, whether in his visible church or hidden in the world. The word seek implies a searching or looking for, and kingdom implies a king and subjects. When we find our eyes resting upon the face of the King, because we behold his will and power ruling in the hearts of his subjects, causing them to praise and adore his name, and crown him Lord of all, this is our home. Who could seek or see this kingdom, except this same be within him, Christ ruling in his heart, giving him eyes to see and a heart to understand the way of salvation?

Dear brother, were I to consult my own feelings, I would not send you this very imperfect letter; but I tried, as you will see by the date, to withhold it; but the more I avoided it, the heavier the weight of duty pressed upon me. The rod is heavy upon me, but I am made to kiss it, knowing that without it I cannot be numbered, and that the purpose whereunto it is sent will be accomplished. The admonition is to serve with the ability given; and feeling the force of this, I am made willing to cast in my little mite, with a precious jewel which I received from our beloved and afflicted sister, Mary Parker. In my darkness I wrote her, murmuring, no doubt. I cannot remember what it was, but behold what love, what sweet reproof. No wonder I was melted down.

It is well, brother Moore, that you did not wait, for I could not have read that to you all. Dear brother Bavis, as he came in on that day, said, "Peace be unto this house." Did not all who were there witness the shining of the King's countenance?

Sister Mary's letter will explain her present condition of health. I spent a day with her about five weeks ago. She was unusually nervous then. We had but few moments alone; she has so many callers who wish to do her a kindness; but it is seldom she has a visit from her brethren. She gave me the privilege of sending her letter to you, and I am glad, for I feel it should not be hidden. As to my own poor scribble, you may do as you judge best. Your paper comes to me laden with comfort, causing my heart to go out in yearning love to the dear ones who write.

Yours in love and fellowship,
CORDIE A YEOMAN.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, May 19, 1886.

MY DEAR SISTER AND COMPANION IN TRIBULATION:—Your welcome letter came last evening. I was very glad to hear from you, though sorry to hear of your distress. A few days after you were here I took one of my bad attacks. It was so intensely severe, and so cut down my strength, that I have ever since felt so weak I scarcely can live. Lottie said I moaned and cried out with pain, so that it would have exhausted a strong person. But I knew it not. It all seems like a horrible dream, the repetition of which causes me to shudder and shrink from it. It does seem that

you and I are called on to wade through deep waters, where billows upon billows roll, where assuredly all the waves and billows of human suffering and woe pass over our heads. I was scarcely able to lift my head from my pillow when my brother gave me a letter from an attorney at Circleville, informing me that the property which had remained the same since dear father's death, for my support, must be sold, all to satisfy the grasping propensities of my deceased sister's husband. I had so hoped to be spared the anguish this trouble must necessarily cause me; but the Lord in his infinite wisdom has allowed it to fall upon me, and I must not faint nor doubt that he who has so often been my refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, will not desert me in this added trial. But O, my sister, I cannot tell how my heart was over-burdened when the possibility of being made pecuniarily more cramped than ever, when I am so weak, so helpless, so much in need of friends to procure me necessaries, came upon me in all its appalling certainty. But where is my trust? I said, Is the wealth of Jesus also gone? Is the blessed Savior himself gone forever from me? O no! O, my sister, it is in such moments of anguish that the greatness of Christ's riches, the sweetness and wonders of his eternal watchcare and love, shines upon us in all its beauty and fullness. Crushed to the earth with the unbearable weight of my manifold troubles, I opened my Testament, and the first words that met my vision were, "Be of good cheer. It is I; be not afraid." Often and often had I felt the inward conflicts of my soul stilled by these dear, consoling words, but never with the force, the sweetness, the almost audibly spoken sound, with which they were given to me now. Opening it again, his blessed "Peace, be still," was before my eyes, and my sorely tried heart drank in its beauty and sweetness. And although the trouble is not removed, I have ever since felt an abiding trust, a blissful love for him in whom indeed we find fullness of joy, at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore. My dear sister, I know you feel all alone in your unutterable sorrow, so far as human sympathy and love is concerned; and so do I. There is no one to tell my trouble to; no one to whom I can look for sympathy and strength. But when we can "Look unto the hills from whence cometh our help," should we faint or despair? O the deep, unspeakable, unfathomable value of a personal knowledge and nearness and trust in the dear Redeemer and Savior of our souls; to feel that he is near when all else is gone; when crushed with unutterable woe, to feel that he ever liveth to make intercession for us; that he knows no change, and that he slumbereth not, neither does he sleep, when the waves threaten to overthrow us. Ah, my sister, to have such a Savior, Prince and mighty Jehovah for our Leader and Friend, is it not better by far than all the wealth, the pleasures and

greatness of this earth? And this Prince Immanuel, this mighty God, took upon him the nature of sinful flesh, was tempted in all points like as we; and why? O comforting truth! that he might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and so that he might know how to succor us when we are tempted. Could any possessed of human power alone, be capable of such a self-sacrifice, such magnanimity of soul? Most assuredly not. And this wonderful Being, when here, "was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Ought not this one thought strengthen us, my sister? Are we not brought into a closer union with him through the fellowship of suffering? "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." And when we think of this dear, meek and lovely Lamb of God, as bearing our iniquities and wounded for our transgressions, should it not move us to tears? And should not our afflictions seem light indeed, and our suffering of little note, when compared with the sufferings of him who bore our afflictions in his own body upon the tree? I would that I could lend you a helping hand in your distress and care; but whilst others complain of care and overwork, my poor hands must remain idle and useless. Whilst the busy world goes on in a ceaseless round, and men and women can step out into the refreshing air and behold the beauty and gladness of bright, beautiful spring, I can only see sky, and birds, and flowers, and inhale the breath of spring from my windows. Think you not it costs a struggle to quietly endure these deprivations? and know you not that I would gladly exchange places with the hardest laborer, it matters not what the avocation be? I thank you much for having sent the dear letter of Elder Taylor Moore to me. His words to me were such a sweet comfort and strength. I have not been able for a long while to write to the loved ones of my Father's household; and writing no letters, I of course receive but few; and O how I miss the dear white-winged missives, and how my heart yearns toward the dear ones who have sometimes sent me sweet messages of love. This, and the troubled circumstances by which I am environed, have caused me, like yourself, to be unusually lonely, and I spend many hours alone in my room, when I wet my pillow with my tears. O, my sister, I could not bear the awful sufferings and burdens of my life, if it were not for Jesus. But when sweet thoughts of him flow into my soul, I can say of a truth, "I can bear all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." You say you cannot forget my anxious face. Ah, my sister, there are few persons, away down in whose heart there does not lie sorrow and burdens, the flood-gate of which cannot be opened to the nearest, dearest friend; and it is this kind of trouble that stamps the countenance with pain, and causes the care-lines and furrows upon brow and face. May we both, and indeed all of the Lord's little, tried ones, be enabled to cast our care upon the

gracious Burden-bearer, to trust to him who is mighty to save; he who is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength. I cannot tell why, sister Yeoman, but since I began writing this letter, writing only a little at a time, my heart has gone out to the dear household of faith; not to one, but to all who love God and his blessed truth; so that I feel I must write to them through the dear SIGNS; but it may be that before another day or hour, I will be so prostrated by pain as to drive all such thoughts and longings from my mind. Excuse me for writing you so long a letter. If I only had a gifted pen, and could portray in a forcible way the glories which I think await you at the end of this long and thorn-pricked road, over which the blessed feet of the Captain of our salvation have trod before us, and who with cruel thorn-crowned head went through the dark valley of death, leaving only the shadow for his tenderly loved little ones; could I cause you to forget the sorrows of the way, in the contemplation of the glories that await you on the other shore, how gladly would I do so. But O my weakness, and the very, very little that I know and "see through a glass darkly," of the glorious beauties of the kingdom of God. But he says, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." O blessed thought! that Jesus will come to us. He will send the blessed Comforter, the Holy Spirit, which shall guide you into all truth.

"Holy Spirit, hover near us,
Till this life of death is done;
Then in christian triumph bear us
To the almighty Three in One."

Remember me in kindness and love to dear Elder Bavis. I feel so deeply thankful for his kindness, for which I pray God to reward him. Commending you to the dear elder Brother, I am sincerely and affectionately your sister in affliction, and companion in tribulation,

MARY PARKER.

PLEASANT GAP, Mo., June 4, 1886.

ELDER WM. J. PURINGTON—BELOVED BROTHER:—Although a stranger to you in the flesh, I hope I am not in the Spirit. I have been edified and comforted in reading your able communications in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and as I am a poor old man, not able to do any labor, and have nothing of this world's goods (often without even bread to eat), I hope you will pardon this intrusion. If it is not too much, will you please give your views through the SIGNS on Matt. xxv. 41, especially on the words, "everlasting fire." The reason I ask this is, There are a great many out here who say the punishment of the wicked is not eternal, but varies according to their crimes; and they are taken up to heaven and pardoned. As I am a feeble, sickly old man, fifty years old, and not able to walk hardly any, will you reply quickly, and oblige your unworthy brother, if one at all?

W. R. BLEVINS.

IN THE chapter from which brother Blevins has selected the words, "ever-

lasting fire," commencing at the thirty-first verse, and reading through to the close of the chapter, the contrast between the cursed and the blessed is clothed in language of the most awful sublimity; for he who knows the hearts of all men shows us that the blessed had no knowledge of having done anything meritorious, and the cursed did not know when they had seen him in distress, and had not ministered to him. Also, it is declared, when that finality has come, the sheep are set on his right hand and the goats on the left. That there is a finality here expressed is certain; and as there has been a sharp discussion on the subject of the final and second appearing of Christ, I shall not enter into that part of the subject here, more than to say that it is to be feared that some excellent brethren have not carefully noticed the words, "And before him shall be gathered all nations." It does not say, out of all nations, but *emphatically*, all nations. As to men being punished according to their crimes here in this life, and taken up to heaven and pardoned, is nothing more than rationalism, and completely destroys what is contained in the glorious word, *atonement*, and totally excludes the blood and righteousness of Christ; and such theorizing should not receive any countenance whatever from the true believer and lover of gospel truth. The declaration of an inspired apostle is, "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." This quotation shows that there is no exemption, for all have sinned, therefore are dead in trespasses and sins; and before Jehovah all in nature are alike dead, and there is not a word about punishment in the future state according to the crimes committed here. Were it not for that death, no violence would be done by mortal men here in this life, and the crimes, as they are termed, are the positive evidence of that death, and not the cause of it; for "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." That shows total depravity, and whether a man's crimes be many or few, the fountain is totally depraved.

Now, without further remarks, your question concerning the words, "everlasting fire," shall be attended to. Words used in the Scriptures have an abstract or separate meaning, and also a meaning according to the circumstances and places in which they are used. Here everlasting is from *aiônios*, age lasting, and fire is from *pin*. Now combining the two words, we have everlasting fire. In the last verse the Savior says, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Here the one is set in *direct contrast* with the other, and the continuation the same; for the word everlasting is from the same Hebrew root that eternity is. My brother, men seem to have no difficulty to believe in the meaning of the

expressions, endless joys, never-ending felicity, &c., but have much difficulty to believe the expressions, everlasting fire, everlasting punishment, endless torment, &c. The Scriptures teach both equally positive. Others talk about the annihilation of the wicked, that is, that they are put out of existence, or spoken into nonentity; but that which should daily engage the child is, "Teach me thy way, O Lord: I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name." They should not be concerned about this one's theory, or that one's notions; for it is very unsafe for lovers of God and his truth to listen to anything, however plausible it may be, which has not a "Thus saith the Lord" to sustain it.

My brother, in the postscript to your letter, which I did not quote, you speak of your sad condition; that at times you "suffer for the necessities of life." Such being the case, it appears to me that the brethren and friends in your section, if they know of your destitution, must be very remiss in their obligations, if you are not cared for by them. And it certainly appears that they ought to know how the matter is with you immediately, and see that you are made comfortable, so far as food and raiment are concerned. I certainly think they will readily administer to your temporal want as soon as they know of your condition. You state that you have "chronic bronchitis," which is certainly a bad condition for you to be in physically; and it is to be hoped, if this is published in the SIGNS, according to your request, that when the brethren and friends read the same they will remember your condition; especially such as know of your whereabouts and surroundings. My brother, for a wise, and to us dark, purpose, God has chosen his children in the furnace of affliction, and some seem to have a double portion of troubles and sorrows while in this life; but you doubtless remember on that wonderful occasion when the Israelites all ate of the paschal lamb before leaving Egypt, each one had to eat bitter herbs; and in our journey through this vale of sin and sorrow, many things are bitter to us; but our God orders all things right. I hope when you read this reply that you will be more comfortable physically, and be enjoying a good hope through grace of a blessed immortality beyond this time state. In this world many sorrows, disappointments any afflictions are allotted the children of God; but "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." Also, "And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also: 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."

My brother, I close this by stating to you that I have briefly, but I hope willingly, complied with your request; and also that according to your statement I am about thirteen years older

than you; and I can assure you that my path since being united with the Old School Baptists has not been a "downy" one, strewn with flowers separate from thorns; but I have found many serious obstacles in my way, which have been in some instances hard for flesh and blood to endure; but I hope that I have known something of what "divine strength" is sometimes in my pilgrimage thus far; and I hope that I may be kept in this day of delusion and error from bringing any confusion into the church, or reproach upon myself. May God bless and sustain you, and to his holy and reverend name be honor, majesty, dominion, glory and power, henceforth, forever and ever. Amen.

WM. J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 24, 1886.

HANNIBAL, Mo., Nov. 27, 1885.

ELDER BENTON JENKINS—DEAR BROTHER:—Days, weeks and months have passed away since I had the pleasure of meeting with you at the Corresponding Meeting in Virginia. At that time, as you suggested, I thought I would write you quite soon, but after my return home I became very feeble, and for weeks I was hardly able to walk about, and consequently felt but little like performing even that much labor, and so put it off until I felt more in the spirit of writing. * * * I will send you the letter we spoke of, upon the subject of the life laid down, and which you intimated a desire to see. It will speak for and explain itself; and though it is old, if you deem proper you may give it to the SIGNS for insertion. While in Virginia I heard of others who dissented from my letter in the SIGNS to which this refers; and when I wrote it, I rather preferred it should then have been published, but did not so request the esteemed brother to whom it was written.

Your brother, I hope, in the fellowship of the gospel,

W. F. KERCHEVAL.

HANNIBAL, Mo., Feb. 7, 1884.

DEAR BROTHER:—I received day before yesterday your kind and brotherly letter, and read it with much pleasure, and was glad you were so faithful, and so jealous of the truth, as to endeavor to admonish and correct me wherein you deemed me out of the way; and it is thus I desire my brethren to do with me always. It is the truth, and that only, I desire to know, and to be found walking in it. I will try, in the same brotherly manner, to pen a few of my thoughts upon the subject you mention, the life laid down, referring to my letter in the SIGNS. I do not know that you have expressed a sentiment with which I do not agree; and if any consistent brethren, as you intimate, have ever harbored the idea that the spiritual and eternal life God has given his people in Christ ever did or ever could die, I am certainly not one of them; for I do not, nor ever have held such an idea. You say, "I may not always know what brethren mean by laying down a life. I certainly

understand Christ to speak of his death; and death is an end of life." And so do I understand him. In the tenth chapter of John he says himself, "I lay down my life for the sheep. * * * No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." This, I understand, has reference to his death for the redemption of his people. Now the question is (and here brethren may not all be agreed), What life does he allude to? Is it a life he *assumed* (as one brother says), when "he was made of a woman," when "he took on him the seed of Abraham," or was it that life which John says "was from the beginning," and "was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," and which he also says was "that eternal life?" When a man dies, we do not say his life dies, but the *man*. His body is dead, separated from the life. That is death. "The dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it." Jesus said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And having said this, he gave up the ghost." He died, laid down his precious life for his sheep. On the third day he took that same life again, and arose from the dead. "I lay down my life, that I might take it again," are his words; and it is the same life in which he ascended to heaven, and in which he "ever liveth to make intercession" for his people. Again I inquire, Was this eternal life, or a mortal, Adamic life? I do not see in this view of it any idea like the spiritual, eternal life dying. Certainly I do not believe it. And where, my brother, is it recorded that Jesus assumed Adam's life, and laid it down, and took it again? I confess I do not know. That the "Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," I verily believe; and that "he was made of a woman, made under the law," is my only hope; and that "he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit," is also my faith. And this Spirit is the same that was in him before he was put to death, I also believe. You say, "As the law was given to Adam, and Adam was the transgressor, his life was forfeited, and the law said what it had to say to them that were under it. It had no claim upon any other life, or any other order of beings." I believe exactly the same, but I do not believe that Jesus died to *restore* this life Adam had forfeited, and as a consequence was dead; and under the curse, else it would be the same life still, and a mortal one. He came not to redeem that life of Adam that was, as you say truly, at an end, but to ransom his elect people from death, and from the curse of the law which they had transgressed. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death."—Hosea xiii. This is accomplished by the death and resurrection of Jesus, the eternal Son of God, "who was made a little lower than the angels, for the

suffering of death." This redemption is to a more enduring, an eternal inheritance; and it was, as you say, from "the transgressions that were under the first testament." This people for whom he died and arose again are the sons and daughters of Adam, which compose "his body, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." You say that I "misunderstand brother C. in regard to the new life. This life he gives to all his people is the same life." I believe also there is but one life in all the members of his body. "There is one body and one Spirit," and only one. But the particular point in brother C.'s letter to which I dissented was not that it was one life, but that Jesus assumed the life of Adam, and laid it down, and that this assumed life "is also eternal life." What life was it that dwelt in the body of Jesus while he tabernacled in the flesh, and commanded the winds and the sea, and they obeyed him, and the dead, and they came forth, the blind, and they received sight? From whence was it? Was it from Mary? Could she transmit life? Or was it "that eternal life that was with the Father, and was manifested to us," as recorded in the first epistle of John, and which he also said "was from the beginning?" You say, "When a sacrifice for sin is spoken of, we read, A body hast thou prepared me." And then you speak of how strange that brethren should have an idea that the spiritual life could die, &c. Why, my dear brother, did you suppose that I ignored the *body* of our blessed Redeemer, and that death was for their deliverance from sin and death, and that it was taken down and laid in Joseph's new tomb? And when he yielded up his life on the cross, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, the earth quaked, the rocks rent, the graves opened; all this displayed his almighty power, so that his enemies, who were watching him, were compelled to say, "Truly this was the Son of God." I do verily believe the words of the apostle, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that *Christ died* for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures." This Jesus, John affirms, "is the true God and eternal life."

And now, in conclusion, what I have written is very imperfect, but is designed as explanatory of a part of my letter in the SIGNS, to which you called my attention. At the time I wrote that letter it did not occur to me that the sentiment or subject of the life laid down had been discussed in the SIGNS, but I now do remember, since you mention it. But I know I have not accepted any views upon it without giving them much thought, and I do not know that what I have said is in accordance with what was then written, though you say the sentiment running through the letter seems about the same. As others beside yourself may have misunderstood me, after you shall have read this you may send it to brethren Beebe, and if they deem proper, give it a place in

the SIGNS. May the Lord bless you, my brother, and make you valiant for the truth, to admonish and instruct those who are out of the way. I will be glad of a letter from you when you feel like writing.

Yours, I trust, in the fellowship of the truth,

W. F. KERCHEVAL.

RIPLEY, Mississippi.

BRETHREN EDITORS, AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have a desire to communicate through this medium of correspondence the reason of the hope which I have been possessor of for a long time. I am now in my forty-seventh year. In my young childhood days I was taught that in order to enter heaven I must do such things as keep the first day of the week holy, and that I must ask God in faith to save me. And this, I was instructed, could be done by an effort on my part, which effort I began to make. Such teaching had, of course, some influence, but did not satisfy perfectly; for the testimony of God is against all such teaching. Before we can receive correct teaching, our heart must be prepared. As Solomon says, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord."—Prov. xvi. Now, as to the date of delivery from self-trusting and false influence, I cannot name a certain time, as some do; but I only claim that the change of realizing my true condition, of being entirely dependent upon God for salvation, did come to my understanding. Apparently, as I grew up to manhood, a true knowledge of Christ as my Savior appeared. I had some trouble in attempting to battle against these impressions, but never at any time succeeded. Being raised on a farm, I was generally at some kind of work, and these serious impressions would be causing constant reflections in reference to my condition. I never dreaded to meet God in judgment after death, as some were, and are now, teaching; but I could often realize that if I was not embraced in God's elective choice, I could never meet my God in a sanctified state. Many times did I shed tears, while plowing, over my sad condition, and would repeatedly try to ask God to forgive me, a poor sinner, and teach me the way of life everlasting. The great war between the north and south came on, and I went into the southern army, serving four years. While serving in the horrible war, I was subjected to many hardships, with many vices to contend with; but being brought safely through by an all-wise God, I could then claim God's grace (favor) as being sufficient to sustain me through life's dreary path, and could claim Jesus as my Savior and my everlasting strength. My former traditions were all banished, and new light entered my pathway, which gave me an understanding of the teachings of the Holy Spirit. Shortly after the close of the war, I felt it my duty to join myself to the church of Christ; and not being able as yet to find among the sects the church, I made choice of the Old School Presbyterians; but

after having remained with them only a few years, I became dissatisfied, and quit attending their meetings, and resolved to stand disconnected of any and all churches, so-called. While passing through a period of about ten years, with a firm, fixed resolution, as I thought, to never join any sect or church, I had many serious reflections. I was all the while convenient to several different denominations, and frequently heard each one preach. I would frequently converse with some among the Primitive Baptists, and finding them to be nearer my feelings in their manner and understanding, I decided to become a member among them, and did, on the third Saturday in October, 1878, offer myself to the Old School Baptists, which I believe to be the true church of Christ. Soon after being received, I expressed myself as having a desire to preach the gospel of our Savior, which desire was granted; and being liberated by the church of Christ, I proceeded to proclaim salvation through the merits of the crucified Savior. Shortly after, some of the churches called for my ordination, which was attended to in the usual manner. For nearly nine years I have been proclaiming salvation through Christ, and him alone. I also have been advocating the absolute predestination of all things, both great and small, and have never had cause to regret it, though being opposed by some of the brethren.

T. L. MORTON.

HINESTON, La., May 15, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—I will send you a short letter which I received a few days ago from our friend and (I believe) brother in Christ, for publication, if in your judgment you think it profitable to the little, despised flock. The reason I would like to have it published is, that it seems from the tenor of his letter that God has made the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES a blessing to him, in showing the fallacy of that corrupt order of will worshipers. I believe the dear Lord will bring all his children out of Babylon at his own appointed time.

Your friend and brother in tribulation,

DAVID RICHEY.

SPRING RIDGE, La., April 18, 1886.

ELDER DAVID RICHEY—DEAR SIR:—Several months ago I wrote to you, asking how I could procure a copy of the minutes of the "South Louisiana Baptist Association," to which you replied by sending me two copies. I felt at the time to thank you, but feared to appear ceremonious, so I neglected it; yet I find it still lingering on my mind that I ought to thank you, so I have taken my pen in hand. Somehow I feel like adding a few words in reference to myself and my surroundings. I am not a member of any visible church. Over twenty years ago I joined the Missionaries. Ten years of that time I served them as clerk, was a Sunday School teacher, superintendent, &c.

About two years ago my eldest brother, who had lived several years in Texas, and who had joined the Old School Baptists, returned here. We had much conversation together, and although I saw I could not refute his arguments, I believed so firmly that the Missionaries were the true church that he made little impression on me, beyond exciting my curiosity, and, perhaps, a little fear that I had been deceived. With some difficulty I got him to lend me several copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I read, and my eyes seemed to begin to open. I visited my brother, and found him on his death-bed, too sick to talk to me. He died, and I subscribed for the paper, and have read it carefully ever since. My understanding seeming to open all the while, I soon told my Missionary brethren that their system was false and rotten from the foundation, and asked them to exclude me, which they seemed gladly to do, without any effort to reclaim me. There are no Old School Baptists here, in this immediate vicinity. I had never heard them preach; in fact I knew nothing about them, except that they had once been united with the Missionaries. I once thought they were a few old fogies, with a hobby (election), and would soon die out; but now it seems to me they bear every mark of the church of God. The malice and ridicule of their enemies, their poverty of spirit, their fewness of numbers, and, better still, the doctrine they preach, and proofs beyond mention, point them out as such. It seems very strange to me that every honest reader of the Bible, who knows anything about them and the doctrine they preach, cannot see that they are the church, and their doctrine the doctrine of God and of the Bible. But they cannot. This blindness is a strange thing to me. I know the Bible says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they [the things of the Spirit] are spiritually discerned." I say, it is mysterious to me; for it does seem that they might understand the letter of the Bible. But many questions arise which puzzle and perplex me, one of the chief of which is, Why am I so unconcerned? Why am I not more thankful? Sometimes I hope I have a little hope. Sometimes I hope that the Spirit has shown me these things. But if I am a saint, I am a dull, almost lifeless one. Unless I am deceived, I believe the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I think I believe that God is an absolute Sovereign, and in the absolute predestination of all things, eternal vital unity, and the ultimate salvation of all the elect, without the loss of one, or the use of human means. Please pardon me for trespassing upon your time so much. I do not expect a reply to this. Hoping God will enable you, and all his ministers, to boldly and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, I remain your obliged friend,

S. B. ANSLEY.

STATE ROAD, Del., July 13, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I notice in the late SIGNS, July 15, that an extract from a private letter that I sent you some time ago is published, which was not intended for publication, as I suppose your readers will be aware when they see it. As it relates to the forthcoming Church History, I feel disposed now, since that much has been said, to add some more to it. I have had no opportunity to look over the manuscript, and am not specially posted as to the merits of the work; but from what has been published concerning it, and what I have gathered from correspondence with the author, I feel quite well satisfied that this work will meet a want that has long been seriously felt, and that no work in existence supplies. It is known, of course, that church histories (so-called) are numerous. They bear a great variety of names, and have been written at different periods, by authors more or less capable of doing justice to what they undertook, and there is a show of candor and honesty about the most of them. There are histories of the Reformation, histories of all religions, and histories of the different sects and denominations; and I presume they have found them all, and given them all at least as much place as they are entitled to. If any one of all these history writers has made any attempt to discern the true church, or distinguish her from her enemies and persecutors, I have failed to discover the fact. The woman riding upon the scarlet colored beast, reigning over the kings of the earth, and every religious establishment that has ever been incorporated in any of the governments of the ten kingdoms of Europe, all come in for a prominent place in these histories of the church. Not only so, but every insignificant faction, under the lead of some ambitious, unruly and vain talker, is given some importance by having space in these church histories. One might be led to wonder how many churches Christ has authorized, and how many sets of ordinances. The spouse of Christ is "A garden inclosed," walled in from the surrounding world, that salvation of which she is the subject constituting her inclosure. Not only is she undefiled, but she is, and ever has been, but one, the only one of her mother: The object of a church history should be to discern, despite all the smoke of the pit, the true church. If she is hidden from the face of the serpent, she should not be hidden from the pen of the historian, but her hiding-place should be discovered, and the name with which the Lord has named her distinctly traced. If the history of her enemies be included at all, it should be only to show them as persecutors of the woman, and engaged in making war with the Lamb. Such, I trust, the forthcoming history will be; and such a history is the only kind of production that will profit anybody, and what we would suppose every reader would understand is what is needed. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, if he will, but let him at the same time show a

mind that hath wisdom, in discovering the company that stands with the Lamb upon the mount, and identify that song which they are engaged in singing, which no man can learn but the redeemed from the earth.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

CLAY VILLAGE, Ky., May 7, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As our yearly meetings are over at Little Flock and Bethel, I send you a few lines for our family paper, should you think fit to publish them. The meetings were well attended at both places. The Lord's little ones came from the four points of the compass, to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, our Lord and Savior. Elders George Weaver and P. G. Lester proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ. They did not give an uncertain sound to the trumpet, but it was the clear gospel ring. They are indeed workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things;" that bid the little flock, Fear not; that say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth; that "speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received double for all her sins." Jesus has paid the debt, and has satisfied the just demands of God's holy law. The salvation of Jesus is perfect and finished, and all of his elect people are saved, pardoned, are justified, and hence receive double for all their sins. His honor is engaged to save all his sheep. What a wonder that we, poor, rebel sinners, are permitted to hope that we have an interest in the perfect and finished salvation of Jesus; to feel, as the poet has expressed it,

"No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

We sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. We shelter under the Rock, Christ Jesus; for he is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He is as rivers of water in a dry place. Jesus is a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. O that we may ever trust in the almighty arm of the Lord of hosts, and ever shelter under the Rock of Ages, till the storm of life be past. O that we may feel and realize that

"We are traveling home to God
In the way our fathers trod,"

and ever press onward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. O that the Lord may bless his Zion the world over, and build her waste places, and guide us all in paths of peace, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Dear brethren Beebe, we still wish for the prosperity and success of the SIGNS, our family paper.

Yours, I hope, in the best of bonds,
WM. F. SLONE.

BOURBON, Douglas, Co., Ill.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Your paper, the SIGNS, comes regularly, as

usual. It has been sixteen years since I moved to Illinois from New York, and the SIGNS has not been astray once. My wife and I have been reading the paper the most of the time since its first publication. Your venerable father bore the burden at the time when the Old Baptists were treated with scorn and derision by the new order of Baptists, at the time of the separation, and he stood formidable and valiant for the truth as it is recorded in the Bible. I am constrained to say that I was always in unison with all his communications. Now, Elder G. Beebe's Sons, as you took upon you the continuance of the SIGNS, go on and prosper; and when a weary task you find it, persevere, and never mind it. The Old Baptists here in the west seem to be prospering. The new order of Baptists seem to be on the decline; it is a hard time with them for money. The Old Baptists have built a house in Arcola for meetings. The church at Hinesborough have built a house about fifteen miles from Arcola. Give my best regards to all the despised Old Baptists.

S. R. COOPER.

PETERSBURG, Menard Co., Ill.

DEAR EDITORS:—I wish to say through the SIGNS that if there are any members of the Old School Baptist Church living at or near Talluka, Illinois, I will be glad if they will write to me, as I would love to attend their meeting. The last meeting I attended was at Bethel, Johnson Co., Ind., in March last. I feel that I cannot stay away from the place where the true gospel is preached, though we be strangers in the flesh. I cannot find any comfort in going where people boast of their goodness; but I do desire to go where they ascribe all the power and glory to God.

Yours in hope,
SOPHRONA B. THOMPSON.

BOOK NOTICES.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 19, 1886

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Will you allow me to state through the SIGNS that the publication of our Hymn and Tune Book has been much delayed by our typographer? We now hope to have it ready to send to subscribers by the 10th of August, or before.

Your brother in hope,
SILAS H. DURAND.

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.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, to the churches composing the same, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—

According to our usual custom, we present you this Circular Address, in which we will present for your consideration a few remarks on the glorious and soul-cheering doctrine of justification, as presented in the gospel of Christ. The doctrine of justification forms a very distinguished feature in that religion which is from above, and is a prominent article of that faith which was once delivered to the saints. It forms the basis of the sinner's hope of acceptance with God. "How shall man be just with God?" is a question of the most interesting nature to every child of Adam. Justification is a forensic term, and signifies the declaring or pronouncing a person righteous according to law. It is not the making a person righteous, by a real change from sin to holiness, but it is the act of the judge, pronouncing the party acquitted from all judicial charges. Justification differs from pardon of sin. Pardon implies a guilty subject, while justification declares its subject righteous. The innocent cannot be pardoned, neither can the guilty be justified. How then, it may be asked, can man be the subject of both justification and pardon? This problem you will find fully and fairly solved in the following elucidation of the subject. There are three things essential to justification. First, the judge that justifies; second, the subject justified; and third, the law or rule by which the judge proceeds to justify.

First, Jehovah is emphatically called the "Judge of all the earth;" "the Judge of the quick and the dead." "It is God that justifieth." It is before his majestic throne that all created intelligences stand present in his omniscient sight, with all their deeds and characters in full review; and from him proceeds the final and irrevocable sentence of either justification or condemnation, which fixes immutably the final destiny of all the race of Adam. If the Most High freely justifies by his grace, who shall bring in a second charge? There is no higher court to which any appeal can be made; there is no superior tribunal at which a complaint can be lodged against any of those happy souls whose invaluable privilege it is to be justified by the eternal God.

We will now proceed to consider the second proposition, to wit, the subject justified. The persons to whom the wonderful favor is granted are sinners and ungodly. For thus runs the divine declaration, "To him that worketh, is the reward [of justification] not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith [or that in which he believes] is counted unto him for righteousness." From this text we learn that the subjects of justification, considered in themselves, are not only destitute of a

perfect righteousness, but have performed no good works at all. Nor are they only described as having no good works, but as being entirely destitute of every heavenly quality or righteous disposition, being under the power and dominion of sin, and subjects of death. This is the inheritance they derive from Adam, their federal head; as it is written, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned." And hence the apostle declares that every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before God. From the foregoing declaration of holy writ the position is clearly established that those whom God justifies are in the fullest sense of the word (in their natural relation and standing) ungodly, and hence are proper subjects of pardon; for as before remarked, pardon implies guilt in the subject. But the question comes up, How can these guilty subjects be justified, seeing that none but the innocent can be the subjects of justification? This can only be shown by taking into consideration the relation and identity they had with Christ, their spiritual Head. This relation consists in their inseparable union with Christ, as shown by the following Scriptures: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." "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 is the "Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." "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." These Scriptures, together with many more that we might adduce, clearly establish the following position, to wit, That ever since Jesus Christ the Mediator existed, the children of God were united with him, and consequently had a joint interest in all he possessed. This is set forth by the conjugal relation of husband and bride. Their interests, both in respect to wealth and honor, are by the very nature of the marriage contract merged into *one*. But again, this proposition is further sustained by the relationship of brethren, being all (children) of one common parent. And hence Paul declares that they are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. The estate is not parceled out, or divided, and hence one cannot possess it to the exclusion of another. Hence it is manifest that their interest is identical. But the position is further demonstrated by the Scripture declarations that he is their seminal head and progenitor, and they his seed or children. This relation does not depend upon anything done or performed by either he or they, but is based entirely on his nature and standing, when "brought forth," or "set up from everlasting." They being brought forth, or set up in him,

consequently derive their existence from him; and hence he is with much emphasis called *their life*. Thus while we consider these subjects of justification in their corrupt and polluted state, sunk under the curse of the righteous law of God, plunged into the labyrinth of death itself, all of which they inherit from a federal relation to their earthly progenitor, we also contemplate them in their glorious relation to Christ, their spiritual Head, in whom they have righteousness, perfection and holiness. This, their Headship, sin has never contaminated. In this their standing is secured by the immutability of God, and Satan with all his auxiliaries has never been able to make the least impression upon it. But throughout all the workings of the mystery of iniquity they are preserved in Christ, and called in due time. This identity and union is beautifully expressed by the holy apostle when he penned these memorable words, "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." The heirs of promise had a fellowship or joint interest with him in all that he did and suffered. They fulfilled the law in him, and obtained eternal redemption through him. Hence the prophet was commanded to cry unto Zion "that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

We come now to speak of the law or rule by which the Judge proceeds to justify. The law by which Jehovah judges all his creatures is based upon his own perfections, and requires sinless and perfect obedience. It knows no mercy, regards no tears of penitence, but is inflexible and imperious in its demands, and pronounces death upon every transgressor of its holy mandates. It is according to this law that the Judge of quick and dead awards to all the race of Adam their final destiny. How then shall sinful man stand acquitted at the bar? Not in Adam, their earthly head, nor any relative properties derived from him. Not by any works by them performed; for in this sense all the world stands guilty before God, and the Judge has declared that he "will by no means clear the guilty." But (glorious truth!) he judges them by his law, according to their higher standing in Christ; and thus he makes him to be sin for them, who knew no sin, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. He beholds the law magnified and made honorable by them in him, and its penal demands paid when he who is their life was crucified; and by this offering sin is obliterated, death is vanquished, and the heirs of promise are made perfect (in the sight of the law) forever. Therefore he declares, "There is no spot in thee;" that he beholds not iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel; that their

sins and iniquities he will remember no more; that they are justified from all things. This sentence of the Judge is final; and it is to have an experimental knowledge of this glorious truth, that every sinner is brought into regeneration. Hence it is called by the apostle, "going to judgment." Passing from death unto life is truly to every child of God a day of judgment. When their sins are arrayed before them in all their damning nature, when the law of God shines in all its spirituality and purity, when the heavenly Judge appears upon his throne, robed with the majesty of heaven's eternal King, when despair shrouds the soul in darkness, and causes the heart to break silence, and cry out in bitter grief, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner;" in this last extremity the glorious Mediator, as an Advocate, appears in heaven's high court to plead the rebel's cause, and make known to the trembling sinner, in accents of love, the sentence of the Judge, that his sins are pardoned, and he is adjudged to life through the merits of Messiah's saving benefits.

J. A. BULLOCK, Mod,
T. G. FLANARY, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Columbia River Association, now in session with the Harmony Church, Columbia Co., W. T., sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—God, who is rich in mercy, has favored us with another opportunity of meeting for his worship and communing with our kindred in Christ, which has been delightful and refreshing to us. The business of the association has been transacted in harmony, and the ministry and brethren, your messengers, have borne a faithful testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, and we have witnessed how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings, that publish peace and salvation, and say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

The letters from the churches indicate but little ingathering, but they are at peace among themselves.

Our next association will be held with the Big Spring Church, in Union County, Oregon, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1887, when and where we hope to receive your messengers and letters of correspondence.

May grace, mercy and peace be multiplied to all the Israel of God. Farewell.

J. A. BULLOCK, Mod.
Attest, T. G. FLANARY, Clerk.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

FOR the especial purpose of rendering more regular and faithful service to his own church (Skewarkey), of which his father was, and he is, a member and pastor, Elder Sylvester Hassell, who has been teaching in Wilson, N. C., since January, 1872, expects, with the permission of providence, to remove to his native place, Williamston, Martin Co., N. C., about the first of September, and to take charge of the Williamston Male and Female Academy.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1886.

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

THE GARNISHED FOUNDATIONS.

"AND the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst."—Rev. xxi. 19, 20.

In compliance with several requests, we submit the substance of a discourse upon this text, although it is impossible to repeat that sermon, as it was delivered without notes, other than the inspired Scriptures. Probably any attentive hearer is better qualified than the speaker to repeat a gospel sermon, since the message sent is no longer a burden to the messenger after it has been delivered. The truth, however, remains the same under all circumstances, and is as indelibly written in the experience of the preacher as of those who hear.

In the wonderful book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, it should need no argument to support the fact that the whole record is the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy, as declared in Rev. xix. 10. This declaration of divine truth exposes the error of those wise theologians who see in the mysterious symbols used in this book only the description of future temporal events, as the rise and fall of empires, the contention and strife of marshalled armies, and such incidents as have marked epochs in the natural world. However striking may be the similarity of such events to the things here recorded, they can only furnish concurrent testimony to the great truth which bears witness to the glorious manifestation of Jesus as our Immanuel. Indeed, this is the one eternal truth, the central fact about which are clustered all the incidents of time, and for which the material universe was created. The riches of that grace which God has given to his saints in Christ Jesus is the theme of all inspired writers. So Paul says, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."—Eph. iii. 8-12. Hence it is evident that this revelation which was signified to John, as

stated in its first sentence, is only rightly understood when the sacred Comforter takes and shows to the saints, in all its glory, the things of Jesus.—John xvi. 15.

As the end for which all Scripture is given is "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," it must be for the profit of the saints in their present experience in this world that the record is provided; therefore it is in the revelation of Christ in you the hope of glory that the saints find the true fulfillment of all prophecy, and the substance of every type and sign used by the inspired writers. It must also be remembered that every portion of the Scriptures, as well as all the experience of the saints, is in perfect harmony with the whole volume of the Scriptures of divine truth. Any seeming disagreement must result from a misunderstanding of the subject, to which even the saints are not only liable, but, when left to their own blind researches, they are certain to fall into error.

In trying to tell of the amazing grace of God in their individual cases, every saint has found that language is too weak to express the inconceivable display of infinite love as they have seen and felt it; yet each can understand the unspoken praises of Jesus when the broken words and stammering tongue fail to say what is felt within; for this righteousness of God is revealed from faith in the trembling speaker to the same faith in those who have that precious fruit of the Spirit. So, while the Holy Ghost moved chosen servants of God to use the most appropriate and expressive figures in recording their witness to the truth in Jesus, that truth can only be seen and known by the faith which receives the things of the Spirit; for it remains immutably true that God has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes. In no other way can these things ever be known but by the revelation of God; therefore there is no room for boasting. The most noted prophet or apostle could not give the knowledge of God to the most highly cultured Pharisee, nor could any natural attainments qualify one to receive that gift.

In all that is written in this book of Revelation, John could only record that which was by the angel of Jesus Christ signified unto him. In the beginning of this twenty-first chapter a new heaven and a new earth was revealed to John; "for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea." Evidently this vision was the new creation of which Isaiah prophesied in almost the same language, saying, by the word of the Lord, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind."—Isa. lxv. 17. There can be no question that his prophecy was fulfilled in the coming of the kingdom of heaven, when our Lord displayed his power and great glory in setting up his gospel

kingdom, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, to endue his apostles with power from on high, on the day of Pentecost. Then the first heaven of Judaism did pass away, and all its elements did melt and flow down in the presence of our God, who took away the former covenant, which constituted the heaven of that dispensation, and brought in the everlasting righteousness of his own glorious holiness, in which all who are under the covering of the heaven of the new covenant are forever justified freely by his grace. By the expression that "there was no more sea," we understand that the barrier of that covenant which had formerly inclosed the natural descendants of Israel, was now taken away, so that they were no longer regarded as separate from the nations of the earth, as waters which are mingled in the ocean can no longer be regarded as a sea when they are no longer separated by definite limits. It was in this revelation that John "saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven [that old first heaven of Judaism,] prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." In her deliverance from that legal and ceremonial dispensation, this holy city, as the redeemed of the Lord, is prepared by his grace, and adorned with his perfect righteousness. She has not escaped as a prisoner might break jail, still retaining guilt, but she is prepared by the cleansing blood of her Redeemer, to endure the most piercing scrutiny of perfect justice, being adorned with that robe of "fine linen, clean and white," which is the righteousness of saints.—Rev. xix. 8. Jesus is himself that perfect righteousness which adorns his church. The provision for wiping away all tears from the eyes of the people of this favored city definitely forbids the application of this revelation to the ultimate glory of the saints, since they can have no sorrow then. In their tribulation in the world they must have tears to shed, and it is in this state of affliction, weakness and sorrow that tears are their meat day and night, while they continually say to every mourning one, Where is thy God? From their eyes God shall wipe away all tears.

It is this holy city that is described in all the chapter including our text. No earthly city ever could compare with this wonderful holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. The dimensions given in verse sixteen are so vast that imagination faints in the effort to grasp their extent; and the height being equal to the length and breadth of the city, presenting a perfect cube, signifies the exact justice and truth with which every appointment of our God concerning this holy city is established. There is wonderful significance in every item of this description of the holy Jerusalem; and when it is applied to the church of our God in her sojourn in time, there is rich consolation in the testimony here recorded. But while it would be interesting to contemplate

each item of the inspired description of this city, it would require more time and space than can now be afforded, therefore we will at once come to the text first quoted.

The foundations of the wall of the city, which were garnished with all manner of precious stones, while here described as twelve foundations, are all included in that one only Foundation, which is Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. iii. 11. And each of the twelve foundations specified in our text includes that tried chief Corner; for not only is Christ all in all to the individual members of his redeemed body, the church, but he is pre-eminent in all their afflictions and in all their joys. As the city signifies the kingdom of heaven in its embodiment of all the saints who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, so it is equally significant of that same kingdom in each individual saint; for the experience of the whole church is but the experience of each one of the redeemed. Attending incidents may vary, but the intrinsic experience of all is the same. So David, on his royal throne, was "poor and needy," and could rejoice that the Lord "will not despise the prayer of the destitute," while God hath "chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him."—See Psa. lxxxvi. 1; cii. 17; James ii. 5. Every one who is a follower of Jesus must be partaker of the tribulations which are the earthly heritage of the saints. This is signified in the jasper, which is the first foundation in the experience of the saints. The crimson color of the jasper indicates passion or suffering. In the fellowship of sufferings with his afflicted and poor people in this world, is laid by the hand of God the first foundation of that holy city in which the saints rest under the protecting shadow of the Almighty. This evidence is too firmly settled in their experience to be shaken by doubt or fear. The tempter may lead us to doubt the reality of our joyful seasons and bright manifestations; but that which has been known and felt of bitterness and sorrow has left its impress too deeply graven in the heart and soul for any doubt of its painful reality. So Jeremiah refers not to bright seasons for strength in the hour of trial, when he says, "I forgot prosperity; and I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord: remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to mind, therefore have I hope."—Lam. iii. 18-21. Here the crimson of suffering is manifest as the first or deepest foundation in the experience of the prophet; and when the storm of severe trial removes all false refuges, the saints will ever find that foundation of their hope which is garnished with the jasper of deep sufferings but the more manifestly firm as the storm of trial beats upon it. Instead of being shaken by the great fight of afflic-

tions, the trial only consumes the dross of self-confidence in which the saints unconsciously rest, thus manifesting the second precious stone with which these twelve foundations are garnished; for as the twelve foundations are the one eternal Rock on which the whole church is built, so each of these precious stones shines as the glory of the entire city of our God. The building of the wall which marks the boundary and forms the defense of the city, is also of the same emblem of suffering.—See verse 18. There is manifest appropriateness in this symbol to show the deep anguish through which our Captain and Redeemer was perfected as that Salvation which is appointed for walls and bulwarks to this glorious abode of his saints.—Isaiah xxvi. 1. And in their personal experience there is no deeper evidence than that which is graven in their souls in the fellowship of those sufferings.

In the blue sapphire is presented the calmness of assured truth. This is referred to as the basis of quiet rest to the saints when Paul says, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."—Phil. i. 27-29. The very rest which is felt by those whose weary feet have fled for refuge to the name of the Lord as their strong tower, is itself an established witness that they are the called subjects of divine grace. No others can rest in the sovereign grace of Jesus, for none can fall upon the arm of sovereign grace until every refuge of their own has been swept away. Then they must come unto Jesus, being drawn by the Father, and cut off from all other dependence. This rest does not arise from self-confidence, for it is never received until all self-dependence is utterly cut off. Then it is the gift of divine grace, without the least shadow of merit on the part of the lost sinner. Reason can never find rest in the immutable truth and justice of God; but faith brings a calm reliance upon that eternal truth, so that "we which have believed do enter into rest."—Heb. iv. 3. As the belief of the truth results from the evidence of faith as the abiding witness, that very confidence of truth is also the foundation on which the believer rests.

The third foundation is adorned with the chalcedony, whose lustrous, waxy white clearly signifies purity. This adorning is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; hence they who have this witness abiding in them as their foundation, cannot find in their flesh the purity for which they long; but the desire for freedom from pollution

is the evidence that the principle of purity is their support. Such as possess this principle within, will not desire to presume upon the grace of God as an excuse for continuing in sin. Therefore to all who aspire after purity, that desire is the certain evidence of the seal of the holy Spirit of promise; this constitutes another firm support for those who rest upon the work of divine grace as their only hope.

In the green emerald garnishing this foundation, the abiding hope of salvation is doubtlessly signified. That hope is an earnest of its own fulfillment, since it never exists alone, but is identified with faith and charity, as the fruit of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in the subjects of his grace. Where this hope exists, it marks the subject of it as an heir of God and joint heir with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The next stone named is one which will at once be recognized by the tried saint. The veined sardonyx, in which the life struggle of every day trial is portrayed; the red sardius alternating with the white chalcedony. This signifies the perpetual struggle which causes the deep groaning within, and extorts the agonizing cry to God for deliverance. Perhaps the dear one who suffers under this tempest of self-loathing and trembling hope may have learned that this is the experience of the saints, but he may not have realized it as an immovable foundation. Let such consider, where would be their hope without the fellowship of these sufferers of Christ.

The blood red sardius represents the fullness of that love of God which is shed abroad in the saints by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. This love is able to make the sufferer forget his pain, the mourner's grief is by its heavenly power turned into joy, and even the blackness of sin is washed away in its cleansing flood. There is something in this experience beyond the power of language to tell, yet it is known to the weakest subject of salvation; for

"He is an heir of heaven who finds
His bosom glow with love."

The chrysolite, golden green, seems to speak of hope as half fulfilled, even in its partial revelation. Then the rarer blue of the sea-pure beryl tells of a rapturous rest in the consolation of assured truth. After these the topaz and chrysoprasus, where azure and flame are met, fitly express the rapture of assurance given in the experience of the saint, as in the inspired witness of the sacred Scriptures. Then the purple jacinth gives expression to the everlasting victory of every saint, through the blood of Jesus, with whom they reign forever; for purple is emblematic of royalty. The final pure amethyst well expresses the triumphant glory when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. This is the foundation as well as the fruition of all the hope of the children of God who sojourn in this wilderness.

This imperfect sketch may indicate some of the truth which is contained in the text, to the comfort of the little ones of our Lord; if so we are satisfied, and would ascribe glory to the name of Jesus evermore.

DEATH OF ELD. THOMAS P. DUDLEY.

ELDER Thomas P. Dudley has received his passport, and is gone to his eternal reward. He fell asleep in Jesus at his home in Lexington, Ky., on Saturday, July 10, at three o'clock p. m., aged ninety-four years, one month and ten days.

Brother Dudley was, perhaps, the oldest Baptist minister in the United States, at the time of his death. He was in many respects a very remarkable man. He was a true and faithful servant of God, and was generally esteemed by the Old School Baptists as an able minister of the New Testament, and his memory will long be cherished by them, especially the churches of the Licking Association, of Kentucky, among which he has labored so many years.

The following from brother Moore is all that we have received in relation to his death:

GEORGETOWN, Ky., July 13, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Elder T. P. Dudley died Saturday evening, July 10, at three o'clock. I will forward you an obituary hereafter.

In sorrow,

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

OWING to the Church History having made about twice as much reading matter as anticipated in the Prospectus, it cannot be furnished bound in leather at two dollars a copy without incurring a loss, even on the cheaper leather binding, to Elder Hassell of twenty-five cents on every book; and we are satisfied that the subscribers would not be willing to have him sustain this burden in addition to the thousands of dollars he has already sacrificed in the preparation of the work. We have therefore concluded to bind the two dollar books in superior imitation Morocco cloth; and those who desire the book in the in-made hand binding in leather can obtain the same at two dollars and fifty cents per copy. These prices merely cover the expense of getting the book out, and do not leave any margin for Elder Hassell. We shall also bind a few hundred copies in the gilt-edged imitation Turkey Morocco at four dollars per copy, as well as the genuine Turkey Morocco, full gilt, at five dollars per copy. Those having already sent on their subscription can obtain any of the above styles by remitting us the balance by the fifteenth of August. We now have (July 15th, 1886) 900 pages in type, and expect to have the books ready to mail to the subscribers by the first of September. The two dollar and fifty cent books are bound in what is called "laced in," or "in-bound," binding, and are as strong and durable as it is possible to bind them. Address, G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While our hearts are filled with mourning, it becomes my sad duty, by request, to send you a notice of the death of our beloved sister in Christ, Mrs. Emma A. Johnson, beloved wife of George H. Johnson, and daughter of brother Nathan Grafton, of Forest Hill, Harford Co., Md. She departed this life on the evening of June 22, 1886, in the twenty-fourth year of her age. Sister Emma was baptized by Elder Wm. Grafton on the first Sunday in March, 1881. She was married on the 24th of last December, thus enjoying but a short time with her beloved companion. Ever since she expressed a hope in Christ, she has often told me that she feared she had no hope. But the Old School Baptists were the only people she could derive any spiritual comfort from. While it pleased the Lord to afflict her in body for the last few years, she never murmured at it, for she felt it was the Lord's doings. Thus she was kept, using her own words, hoping that she might have a hope, until on the evening of June 5, when Elder Wm. Grafton came to see her, and began to talk to her of her hope. But she did not have a disposition to say very much. He had not left her long before it pleased the Lord to reveal himself more fully to her, and a most glorious vision was given her of Christ and his kingdom. She said that while death and the grave had been a terror to her, she could not now get there fast enough. She also said, with outstretched arms, that her Jesus was so near her that if he would only come a little closer she would embrace him in her arms. She asked to see Elder Grafton, and when he came she told him she had been with Jesus. While her friends were weeping around her, she begged them not to cry, for she was so happy, and did not wish to stay here on earth. When asked if she wanted to leave us, she said the Lord had released her from all earthly ties. In the evening her mother asked her if she did not want to go to sleep. She said, not until she went to sleep in Jesus. Later at night the same question was asked her by her sister, she making the same reply. Thus she lingered until she fell asleep in her blessed Jesus, never more to awake until the resurrection morning, when God shall call his sleeping saints to arise from their graves. Sister Emma was a dear sister. None knew her only to love her. While she has left a sorrowing family, may the God of heaven comfort the afflicted hearts, and may we all be made to say, Not our will, but thine be done. On the morning of June 25, she was carried to her grave by her four brothers and two of her brothers-in-law, at the Harford Baptist meeting house, Elder Wm. Grafton making some very comforting remarks on the subject of Rest.

The following verses were composed by her brother, Jacob A. Grafton, on the expression made by her, "I do not wish to sleep until I go to sleep in Jesus."

Asleep in Jesus! sister's gone
To dwell in heaven above;
Why should we weep or mourn for her,
Who reaps redeeming love?

Asleep in Jesus! who would dare
Disturb her peaceful rest,
To call her back to toil and care,
When she's supremely blest?

Asleep in Jesus! sweet the thought
To those who're left behind,
Who hope in heaven our loved to meet,
And faith's fruition find.

Asleep in Jesus! precious thought,
When from her lips it fell;
The terrors of the grave were naught,
For Jesus had them quelled.

Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,
When in the Lord we die;
Though o'er her earthly form we weep,
She bade us not to cry.

Asleep in Jesus! this she said
As death o'er her did creep;
Until on him I rest my head,
I do not wish to sleep.

Your brother in affliction and hope,
J. N. HENDERSON.
TOWSONTOWN, Md.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I feel it impressed upon me to write you of the death of my beloved wife, for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is done in sorrow and weakness.

Sarah S. Supplee departed this life at our son's residence, in Camden, N. J., July 10, 1885, aged seventy-one years, eight months and seven days. She was the daughter of Isaac and Rachel Cleaver. We were married in November, 1838, and moved in the same month to Knox Co., Ohio, and in April, 1841, were received into the Old School Baptist Church called Wayne, of Knox Co., Ohio. In 1857 we moved to Trumbull Co., Ohio, one hundred and fifty miles distant from the church, and about the same distance from any other Old School Baptist Church, still holding our membership where we first united. In 1882 we moved to Camden, N. J., and in the winter of 1884 we received letters of dismission with the expectation of offering them to the Salem Old School Baptist Church, of Philadelphia. My wife being in poor health at the time, not being able to attend the meetings, did not offer her letter; but mine was offered and received. During all the time after we left Knox County, in 1857, my wife heard but one gospel sermon, and that was preached by Elder W. J. Purington, in the fall of 1876. How often she would say, "O if I could only hear once more a gospel sermon." The New Testament and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES contained her preaching, in which she took much comfort. Her great desire in her last sickness was that she might have a brighter evidence of her acceptance in Christ. She appeared to suffer much, but with patience. Her disease was general debility, with bronchitis. She would often say she was so thankful that she suffered no pain; was only confined to bed about ten days, was sensible to the last, passed away peacefully, without a struggle or moan, just like one falling asleep, leaving a smile upon her countenance. She would often note passages of Scripture, showing her trust in Jesus. One circumstance I will mention, which has been, and still is, at times, to me comfort and consolation. I think not more than two days before her departure she repeated that hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," &c. It is a hymn that I have no recollection of ever hearing nor ever seeing until two months after her death. When she repeated it I thought the words very beautiful, and that she appeared to enter into the spirit of the hymn. I frequently read in the hymn book, and as I said above, I came to the hymn, and as I followed the reading it appeared to me that I could hear her speak the words, and the fourth verse of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews was brought to my mind, "God testifying of his gifts; and he being dead, yet speaketh." Blessed are they who die in the Lord. I can truly say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken. Though I feel so sensibly my great loss, yet I feel to bless the name of the Lord for the hope that while it is mine to suffer the loss of a dear companion in this life, it is her eternal gain. She was a loving wife, an affectionate mother, and a kind neighbor. She was the mother of five children (all sons), three living, and permitted to attend her funeral, services being held in the house, and attended by a goodly number of friends and relatives. Preaching by our beloved Elder, S. H. Durand, who spoke words of comfort to those called to mourn. After services, her remains were deposited in Evergreen Cemetery, Camden, N. J., there to await the sound of the trumpet, when the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, and shall be changed. May the God of all comfort still continue to comfort me in this my day of trial, and by his grace be prepared, when called from time, to join not only my dear one, but all his redeemed ones, and to see Jesus, is the desire of a lonely husband.

Your brother in affliction,
S. G. SUPPLEE.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is my painful duty to prepare the obituary notice of one of our household. Our eldest son, Richard A. Thomas, departed this life May 5, 1886, aged twenty-eight years and five days. His disease was that dreadful destroyer, consumption. He graduated at Hahnemann

Medical College, Chicago, in 1885, located in Columbus, Kansas, in April following, and was making a success professionally. But while on a professional call, he was caught in one of those blizzards about the last of December, and from that time his health was on the decline. He thought to get to a warmer climate might improve his health, and on the tenth of March went to southwestern Texas. But he only became weaker. In April he wrote us of his condition. His father and sister went immediately to his relief. He still thought he must stay in that climate. His father returned, his sister staying with him until he wished to come. They reached Sullivan, Ind., his old home, April 13th. He lived but five days. He was possessed with a bright, social and friendly disposition, which had endeared him to many. I never heard him express himself in regard to spiritual things, but we are not left without some evidence that for him to die was gain. I never saw one more quiet or submissive than he. He suffered very much the last three days, being much fatigued from traveling. That morning we raised him on his pillow. He said, "Mother, I am perfectly easy, free from pain. Call my sisters and kiss me." In a few minutes the summons came and nipped the fair bud just ready to bloom. We laid the dear form in its last resting-place, near his friends who had gone before.

Dear brethren, pray for us, that we who remain may have strength given us to bear these sad afflictions. We do feel that

His soul has fled this mortal lot,
To soar amid the skies,
And left a blank to mark the spot
Where death has claimed his prize.

His charming words no longer cheer
A parent's fervent heart;
Sister and brother cease to share
The joys his smiles impart.

Consoling proof of final rest
Should quiet every sigh;
His dying words a hope express'd
Of peace with God on high.

ANNA M. THOMAS.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of the friends I send for publication the obituary of **Deacon Cornelius Hogabome**, who died June 17, 1886, aged eighty-three years. He was baptized in the fellowship of the Lexington Church, by Elder Hezekiah Pettitt, in February, 1828, and has been a worthy member ever since, serving the church for many years as deacon and clerk. He was firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and firm with the church through all the divisions and isms that have come among us. I often called on him during his decline of life. His faith was as strong and his hope as firm as they were fifty-eight years ago. At the last he had a slight shock of paralysis, from which he partially recovered, but was not able to converse much. While I was conversing with sister Hogabome, I asked her what constituted the sons of God—if calling them made them sons. Brother Hogabome arose partially on his elbow, and with a glow of youth and beauty on his face said, "They were sons from eternity. Calling did not make them sons, but made manifest that they were sons. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. And he will bring his sons from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth." He then sank back upon his pillow, and into the same state of stupor. On Sunday night before he died he had another shock, and did not realize anything more till he passed away, like one falling asleep. He leaves an aged widow, one daughter, numerous relatives and the church to mourn their loss, which is his eternal gain. May the Lord sanctify it to our good and his own glory.

His remains were taken to the meeting house for the last time, where the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the mourning friends and a very large congregation, from 2 Corinthians v. 4, after which the remains were laid in their last resting-place, to await the morning of the resurrection.

LAMBERT GASS.

LEXINGTON, Greene Co., N. Y.

DIED—At the residence of Mrs. Jane Hobson, in Lawrence County, Ind., Feb. 26, 1886, **Miss Polly Todd**, aged seventy years, one month and one day. She was born in the state of Kentucky, was the daughter of Jonathan Todd, one of the pioneers of Lawrence County. At the age of two years she was stricken with paralysis in her legs and feet, and was never able to walk afterward. In early life she united with the Old School Baptist Church of Gilgal, where she was dearly beloved as a member until death, the space of fifty years or more. To know aunt Polly was to love her. She seemed to occupy a place in the affections of many, both old and young, as was evidenced by the large congregation that assembled at Gilgal on the second Sunday in June, to listen to a discourse preached in memory of her, by the unworthy writer of this notice. It was estimated that nearly two thousand were present. Her health the past winter was unusually good. The day before her death she complained of feeling sick, and at night she complained of trouble of the heart and back, suffering intensely. At five o'clock in the morning she seemed to rest easy, and her friends thought she was better; but when breakfast was ready it was found that aunt Polly was dead. She leaves one sister and four brothers. Her remains were interred at Gilgal, where she rests in peace. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

P. K. PARR.

By request it becomes us to send for publication in the SIGNS a tribute to the memory of brother **Jefferson Sherman**, of the Canton & Columbia Church, who died August 5, 1885. He was born in Providence, R. I., came to Pennsylvania in 1878, and joined the church of Columbia & Wells about the year 1832. We do not know the year of his birth, but he was over eighty years of age. He was strong in the faith of salvation by grace, and willingly obeyed the Master's call. His disease was dropsy.

E. WEBBER.

TROY, Bradford Co., Pa.

ORDINATIONS.

AGREEABLE to a call of the First Nodaway Church of Regular Baptists, of Andrew County, in the state of Missouri, the following presbytery met at said church on the first Saturday in June, 1886, to wit: Elders W. J. Pollard and Richard Oliphant, Deacons J. A. Sparks, B. J. Bunch, J. S. S. Wilson and Robert Rowe. The presbytery organized by choosing Elder Richard Oliphant Moderator, and W. S. Paterson Clerk. The church then submitted brother R. Vanbuskirk to said presbytery, for ordination to the office of deacon. The presbytery being satisfied with his qualifications, proceeded to ordain the said R. Vanbuskirk, by the imposition of hands, and prayer by Elder W. J. Pollard. A hymn was then sung, and the hand of fellowship extended by the presbytery and church.

RICHARD OLIPHANT, Mod.

W. S. PATTERSON, Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

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ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

M A Florence 50c, Tunis Titus 1, Eld P M May 50c, E T Cooper 50c, S H Howell 50c, Willis S Gott 50c, John Carson Jr 1, T A Eastin 50c, Eld R M Thomas 1, Sam Hansborough 2, Ruth C Mewborn 50c, A Tomlin 50c, Randolph C Gibson 5, Richard Langford 50c, S E Stover 50c, Q A Ward 50c, H Cox 1, Wilson Thomson 3, Jacob Hewitt 50c, Ann B Parker 50c, W G H Morgan 1.50, Samuel R Paxton 3.—Total \$43.50.

HOPEWELL SEMINARY.

The Fall Session will commence on Wednesday, September 22d, 1886. For particulars address

MISSES BOGGS, Principals,
Hopewell, Mercer Co., New Jersey.

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 who intend to visit the Corresponding Meeting, to be held with the Occoquan Church, to begin on Wednesday after the second Sunday in August, 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. We have had several meetings at this place, and the result has been encouraging. Some have been baptized, others have indorsed the doctrine, and there is an increased desire to have such a meeting. 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.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Licking Association of Particular Baptists will hold her next annual session, the Lord willing, with the Bethel Church, near Clay Village, Shelby Co., Ky., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1886.

It is the wish of the church for all that can come in their own conveyance to come in that way, as the Louisville & Lexington Rail Road is nearly twelve miles from the church, and the most of the members are three or four miles farther than that. Three or four families, myself with that number, live fourteen miles from the meeting house, which will make it very inconvenient to convey many from the railroad. Ministers and members who wish to come by rail, will write to Wm. Slone, Clay Village, Wm. Vannatta or Wm. Sleadd, Shelbyville, M. V. Money or myself, Finchville. Write in time and give the number as near as you can, so we can arrange to bring all. It is too far to leave any. Those coming from the east, from Lexington, will get off at Bagdad, Thursday evening. Those coming from the west, or Louisville, can come to Shelbyville Friday morning in time for meeting. A full attendance is desired, especially of preachers.

By order of the church.

J. A. MONEY, Clerk.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Deer Creek Church, at the village of Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio on the Columbus & Cincinnati Midland R. R., twenty-three miles from Columbus, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1886, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west, north and northeast will come by way of Columbus, Ohio, and there take Columbus & Cincinnati Midland R. R. to Mt. Sterling. Those coming from the south and southwest will come by the way of Cincinnati, and at the Central Depot take the same road to Mt. Sterling. There are four trains each way every day. Brethren will meet the friends at the trains. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and a special invitation to ministering brethren of our faith and order.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE fiftieth annual session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting will be held, by divine permission, with the Occoquan Church, at their meeting place at Oak Grove, eight miles from the village of Occoquan, in Prince William Co., Va. The meeting will commence on Wednesday, August 11, and continue the two following days.

The trains leaving Washington, D. C., from the depot of the Pennsylvania R. R., corner Sixth and B Streets, Tuesday evening at 4:35 o'clock, and Wednesday morning at 6:00 o'clock, will be met at Woodbridge Station, on the Alexandria & Fredericksburg R. R., and about twenty-four miles from Washington. These two trains leave Alexandria, Va., twenty minutes after leaving Washington.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to attend.

WM. M. SMOOT.

THE Salem Association of Predestinarian Baptists will begin on Wednesday before the fourth Friday in August, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m. Brethren and sisters are respectfully requested to attend. All are invited, especially ministerial brethren of our faith and order. Those coming from the east, west or north will come to Cincinnati, where they will take the train on the Cin. Southern, or the L. & C. Short Line, for Walton, where they will be met. Those that come from the south will stop at Verona the day before, or go to Walton, where they will be met. Should any come to Verona on the late train, they can inquire for J. S. Ransom, J. E. Ransom, or J. R. Johnson.

J. H. WALLINGFORD, Mod.

J. R. JOHNSON, Clerk.

THE thirty-fifth annual meeting of the Western Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Little Flock Church, seven miles northwest of Knoxville, Marion Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west will be met at Pleasantville, and those coming from the east and southeast will stop at Knoxville, where they will be met on Friday before the meeting. The Rock Island R. R. runs to Knoxville from the east; also the branch road of the C., B. & Q. R. R. running from Albia to Des Moines. All those who love the truth as it is in Jesus are invited to meet with us.

WM. J. REEVES, Clerk.

THE White Water Association will meet at the Nettle Creek Church, Randolph County, Indiana, commencing Wednesday August 11, 1886. Brethren and sisters coming from either the direction of Columbus, Ohio, or Indianapolis, Indiana, will take the I. B. & W. R. R., and stop off at Modoc. Those coming via Cincinnati will take the Richmond & Ft. Wayne R. R., to Lynn; there change to the I. B. & W., west to Modoc. All trains from 3 p. m. Tuesday, will be met with conveyances. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may feel inclined to come.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Yearly Conference will be held this year with the church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 3, 1886, at half-past ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days. All who have a mind to do so, we hope will say, If the Lord will, we will be with you at that time; for all such are invited to come. There will be teams at the depot the day before the meeting, to take all to the place of the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

THE Lebanon Old School Baptist Association will convene at the Taylor's Creek Church, Grant County, Indiana, Friday before the third Saturday in August, 1886, and continue three days. Those coming from the east on Panhandle R. R., will stop off at Mier, and those from the west on the Narrow Gauge R. R., will stop off at Swayzee, and they will be met at both places with conveyances. A cordial invitation is given to ministers of our order, and also brethren and sisters, to come and see us.

THE Morgan Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will meet, the Lord permitting, with Middle Fork of Apple Creek Church, in Greene County, Ill., twelve miles east of Roodhouse, at ten o'clock a. m., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1886. All visiting brethren will be cordially received.

GILES REEDER.

THE Spoon River Association is appointed to be held with Waterford Church, four miles south of Lewiston, Fulton Co., Ill., on C., B. & Q. R. R., to begin on Friday, Sept. 3rd.

I. N. VANMETER, Clerk.

MACOMB, Ill.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, commencing on Friday, September 10, 1886, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

THE Tygart's Valley River Association have appointed their next session to be held with the Mount Olive Church, Barbour Co., W. Va., to begin at 11 o'clock a. m. on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1886.

THE Little Piney Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will hold her next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with Little Hope Church, Osage Co., Mo., to begin on Saturday before the second Sunday in August, 1886, and continue three days.

THE Brazos River Association of Primitive Baptists have appointed to meet with the New Mount Zion Church, seven miles east of Graham, Young Co., Texas, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1886.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association, by divine permission, will meet with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1886.

THE Redstone Old School Baptist Association has appointed to hold her next session with Indian Creek Church, Monogalia Co., W. Va., to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, at 11 o'clock a. m.

THE Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Sulphur Fork, Henry Co., Ky., on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1886, and continue three days.

THE Pocatalico Old School or Particular Baptist Association will hold her next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Providence Church, near Byrnside, Putnam Co., W. Va., on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, to begin at 10 o'clock a. m.

THE Union Primitive Baptist Association have appointed their next session to be held with Antioch Church, Lafayette Co., Ark., to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, and continue the two following days.

THE Mad River Predestinarian Baptist Association will meet this year with the Thompson Church, six miles west of Columbus Grove, situated on the D. & M. R. R., in Putnam Co., Ohio, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1886.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

THIS work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order, by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

Owing to the delay in the typographical work, the Hymn and Tune Book will not be ready to send to subscribers till the last of June. Please observe carefully the above directions for sending money. Do not send checks, nor postage stamps, nor post-office orders on any office but Philadelphia.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

Is now in press, and progressing at the rate of 50 pages a week, over 800 being now in type. The book will contain nearly 1,000 pages, arranged in such a manner as to make it most convenient for reference. It will have a full and complete Table of Contents in the front part, and an Index in the last part, which, with the running heads over the pages giving the chapters, will enable the readers to turn to any subject or part of the book with the utmost convenience. There will also be a superior steel engraving of Elder C. B. Hassell in the front of the book, and the whole bound in Imitation Morocco Cloth and Full Leather Binding of extra quality, at the following prices:

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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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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 1886, 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.

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.

TERMS.

TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR.

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B. L. BEEBE.

WM. L. BEEBE.

INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBSCRIBERS.

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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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. 54.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1886.

NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STATE ROAD, N. C., May 4, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to continue to satisfy the requests of many of the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by giving them, by your permission, some more of the many incidents of God's dealings with me and mine. My last letter closed in giving a description of my sinful and perverse feelings. I continued for a while in that horrible condition, and finally my heart seemed to be as hard as a flint, my faith and hope seemed to almost vanish into nothing, and I would cry and say, "O Lord, give me but a little faith. O Lord, revive my sinking hope. O that I could repent! O Lord, be pleased to greatly chastise me with fear and trembling, and melt my hard and stony heart into a great fountain of tears; affect my heart, and cause my eyes to flow with penitential tears." While thus crying from the very depths of my soul, one night, after I had been laboring hard all day, I took my Bible and began to read in John, where Jesus prayed for his church. Suddenly I felt the fountain of love divine flow through my whole system, and my soul was filled with love to God, and love and peace toward all men, and tears began to trickle down my cheeks. Thus my soul was filled with rejoicing, because of the witness of the Holy Spirit while I was reading, and of the manifestation of God's love in my soul.

But this heavenly season did not last long, for I soon was fearing again, and feeling hard-hearted, and sometimes feeling desolate and lonesome. Sometimes I would read my Bible, though not often. Sometimes my soul would be so lifted up as to think that doubts and fears were entirely gone, and that surely I had a part in the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. But I have always been upset in such definite decisions. The nearer the time came that God had predetermined that I should speak as a mouth for him, the less peace I enjoyed, for my trouble was very great. But I did not know that the time was so near at hand, though I was so greatly pressed with the impression to go and preach, that I had no peace of mind day nor night. Deep solemnity and great tribulations were my hourly companions. It seemed as though my whole system was set on fire, for it seemed as though there was a mighty flame rolling and rumbling in my breast, as though it desired to come out, but had not, as yet, any place or vent of coming out. I would go at all times

with a bowed down head, feeling at times to be a great rebel against God, while at other times I would think, O what a pleasure it would be to me to obey the call, if I were only capable and worthy. I thought, O what beautiful things are there to be found in the gospel treasure! but it is too great for me. My dreariness of feelings was so great and continual that everybody that saw me decided at once that I was going deranged. But man may make decisions, and God will confute; for the sons and daughters of men knew nothing of the great trial-furnace which the Lord was bringing me through. For does not the Lord bring all his ministers through this furnace, that he may teach them the great and important lesson of his power and all-prevailing hand? Yea, he teaches his ministers to put their sole dependence in him, and in this teaches them the graceful lesson of deep humiliation.

So time passed with me in much affliction, and I had not been to any meeting in all this time. But I could not stay away any longer, for I had made up my mind to go to the monthly meeting of Center Church, which was in Surry County, about ten miles east of my father's cabin. I set out on the morning of the second Sunday in August, 1878, and traveled eastward, not knowing whether I would find that church house or not, for I had never traveled in this direction before. But as I traveled through this wood country (a very strange looking country to me), I was in the Spirit, for all of my thoughts were heavenly. When I but glance back upon my feelings of that day, my soul is filled with great joy while writing, for my thoughts were completely carried away from earth to heaven; for the first I knew I was at the strange meeting house, and felt very calm. But when the people were gathering together, O the awfulness of my feelings! The Spirit came with great and mighty power upon me, so that my whole system did quake by reason of the power of God. O that I could find language to describe my feelings while there. O how my soul was lifted up in the glory which was presented to me in gospel revelation at that time. I could hardly hold my peace. Thus a few minutes passed, and then the ministers that were appointed to preach arrived. When they had both preached, they asked me if I wanted to speak. No sooner was the question asked, than I was upon my feet, for I was completely carried away, and did not know what I was doing. I gave out a hymn as best I could,

but it took me some time to give the hymn out, though it was one I had read before several times. I called on some person to lead in singing, which they did. O how awful I felt, and what a mighty shaking was felt by me while in this place. After they had sung the hymn, I took up the Bible and opened it, and my eyes caught the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses of the thirty-third chapter of Job, and I began to read, "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness; then is he gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." Then was my soul filled with light from on high, for the words of the text did preach themselves in me, seemingly. The glory of these moments are past human description. O how precious were those few moments with me, for the candle of the Lord was lighted up most brilliantly with and in me (it seems to me), and shined so bright to me. O what a beauty I here saw in the great plan of salvation. From the time I quoted the text, I remembered nothing but that heavenly light and love which seemed to take possession of me, for the power of the words of the text was very great. When I came to myself, I was preaching in word what I had never thought of before, and the congregation I had not seen (in my memory) until now, which was near the close of the sermon. When I had come to my natural thoughts, and had looked with thought at the congregation, they were all gazing at me, with tears streaming down their cheeks, and their countenances were very solemn. They looked as if the fountain of the great I AM was broken up, for their eyes did stream with tears, and they did manifest great affection. But I thought when I saw them thus weeping, that they were only sorrowful on my part; that they were weeping for my ignorance, and did pity me for my weakness. Notwithstanding my thoughts in regard to the people weeping, my mind was perfectly calm, and O the love that was (seemingly to me) in this place, and how precious, lovely and divine was this heavenly season. When God had ended his sermon from these lips of mine, I sat down, and one of the brethren arose and dismissed the people. I went home with a friend, feeling very meek among his family, for I was perfectly grum and silent. I had but little thought about the sermon that I had preached, for it came not into my mind. It seemed that my mind was

perfectly motionless, and that my senses were almost gone for several days. After the night was passed away, I was on my way home, and while traveling through the lonely woods I began to have thoughts, for I was called to meditate on my attempt to preach; and I thought, O what have I now done? for there is no telling what I said on yesterday. I wept most bitterly. Often while I was on my way home I would betake myself to the thickets by the roadside, and fall on my knees, and implore God to have mercy on me. I arrived home, and did greatly fear that my father, or some of the neighbors, would find out that I had been trying to preach; for I thought that I would not have my father, nor any one else around that neighborhood, know that I had been trying to preach, for no mention. My thought was, O what have I now done? I have been seen by a large congregation of people to stand up and talk publicly, after I have said that I never would; for I thought that I well knew that I could not utter a discourse of any kind. Then, O what have I now done? The people are now laughing at my ignorance. And if I should try no more, the people will make fun of me. O what a strait I am in! for if I continue to try to preach, the people will continue to laugh, and to make fun of me; and if I quit, they will laugh at me, and say, Ah, he is ashamed of himself; and though he trusted in God, yet he turns his back in shame. Then I said, O Lord, did not I cry unto thee, that thou wouldst let me off from so great an undertaking? Then I felt a spirit of murmur in my breast, saying, Why, O Lord, wouldst thou not release me? For what hast thou brought me to? even to ruin; for I am now a laughing-stock to the world. Then it seemed as though something spoke to me and said, You know not whose hands you are in; for you shall yet stand before many congregations of this gainsaying world, and speak for me. Then I cried out and said, O Lord, I cannot speak in that way; for my tongue is slow to speech, and my mind is sluggish and feeble, and is so scattering that I cannot remember from one moment to another, and how can I know what to say? O Lord, thou knowest that my lips are uncircumcised, and thou knowest my inability to speak. Therefore, O Lord, I pray thee, send some of the neighbor boys in my stead; yes, some who are quick spoken, and that have strong minds and good education, and have qualifications for such a great work as preaching. Now while

I thus reasoned, behold, that same voice was sounded in my ears, or at least to my understanding, and it was as the voice of thunder, for it came as an answer of the all-powerful supreme God of high heaven, to me, saying, "Whatsoever I will, that I will do. And as for thee, I will shew thee what great things thou shalt suffer for my name's sake; for thou shalt suffer many persecutions for the truth's sake. But behold, I will be with thee always, even unto thy end; and whatsoever I will, that shalt thou do." This somewhat calmed my rebellion, but still I did not want my father to find out that I ever had tried to preach. But one day he had been off in the settlement, and some person did ask him about my preaching, and he replied that if I had even as much as ever attempted to preach, he knew nothing of it. "Well," said the person who talked with father, "there was certainly a young Welborn that did preach at Center a few days ago, and he preached most powerfully, and that to the astonishment of all who heard him." So when father came home he asked me about what he had heard, and I could not answer a word, for my countenance was fallen, and the first thought was that my foolish (as I thought) act of making an attempt to preach is now discovered to those whom I had hoped would never find it out. But when I gave my father no answer, he continued and said, "Ransom, you have been preaching, for they say that some Welborn boy preached most powerfully away down yonder at Center, on Sunday of their last meeting; and that was when you went down there." And when he said that the people were saying that I did preach most powerfully, then was my soul greatly revived, and my feelings were exalted, insomuch that I could say within myself, Yea, I will go; for if the people say so, then I can preach of a surety. Then calling to mind the sermon which I had preached, and which there was so much talk about, and the great effects of it, and then remembering how the text seemed to preach itself, I thought that I would go to the next meeting within my reach, and take for myself another text, and just go on right ahead preaching. So I went up to Mitchel's River meeting, where one of those same ministers which was at Center was to be. When I had arrived, shortly the preacher took me out to talk with me, and his conversation was about the wonderful sermon which he said I had preached. Then he continued and said to me, "Brother Welborn, you are an able speaker, and will be one of the most popular preachers in this country, if you will manage right. But you must not talk so much about predestination, for that is the great objection to your sermon which you preached at Center. I tell you, brother Welborn, if you believe in predestination, you must not preach it, for Primitive Baptists nor anybody else will have predestination in this country. If you want to be a popular preacher among the people, you must not preach particular

election." Now this preacher was the most popular preacher that the Primitives had in this section. So I concluded that I had better take this good man's advice, for he was looked upon as being a very good man. And when he had asked me to take a part in the services, I very willingly agreed. Then we went into the meeting house, and when the brethren had sang a hymn, I bowed upon my knees in prayer, and it seemed that the Lord breathed the very spirit of prayer upon the altar of my heart, for it seemed that something formed words in my heart and sent them out of my mouth; yea, new words, which I had never known before. And these words were full of great understanding. And when that flame of prayer ceased to flame up out of my heart, then I ceased to speak, for I had no more words to speak. And when I ceased to have utterance in prayer, then I arose to try to preach, and behold, I was speechless. I stood for a few moments in great shame, and then sat down. O how quickly was I abased; for my exalted notion of myself as a preacher was brought down to naught, yea, completely blasted. Then O how miserable I was. Miserable indeed were my feelings. While I was sitting, clothed in shame and confusion, I began to say within myself, O Lord, have mercy on me; for, O Lord, did not I say that I could not speak? I mourned very sore until night, and then all night. O what a miserable night was the night of the 17th of September, 1878, to me. My soul was poured out in prayer. And when the morning was come, I arose, feeling some better. My mind, for some cause unknown to me, was calm. Now this was Sunday morning, and we were soon assembled on the meeting ground. I did greatly fear the great name of Jehovah, for my mind was filled with reverential awe, while meditating on the perfections of Deity. The same preacher called on me to go forward again and open the services, and then preach; but I refused at the start, for it was more solemn to me than death, to stand as a mouth for God; and besides, I was fearful that I was not called, else God would not have stopped my mouth on the day before (for I knew not at that time that it was done to humble my pride, and to teach me that God is all in all, and that man can do nothing). But through the much exhortation and begging of the preacher and private brethren, I took courage and arose. I was no sooner on my feet than I felt the Spirit of God come upon me, and I began to speak to the people, and to warn them of the false doctrines, &c. And when I was compelled to speak of that erroneous doctrine (free will) among the Baptists, I saw the countenances of all (Baptists) those that were present (with the world) fall. When I had concluded my introductory remarks, I proceeded to read a hymn, and requested that some of the brethren lead in singing; but they refused, although there were several good sing-

ers present. I had never learned any tune at that time; but no sooner had they refused to set my song to tune, than the Spirit seemed to fill my soul with music, and I sang that good hymn which reads,

"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."

And when I had kneeled and prayed, I then arose, feeling at liberty. I read the following Scripture for the foundation of a discourse. "I say the truth in Christ Jesus, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart."—Rom. ix. 12. This was the second time I had ever read a text to preach from. While I was preaching, I could see great malice raging in the countenances of those free-will brethren, while many others of the congregation were making sport of me and laughing at my awkwardness, while some of the poorer sort of the people were shedding tears. Some of those Arminians (professed Primitive Baptists, and members of the church), were to take me down; but all was kept in secret from me, as they thought. But blessed be God, who shewed me their wickedness. Now it was that day that I saw the second baptizing I ever saw in my life, and thus ended the 18th of September 1878. I went home to my father's cabin, and was put at hard labor, which was, and had ever been, my lot when at home; yea, going through wet and dry, heat and cold, laboring in the support of my father and his weakly family. Seldom would my father agree for me to go to meeting, often speaking of my not having any clothing fit to wear to meeting. After I had arrived home, and had engaged in labor, I began to reflect. Then I was tempted to think that if I was a saint everybody would not be against me. So I was in much trouble, greatly doubting and fearing, and very hard-hearted; and my temptations were very great, for Satan did sift me as wheat. But my hope is that Jesus did pray for me when he prayed for all his elect family. Satan's continual suggestions were, that the holy Scriptures were nothing but cunningly devised fables, or stories made up and written by carnal men who had studied themselves to be wise fable writers. The tempter would also say, or send it through my mind, Perhaps your hopes are all vain; for the probability is that Christ has never been in existence. And furthermore, the devil would suggest to me that there was no such existence as Christ, God, or any eternal, infinite Being, or spiritual, eternal existence.

Now, dear reader, I cannot, for lack of language, describe my anguish of soul while under this sore temptation; for when I would bring forward my experience as a witness to confute those suggestions of Satan, he would overwhelm me in despair, by tempting me to believe that my experience was nothing more than dreams of carnality, stagnation of my

blood, or carnal imaginations. Then, when I would be laying in great agony of mind, the tempter would say, You had as well just quit your foolishness, and go on in sin, and take your fill and satisfaction in the luxuries and pleasures of this world, and thus wipe away all your troubles. Just view for a moment, the tempter would suggest, all this world's pleasures, all its glory. It is all mine, and to whom I will, I give it. Fall down and worship me, and I will give it thee. But blessed be Jesus, who being tempted, and suffered, is ever able to succor, and secure them that are tempted. For this trial or temptation came upon me like a great storm, and seized upon me with a great flood of terrors, and did engulf me in a great and horrible darkness, to destroy me. But Jesus did send the holy Comforter, who did deliver me, by bringing into my mind many of the glorious promises to those who are thus tempted, even such as these, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation." "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." "But 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 of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Now, my soul was filled with joy at the rushing in of those precious promises; yea, those temptations were lost in an overwhelming joy. During the just described season of temptations, when I would go to prayer, I would often be assaulted with many blasphemous thoughts or forms of words, rushing into my mind, even while I would be on my knees at prayer, and thus tempt me to speak some blasphemous or intolerable words. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. O how amazing is that grace, and how sweet it sounds to me, when I think of its saving, and always delivering such a wretch as I am; for I know that I was once lost, and now I feel that I am found by Jesus, and have been led by his holy Spirit. I know that I once was blind (spiritually), and now I see how my soul can be saved by the merits of Jesus. I was deaf to every spiritual sound, but now I hear the glorious gospel sound, and blessed words of the blessed Comforter. I was dumb (could not speak the Canaan language), but now I can speak the glories of King Jesus. I was dead in sin, but now I am alive in the Spirit, and to a knowledge of Christ's righteousness. When I look back, O how fearless (without godly sorrow) I was; but now I fear the Lord. So,

"Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed."

In looking back over the many severe trials which I have passed through since I first was enlisted in this holy war by the Captain of our salvation, I am made to further exclaim, O what dangers, toils and snares I have passed through; and what dreadful, horrible pains I have underwent. O how miserable I have been! and what is it that has brought me safe through all this? Is it not that amazing grace which was given in Christ Jesus for us before the world began? Yes, sure enough, it is grace that has brought me safe thus far, through all these sore trials and tribulations, great and awful dangers, which I have passed through. O how precious is that grace divine, for it has brought me safe thus far, and it will lead me home to Jesus. I remained thus feasting for a short space of time. Then I again began to be troubled, and was troubled for a long time; a portion of which siege I will now give. When I would try to read my Bible, my mind would be so sluggish that no portion of Scripture would interest it enough to enable me to remember from one line to another. It became so dull to me that I did not read. Then I would lay my book away in tears, weeping because I could not interest myself by reading the Bible, as I had in times past. I would go every night, after all were silent in sleep, and pray unto God to have mercy on me, and to make it interesting to me. After several days of thus begging and weeping, and I found no relief, I thought, O what am I to do? for God is mine enemy. O the anguish of my poor soul! Then for a time my thoughts were, O Lord, that I had died when but an infant. I thought that surely I was one of the banished reprobates. I would think, while looking back over my past life, that God would never have me, since I have been inclined to deny the holy Scriptures. While in this dreadful state, I fail for language to express my dreadful feelings; for my life was a misery to me, and I thought, If I live longer, I shall be more miserable than now. Then I desired to be away from time, but I thought, What will be my doom after death? But just at the verge of despair with me, behold my soul was of a sudden all ablaze with light, and I was lifted upon the bright wings of high heaven, and that same blessed sentence of holy writ came into my mind, "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." And also these words, "For he hath made peace through the blood of his cross." "For all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself, through Christ Jesus our Lord." This filled my soul with exceeding great joy, for my heart was uplifted with praises to God, and I could say from the very depths of my soul, Glory to God in the highest, for the gift of his darling Son; for I verily thought that Jesus had and would secure me from all those great and alarming temptations which gushed from the mouth of the

dragon. Now, dear readers, the day in which my blessed Lord delivered me from those temptations, vexations, &c., was a day of great prize to me, and a day long to be remembered by me. Those glorious words did greatly build me up, for my very thought was in heaven. My mind was completely carried away from earth, and I felt to be as light as the least feathered atom, for a few moments. Glory be to God forever. Amen. I went on in much love for some time, doubting but little as I journeyed, and at times would have great seasons of reviving, and my condition would be a condition of great rejoicing. I well remember one evening, when in my father's house, feeling very lonesome, sitting alone in person, my heart was drawn to contemplate the perfections of God, while in deep meditation upon the vanities and the vexing spirits of earth. Yea, I viewed all the powers of men and devils as nothing, comparatively, with the power of the great Jehovah; for they (the devil and men) have no power of their own; for God gives them their power and existence. I viewed all flesh as grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of grass, and thus can abide only for a short time. Then I was made to say, O how swift do my days fly! my moments fly fast; yea, my days are swifter than the ball that flies from the mouth of the rifle, and swifter than the weaver's shuttle do I pass on to eternity. And while meditating, my soul was suddenly filled with unspeakable joy, insomuch that I was carried away out of my meditations; yea, my mind was carried away from time and timely things, into sweet songs of heavenly bliss, songs which I had never heard before nor since, that I know of. Then my desire was to depart from time and be with Jesus, my dearly beloved Savior, that my sweet song might never cease, and that my soul might be forever charmed with the melodious sounds which attend my inner ear. Thus I continued to sing for some time.

WM. R. WELBORN.

"AND I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

DEAR BRETHREN, EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Some months since there appeared a request in the SIGNS from an aged sister in Middletown, N. Y., that I should write upon the above text. Shortly after this I replied through the SIGNS, at the close of an article upon another subject, that I did not feel sufficiently clear in my mind as to what the text signified, to undertake to write about it, and that I had never felt fully satisfied in my mind with any view that I had heard or seen concerning it. Since that time these words have been very often on my mind. At our association I had a talk with brother Benton Jenkins about them, which was very pleasant and suggestive to me, and now I feel like suggesting a

few thoughts that have seemed pleasant and comfortable to me, and not out of harmony with the general tenor of the Scriptures. I feel like treading softly here, and do not wish to be understood as desiring to controvert any one else, or as claiming that the views presented must be received by others as well as by me. If the thoughts I have shall be thought not to present the true meaning of the text, yet I trust they may be scriptural nevertheless. I thought it right to make these preparatory remarks, by way of explaining the reason why I now feel like writing upon this text.

The book of Revelation, as we call it, is a record of a conflict and of a final victory for the truth and those who know it. In this conflict every believer is tried, and in the victory every believer shares. I have always felt that I knew but very little about this wonderful book, so full of sublime imagery; but this much seems plain, the record of a conflict and a victory; and this conflict and victory are the substance of the whole life of the believer.

In this fourteenth chapter, Babylon is spoken of as the synonym of all that opposes itself to God. She is spoken of as a persecutor, compelling men to receive the mark of the beast in the forehead or in the hand, and to worship the beast and his image. In this compulsion which she uses, we see all the forms of suffering involved which have ever been made use of to torment the saints, and compel them to adjure their faith. The whole picture is one of terrible persecution against the saints of God. In the tenth and eleventh verses of this chapter the fearful judgments of God are described against those who worship the beast and his image, and who receive his mark.

Now in verse twelve it is said, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." "Here," right in the midst of this corruption and blasphemy and persecution; right here, where the judgments of God fall upon his enemies, is the patience of the saints. Here are they found who obey God and believe in his Son Jesus Christ. Here is where their faith and obedience and patience become manifest. Here their patient continuance in well-doing appears. God has chosen his people in this furnace of affliction, in order that the faith that is in them may be shown to be as the pure gold.

But underneath these accumulated trials and sufferings, which are heaped upon them even to death itself, is there no comfort for the saints? If they are persecuted and driven to death, is there any hope in their death? Yes! thanks be to God, every tear, every pain, every conflict, even death itself, is precious in the sight of the Lord. And for their strength and comfort John was commanded to write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

Now in writing about these words, I have no desire to controvert the views of any brother, but simply to

present the view to which I have felt myself compelled to adhere, and to give the reasons which impress that view upon my mind. I have felt myself compelled to believe that this refers to the time when believers reach the end of this life and fall asleep in Jesus, rather than to their experience of death to the law and to sin, for the following reasons:

1st. The connection itself seems more naturally to point to this. The connection is treating of the persecution of those who believe in and follow Jesus, and who consequently must have previously become dead to the law and to sin. And now to these, who are so sorely tried for the truth's sake, the cheering news is brought that even in martyrdom they are blessed.

2d. The form of the language itself seems to me to shut us up to the view that I have named. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." The last clause is a limiting one. It limits the meaning of the first clause. It shows that not all the dead are blessed; but only those of the dead that die in the Lord are blessed. If this language referred to that experience of which Paul speaks when he said, "But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died," it seems to me that the last clause would not be needed, since all who thus die are blessed. But all men die naturally, and some wicked men die violent deaths, or painful deaths, as well as the saints. But they are not blessed. Only those who die in the Lord are blessed. Suppose some one should hear the apostle say, "Blessed are the dead," and then should ask, "Do you mean that all the dead are blessed?" and then he should answer, "No, but the dead that die in the Lord are blessed," would not this express the force of this language simply and plainly? But if this supposed apostle were speaking of heartfelt experience, and I knew that he was doing so, and he should say, "Blessed are the dead ones," I should know that all such are blessed, and would not need that any limiting clause should be added.

3d. Another reason in my mind is the phrase, "In the Lord." I do not think that this phrase is ever used in any other place in the Scriptures with reference to the work that attends the new birth, while similar phrases are often used of the death of the bodies of believers. I will quote some expressions that seem to me similar to this, which unquestionably do refer to the temporal death of the believer. "The dead in Christ shall rise first."—1 Thess. iv. 16. "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 14. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." And in other places similar expressions are used of the death of believers. And I think that it is only reasonable to suppose that these words in the text must mean the same thing as they do when used in other places in the New Testament.

I have thus candidly and kindly, I trust, assigned my reasons for think-

ing that this language alludes to the death of the bodies of believers. But I shall not feel grieved if brethren differ from me, and I hope that none will feel grieved if I differ from them. I hope to speak of some reasons why the saints are blessed in their death, before I close this letter; but before doing so, I feel to speak of some expressions which follow.

"From henceforth." That is, from the time of their death. Just as Paul has said in his second letter to Timothy, written before his death but a short time, and, as far as known, the last letter that he ever wrote. He said, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. * * * Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day;" that is, the day of my departure. On this side was sorrow, pain and conflict; but on the other side, rest and unveiled joy. We are exceeding sad when loved saints die, because we look at the marble features, the coffin, the grave and the decay; but faith says, as it triumphs over these gloomy scenes that appear, that such as die in the Lord, from that time on are blessed. Should we not rejoice, then, when a loved one dies in the Lord? If we have gained the evidence that a loved one is in the Lord, we know that whether he lives or dies he is still in the Lord, and in any event is blessed.

"Yea, saith the Spirit [the voice is still from heaven,] that they may rest from their labors." I will just remark here that the force of the word "labors," in the original Greek, is sorrow, anxiety, trouble. Now the assurance is held out that these persecuted and martyred ones are blest when they die, because they rest from all these fears and foes, these sorrows and sufferings which pressed them down and were a heavy burden to them. It is more blessed to die than to live. Paul thought so, for he said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." And again he said, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." This expression seems to me to favor the view that this whole text refers to the temporal death of believers. It seems to me that it cannot refer to the work of the new birth, because instead of resting from their cares, troubles, sorrows and anxieties, right there these things are but beginning with them. This seems to me to be Bible testimony, and I know that it has been my experience. Remember, the word "labors" does not mean work, in the ordinary sense of the term, but sorrows and conflicts. These abide with the child of God until death, and then we shall rest from them.

"And their works do follow them." I frankly confess that this expression has seemed to me more difficult to understand than any other words in the text. It seems to me equally hard to understand, whatever view we may take of the general meaning of the text. Some other scriptural expressions have of late come into my

mind in connection with this text, which seem to me to present a similar thought. I will quote one or two right here. In John v. 29, it is said, "They that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." In Revelation xx. 12, 13, it is said, "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Now, whatever these texts may mean, it seems to me that this expression, "And their works do follow them," has something of the same meaning. The words, thoughts, purposes and works of believers are the evidences by which he that is a believer is known. The word "works" here means something done. It is not the same word at all as the word "labors" in the preceding clause. Paul said, in 2 Timothy, in the same connection as the words quoted in the preceding paragraph, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." The same can be said in measure of every believer. But at death the course is finished, and the works are all done. They are sealed up. They, too, may be said to rest. God does not need them in order to judge the saints, but he does treasure up the works of his people, as well as their tears. These are only some suggestions with regard to this last clause, which at least may call the attention of others to these words. There certainly is nothing here to feed Arminian pride, since whatever of righteous works are found in us, God has himself wrought them all; and what God has wrought in us will not be lost to us, but must go with us into heaven itself. I think that these are the works that follow the saint, even when he dies. These are works that he does not desire to be separated from, and they follow him. He realizes the power of the same works in the world of glory. God wrought them in him here, and they were apparent in his outward conduct; and in that world the same work shall result in perfect conformity to the divine image, and in producing everlasting praises and obedience. Do we not want these works to follow us, my brethren? Blessed indeed is he who dies in the Lord, since he ceases from all his sorrows, and all that is heavenly in its origin follows him.

Now, ere I close, I feel like suggesting a few things which make the death of the believer a blessed lot. We can see and understand but little of the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, in that world; but yet some glimpses are now and then given us of an infinite glory. Paul saw unspeakable things, which it was not possible that he should utter. But some things we do know. The psalmist said, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." And Paul said that death, as well as all other things, belongs to the saints. But we know that death in itself is called an enemy. It is the result of sin. Therefore it must be that which is beyond death

that makes it precious in the sight of the Lord. If, as Paul said, "to live is Christ, and to die is gain," there must be something peculiarly glorious on the other side; and some things at least we do know will be true there. We shall be free from all pain, sickness and sorrow there. We shall not then be subjected to temptations and trials of every sort and degree. We shall know no more sin, either within or without. These are things that are not in that heavenly world. They are here, and give us grief all our journey through. In that world we shall be filled with righteousness and peace and joy, and so shall we see the holy One. And there we shall have every large desire fulfilled, and shall see and be like Jesus; and our communion with him, so often interrupted here, shall not be broken there. Here our fellowship with saints is often marred by self and sin, by jealousies and misunderstanding; but nothing can mar our fellowship there. These things at least we know will be true of that world; but yet our vision is dim and uncertain, and our hearts cannot grasp the glories in store for saints.

"How blest the righteous when he dies."

Since we believe that these things are true, two considerations seem to follow. First, we need not grieve because believers in Jesus die, and we need not ourselves shrink from death; and why should we be overmuch distressed because of sorrow, trial and persecution, since it is all so soon to end? And, second, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? If we are pilgrims and strangers, and our true home is beyond, and it is so bright and glorious, it certainly seems that we shall feel to bestow but a passing glance upon all this world's show and passion and glory, as we pass along. If we are citizens of heaven, how heavenly should we behave ourselves on our journey thither.

May God grant us all such a heartfelt knowledge of his word that we shall be stirred up and animated and encouraged, and press daily toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. And when our time comes, may we be able to meet death with the assurance that he cannot harm us, since we are in the Lord, and when we die shall die in him.

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., July 19, 1886.

A SERMON BY ELDER H. J. REDD.

ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN MARCH, 1886.

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—I have for some time had a desire to come and preach to you, and I feel thankful to God that he has spared my life and permitted me to meet you on the present occasion. I am satisfied that when the Lord calls and qualifies a man to preach the gospel of the Son of God, he has a certain field of labor marked out for him, and that he will not accomplish much good anywhere else. Whether *this* is a part of my field of labor, I know not. But we

know that the Lord directed the apostles where and when to preach; for we read that on one occasion the disciples "essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not." And even Christ "did not many mighty works" at a certain place, "because of their unbelief;" and he told his disciples that when they entered a house or city, and they would not hear them, to shake the dust off their feet for a testimony against them. For, said he, "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city." And so, dear friends, as much as I feel impressed to preach to those who desire to hear me, so I feel warranted in saying that the Lord always and under all circumstances goes before the preaching of the gospel, and prepares the hearts of his people for the reception of his word; and whenever and wherever he sends one of his ministers to preach the gospel, there is always some one present whose heart the Lord has opened to hear that gospel. And if the Lord has sent me here to preach the gospel to-day, there is some one here ready to hear it. And as the Lord sent me here to preach the gospel, so he sent you here to hear it.

"Now Paul saw in a vision a man standing, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us;" and the writer says, "Immediately therefore we endeavored to go, gathering assuredly, that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." Also the "Spirit said to Philip, Arise and go toward the south country." So Philip arose and went; and as he went, he saw the Ethiopian eunuch riding in his chariot; and the Spirit bade him to go and join himself to the chariot. And he ran and joined himself to the chariot, and heard the eunuch read a portion of the prophecy of Isaiah. The portion of Scripture that he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." And Philip said unto him, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" And he said, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" And he took Philip up into the chariot with him, and said, "I pray thee, of whom speakest the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" And Philip "began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." And as they went, they came to a certain water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" And Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." Now all these things show conclusively that the Lord always directs the preaching of the gospel, and that he also directs those to whom the gospel must be preached. And I am satisfied that none of the other apostles would have answered

the same purpose here that Philip did. It must be Philip to preach to the Ethiopian eunuch, and it must be Peter to preach to Cornelius.

Now it was not the preaching of Philip that quickened the eunuch into divine life, for it is expressly stated that he was returning from Jerusalem, whither he had been to worship; besides, his study of the holy Scriptures showed that God, by his holy Spirit, had already quickened him into divine life; hence he was earnestly searching after the truth as it is in Jesus. I am frequently asked this question, "Why do you preach? If the preaching of the gospel is not for the purpose of saving sinners, what is it for, and what do you preach for?" I venture the assertion that there are persons in this congregation to-day that can answer that question—persons that know why I am preaching to them. It is true that the Scriptures say, "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." And also, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God." "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." Also, Paul says to Timothy, "That from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." You see the *faith* must be there; and Jesus is the "author and finisher of our faith." But none of these quotations prove that either the Scriptures or the preaching of the gospel have anything to do with saving sinners with an everlasting salvation. "Well," you say, "what are the Scriptures for?" Let the Scriptures themselves answer that question, and here is the answer: "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." Now this is what the Scriptures are for; and I say here that the last one of God's grace, who are redeemed by the "precious blood of Christ," would surely have been saved with an everlasting salvation, if there had never been a *Bible printed* nor a gospel sermon preached by man. This is a bold assertion, but I make it without fear of successful contradiction, from the fact that we are taught in the Scriptures that the "blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." He "entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." And "through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God, to purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the true and living God." And he bowed his head upon the cross, and said, "It is finished." Now if anything else is re-

quired to save sinners and cleanse them from all sin, then the atonement made by Christ was insufficient. Besides, the apostle says, "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." Not by the preaching of the gospel, not by the Bible, not by the Sunday School, not by money, means or instrumentalities, but "*by his life*." "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." Hence the apostle asks the question, "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." But again, "He that spared not his own Son; but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not *with him also freely given us all things*?" Ah, this is enough to hush to silence the doctrine of Arminianism, and cause it to blush with shame forever. Let me quote that passage again, "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?" In this we see that God has delivered up his Son for us all, and that with him he freely gives us all things. The salvation of God, which is in Christ Jesus, is a free gift; we do not have to do something to obtain it; then it would not be free. But it is written, "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." And again, "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."

Now we see that God's people are saved and called according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given to them in Christ Jesus before the world began, and not according to their works. Hence it is a free, unmerited gift, and all that are saved are effectually called with an holy calling. I know it is said that God calls *every body*, and that one may so persistently resist the workings and the beseechings of the Holy Spirit, and refuse to fall in with the overtures of mercy and be saved upon the terms of the gospel, as to cause the Holy Spirit to take its everlasting flight, never more to return. But this is blasphemy. For Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." And again, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." When those quickened

sinners on the day of Pentecost cried out and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 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." And there is a prophecy which says, "For upon mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall by deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." Now this shows that, where the Holy Spirit quickens, and the Lord calls and gives repentance, remission of sins and deliverance are sure to follow. For says an inspired writer, "I know that what God doeth, it shall stand forever." Another inspired writer has said, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." The term *all Israel*, here embraces all the redeemed people of God, whether Jews or Gentiles. Now Peter thought that the Gentiles were not entitled to the blessings of the gospel. The Scribes and Pharisees thought that *they* were entitled to the kingdom of God, because of their fleshly relation to Abraham; but Christ said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." But a prophet had said, "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." And again, "All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." And the preaching of Peter to Cornelius and his household was the beginning of the fulfillment of that prophecy. It is stated that Cornelius was a just man, and one that feared God, and gave much alms to the people; and while he was praying in his house an angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and told him that his prayers and alms were had in remembrance before God, and to send men to Joppa, and inquire for one Simon Peter, who lodged with one Simon, a tanner, whose house was by the sea-shore, and that Peter would tell him words whereby he (Cornelius) and his household should be saved. Thus we see how minutely the angel described the place where Peter was lodging, so that there might be no mistake made. And now while the Lord was preparing Cornelius for the reception of his word, he was also preparing Peter to preach that word to him: so we find Peter going up upon the house-top. And while they made ready a repast, Peter became hungry, and fell asleep, and behold, he saw in a vision a sheet knit by the four corners, and let down from heaven; and in it were all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And a voice said, "Arise, Peter, kill, and eat." But Peter said, "Not so, Lord; for nothing that is common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth." But the voice said, "What God hath cleansed, call not thou common or unclean." This was done

three times, and all was received back up into heaven again. Now while Peter thought upon the vision, wondering in himself what it should mean, behold, three men, whom Cornelius had sent, were at the gate inquiring for Peter. So Peter went down, and after learning their errand, called them in, and lodged them till the morrow; and then with six other brethren he accompanied them to the house of Cornelius. When they arrived, Cornelius was ready to hear the word of the Lord. He rehearsed the vision to Peter; and when they had assembled in the house, Cornelius said, "And thou hast well done that thou hast come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." See how readily and humbly Cornelius recognized the hand of God in all this arrangement; thus showing that he had already been taught of the Lord, and that he was blessed of the Lord, called with an holy calling, and that he was the happy recipient of God's grace, although he had never yet heard the gospel from the lips of man. But Christ is the great "Preacher of righteousness" in the "congregation of saints." He went and "preached to the spirits in prison," "when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah;" and he does the same thing yet, whether any *man* be present or not, as he is not dependent upon man to carry the gospel. So Peter said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons [that is, nationalities]; but in *every nation*, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Cornelius was working righteousness, because God was *working in him* "both to will and to do his own good pleasure;" and that, too, before the gospel was preached to him. So he was a subject of gospel address, was ready to hear the gospel, and also to believe it. And while Peter expounded the word of the Lord, the "Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." And Peter said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

From all these circumstances, we conclude that God alone calls and qualifies men to preach the gospel, and that he assigns to each one of his called ministers a special field of labor; that he prepares for the reception of that gospel those whom he designs to save, or *has* saved; that it is the Holy Spirit, and not the preaching of the gospel, that quickens dead sinners; that it is the atonement of Christ, and *nothing else*, that saves sinners with an everlasting salvation; and that those only who have been saved, and called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to the purpose and grace of God, given to them in Christ Jesus before the world began, are subjects of gospel address; and of all such characters it is said, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." Amen.—*Primitive Monitor*.

DECHERD, Tenn.

THE subject of predestination is so copious and full as to details, as it permeates and has to do with the entire system of salvation, I can only allude to some of its leading features, and ask the interested reader to examine with care, and test what I write by the inspired word, and supply and draw out to their legitimate results the positions taken. Predestination, then, and its counterpart, election, do not only operate in adjusting the preliminaries and determining the end, but also prescribe and appoint all the intermediate means or agencies conducive to the salvation of the Lord's people. I will again call attention to the chain of blessings and connections, referred to in a former article, in Romans viii. As we are taught that the love of God is the foundation of all those imminent acts of his that contribute to the salvation of his elect people, we should not think it a passion in him, as it really is in his creatures, and moves from some cause out of or extraneous to himself, as that would be subversive of his independence, immutability and divine sovereignty. The love of God, then, is his eternal and unchangeable benevolence, and coincides with his will, purpose and determination to save his people. And as this love and God's purpose, as to communication, are eternal, and the objects of it are in themselves sinners, it cannot be predicated on anything in them or wrought by them. But as united to Christ, their Head, and partakers of his benefits, the elect were everlastingly the objects of this immutable love. Even the merits of Christ, as the Head and Redeemer of his elect, is not a motive to this pure love that God bears to them. As the gift and mediation of Christ are the effects of the love and good pleasure of God to them, they cannot therefore be the cause of it. As the elect were chosen in and united to Christ, their spiritual Head, so they were predestined to be conformed to his image. For in their relation to the earthy Adam they bear his image and reflect his character, as his sin did not terminate in himself only, but affected his entire race; not alone as to the blessings with which he and his posterity were invested, such as natural life and its attendant blessings, but they were affected also as to their state of being, by virtue of that relation; for the federal head of his race, Adam sustained their persons and acted as their representative. They are therefore in equity sharers of his punishment, being partakers of his sin, as by his offense or sin judgment came upon all men to condemnation.—Rom. v. 18. And from hence follow all the misery and calamities of this life, being by the appointment of God the inseparable concomitants of sin. When we say that natural life, with its attendant blessings, was given Adam's race in him, we do not mean that it was given in mass, in a general way, to be dealt out as the exigency of his creatures might require, but that each individual that has been or ever shall be born into the world had

that special, definite life with all the qualities, physical, mental and moral, given them in Adam, which each receives by birth of a natural parent. And Solomon says there is a time to be born and a time to die.—Eccl. iii. 2. They are all born at the destined time and place in their several generations, as God has set the bounds of their habitation, and divided to the nations their inheritance, and set the bounds of the people.—Acts xvii. 26; Deut xxxii. 8. And if this is true of communities or nations, it is true of individuals who compose them; for surely he that provided this life, and appointed the time when and how long it should be enjoyed, determined the location of its enjoyment. The great and noble, or such as occupy an exalted place, or act a conspicuous part in the affairs of this life (as the Lord has use and place for all his creatures), are no more the objects of his special care and protection than the most humble and insignificant in the relations of this life. But as God has a destined sphere of action for each and every individual to whom he has or will give being in the different and successive generations of earth, so he fits or qualifies them for, and assigns them each their special and particular place of action in the scale of being, all of whom he directs to the grand end of their creation, his own eternal glory. Thus in the successive ages of the world, God has raised up great men to fill important posts, in both church and state; not because they were in themselves qualified for such positions, but having a destined place for them, he raises up, calls and qualifies them for that very purpose. Many instances of the kind are matters of record, of both good and wicked men. For specimens, I will refer to the apostles and prophets of the first; Pharaoh, Cyrus, Judas, Herod, Pontius Pilate, and all concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, of the latter. Man is really a very dependent being. But as Satan said to our mother Eve, "Thou shalt be as gods," so he says to her apostate sons. Though a suggestion so opposite to, and the very reverse of what we feel to be our fallen state, and alike contrary to reason, Scripture and experience, yet owing to the depravity and pride of the human heart, men not only admit, but relish the deception, and incline to the belief that the father of lies did in this instance speak the truth. The doctrine of predestination, however, digs up this potent delusion by the very roots. As the Scriptures assure us, all things are of God; that our times, and all things and events to which we are related, are from him; that man in all his wanderings, though his heart devises his way, the Lord directs his steps. In his heart there are many devices, yet the counsel of the Lord, as the director and regulator of all his movements, stands; for he has searched him and knows him, even his down-sitting and uprising, understands his thoughts afar off, compasses his path and his lying down, and is acquainted with all his ways. There is not a word in his tongue but

he knoweth it altogether, and encompasses him by his power. Such knowledge is so wonderful, he cannot attain to it, neither can he elude his Spirit, or flee from his presence. If he ascends to heaven, God is there; if he makes his bed in hell, he is there; if he dwells in the uttermost parts of the sea, there shall he be held and led by the hand of God; and if darkness cover, even the night shall be light about him. Therefore the eternal God is his refuge, to uphold him by the arm of his power, and direct, guard and protect him by the unseen, yet incessant and ever-active agency of his providence.—Job xxiv. 1; Psa. cxxxix. 1-12; Prov. xvi. 9; xix. 21. As God takes care of sparrows, numbers the hairs of man's head, so that the sparrow cannot fall to the ground, nor a hair from its pore, without license from him, it would be absurd to suppose the man on whose head the hair grows could fall without a commission from him, though the commission be executed by a wicked agent. And if God thus takes such special care of individuals, so he does of mankind in general. Therefore in all the convulsions and mutations of time, commotions and revolutions of empires, kingdoms and republics, though attended with the most calamitous and destructive consequences, and things seem huddled together in blind confusion, and wild anarchy seems to reign supreme, yet to the omniscient eye of the omnipotent God all things move in harmony with his eternal counsel and purpose. As he has his ends in it, he will accomplish his ends by or of it; and if the conflict of arms and the missiles of death seem to fly at random, dealing out destruction and death, yet God directs their every movement, and has as special charge of men, their head and hair, as when in the most retired and seemingly secure moments of their lives. With a sense of the wonderful works of God warm on his heart, no wonder the royal psalmist exclaimed, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all. The earth is full of thy riches." And again, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." Another valiant soldier says, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord? glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." And yet another, from long and repeated experience, with due reverence and deep humility and resignation, makes the following confession: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Exodus xv.; Psalm civ. 24; cxlv. 10; Jer. x. 20. It appears, therefore, from Scripture, experience and observation, that the business of man below is to act in the sphere, fill the several offices assigned him, finish his allotted course of action and suffering, when God, his Creator and preserver, will remove him to the invisible world.

I will now return from this digression, into which it seems my mind was inadvertently drawn, to the main subject. I will observe, however, that if God provided natural life for

his creatures, puts them in possession of it, and directs all their movements from the beginning to the end of it, it would be very absurd to suppose he does not observe with care and guard with equal vigilance and faithfulness the objects of his everlasting love, as to their eternal life. As God's elect are predestinated to the conformation of his Son's image, so by his grace he calls them to that state; and as natural life, and all the blessings of that life, were given Adam's race in him, in the divine economy eternal life and all spiritual blessings were given God's elect in Christ before time, who, as a middle person, sustained their character and acted in their stead, by conforming to the law, both as to its precepts and penalty; and for this reason he bears the different titles given him in the Scriptures; yet the Father, Son and Spirit are co-eternal, and constitute a trinity in unity, and are therefore one in counsel, one in purpose, and one in final accomplishment of the things decreed. And as the eternal Son is the appointed Mediator, as the Head and Savior of his body, the church, so all the infinite perfections of Deity centre and harmonize in him. He is thus the likeness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholds all things by the word of his power.—Heb. i. 3. Thus grace reigns by and through him unto eternal life, sin having reigned unto death through Adam, our natural head.—Rom. v. 21. Grace being the employed agent in the work of salvation, it is highly necessary we should have correct views of it, both as it is in itself, and as it operates in the work of salvation. Grace, then, is the eternal, free favor or love of God, and the source of all the blessings we receive, either as to time or eternity, and is therefore sovereign, and so it operates in its donations to the apostate sons of Adam. Thus the apostle says, "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." "It is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." "And if 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."—Rom. iv. 4-16. We learn from the inspired teacher that grace and works are so diametrically opposite, both in their very nature and as they operate, that they cannot possibly unite in the same cause, or conduce to the same end; the former donating its favors freely in a sovereign way, upon the guilty, helpless and ruined, while the latter is received as a debt or bounty, upon the principle of equity. Though grace is absolutely sovereign in its character, and perfectly free in donating its favors, which Scripture and experience concurring establishing beyond the shadow of doubt, yet there is probably no term more used that is less understood and more perverted and abused by most professors. When the apostle, in his address to his Ephesian brethren, after referring to their awful state before conversion,

as dead in trespasses and sins, tells them that, for the riches of his (God's) mercy and covenant love which he bore to them, he quickened them together with Christ, and saved them by grace, I understand him to teach that grace reigned in the beginning, and that it reigns in the progress and final consummation of their salvation; first, in the eternal counsel of peace, and in the eternal Son mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other. And as grace reigned in the eternal counsel, in the plan of salvation, so it reigns in the evolution of that plan, by securing all the succeeding and depending links in the chain of blessings, predestination, invincible calling, justification and glorification. And as these blessings are secured to the church through Christ, their Head, "Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven;" and thus the two natures unite in Christ, as Mediator and Executor of the everlasting covenant. Then, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Psalm lxxxv. 10, 11; Zech vi. 13; Rom. viii. 31.

I will write next on effectual calling, if this meets with a favorable reception.

Your brother in hope,
JAMES WAGNER.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., Dec. 27, 1830.

DEAR BROTHER GRENNELL:—Having understood that you was aggrieved with the church with which I labor, in connection with myself also, on account of the letter which was written in answer to the communication which we received from the Orange County Baptist Society, apprehensive as I am that your grief has originated in a misunderstanding of our intention in that communication, I feel myself called upon by a sense of duty to address to you the following lines, hoping thereby, with the divine blessing on my labor, to remove all difficulties and to perpetuate that bond of christian love and fellowship which has hitherto existed between thee and me as brethren and fellow-laborers, and also between thee and the church in this place. In the first place, I wish to refer you to the decision of the Association on the queries from the New Vernon and Wallkill churches. The committee, of which you were chairman, recommended that "individuals and churches should believe and judge for themselves," and act accordingly, (see minutes). Your report was adopted. In perfect accordance with your own advice, we have "believed," "judged" and "acted." Have we done rightly? If right, do not censure us; if wrong, do not forget we were advised on the subject, and forgive. I have been told that you said you considered that by our letter this church hath withdrawn all fellowship from you and all the brethren concerned in the Orange County Baptist Society. I can assure you that this was very far from our intentions as a church, and nothing more remote from my own meaning on the subject. I confess I have never had any fellowship for any

of the popular institutions of the day. Some of my reasons I will give in a subsequent part of this letter. But believe me, my dear brother, since the death of the venerable Elder Van Velsen, I have never found a minister of the gospel for whom I felt so much nearness, christian love and fellowship, as yourself. I have and do still love you for the work's sake. Considering that the present is a day of error, there are probably few to be found who are, generally speaking, more united in the doctrine of salvation by grace. I do not know that we differ essentially in regard to the doctrine, discipline or ordinances of the house of God. In christian experience, I believe we have both drank at the same fountain. Our difference of views is wholly of a different nature. As far as your kindness has applied to me as an individual, I am not insensible to the laws of gratitude. But you will suffer a remark concerning my ordination, and your recommending me to the favor of the brethren of this church. And, first, I think you had higher motives in view than my personal interest or accommodation. You acted for God in these particulars. Secondly, I did not dissemble when examined by the council: I answered all your questions honestly, according to the best of my abilities. And I am now precisely what I was then in regard to missionary and other societies; and farther, I am now what I took you to be on the same subjects. There has been some difference of opinion between me and some of my brethren touching the propriety of answering the letter which we received from the society. Some have deemed it inexpedient to make any reply, but I insisted on a reply being sent, upon the following grounds. First, because your circular requested it; secondly, because whenever we are collectively or individually called upon to co-operate in an undertaking which we cannot fellowship, I believe it to be our indispensable duty to give our reasons why we cannot co-operate. Indeed, I do not think it would be using you well to pass your communication by in silence. If there was anything in our letter which was abusive, or that amounted to a disfellowship of the brethren, any farther than to disapprove of the institution, I have not discovered it for meant it. I disfellowship the Orange County Baptist Society, as such, because it is in my opinion, without example or precept in the Bible, which I profess to take as my standard of faith and practice. Because it will not (in my opinion) subserve the interests of Zion. Because neither Jesus Christ nor his apostles have ever established any society other than the church. Because all other societies are invented by man. Because this society receives members for fifty cents each, without regard to any other qualification than the cash. Because infidels and other corrupt men can thereby become members of a Baptist society without regeneration or immersion. Because this institution requires in its organization

such officers as are unknown in the Bible. Because no Executive Committee or Board have a right (in my opinion) to control the messengers of Immanuel, by directing their course, telling them where to go, how long to stay and what remuneration to receive, &c. Because no minister of Christ has a right to contract in the above manner, with any board or body of men. Because the Executive Committee having all this authority vested in them by the society, are chosen by a majority of votes given by any one, "saint or sinner," who will purchase a birth-right in the institution. Because the same honors are ascribed to simliar institutions that Aaron ascribed to the golden calf, viz., "These be thy gods which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." You will recollect it was said at Brookfield that "this Association owes its existence to Missionary Societies," &c. Because this institution makes a schism in the church, sows discord between very friends, divides churches, &c. Because this institution is calculated, like all similar institutions, to unite the church and the world, or state, by incorporating materials from both, into a religious confederation. Lastly, because the Lord of the harvest is as mighty and able to thrust laborers into his vineyard as ever, and "His arm is not shortened," and he has directed his children to pray unto him for all these things.

I have given thirteen or fourteen reasons (out of the hundred which might be added) why I am conscientiously opposed to the society in question. Remove these difficulties, and I will endeavor to co-operate with you. Till then, I ask only for that liberty of conscience which you and the association recommended at our last session. I have much more to say to you on this, but my sheet will contain but a small portion of what I would communicate. If this subject makes a disfellowship between you and me, you must make it so, I do not. I consider you in an error in this particular, and I pray earnestly that the Lord may bring you out, and make you shine brighter than ever. In the meantime let me admonish you as a brother to reconsider the whole matter, and ask counsel of God, who giveth liberally. Let not the glittering bait of popularity, nor any other temptation, cause you to err. Leave the fame and honor of all human inventions to men, whose element is in such things. Go unto your Lord without the camp, shun not to bear his reproach. Tremble not for the Ark; God will take care of it. Be a good soldier for Jesus. Be faithful unto death, and God will give you a crown of glory.

I consider the representative plan, given by the New York Association, far preferable to the Orange County Baptist Society, if I understand it; but I am not wholly satisfied with that. If our churches would, by voluntary contributions (without selling membership), raise a fund in each church, let it be deposited in the hands of one of the deacons or other

members. Let the church draw from this fund, from time to time such drafts as they shall think proper, and give it to such poor, itinerant preachers as they are in fellowship with. I should be much pleased with such an arrangement, wholly carried on under the direction of the churches as independent bodies; or, otherwise, as I proposed at Brookfield, I will bear an equal share of the burden with my brethren in the ministry, if they on their part will divide their time and services more equally among all the churches in the association.

The church at Newfoundland have at length consented to give brother J. Abers a council. They have named brethren Broom, N. Martin, Deacon Clay Brown, and a member of Newton Church. Joel has sent for me and brother Harding to come down as witnesses, the first Saturday in January next. I expect to go. I do most earnestly request your personal presence at that meeting, as much will depend on the development of facts then and there to be made; also the decision of the council. You know something of the nature of the difficulty, and if it should so turn out that the council should decide against brother Abers, brethren Harding, Ball, Terry, Beebe, and others, would be implicated, you know. I wish you and all our ministering brethren, if possible, to attend, that they may know the utmost of this affair, &c.

I have been afflicted with a very bad cold ever since I saw you. My wife is not in very good health. It is a general time of colds. Remember me affectionately to sister Grenell, and the brethren and friends at Orange. Write me, if you have time to spare, and be assured I remain with affection,

Yours in the best of bonds,
GILBERT BEEBE.

P. S.—Elder Harding and I talk of going down the mountain-road. If so, we shall not pass by your house. Do not let that hinder you attending the meeting. I do think, if the case were reversed, I would attend on your request, and certainly you are as good and obliging as I am. At all events, I trust I shall see you, going or coming, if not at Newfoundland. If I write any more on this sheet, I shall cheat the paper market.

G. B.

PATERSON, N. J., July, 1836.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I find Elder Grenell's reply was written March 22, 1831, stating that he did not receive Elder Beebe's letter until three or four weeks after it was written, consequently he could not comply, &c. I have taken much pleasure in copying dear Elder Beebe's letter, for I recognize a kind, forbearing spirit, but no compromising with error. The book from which I copied it is a borrowed one, or I would have sent it.

Humbly yours,
M. HELTINGS.

ATHENS, Ga., June 1, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am truly sorry to see such a disposition among our people south to discontinue the SIGNS; but you know, and have correctly stated the reason; it is because of so many other papers being started up, and most of them are cheaper, or at least cost less money, and our people are as a general thing becoming poorer constantly, having relied on raising cotton to buy every other thing with, until it has become so low in price that it will barely pay the expense of raising; and a great many are in debt, with no prospect of getting out. But the future for us all is in the hand of him that doeth all things well, and I hope he will open a way for the SIGNS to be sustained, and put it into the hearts of those who write for its columns to follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another, and let all things be done to edification. I fully indorse the views, in the main, of those brethren who believe in the certain or absolute predestination of all things. Yet the apostle says, "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Of course this does not convey the idea that any point of doctrine is to be sacrificed; yet it seems to me that if any point of doctrine is so controverted that to constantly insist on either view of it would lead to division among the children of God, it would be better to dwell less on that point, and more on other points, on which we can all be agreed. Again, the apostle signifies that through the knowledge of the strong, a weak brother for whom Christ died may perish. And we all know that if a young child was forced to eat constantly such food as was adapted to the taste and condition of grown people, it would certainly result most disastrously to it. But perhaps those brethren who oppose the predestination of all things may be ready to say, We are the strong, and you are the weak. Well, if so, then they should deal with us as such, and not try to compel us to be as strong as they are; for it is to the Master we stand or fall; not to the brethren. And O that brethren all over the land could accept the admonition of Joseph to his brethren, and see that they fall not out by the way; and of the Lord by the prophet, and stand in the ways, and see, inquire for the old paths, and walk therein; for in so doing we are assured that we shall find rest for our souls. I have often thought of a remark I once heard our lamented brother, J. L. Purington, make, with regard to himself. He said he reminded himself of a sign-board that was always pointing out the way to others, and never walking in the way; and I fear we are all more or less afflicted with the same complaint, and consequently consume most of our time in telling what we believe, and insisting that others should believe the same, and finding great fault of all who differ from us on any point of doctrine, and seldom think of showing our faith by our

works; forgetting that faith without works is dead, and that the way to show our faith is by our works, and that our works certainly do in some sense justify us. Our Articles of Faith say that good works are the fruit of faith, and only justify us in the sight of men and angels, and are evidences of our gracious state. And Paul certainly did not differ from his view when he said, "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God." Nor James, when he asked the question, "Was not Abraham justified by works when he offered up his son?" And was not Rahab justified by works when she had received the messengers and sent them another way? The plain inference is that they were justified by works; and surely by men they are justified, whether by angels or not; for all Christians certainly justify their course in obeying God and looking to the best interest of his children. And it is in this way we understand the text in Revelation, "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." I heartily indorse the sayings of our esteemed brother, Elder Vanmeter, in the last number of the SIGNS, with regard to the various points on which the children of God differ, which I think are strictly in harmony with the Scripture that requires each one of us to examine ourselves, to see if we are in the faith. May the Lord of his infinite mercy grant that we may all be enabled in his light to see light, to walk as children of light, committing our way to the Lord, and trusting in him, with the assurance that he will bring it to pass; the *it* meaning, whatsoever is best for us. Dear brethren, I began writing with a view of making you a remittance only; but thoughts came, and I have penned them down, as you see; and if you think there is anything in what I have written that would be edifying, and nothing hurtful to the children of God, you may publish it, leaving out the business portion of it. My love to you and all the household of faith.

F. M. McLEROY.

LANCASTER, Ohio, March 4, 1886.

DEAR EDITORS:—In reading your editorial of the fifteenth of January, and many of the communications, my heart burned within me, and I would like to talk with all of you. You told all my dark trials. I feel truly that I cannot kindle a spark to warm myself by. When my Lord hath withdrawn himself, I seek after him, but do not know where to find him. If I only could write and talk as other sisters can, it would be a great pleasure; but I am ignorant and unlearned. In reading the SIGNS I often think I feel as the disciples that said, "Did not our heart burn within us, as he talked with us by the way?" That burning love binds us together like a three-fold cord. And you, dear sister, Mary Parker, what a glorious sight you have of your Re-

deemer, and how loftily you can proclaim his glory. I am so glad your "all" is in the dear Redeemer. O may he be a balm to you in all your sickness and pain. Your kindred in the flesh were greatly endeared to me, especially your father, mother, uncle Albert and his wife. And now my heart mourns and is sorrowful for your dear aunt in the far west. May the good Lord be more than a father, husband or son to her, and may he enable her to say, The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. This is the prayer of an unworthy sister, if one at all. I have often, very often, wanted to go and see you, and your father, when he lived. I never saw him after his afflictions. Three years ago I passed your town. I told brother Cole that on my return I would stop and see you, but I was hindered, and have always been so. But, dear sister, you have my heartfelt sympathy; and may the good Lord be merciful to you in all your afflictions, and may I have the pleasure of reading some more of your glorious communications. It was your father that laid me in the "liquid grave." I saw you when a babe only a week old, and now I can read your glorious proclamations of salvation with joy, but have no hope of ever seeing you in this world again. And you, dear brother, Wm. R. Welborn, write on. I am always anxious to hear more of the Lord's dealings with you. You speak of your poverty, but you have a great promise. Not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the low things, yea, the base things, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are. I do hope you will visit us. We are few in number, but a peaceful little band here in Lancaster. I often think if I had such revelations as you have had, I would have no doubts. I am a poor, helpless sinner, but I cannot charge God with one of my shortcomings; but I do thank God that he has shown me that I am a sinner. You who are strong can eat meat, but I have to take milk.

Dear brethren editors, you will bear with me, and I hope all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will pity my ignorance, instead of deriding me for taking my pen. Brethren Beebe, I leave this to your better judgment. If it looks as imperfect to you as it does to me, I hope it will not be printed; at any rate, do not crowd out better matter for this. I try to have other brethren send for the SIGNS, but none feel able. But as long as I can raise two dollars, I cannot think of doing without it. My paper is read by others till it is pretty well used up. With an earnest prayer for the peace, unity, prosperity and welfare of Zion, I will close.

Your sister, as I sometimes hope, in Christ,

SARAH B. PEARSE.

LAUREL BRANCH, N. C., Feb. 20, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—For some little time I have been thinking

of writing a short note, giving a short sketch of my experience. I was raised in the mountainous country of North Carolina, where but few Primitive Baptists ever visited. I was so well acquainted with the Methodists, Missionary and "Union Baptists" (as they call themselves), that I believed their ways to be right; and when I had the opportunity of hearing a Primitive Baptist preach, I would go merely to get something to say about them, and would not believe a word of the preaching. When I was about sixteen years of age I was at a Missionary meeting, and was induced to be a mourner. I went on for some time trying, as I thought, to do right. Nearly every time I went to their meetings I would go to the mourners' bench. On one occasion I went to a Methodist meeting at Union Hill, where I again went to the mourners' bench. Just before the close of the meeting, one came to me and asked me if I loved Jesus. I told him I did, for I could not say no. He asked me if I loved the people, and I said yes. He said that was religion. As I knew no better, I got up and talked some. From this I joined the Union Baptists, and for several years believed I was doing right. At last I chanced to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which differed with my belief, though their doctrine seemed to be backed by the Scriptures, or in other words, they seemed to prove their points by the Scriptures. I prayed to God that if I was wrong, to show me the right way. At last I decided to lay down all prejudice toward other denominations, and read the Scriptures carefully. As I began to read, it seemed as if they had changed; they did not read as before. And the more I read, the more I became convinced that the Primitive Baptists were right. I made up my mind that if I could believe and understand predestination, I would join them. As I continued to read, and to reflect upon the church, and was almost ready to decide without a doubt that the Primitives were the few that should enter in at the strait gate, I began to reflect upon my hope. I saw that I had none. I saw I was a poor sinner, and could never save myself by my works, as I before believed I could. If I am not saved by grace, I shall forever be lost. Nothing save the goodness and mercy of God can save me. It seems to me that I (even if I were one of the elect) shall be lost, I have wandered so far away. My hope is now all in the future. I hope the Lord will one day call me from my sinful state, to travel a pilgrim journey, and at last enter in at the strait gate. But my whole trouble is my past life. I am sorry that I ever knew there was any such thing as mourners' benches, or even that I have ever went to preaching, as I believe it has only heaped condemnation upon my own soul. Friends, pray for me.

If you think proper, publish this; and if not, cast it aside.

Your friend,

J. A. BROOKS.

BRANTFORD, Canada, July 25, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR SIR:—Inclosed find the extra fifty cents called for to my subscription for the Church History. Permit me to state that it grieves me to know that Elder Hassell is bound to sustain a heavy loss by this publication, which was begun by his late lamented and honored father. I venture the hope, however, that the Old School Baptists throughout the United States and Canada will, by a united contribution, substantially recompense him for his loss in getting up so important a work, requiring such a long-continued mental strain, and the cost of which being most difficult, in the commencement, to determine. Although not one of the number, I shall be pleased to contribute my share for this purpose whenever a move is made in that direction, and I fully believe that the reported forty thousand Old School Baptists of Canada and the United States (of whom a New School Baptist minister of this city said, a few days ago, that he thanked the Lord they were not more numerous) will not have the conscience to read the History whilst knowing the fact that the author of the same, through an oversight in estimating the cost, has involved himself and family in financial embarrassment and its unpleasant consequences.

Yours very truly,
JOHN A. LEITCH.

GHEAT, Ky., July, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—When brother Hassell issued his prospectus, for the publication of the Church History, I was satisfied that he was in danger of sustaining loss in the publication of it. I had been buying books from publishers for quite a number of years. Law books anything like the size and binding of the proposed Church History cost me from four to six dollars, and I could not see how brother Hassell could publish such a book as he proposed at two dollars. I remitted to him at that time the amount named in his prospectus, but with the conviction that justice would demand that I should remit again before I received the History. Knowing now that I was correct, and that justice and fair dealing demand it, I inclose you one dollar, to go to the credit of brother Hassell. When published, please send me such a book as you may think best, and, believe me, yours,

H. COX.

P. S.—If you believe the publication in the SIGNS of this short letter would induce others to pursue the course that I have, you are at liberty to publish it.

H. C.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

THE sheets of the Church History are now in the hands of the binder, and he has agreed to have them bound in three weeks, and if he fulfills his contract we shall be able to mail the book to subscribers in the early part of next month.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1886.

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

ISAIAH XXVIII. 9.

DEAR BROTHER:—I wish to let you know how I am pleased with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The older they are the better I relish them according to my understanding. I have just finished reading the last number, and I remarked to my companion, This paper alone is worth more than the price of subscription. I have taken the SIGNS since 1858, and have not missed a paper. The expression recorded in Isaiah xxviii. 9, has been upon my mind nearly all the spring. Will you please write on it, and oblige your well-wisher and old brother?

JAMES MCINTYRE.

NEWMAN, Ill., June 11, 1886.

R E P L Y .

"WHOM shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts."

In order to see the true application of any text, it is important to notice the connection in which it is recorded; and when it is the pleasure of the Lord to show the inspired explanation of it in other portions of Scripture, it is certain that the correct meaning is thus given. The announcement in the close of the preceding chapter is a vivid declaration of the ushering in of that day when the great trumpet shall be blown. This is clearly the antitype of the jubilee under the legal dispensation, and therefore it must find its fulfillment in the gospel of Jesus Christ, which proclaims to guilty and lost sinners that justification which is by sovereign grace, and which does not depend upon their own works. In the type, none could rejoice in the sound of the great jubilee trumpet like the hopeless and helpless debtor to whom it proclaimed liberty and restoration to the heritage which was his birthright. The perishing outcasts, having no power to meet the just demands of the law, were not released from their obligation in consideration of anything they had done, but their deliverance resulted from the provision which was made by the Lord when he gave that law to Israel, without consulting either the debtor or the creditor. It was the birthright of the Israelite; no other debtor was interested in it. So, in the antitype, none are prepared to receive with joy the glorious proclamation of that salvation which is entirely by grace but such as are conscious of their just condemnation and utter inability to deliver themselves from their lost condition. These are they who shall come at the sound of the great trumpet, which the Lord God shall blow (see Zech. iv. 14), and all such shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

The revelation of the power of God unto salvation in the experience of the saints is always attended by the humiliation of their self-confidence. In this they feel the woe to their crown of pride as expressed in the first verse of this chapter. In the language of prophecy Ephraim represents the election of grace in distinction from

that choice of the nation of Israel by which they were selected as the typical people unto whom the Sinai law was given. When presented in connection with his brother Manasseh, Ephraim signifies the chosen people of God among the Gentiles, and Manasseh that election among the descendants of Jacob.—See Deut. xxxiii. 17. But in the prophecy here recorded, the first application appears to be to the rejection of the Jews as a nation, whose crown of pride consisted in their natural relation to Abraham, in which pride they were so drunken that they "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." Their woe came in that awful judgment declared by our Lord when he charged upon them all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, saying, "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."—Matt. xxiii. 36-38. Truly did they then receive all the withering destruction here written. The antitypical and more important application of the prophecy is found in the experience of the spiritual Ephraim, whose crown of pride is continually cast down throughout their whole sojourn in time, so that in themselves they have nothing whereof they may glory. As above stated, the first display of divine perfection consumes every vestige of self-righteousness in the experience of the subjects of salvation. From that time every effort of the conscious sinner to make himself better is met by the condemnation of that perfect standard of holiness which shines in the perfection of God. Thus he is led in the fellowship of Paul, who writes, "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead."—2 Cor. i. 9. The more clearly a saint is led into the knowledge of the righteousness of God, the more manifestly he realizes his own vileness.

It is in that day when all the glorious beauty of self-dependence is utterly consumed, that the Lord of hosts shall be "for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people." The spotless righteousness of the Lord Jesus is the perfect justification of every saint, even though the subject of that grace may be as yet entirely unconscious even of his need of that righteousness. But when it is the pleasure of God to reveal the truth to the chosen one, he is always made to feel his own vileness before the gift of divine righteousness is shown to belong to him. To reason it would seem that this one lesson so severely learned should be sufficient for the whole earthly sojourn of the saint; but experience shows the need of repeated instruction. Such is the power of carnal pride, even in the subjects of salvation, that they find continual neces-

sity to call upon the Lord that they "may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need," and realizing their own insufficiency they learn that it is ever a time of need with them. In this way they learn their dependence upon the grace of God for daily support and protection, and they are thereby qualified to "pray without ceasing," not merely in a vain repetition of words, but in spirit and in truth. This "residue of his people" is that "remnant according to the election of grace," who "shall be saved."—Rom. ix. 47; xi. 5. The Lord of hosts is all their crown of glory and diadem of beauty, so that in themselves they have nothing of which to boast, being "by nature the children of wrath, even as others." By the unspeakable riches of that grace which is given them in Christ Jesus, they are made perfect in him, and are manifested as the most glorious exhibition of his divine perfection, as it is written again in this prophecy, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."—Isa. lxii. 3. It is only in the hand of the Lord that his ransomed people are thus glorious. In themselves and in their own hand they are ever polluted and vile. All their beauty and righteousness is in the Lord of hosts. He also is for a Spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment. There is but one supreme Judge in this heavenly kingdom, and he is also the King and Lawgiver. By his appointment the chosen apostles sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The Lord of hosts is to him a Spirit of judgment, not only in keeping him as the King, but also in giving inspiration to them whom he has set as apostles, who turn the battle to the gate. Till time shall end, those inspired apostles stand as invincible defenders of the doctrine and order of the gospel kingdom; and they turn to the gate every assault of the enemy, whether it be by open opposition or by cunning craftiness. No natural ability could qualify them for this great work, but they have the Lord of hosts for a Spirit of judgment and for strength. Therefore they can never be overcome nor destroyed.

Notwithstanding the clear judgment thus given for their guidance, "the drunkards of Ephraim" "have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way." This was very clearly fulfilled in the type of natural Israel, who trusted in their relationship to Abraham and in their observance of legal rites, and were so drunken in their vain confidence that they still claimed these observances to be the temple of the Lord, even while they walked after other gods, and were engaged in bloodshed and oppression.—Jer. vii. It is plain that their presumption was sinful, and that it brought upon them the heavy visitation of divine judgments, as provided under that legal covenant; but the most im-

portant consideration to us is the fact that in all the history given of Israel as the chosen nation, there is but the shadow of things which are really experienced by the true Israel while sojourning here on earth. Their proneness to idolatry and rebellion against the holy law given to them is but the type of the more grievous departures of the saints from the law of the Lord, in turning to their own ways and seeking in themselves some ground of confidence before God. As in the figurative dispensation, the idolatry of Israel caused all tables to be full of filthiness, and therefore revolting and repulsive, so with the saints who are walking after the flesh. Their best efforts to clothe themselves with meritorious works of their own but result in filthy rags, and all they can provide for food of their own deeds is most abhorrent filthiness, leaving no place clean. After all their most earnest efforts to purify themselves, they have to confess with Paul, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."—Rom. vii. 18, 19.

"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine?" These two questions are evidently designed to convey separate inquiries, yet the same character is no doubt the subject of the teaching who is also made to understand. None but living people can be taught, therefore it must be that they who are here spoken of are already subjects of the quickening power of almighty grace. As in nature the living child is the only one prepared to receive instruction, and that intelligence of which it is capable of being the recipient must be tangible to the natural mind of which it is possessed, so in the case of them who are taught spiritual truth; they must be born of the Spirit, and in possession of that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit, before they can receive the things of the Spirit. Indeed, they who are taught of God have an unction from the holy one, and know all things; yet they have continually to be taught the very things they know. In this there is a marked contrast between natural teaching and that which is of God. In nature, after anything is once learned it can never need to be learned again; but in the experience of the saints the whole truth that "salvation is of the Lord" is revealed in their first view of Christ Jesus as their personal Savior, yet in all their subsequent pilgrimage, in every trial and deliverance, they only learn the same eternal truth. Jonah was a prophet of the Lord before he went to the bottom of the mountains, yet he was taught knowledge and made to understand wisdom in that severe school. And doubtless our aged brother could recall some very clear examples of the same sort of teaching in his own experience, when darkness was so intense about his way that he was

ready to give up all hope, yet the Lord was his present help in trouble. Then the sweet truth was taught him, as he could never have learned it in any other way, that "Salvation is of the Lord," even in the tribulations of this temporal state, as well as in the eternal victory over sin and death by the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanses us from all sin. The wonderful way in which the Lord teaches knowledge to those whom he leads, is by showing them their own ignorance and folly. So he taught Agur and Isaiah.—See Prov. xxx. 2, 3; Isa. vi. 1-5. This mode of teaching humbles the learner instead of puffing him up with pride, and it is a sure indication that one is deeply taught in this divine knowledge when he is painfully conscious of his own ignorance.

One who has never known trials and conflicts may be incapable of appreciating this teaching. Such have not been experimentally "weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts," and they are not able to feed upon strong meat, not being prepared to receive the rich nutriment in its strength, as adapted to them that are of full age.—See Heb. v. 12-14. Yet it must be observed that the essential element which nourishes the nursing babe in milk, is the same element in the strong meat. So also the child who feeds upon milk must be living as much as the strong man who eats meat. To the dead neither milk nor meat would yield nutriment. When the Lord gives his gracious word to teach knowledge, he makes them whom he teaches to understand doctrine, or, as it is rendered in the margin, *the hearing*. When the Lord speaks to the dead they hear his voice and live; so, when he speaks to the poor, ignorant child, he gives the understanding of doctrine. It matters not though Jeremiah is a child, the word of the Lord sets him over the nations and over the kingdoms.—Jer. i. 1-10. If this doctrine were understood by dint of study, it would give the wise great advantage; but the Lord says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God."—Deut. xxxii. 2, 3. This illustration shows how the doctrine and the understanding of it are both the good and perfect gift of God. They whom he teaches are as passive in receiving his doctrine as is the earth in receiving the rain and the dew.

With such light as has been afforded us, we have endeavored to comply with the request of our venerable brother, though we feel more like learning from him than presuming to instruct him. May the Lord give him in his last days bright manifestations of his doctrine, and sweet assurance of his heavenly love; and to the glory of his infinite grace be praises evermore. Amen.

MARRIAGES.

JUNE 29, 1886, at the residence of Mr. Jones, 1226 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, Pa., by Elder J. L. Staton, Mr. Peter M. Sherwood, of New Castle, Delaware, and Miss Clara B. Anderson, of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Elder Thomas Parker Dudley was born on May 31, 1792, and died July 10, 1886, aged ninety-four years, one month and ten days. He united with the Particular Baptist Church at Bryans, on the third Saturday in March, 1820, and was baptized by his father, Elder Ambrose Dudley. It was very soon thereafter manifested that he was called to the work of the ministry, and we find upon the records of that church that on the third Saturday in November, 1822, a motion was made for his ordination to that work, and the time appointed was the third Saturday in April, 1823; but in consequence of inclement weather and the absence of helps, the matter was postponed until the third Saturday in June, which was also appointed as a day of fasting and prayer. The church met according to appointment. The ministerial helps present were Elders Toler, Shackelford, A. Dudley, and some others. His ministerial labors extended through a period of sixty-three years. He served the church at Bryans fifty-seven years, resigning the care of the church six years and twenty-three days before his demise. He served two other churches, Mt. Carmel, in Clark County, and Elizabeth, in Bourbon County, for over half a century, and the Georgetown church forty-eight years. He perhaps was as generally and popularly known among the Baptists as any preacher who has ever lived in the United States. His call both to the fellowship of the saints and the gospel ministry was fully exhibited. He traveled extensively among the churches, and his writings would fill a large volume. His doctrinal views of the way of salvation have been so generally promulgated that it is unnecessary for me to speak of them here, further than to say that he died as he had lived, fully confirmed in the truth that he had so ably preached, Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega of his hope. The word of the Lord re-echoed along the corridors of time, to the generation following, whose names are all written in the book of life, written from the foundation of the world. The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." His tenacity for truth, the good order of the Lord's house, and a godly life, enhanced the high esteem in which he was held by his brethren, as it also naturally carried with it the persecutions of those that will live godly. He acted as Moderator of Licking Association for over fifty years. He was the last one of the Elders who officiated at the time of my own ordination to the work of the ministry, the others being Elders J. F. Johnson and J. M. Theobald, all of whose funerals I attended. One after another of the old veteran fathers are being called from the field of conflict to their glorious and eternal rest; and as their mantles gently fall upon those that are left behind, may God give that grace that will adorn with like usefulness those that may come after them, enabling us to bow in humble submission to his holy will. None can miss his able and wise counsel more than the humble writer of this notice of his death, and an attempt to speak or write in eulogistic terms of such a character would prove so feeble and abortive that I dare not attempt it. His funeral was from the First Baptist Church (Missionary) of Lexington, on Monday, July 12, 1886. The words used on the occasion were 2 Tim. iv. 6-8.

I inclose a complimentary notice published in the *Kentucky Stock Farm*, July 15, 1886, which shows the high estimate set upon him as a citizen of the community in which he was born and had lived so long. I request that you will please copy it in the SIGNS with this notice of his death.

In sorrow,

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

"In the death of Elder Thomas P. Dudley, a great and good man, and the influence such a

man exerts, has been lost to us. He was not a great man in any conventional sense as we estimate great men popularly. He was a great man in fact; he was great in character; that is, he was simple as a child in great things, and great in little things; he had a great sense of honor; he was great in his simple, loyal regard for truth; great in principles that make men great; he was great in regard for simple, everyday honesty. His life was the gradual unfolding of a character well grounded in a sacred and inviolable uprightness of character. He was not turned aside from his simple integrity of character by prosperity or adversity, by fashions or customs; but like a rock against which earth's wild waves of folly and fashion dash in vain, he made his way through life, duly regarding and respecting those of more plastic and yielding clay, but never for a moment forsaking or forgetting himself, his God or his country. A great man, in that he was a true man. He was as simple and unostentatious as he was guileless. He was a liberal, broad and enlightened christian. Elder Dudley's greatest reason for doing anything was that he believed it to be right, and upon this firm foundation of character life was built, and grand results followed.

"We have no grand men who are not loyal to conviction, and follow that whithersoever it leads. He was a sincere man. When he spoke as a friend, there was no falsehood in his speech. You could always calculate upon the basis of genuine truth, integrity and sincerity. There was no unknown quantity in the ins and outs of life in which he might figure. He would not deceive you by word or deed. He would not cheat you. He would not do injustice to any in any way. He did not want that which was not his own, and did not want his own when the high mandates of a genuine christianity bade him part with it at the call of any of the many voices of human woe and misery. The conventionally great men of the world dwarf into pigmies, compared with a truly great character like that of Elder Thomas P. Dudley. His policy was truth and justice. The inspiration of his life was the divine standard of the Book of books. This, acting upon and controlling a nature naturally strong, pure and noble, made not the great man that fashion or folly crowns, or that the impulsive crowd cheers and makes for a season a demigod, and then despises by indifference; but the great man, beside whose grave all the world always has and always will stand with uncovered head, in awful silence, awed into profound respect. Such a man was Elder Dudley.

"His death is a great loss. The silent power of his mighty example for all that is true, beautiful and good in our imperfect humanity, is lost to those who move on lower planes; who take narrower and more sordid views of life. The place, date of birth, age and day of death, are trifling incidents to a life fraught with so much that is good and great as that of Elder Dudley. We shall only point to the high plane upon which the honorable and liberal gentleman moved and say, Do thou likewise."

"THE church of Jesus Christ of Particular Baptists, at Bryans, feel to bow with humble submission to the will of God, in the removal of our dear brother and aged pastor, Elder Thomas P. Dudley, from time to eternity, which occurred on July 10, 1886, at 3 o'clock in the evening, aged ninety-four years, one month and ten days, and in the sixty-third year of his ministerial labors; serving this church as pastor and Moderator fifty-seven years; resigning the care of the churches, through infirmities, six years and twenty-three days before his demise.

"In his eventful life as a minister of the gospel, he preached salvation by grace, as contained in our articles of faith, insisting that a man must be born again or never see the kingdom of God. And we believe he died as he lived, strong in the faith, and an heir of heavenly glories."

By request I here offer a tribute to the memory of a very dear sister in Christ. **Amy Raybourn** was born to Fielding and Rebecca Raybourn, November 21, 1842; was married to John Watson, Jr., September 22, 1859. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Hopewell, in Vermillion Co., Ind., and

was baptized by Elder Orr in 1865. She enjoyed her church privileges, and was an orderly and faithful member. She died in possession of a living faith, May 15, 1886, at her home near Danville, Illinois, leaving a kind husband and eight children to mourn over her departure. Dear ones, I feel for you, and you have my heartfelt sympathy, but we are sure your loss is her gain. She is safe in the presence of Jesus, where is fullness of joy.

"Methinks I see her now at rest,
In the bright mansions love ordain'd;
Her head reclines on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin or sorrow pained.

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

The writer of this was sent for to attend the funeral of the dear sister, and try to comfort those who mourn, by drawing their thoughts to the precious Savior, who alone can bind up the broken-hearted. I trust he will heal your bleeding hearts. This is the sincere desire of your loving brother.

M. M. VANCELEAVE.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

L B Thomas 2, J S Turner 2.50, M V Money 2.50, James A Money 2.50, H B Jones 2, A Reed 2.50, Sarah Anderson 2.50, Mrs Geo Frederick 2.50, Mrs J R Halstead 3.50, Mrs H Halsey 2.50, Mrs Harriet Wisner 2.50, I M Darland 2, John Orsman 2, M D Mouser 2.50, Wm G Howard 2.50, Mrs Mary Felingham 2, Peter L Brantetter 2, G B Paxton 2.50, Elder S Bradbean 2.50, Geo Dodson 2.50, Mrs R Worley 1, Wyatt Hunt 4.50, J M C Robertson 5, J S Mauldin 2.50, T J Hadley 2.50, H H Alexander 2.50, Nathan Hurst 2.50, Wilson Long 5, Thos P Knapp 2.50.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

A H Parkes 60c, Mrs E L Uptegrove 50c, Archibald Vandyke 1, E B Turner 2, G R Turner 50c, G B Le Suer 50c, John T Crook 50c, Mrs B C Holland 50c, H C Roberts 50c, W B McGehee 50c, L K Martin 50c, Mrs Dorcas Bates 50c, Miss M B Banes 50c, John Axford 50c, Mrs Wm H Johnson 1, Mrs S P Parker 50c, J W Lawrence 50c, Mrs S A Everett 1, L H Hardy 50c, Eld H D Conner 50c, Mrs Wm E Rawls 50c, Thos Manby 50c, Lucinda Chambers 50c, Ivory Libbey 50c, D G McCowen 50c, A Zellner 50c, A L R Avant 50c, B T Spindle 50c, J D Linton 3, J C Pitman 50c, I J Taylor 1, Caroline Leach 50c, Mrs J S Carnahan 2, John C Howard 50c, Jephtha Watkins 50c, Noah Peal 50c, B Bradbury 50c, Wm Mocre 50c, Eld J E Goodson Jr 50c, W A James Jr 50c, Mrs James Pearce 50c, Eld David Fawley 50c, Wm Chapman 50c, Thos Chapman 50c, Eli Cartwright 50c, Minerva Rouse 50c, H B Elliott 50c, George D Burley 50c, Abigail Kendall 50c, Mrs Mary Laws 50c, Nancy A Alsbrook 50c, W Myatt 50c, J G Ford 50c, H H Rush 50c, J F Bursleson 50c, I P Hellings 50c, R C Brown 50c, J J Porter 50c, Wm F Slone 50c, Joseph P Gulley 50c, Sarah Anderson 50c, Eld B Greenwood 50c, James C Brook 50c, W P Blackwell 50c, Morgan Shults 50c, Annie E Jenkins 50c, Mrs R A Thomas 50c, John A Leitch 50c, Daniel Goble 50c, F E Shittleharpe 50c, E G Peacock 50c, Nelson D Blackwell 50c, James Wood 75c, Alice H Parker 50c, Jane Hole 1, L W Beery 50c, Henry Ayres 50c, Benj Spittler 10, Geo M Pendleton 50c, Mrs E A Harris 50c, R D Christie 50c, S R Boggess 2.50, Eld L B Hanover 50c, Ansel Hard 50c, B P Lewis 50c, Sarah Sayer 1, Mrs S Hoibert 1, Mrs F R Ellis 50c, H P Brumback 50c, James Gorbail 50c, Jos D Biggs 50c, John Rea 50c, Joshua Mewborn 50c, John P Gray 50c, D W Morton 50c, Lucinda J Allen 50c, Wilson Hefner 50c, A D Nowland 50c, W L Campbell 50c, Thos B Dame 50c, S D Aydelott 50c, S Jones 50c, Eld T C Horne Jr 50c, Ivey Fleming 50c, L Fleming 50c, John O Pollard 50c, Calvin Woodard 50c, Mrs Mary Walston 50c, Bennet Bullock 50c, Celia Peacock 50c, John J Arnold 50c, J L Brake 50c, J D Robbins 50c, M B Wilford 50c, Wm E Bellamy 50c, L H Elliott 50c, Susan Jenkins 50c, Mrs H Danks 50c, Dorcas Gard 50c,

Wm Gwaltney 75c, R B Peek 3, J T Nay 50c, B F Butler 2, Sarah Tasker 1, J L Rogers 50c, Mrs L M Fowler 50c, G A Johnson 50c, G W Lefforts 50c, R R Putman 75c, Geo A Bretz 50c, Samuel Bretz 50c, Harriet Klete 50c, Mrs M Powers 50c, John Shepherd 50c, Wm Smith 50c, W A Chester 50c, Joseph Robertson 1, Nathan Nall 50c, J F Childs 50c, John Varnes 50c, Rachel Moore 50c, V E Dagget 50c, T E Woodfin 50c, J B Johnson 50c, R H Salisbury 50c, B L C Bryan 50c, M T Lawrence 50c, Justus Everett 50c, W W Purvis 50c, Bishop Boyd 2, L N Monroe 50c, P G Lester 50c, John P Shitz 1, Mrs Rebecca Dalrymple 50c, Phebe Price 50c, Ellis Fancett 50c, Wm N Cory 50c, S B Small 50c, Mrs K Risler 50c, Wm Walter 50c, Peter Rigg 50c, Wm Williams 50c, Henry Kirby 50c, W B Griggs 50c, H Ragsdale 50c, Samuel Spencer 50c, Lewis Butler 2, Squire Willard 50c, J P Kinman 50c, Samuel Fettinger 50c, J W Gilliam 50c, I N Hersberger 50c, A J Almond 50c, Robt Harris 75c, H C Harris 75c, S H Starr Jr, 50c, John Hodnett 50c, Jas A Cobb 50c, Mrs S Wheeler 50c, Eli Warren 50c, G W Mewbour 50c, J H Clayton 50c, D W Lourdermilk 50c, F M Casey 50c, J W Alexander 1, S D Ward 50c, Joel Johnson 50c, James T Howard 50c, John Donaldson 50c, A Barrow 50c, Hester Rumney 50c, Nancy Brumback 50c, Mrs L L Perry 50c, John W Squire 3, R F Reeves 1, James A Jones 50c, Wm L Stegall 50c, W G Matheny 50c, S N Wright 50c, Mrs James Oliver 50c, K F Polk 50c, J W Skagg 50c, John Burroughs 50c, E Humphrey 50c, H H Ratliff 50c, T Night 50c, T M Nolan 50c, James Snider 50c, John C Chaney 50c, H J Burroughs 50c, F R Warren 50c, T L Warren 50c, S Timmersman Jr 50c, H R Little 50c, L H Bradbury 50c, A D Jones 50c, R W Copeland 50c, Mrs E Simpson 50c, Wm Willett Sr 50c, Wm Fitz Jerrel 50c, B F Query 50c, Robt Beaty 50c, C W Kemper 50c, Thos W Records 50c, Jas A McCord 50c, R G Pack 50c, Sheldon Wyman 4, Thos J Wyman 50c, Wm H Yerkes 1, C Reynolds 50c, Uriah Trumbo 50c, Jacob Wright 50c, Nathan Brumsey 50c, Cynthia A Yountz 50c, Abram Spittler 50c, C F Shiddart 50c, D S Bunch 50c, C N Jordan 30c, E S Leggett 50c, I N Bailey 1, J H Pippen 1.50, Benj Woodard 50c, E T Sanders 50c, Dr J G Williams 50c, Reuben Thompson 50c, Thos G Drake 50c, J M C Robertson 60c, T J Tenery 50c, S W Adams 80c, Silas Minter 50c, R S Fisher 50c, Thos Fry 50c, I B Whitcomb 50c, Susan Rouse 50c, S W Brown 50c, T J Norris 50c, W R Lawshe 50c, M R Lawshe 50c, Russell Higley 50c, C C Clayton 50c, J C Clayton 50c, Wm P Clayton 50c, Andrew Carver 50c, S A Harlan 50c, S R Cooper 50c, Lucinda Riley 50c, G M Hartsfield 50c, Cyrus Mapes 50c, T P Heusley 50c, T A Waldrip 50c, W H H Edge 50c, Wm Griffiths 50c, A L Wilson 50c, M H Clark 50c, Ellen Cox 50c, L Carl 50c, Wm T Brown 50c, Edward Walsh 50c, J N Mangum 50c, W Spittler 50c, J F Farmer 50c, D A Scott 50c, A Partin 50c, J M Griffin 50c, W D Partin 50c, R G Temple 50c, Mrs N Mercer 50c, S Guthrie 50c, T C Garrett 50c, I D Parker 3.25, Wm Thomas 50c, M B Reeves 50c, J F Hancock 50c, C P Griffin 50c, N G Jones Sr 50c, N G Jones Jr 50c, James E Jones 50c, Rachel Sellers 50c, T M Poulson 50c, S J Mears 50c, J W Timmons 50c, E B Revelle 50c, Thos Bridges 50c, J W Maxwell 2, I W Peters 50c, A P Grover 50c, S P Ramey 1, J May 1, G V Bates 50c, F Odom 2, John Stipp 70c, E Dush 50c, C McQueen 50c, Mrs Lydia Thomas 50c, I Guyman Sr 1, G D Staton 50c, Johnathan Coleman 50c, J R Townsend 50c, H Smith 50c, E P Wood 50c, John Wood 50c, Albert Corbin 50c, A L Kennedy 50c, Mrs S C Newton 75c, A B Morris 50c, T W Wilson 50c, John Barton 1.50, Mary J Eaton 1, S Beck 50c, J R Wilkins 50c, Chas Moulds 50c, J L Taylor 1, Priscilla Flatford 50c, J Q Brimson 50c, W L Harper 50c, H L Sherrod 50c, J M Clay 50c, U J Bell 50c, C W Wett 50c, A W Bacchus 1, E S Yarborough 50c, Isaac Taylor 50c, Wm L Brooks 50c, John F Leath 50c, Thos S Whittaker 50c, M J Martin 50c, J B Daniel 60c, Bettie Cooper 50c, Thos Whitaker 50c, J T Knight 50c,

Dr N J Norris 50c, Thos Hull 50c, M A Welborn 50c, Marion Thompson 50c, T J Johnson 50c, J S Craddock 50c, J T Fowler 50c, H A Brumfield 50c, Martha A Linn 50c, J R Thompson 50c, B C Herrick 50c, M C Awtney 1, Eaton Hudson 50c, A W Barrow 1, J T Barfield 75c, Mrs J N Whiteside 50c, J W Riner 50c, Mrs N Norman 50c, Wm L Wiggins 50c, N W Boddie 1, W F Hogarth 50c, John Lay 50c, Elizabeth Gardner 50c, J Golden 50c, Elizabeth Bogart 50c, Thos Gill 50c, J F T Bradley 50c, David Russel 50c, Tull Thompson 50c, E M Dudley 50c, Amos Reed 70c, G W Kinman 50c, John R Fettinger 50c.—Total \$318 30.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, will be held, if the Lord will, at or near the Willhelms school house, in Jefferson County, Kansas, three miles east of Winchester and five miles west of Easton, beginning on Friday before the last Saturday in September, at ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days.

Those coming by rail from the east on Thursday will stop off at Easton, where they will be met and taken to the house of W. F. Jones or John L. Bristow, near by. Those coming from the west will come to Winchester, 12 o'clock, and be taken to the house of T. J. Housh or John Miller.

Should any miss connection and not reach here until Friday, either from the east or west, they will stop off at Lee Station, two miles from the place of meeting, where they will be met and taken to the place of meeting. From the east the train reaches Lee at 11.30, and from the west at 12.30, on the K. C. or Union Pacific Narrow Gauge.

Those coming by private conveyance will inquire for the above named persons. Those coming to Easton will inquire for McGee Brothers or C. O. Warrell. At Winchester inquire of A. Barns.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and to as many of our ministering brethren as the Lord may be pleased to send, who can endure sound doctrine.

T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Particular Baptists will hold her next annual session, the Lord willing, with the Bethel Church, near Clay Village, Shelby Co., Ky., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1886.

It is the wish of the church for all that can come in their own conveyance to come in that way, as the Louisville & Lexington Rail Road is nearly twelve miles from the church, and the most of the members are three or four miles farther than that. Three or four families, myself with that number, live fourteen miles from the meeting house, which will make it very inconvenient to convey many from the railroad. Ministers and members who wish to come by rail, will write to Wm. Slone, Clay Village, Wm. Vannatta or Wm. Sleadd, Shelbyville, M. V. Money or myself, Finchville. Write in time and give the number as near as you can, so we can arrange to bring all. It is too far to leave any. Those coming from the east, from Lexington, will get off at Bagdad, Thursday evening. Those coming from the west, or Louisville, can come to Shelbyville Friday morning in time for meeting. A full attendance is desired, especially of preachers.

By order of the church.

J. A. MONEY, Clerk.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Deer Creek Church, at the village of Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio, on the Columbus & Cincinnati Midland R. R., twenty-three miles from Columbus, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1886, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west, north and northeast will come by way of Columbus, Ohio, and there take Columbus & Cincinnati Midland R. R. to Mt. Sterling. Those coming from the south and southwest will come by the way of Cincinnati, and at the Central Depot take the same road to Mt. Sterling. There are four trains each way

every day. Brethren will meet the friends at the trains. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and a special invitation to ministering brethren of our faith and order.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE thirty-fifth annual meeting of the Western Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Little Flock Church, seven miles northwest of Knoxville, Marion Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west will be met at Pleasantville, and those coming from the east and southeast will stop at Knoxville, where they will be met on Friday before the meeting. The Rock Island R. R. runs to Knoxville from the east; also the branch road of the C., B. & Q. R. R. running from Albia to Des Moines. All those who love the truth as it is in Jesus are invited to meet with us.

WM. J. REEVES, Clerk.

THE Pocatlico Old School or Particular Baptist Association will hold her next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Providence Church, near Byrnside, Putnam Co., W. Va., on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, to begin at 10 o'clock a. m.

We wish all of our faith and order to come, especially brethren in the ministry. We are located here in the hills of West Virginia, and able ministers of our order never come from a great distance, as we are but few. Those coming from the west will stop at Hurricane Station, on Thursday before the meeting, and those coming from the east will get off at St. Albans, also on Thursday before the meeting, at which places they will be met with conveyances and taken to places of entertainment.

JEHU BYRNSIDE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Yearly Conference will be held this year with the church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 3, 1886, at half-past ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days. All who have a mind to do so, we hope will say, if the Lord will, we will be with you at that time; for all such are invited to come. There will be teams at the depot the day before the meeting, to take all to the place of the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

BY request of the New Providence Church, the Salen Association of Regular Baptists will meet on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1886, and continue three days (instead of Wednesday, as the minutes read.) The Association will meet at ten o'clock, near Ursa, Adams County, Illinois, on the Quincy & Burlington Rail Road. Our brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to attend, especially our ministering brethren.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet with Salem Church, in Marshall Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September. Those coming by Illinois Central R. R., will stop at Rutland, and those coming by Chicago & Alton R. R., will stop at Evans, and those from the west at Varna. Teams will be in attendance at these places. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Salem Association of Predestinarian Baptists will begin on Wednesday before the fourth Friday in August, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m. Brethren and sisters are respectfully requested to attend. All are invited, especially ministerial brethren of our faith and order. Those coming from the east, west or north will come to Cincinnati, where they will take the train on the Cin. Southern, or the L. & C. Short Line, for Walton, where they will be met. Those that come from the south will stop at Verona the day before, or go to Walton, where they will be met. Should any come to Verona on the late train, they can inquire for J. S. Ransom, J. E. Ransom, or J. R. Johnson.

J. H. WALLINGFORD, Mod.
J. R. JOHNSON, Clerk.

THE Brazos River Association of Primitive Baptists have appointed to meet with the New Mount Zion Church, seven miles east of Graham, Young Co., Texas, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1886.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association, by divine permission, will meet with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1886.

Williamston Academy.

FOR BOTH SEXES.

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For the especial purpose of rendering more regular and faithful service to my own church, of which my father was and I am a member and pastor, I expect, with the permission of providence, to transfer my residence, about the first of September, from Wilson to my native place, Williamston, N. C., and to take charge of the WILLIAMSTON ACADEMY, opening the Fall Session, Monday, September 13th, 1886.

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We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

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Owing to the delay in the typographical work, the Hymn and Tune Book will not be ready to send to subscribers till the last of June. Please observe carefully the above directions for sending money. Do not send checks, nor postage stamps, nor post-office orders on any office but Philadelphia.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

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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, 1886, 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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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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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 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. 54. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1886. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, July 10, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I see in the SIGNS (No. 13) a request from our dear brother, W. B. McAdams, for my views on the fifth chapter of Revelation. "What book was sealed, and what are the seals?" I feel sensible of my great ignorance and inability in attempting to write on so mysterious a subject as the one proposed by our brother. Still I have had my views on the text for many years. And it, like all other 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."—2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Such views as I have (by your permission, brethren Beebe) I will try to give, for the consideration of brother McAdams, and all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The proposed text reads thus: "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." The first thing that I shall notice is the almost universal error made in the quotation of this first verse. In transposing the comma, they make it read thus: "Book written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals;" thus changing the meaning of the sentence entirely. The meaning of the sentence, in short, is this: The book was written on the back, and also written within. The number seven signifies a full, complete and finished number of seals. My understanding is this: The book with its seven seals represents the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. That which was written on the back side was a representation of the covenant that God made with the fleshly Israelites, when he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, called the old or Sinai covenant, the covenant of works, being a conditional covenant, established upon temporal promises, upon conditions of obedience to the requirements of that covenant, as set forth by Moses. "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away,

so that thou wilt not hear, but shall be drawn away and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it."—Deut. xxx. 15-18. This covenant being written on the back or outside of the book, was not sealed. It was known and read of all men.—2 Cor. iii. 2. "For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day."—Acts xv. 21. This covenant was written or engraven upon two tables of stone, as a representation of the hardness of the hearts of that people with whom it was made. The first two tables were broken to pieces by the anger of Moses, at the sight of Israel dancing before a golden calf. As it is written, "And all the people break off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and made proclamation, and said, To-morrow is a feast to the Lord. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. * * * And it came to pass, as soon as Moses came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and break them beneath the mount."—Exodus xxxii. Thus we see that at the precise time of the breaking that covenant, it was manifestly declared by Moses breaking the two tables of stone; and also the denunciation of God's wrath consequent upon a breach of that covenant, as already quoted from Deuteronomy, "But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day that ye shall surely perish," &c. And here follows the fulfillment of that denunciation. "Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate

to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses, and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."—See verses 26-28. Thus we see that they perished according to the stipulations of that covenant which they had broken. Now all this, and likewise all that pertaineth to that covenant, was written on the back side of the book, known, read and understood, and was perceivable for all men to look upon. The Lamb that was in the midst of the throne had nothing to do with this covenant—had no seals for him to open. His was the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, and was hid with Christ in God until the day of redemption, and revelation of Jesus Christ. The fleshly Israelites knew nothing of the covenant of grace; it was hid from them, as Christ himself expresses it. "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."—Matt. xi. 25. As I have often expressed it, there are three heavens; the first two heavens were under two separate and distinct covenants. The first, or Jewish heaven, was under a covenant of works, with promises of earthly life and temporal prosperity upon certain conditions to be performed by those, and those only, who belonged to that heaven, and were under that covenant. But the second, or gospel heaven, is under a different covenant, with different promises. The apostle, speaking of Christ, saith, "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."—Heb. viii. 6. These better promises are eternal life and an eternal inheritance, not on earth, but in glory, which is the third heaven. Now when were those better promises made? Paul tells us in these plain words, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due time manifested his word through preaching," &c. Now these promises were but a part of those things which were written within the book that was in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, that was sealed with the seven seals. They were not revealed in that old conditional covenant, that Paul said, "Decayeth and waxeth old, and is ready to vanish away."—Hebrews viii. 13.

Moses was neither able nor worthy to open the book, neither to look thereon. But weep not, dear reader. Behold, yonder in the midst of the throne is a Lamb that has been slain, even the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David. The God-man Mediator hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. He is both able and worthy. A Lamb that had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth. The number seven here, as elsewhere in Scripture, signifies a full, complete and whole number. In this place, by the number seven is signified all the attributes belonging to the eternal Godhead dwelling in the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. "And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts [or living creatures] and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." O what a glorious song! A new song, first sung in the heaven of grace, by all the heavenly peers. It is ever new; it never grows old. It is new to-day, and is still sung, and will be sung till the last redeemed vessel of mercy is gathered into the kingdom of grace. This song was never sung on the other side of Jordan. It was sealed, and none could open the seals. It belongs exclusively to the gospel Canaan, and was never sung by any one under the old legal covenant. Under the old, legal covenant God was known as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; but under the gospel covenant Paul asks, "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also."—Rom. iii. 29. This is one of the things that was written within and sealed, as Paul saith in another place, "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery (as I wrote afore in a few words; whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ); which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body, and partakers of his

promise in Christ by the gospel. * * * And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.—Eph. iii. 3-9. "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 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."—Col. i. 26, 27. This mystery was sealed and hidden from the understanding of the apostles themselves, and that, too, after the day of Pentecost, and they had received the gift of the Holy Ghost. This seal was first opened to Peter while in prayer upon the housetop, about the sixth hour. "He became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice, and the vessel was received up again into heaven."—Acts x. 10-16. This vessel, I think, was a type of the gospel kingdom, and those "all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air," represented figuratively the same as the four beasts of the text, which were God's elect people, that were redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, from all the Gentile nations of the earth. And the four-footed beasts, wild beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air, are characteristics of the different Gentile nations. Now my view of the matter is this: The four and twenty elders represent all the redeemed from the Jewish nation, embracing the twelve tribes, and the twelve apostles, as set forth in the erection of the holy Jerusalem. "It had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." "And the walls of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. xxi. 12-14), which is the number of the four and twenty elders. These, with the four beasts, fill up the number, figuratively, of all the redeemed of all nations. John further saith, "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice, saying to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And

I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. * * * After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, kindreds, people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen." So we see that the four beasts and four and twenty elders represent, emblematically, the redeemed of nations, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ having broken down the middle wall of partition between the called of Jew and Gentile. And from all nations he hath made one nation, a holy nation. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praise of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Pet. ii. 9. Now, under the old covenant the descendants of Jacob, or Jews, were called by the appellation of domestic animals, or clean beasts, such as they were allowed to eat, such as sheep and cattle of all kinds; and the Gentiles (by the Jews) were called by the reproachful name of all unclean, carnivorous animals, such as dogs, wolves, lions, leopards, &c. As the Savior said concerning the woman of Canaan. He first said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." "Then came she and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs."—Matt. xv. 22-26. Thus calling the house of Israel sheep, and the Gentiles dogs, nationally; but by grace she was of the other sheep of Christ, not of the Jewish fold, and belonged to that great multitude of all nations, &c., that John saw. Isaiah, by prophecy spake of the same thing, saying, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. * * * And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest [gospel rest] shall be glorious."—Isa. xi. 1-10. And again, "And it shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."—Isa. lxxv. 24, 25. These figures are in unison with what Paul wrote concerning Gentiles and Jews. "But now in Christ Jesus, ye [Gentiles] who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit unto the Father."—Eph. ii. 13-18. Now, this is the sum total. The book that John saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, that was written within and on the back, and was sealed with seven seals, was the book of God's eternal decrees, as set forth in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. That which was written on the back of the book was open, and could be read of all men, which pertained to the old covenant, with its types, shadows and figures. But that which was written within was sealed up, which pertained to the new covenant of grace; and no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon; but the God-man Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant, in the likeness of a lamb that had been slain, was both able and worthy. Here we see the unity of the Gentile and Jew under the similitude of the four beasts and four and twenty elders. They all fell down before the Lamb, and all sung the same new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Yes, out of all the Gentile nations, as well as the nation of the Jews; and made them fellow-citizens, and of the same body. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."—Gal. iii. 20. "In that day, [the day herein set forth, which is the gospel 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 which keepeth the truth may enter in."—Isa. xxvi. 1, 2. "I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."—Zech. ii. 5.

The foregoing, brethren Beebe, is for your disposal.

Yours in brotherly love,

JOHN STIPP.

P. S.—Excuse poor penmanship and bad composition. The foregoing was written under painful circumstances. I was very sick while writing the foregoing, and had to write at small intervals, writing only a few lines at a time; but perhaps you and the readers of the SIGNS may gather my meaning. But concerning writing the occurrence at the opening of each one of the seven seals, would be a task too great for an ignorant person like me to undertake.

I will just say to our dear sister, M. A. Bowie, of Herndon, You will please forgive me for not answering your request for me to write for publication in the SIGNS on Rev. xx. 1-3, 7-9. The subject matter contained therein is too mysterious for an old, ignorant man like me to undertake. Still I cannot say that I have no views on the subject. J. S.

SMITH'S STATION, Ala., July 3, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—There seems to be at this time a necessity upon some one to write upon a subject which is perplexing the minds of God's children; and as God's cause is the cause of every one of his children, it seems that we should be careful how and what we write, especially when we know these writings are open for inspection and criticism, both to the church and the world; and from these writings the world is gathering an insight of Zion, and often gathers an idea of wrangling. Therefore with a desire to benefit my brethren, with the fear of God before me, and his glory in view, I have at last concluded to go forth and discharge this duty, hoping it may be carefully read and diligently examined, that it may tend to unify and bring together the brethren who may feel any alienation on the subject, and who may feel torn or divided. I have no ambition to satisfy, but a humble desire to do the brethren good in the truth.

The doctrine of predestination is not denied among the Primitive Baptists, as it relates to the church, or God's people; but outside of that, many seem to think it is not revealed in the Scriptures, and that he who advocates it, advocates what he is not taught in the sacred Scriptures. Then there springs a question which must be answered in this article, the answer of which will settle the question with all those who believe that the Scriptures of the old and new Testaments are the word of God, and our only rule of faith and practice. Without stopping to consider all the objections here, let us come to the definition of the word in its literal sense. Webster says predestination is "the purpose of God from eternity,

respecting all events." Then if we would take his word for it, we need go no farther, for he says it is God's purpose from eternity, respecting all events. This is all that is claimed by those who advocate the doctrine in its full sense and meaning. If there is such a thing as predestination, it must be absolute; for it is not arbitrary, but settled and fixed. But as the children of God, and believers in his blessed word, we are not satisfied with a literal settlement of the question, but we want a scriptural settlement, a spiritual settlement, after which it will never disturb us again. The Scriptures therefore are the standard by which we will next try the subject of predestination; and as the words are used interchangeably, we understand it to mean the same as purpose, appoint, ordain, decree, plan. Therefore we must conclude that God's purpose, his ordination, his appointment, his decree, his plan, is his predestination. This seems clear to our mind from this standpoint, which I presume none will deny.

We will next call the reader to think of God in his perfections, his omniscience, his omnipresence and his omnipotence. These three points considered, seem sufficient to settle the question; but lest any are not satisfied, and as we wish a thorough investigation, we will now consider his infinite perfection considered under the head of omniscience, or all wisdom, which we attribute to him as our God. We must remember the depth and extent of this perfection, his wisdom, although incomprehensible by us. And like Paul, when we consider it, we are led to say, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" "His ways are past finding out." Shall we now, professing to be subject to God, question it? We are also taught in his sacred word that he doeth all things well. He causes the blind to see. And yet we are taught that sin was not the cause of one being born blind, but for the glory of God. May we not therefore say, as his way is in the sea and we cannot attain unto it, that it is the result of his divine wisdom, by which he acts in all? For the Bible most assuredly teaches us that he doeth his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?

Next, let us consider the matter of eternity. It is also incomprehensible to us, yet we believe it to be true; and time, as understood and computed by us, is as a gap in eternity. We are also taught that a thousand years with the Lord are as one day. Now, can we understand that? No; but we believe it to be so. If then we see such depths unfathomable before us, does it look wise in us to stand on the shore and say, It is not deep? This is like the river Ezekiel saw. We wade in ankle deep, knee deep, and then waist and breast deep, and up to the arms, and to venture farther is to lose our footing on bottom. And if God is unchangeable

(which he surely is, or he is not God), then this wisdom was ever present with him, this perfect and extensive wisdom; that spans all eternity and embraces all time; and it is always an eternal now with him, "with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning." He is "the same yesterday, to-day and forever." This properly understood seems sufficient to satisfy. But in this doctrine there seems to be doubting ones, who cannot understand the things of his wisdom.

Now let us consider God's power, for he is at the same time all-powerful. He is the source of all power, the author of all power, the God of all creation. All the powers that be are ordained of God. And when the Savior was crucified, he told his murderers that the power given them was from the Lord. They had no power of their own. God therefore being the source of all power, gave it only as it served his purpose; and his purpose being founded in wisdom, we are led to look to him and wonder at his stately steppings, manifested in time by creatures who received all the power to act from him. If it was therefore his will how soon he could curtail this power. Therefore we conclude that he must have a wise purpose to accomplish in what transpires under the sun. And if we look into the opposites and their respective operations, and see the purpose of God effected, and standing upon a basis fixed of God, who shall object, or challenge the Deity, and change the order of things? And as he has all power, and had it been his will could have changed things, we must conclude that his will, in a sense, must be exercised in the vast concerns of time and of the earth. Every way we turn, we see things fixed, which establishes the fact that he had the power, and therefore fixed these things. The sun, moon and stars are all fixed, and are stationed and prepared to perform all their functions. The reign of the dark night was also decreed and fixed for a special purpose; and while the genial rays of the sun come blazing forth by decree, to lighten the earth, so does night succeed. The sun acts upon vegetation, and causes it to grow; but the night shades are absolutely necessary to its development. So the prophet says, showing God as the absolute Sovereign and Creator, "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things." This is an assertion of absolute right, absolute authority, and absolute sovereignty.

We will next take up some of the many Scriptures which teach God's purpose in evil as well as in good; for upon this idea hangs the main question. And before bringing forth the Scriptures, as many have so cautiously avoided what is not written, (which is a wise avoidance), let us see that we are willing to admit the word in all its force, and fear not to suffer afflictions for the word's sake. "But be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel." We are

taught that some who were about to suffer affliction for the word's sake, fell away, and could not bear it. I have fears that more will be found denying the word than of any other, as some anciently "limited the holy One of Israel." Such seems to be the case with some. Attempting to honor God, they have rather brought his perfections into question. Some brethren have also dreaded what is called fatality, from the fact that the ancient heathen fatalist was worthy of horror. Yet there is a fatality which we all accept. The heathen fatalist believed that God was under a law of necessity, while the christian fatalist believes that God is above, and the source of all law, and does everything in accordance with his will, his wisdom and his love; for he is a God of love, and there is no unrighteousness in him. We cannot conceive of a prophecy, with any degree of certainty, without considering the purpose of God connected therewith; and we do not believe that any prophecy was ever uttered in time by the Lord's servants, except such as was decreed in eternity, in infinite wisdom, whether it pertained to the kingdoms of the world or the kingdom of God. We also conclude, as God is the God of the universe, and the God of all his creatures, he therefore presides over them; and in a general sense, the psalmist says, he opens his hand and satisfies the desires of every living creature.

We will next look at the very order of creation; and we gather from that the wisdom of God, and see his purpose in the creation of all animals; and after the fall of man, we see how everything seems to come and follow its order. We look at the creation of man in the garden, the tree in the midst of the garden forbidden; but the subtle beast and all the surroundings lead us to believe that there was purpose, which has afterwards developed the fact; which leads me to believe that God had as much purpose in the subtle beast of the field, to stand before Eve, as in Judas to stand before Christ. When the Lord by his word states that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and the serpent should bruise his heel, the whole plan and purpose, or predestination of God, seems evident to my mind, since also we are told that he does his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Then there must have been some pleasure in the accomplishment of his purpose. Then if all men were created in Adam, it would seem to cut off God's wisdom, power and dignity, to say that he planned and arranged and fixed some things, but let the others happen, or come as they could or would. Therefore if there was wisdom in fixing and purposing one thing, there was also wisdom in purposing and fixing all things.

We now come to the Scriptures, and a few, showing that all Scripture is but a declaration of his wisdom and purpose. A few pointed Scriptures will suffice; for if we speak according to his word, there is light; if not, it

is because there is no light. I will first quote Job. "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Next we will notice God's revelation to Nebuchadnezzar. "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee eat grass as oxen; and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."—Dan. iv. 25. We also understand that God raised up Pharaoh for a purpose. And if God did not have a fixed purpose, the whole earth would be dissolved; for as he is the God of the large or great, so is he also the God of the small; and I believe he has as much purpose in the creation and preservation of the ant, as in the elephant, in proportion to the space and position occupied. So said our Lord Jesus Christ, that not a sparrow falleth without the Father, and the hairs of your head are all numbered. While it may seem strange, yet faith accepts the same as the word of God. We also believe that there is a law of nature, of which God is the author, that directs and gives place to fall and settle the atom that floats in the sunbeam, and that steers the stars in their courses. In fact, all matter that is inanimate must be moved by some power; therefore the law of motion must be applied before there can be action. We therefore conclude that God, invisible, is the power upon which all power must rest, the source from which all power must arise. Therefore all principalities, and powers, and thrones, and dominions, whether they may be animate or inanimate, were made by him, and he is before all things, and by him *all things consist*. Many other passages occur to us in the books of Job and Daniel, but we will next examine Isaiah. "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. xvi. 10, 11. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isa. xiv. 24. "This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"—Isa. xiv. 26, 27. These Scriptures show the certainty and extent of God's purpose, and it shall stand, which no Primitive Baptist can or will deny. Then if purpose and predestination is the same, why say that the word predestinate occurs but a few times? And even if it occurs only once, is that a

sufficient reason or excuse for unbelief? We notice also the relation between counsel and purpose, as related by Solomon. "Without counsel, purposes are disappointed." Therefore we conclude that God's purposes are backed or sustained by infinite wisdom, which leaves it without any danger of frustration. "The land shall tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant."—Jer. li. 29. We also read of God's judgments and purposes upon Egypt and Moab, Edom and Syria, and therefore conclude that his purpose is commensurate with his wisdom and his power; and all the fullness of his perfections is manifest in creation, in providence and in grace.

Next we examine the testimony here and there, to show how God's servants believed him in his word. It is said that he made Jacob to "suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock."—Deut. xxxii. 14. Here we understand that the election of the church to salvation was the rock doctrine; and the separation and appointment of transgressors, their portion. Both the choice of his people and the rejection of the non-elect, were sources from which Jacob could gather nourishment; for it was the decided evidence of God's sovereign power, right and wisdom. "And I turned and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass."—Zech. vi. 1. We see here that these two mountains represent the same thing, election and reprobation, as the brass mountains. When Jonathan gained that signal victory, he went up between two rocks. Samson dwelt in the top of the rock Etam. Paul then comes on and speaks of the elect and reprobate. Paul also says that God loved Jacob, and hated Esau; not on the account of good or evil, but according to his sovereign pleasure; and there can be no better base upon which to found election and reprobation, than the sovereign pleasure of God, who is infinitely perfect. Paul could say to the brethren at Rome, "Why doth he yet find fault [quoting the language of opposers of the doctrine], for who hath resisted his will?" But Paul, by inspiration and revelation, could put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, by saying, "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 to honor, and another to dishonor?" But some have seemed to contend that the clay fashioned itself. If so, Arminians are right, and predestinarians are wrong. We are all clay, and clay does not fashion itself; and I never can believe that Cain could have offered a lamb, mixed with faith, without he had been blessed with faith from God. But God gave Abel faith. And I do not believe that Adam had faith enough to

take the fruit of the tree of life before he ate of the forbidden fruit; for had he, then he would not have died. But there is a perfect order in God's system. We must hold predestination or Arminianism; for they are like oil and water; they will not mix. And the strongest link in all the Arminian chain would by no means hold up the least weight supported by the predestinarian chain, which is linked to the everlasting throne of God, and supports heaven, earth and hell. The best part of Arminianism but assaults the throne of God, and belches forth its hideous sounds of blasphemy. It is man-honoring and God-abasing. But predestination honors, exalts and glorifies God, and loves to do so; but it at the same time abases man, and leaves him where it finds him, a worm in the very dust. Truly can I feel to say in conclusion,

"Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree:
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

Dear brethren in the faith, I submit the above: try it by the standard, and if it does not bear the test, throw it away; but if it does, hold it, love it, preach it, believe it, and fear not. God says, "I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee." May the Lord bless his dear people from this time forth and forevermore.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, Mich., July 14, 1886.

WHEN OUR SAVIOR was teaching the multitude, and telling them the truth, there were those present who said unto him, "We be Abraham's children, and were never in bondage to any man." How expressive is this of the true condition of mind of all who are in a natural state. They know nothing of being in the gall of bitterness and in the strong bond of iniquity. Though that is indeed their state, yet they think themselves free, even to make choice of their portion in the life to come, if not in this life. The Savior said unto them, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham." "And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. But ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God. This did not Abraham." How conclusive this argument was. Yet so blind they were that they could see nothing but their own wisdom or understanding. They thought they had all knowledge, and that understanding truly was with them; and for this very reason Jesus said unto them, "But now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." "He that committeth sin is the servant of sin." Their being lineal descendants of Abraham did not deliver them from this bondage. Spiritually they were not the children of Abraham, and the truth did not liberate, but only offended them. And is it not so at the present day? Do not all classes of professed christians claim to be children of God?

"We be Abraham's children." But if the truth is told them, just as the Master taught it, how quickly they are offended. We do not feel so toward them. If the occasion seems to require it, we can listen respectfully to what they have to say, and let them unfold their little stock of worldly knowledge, though it may seem to us like the veriest foolishness; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and surely it must be the same to the heaven-taught children of God. Yet we do not wish to stone them. We feel no anger or resentment toward them. We feel they are welcome to their so much claimed superior abilities, &c. Yet we cannot help but wish they might have but one feeble ray of light, which a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus gives. And if when we tell them the truth they feel to persecute and revile us, it is well if we can find in our hearts a prayer for them. It is not for us to know who among them is to be granted repentance unto life, as was Saul, who according to his own testimony, was a persecutor and injurious. Yet how confident they are that they are the children of God, like those who were so ready to tell the Savior just how things were. They could also take such good care of the sepulchres of the prophets, and garnish them, and say, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have stoned them." How withering it was for that awful truth to be so plainly told them by him who was himself the truth, "Ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children of them that stoned the prophets." Not children of Abraham in spirit, for "this did not Abraham." But they were ready to stone him because he had told them the truth. The same spirit was in them that was in those that stoned the prophets. We think we are safe in saying that there is no class of professed christians but what would at the present time take to themselves all that have suffered martyrdom for the cause of truth. They hold them in great remembrance; garnish their sepulchres; yet if we, with the same spirit of those who suffered, were as plainly to tell them the truth, they would in mind, if not in reality, be ready to stone us. "Marvel not," said Jesus, "if the world hate you." "It hated me before it hated you." Not only shunned and despised, but "hated." "Ye shall be hated of all [classes] men for my name's sake." We are not even known or recognized by them. They are all children of Abraham according to their own claim, and it matters not what they do, so long as they put in their claim. It matters not how worldly they are. The more they are in favor and honor with the world, the better. The more they seek its vanities and its applause, the more they are sought after, and all barriers to worldly pleasures, sinful or otherwise, are removed as obstructions to the progress of "christianity." The noble, great and gay of the world would not fall in with them if their darling propensities were interfered with; so

there is but a faint line drawn; so very faint indeed that it is hardly perceptible. They can all do much alike, and the worldly and religious papers of the world are full of their doings, of their great gatherings, of the days and times which they observe, of the great events that are taking place, of notable guests that are present, of what they say, of what the ladies wear on such occasions, of the "floral decorations," of the great advancement of the times, or of the death of some great dignitary, usually telling of the suitable, befitting and lavish expenditure, so very desirable to make the occasion just what it should be. "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." But when we receive and read the periodicals of our order, how very different it all is: not a word about all these things. They find no place there. But here we read of a kingdom which is not of this world. We hear from those who plainly declare that they have no continuing city here, but are seeking one to come; that they are pilgrims and strangers here; that their portion and treasure is not here. We read, it is true, where they have met together in the name of the Lord, and of how the Lord himself was present there; of feasts, where there was a noble guest indeed. They tell us of the joy this wondrous presence gave, and of the words that were spoken there. We have some idea of it all as we read. The spirit of it comes like a sweet breath borne us from off the garden of the Lord, laden with the odor and fragrance of all the sweet graces and chief spices which were there. We wish we had been theretoo. No garment of earthly device, be it ever so costly, ever so skillfully arranged, even suited for the highest of earthly courts, would not do to warrant us a place at this feast. To come into the King's presence in spirit, to sit down in the banqueting house, to feast upon the rich provision of the gospel, we must have on the wedding garment. The Father knows each one. His own hand has placed the robe upon them. It covers all sin. Though outwardly we may seem all deformity, yet the Lord can say of us, "Thou art all fair, my love: there is no spot in thee." His righteousness is upon thee. "Eat, O, friends; yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." We read sometimes of the dear ones coming home to Zion, of following the Lord in the way he marked for them to go, and again we are rejoiced. We may never have seen them, nor heard their names, yet we feel now that they are our kindred, and there is a welcome in our hearts for them. Some are pleased to tell us of the dealings of the Lord with them, and we are delighted to hear. Others have a word of exhortation or admonition, or of deep instruction; and on the whole, how beautiful it is, all concerning the glorious kingdom, which is indeed manifested as being not of this world. We are also told when any depart; not only the greatest, but also the least. For here we are all related, and all mourn the de-

parting ones. We sorrow indeed when a long-tried and valiant one, whose name has grown dear and familiar to us, is removed. We sorrow for ourselves, but not for them. And our hearts are touched when we read of some parent heart-broken for the loss of but a little one, and "sorrow flows from eye to eye," as well as "joy from heart to heart."

KATE SWARTOUT.

Towson, Md., June 20, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—For some time I have been very much cast down, and there appears to be a very dark cloud hanging over my mind. But this beautiful Sunday morning, while all nature seems to be praising the God of heaven, my soul has been made to catch a glimpse of that heavenly light, and it appears as if the dark cloud was broken. My mind has been led to the expression of the psalmist, found in Psalm xxxiv. 19, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." David was a natural man, as we all are, subject to many changes in his feelings. In the beginning of this psalm he says, "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth." We might suppose, from the positiveness with which he spoke these words, that he never had any dark seasons. But a little farther on we hear him make use of the expression, "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."—Psa. lxxxix. 1, 2. Then, and then only, did he cry, when he had been brought to the end of the earth (that is, to the end of all his earthly works), feeling that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

But to the subject. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous." The psalmist speaks of the afflictions as being many. The children of God are the only people who know anything about these afflictions, because the psalmist is speaking about the righteous. The children of Israel had to suffer many afflictions at the hand of Pharaoh, while in Egyptian bondage; but the Lord delivered them out of them all. So did the three Hebrew children, when they were cast into the furnace; but the Lord appeared unto them in the flames, and they came out with not a hair of their head singed. So, my dear brethren, many are the afflictions of the children of God to this day. I do firmly believe that if the law of the land was to be removed, there would not be one Old School Baptist allowed to speak of this glorious doctrine of salvation by grace alone. But thanks be to his holy name, he has promised to be our guide even unto death. And, "The afflicted people thou wilt save; but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down."—2 Sam. xxii. 28. Sometimes we get above that childlike simplicity, and feel proud and haughty, and think we are somebody. This is because we still have that

Arminianism in us. For when the child of God is born again, his natural flesh remains the same, and it is the natural desires which become haughty. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law." But the psalmist says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray."—Psa. cxix. 67. My dear brethren, how often does the child of God get astray in his feelings and desires, and sometimes in his actions. Then the chastising rod is laid heavily upon us. I have heard the child of God say, "I became so careless about my spiritual welfare, my mind was on the things of this life, I had lost nearly all desire to attend my meetings, and when I did go I was thinking about all kinds of worldly things; and, in fact, my time was given to the riches and pleasures of this world. But while passing along on this flowery bed of ease, the Lord saw fit to send the rod of affliction upon me, and deprived me of some very dear loved one (perhaps a companion, a child, or a fond mother or father, or a brother or sister), and then I began to think, Have I not been clinging too much to this world? But he has promised, "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 transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."—Psalm lxxxix. 30-33. Then can they say, "It is good that I have been afflicted." And he will have mercy upon his afflicted. Then are we made to say,

"I cast my hope on thee;
Thou canst, thou wilt forgive;
Wert thou to mark iniquity,
Who in thy sight could live?
"Though storms his face obscure,
And dangers threaten loud;
Jehovah's covenant is sure,
His bow is in the cloud."

If it was not for the electing power of God, and that his children were all chosen in him before the foundation of the earth, they might fall. But he has said that nothing shall pluck them from out of his hand, and that nothing shall separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus. So we see there is no falling from grace in this. But all the Father gave him shall come unto him, and not one shall be lost. If it was left to man to choose his road, he would most assuredly choose a smooth way; for a natural man would not like to choose a way in which there are many afflictions encountered. But the Lord has said that he has a people formed for himself, and they shall show forth his praise. But while his people are an afflicted people, he has said, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

Dear brethren Beebe, you may do as you think best with this, as I have just written what has come in my mind. May the Lord bless you all in your duties of this life, and feed your souls upon that bread which cometh down from heaven, whereof if a man eat he shall never die.

From your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. N. HENDERSON.

JULY, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The inclosed letter is from a dear sister who has not seen the face of an Old Baptist for nine or ten years, and whose way has been led through deep waters and fiery trials. If your judgment approves, give it a place in the SIGNS, and oblige a poor sister,

W.

SMITHVILLE, Feb. 14, 1886.

MY DEARLY BELOVED SISTER:—I hope you will not think I did not appreciate your last precious letter because I have so long delayed an answer. Believe me, my sister, the fault is wholly in myself, in that I have felt utterly incompetent to answer it as it deserved, neither do I now feel that I am; but lest you should feel that I am losing interest, and my love for you is growing cold, I will try this morning to write a few lines, though I do not think I can possibly write anything that will be of any interest to you. Could I describe to you the wretched state my mind has been in for the last two months, you might understand why I have not written before, and how good your dear, precious letter was to me. I love them more than I can tell; for your words always seem to tell my own feelings better than any I can use, and it gives me hope that I may be traveling the same road with you, and have the same Teacher. But O how soon is that little comfort gone, and I am left in darkness, and almost despair. Were it not for my firm reliance on God, I should despair; but when every other refuge fails me, and I feel like Peter, that I am sinking in the waves, I fly to him who alone is my hope, and who alone is able to save. I cry from my heart, "Lord, save, or I perish." "Other refuge have I none." I do not know what I am, but I do know that it is a blessed thing to trust in the Lord. And the worst anguish I know is when I am like the troubled sea, tossed about, and in thick darkness, and cannot rest or hope, when Jesus is nowhere to be seen, and I feel that he is so far from me that he cannot hear when I cry. Such has been my experience so much of the time of late. I am alone so much, I get very low down. My health has been very poor, and I am very nervous. My head feels so badly, I cannot read, write, think nor work, part of the time. I think my head does not feel quite so badly to-day, and that is why I attempt to write to you; but you can see I make bad work of it.

What do you think our Savior meant to teach by the importunate widow? I have gleaned some com-

fort from that in my trouble, because he says, by her continual crying the judge heard her. It has seemed sometimes that my only hope was to cry, and that continually. And the Lord says he hears the groanings of our burdened hearts; that every sigh and heartfelt desire ascends to him. O what a comfort! And more, he knows the meaning of every trial. Ah, my dear sister, when every other refuge and hope fails, what a comfort and rest to fly to him, and leave all at his feet. But there are times when I cannot do that; when it seems that all is against me, and I look this way and that way, but I cannot find him, and feel that I shall one day perish. I have no faith, and how can I have faith? Jesus, when on earth, reproved his disciples for their want of faith. But does he not, and must he not, give us that faith, else we are utterly destitute of it? Our Arminian friends tell us we must "exercise faith," but I cannot.

"Tis midnight with my soul till he,
Bright Morning Star, bids darkness flee."

Yes, my sister, as you truly say, the heavenly manna must come daily; it will not keep. To-day we may be able to rest in his precious promises, and to-morrow be plunged into thick darkness and doubt, unable to claim a single promise as ours. But amid all this turmoil, he is the unchangeable God, and his love fails not; for his love is from everlasting to everlasting; and he leads his own in his own right way, in a way they know not. O that I could bless his holy name, and trust where I cannot see.

Dear sister, as I look over this, I feel that it is hardly worth sending; but I will tell you that I still love you, and hope you will write me again, and write your views as you expressed in your last letter. I perhaps will be unable to understand or comprehend all you may say; but perhaps I may learn something; for I feel that I need to be taught. But God alone can give the understanding heart. Sometimes the way is so plain, and then again all is so dark. Pray for me, dear sister, that God will not forsake me. May he sustain and bless you, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

W. J. COY.

COBLESKILL, N. Y., June 13, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—As I am alone and quite lonely to-day, I feel impressed to write a few lines to you, and have you print them in the SIGNS, as I feel to talk a little to the household of faith, although I feel too unworthy to be noticed by any of God's dear children. We read, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." I know this is true; I know it by experience. Since the year 1853 the Lord has taught me by his grace, and made me feel my dependence upon him. I have been taught a lesson since then, about thirty years, that I was not looking for. When I was first liberated I wondered if any one on earth or in heaven could be happier than I was. I really thought that was the life of a

christian all the way through their life. I think no one can tell the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love. I loved everybody, and wanted to talk with them, and make them feel just as happy as I was; for it was then that I thought

"I could read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
And bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes."

I thought old Adam was dead and buried. I knew of no warfare to come, which I have learned since. I am amazed every day of my life that Jesus should have compassion on me, a great sinner. Notwithstanding my imperfections and my sinful nature, I know he has given me an evidence of his love and the forgiveness of sins. It is a great comfort to me, brethren and sisters, to read the good writings of the brethren and sisters from the east and west, north and south, through our excellent paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I have been agent for over thirty years. The children of the heavenly King all speak one language; they all give God all the glory. "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." I have been bold enough to say, as I understand the Bible, if I did not know of another Old School Baptist on earth, I should have to stand alone. And, brethren, I want to say right here that I understand there is but one regular organized church upon earth in the sight of God to-day, and that I believe to be the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." However, I have reason to believe there are heaven-born souls in other so-called churches, and even of those who have never made any profession. We had the pleasure, a short time since, to follow two beloved brethren to a beautiful stream for baptism, for which we have reason to rejoice. My love to all the brethren of our faith and order. Now, brethren, if you see fit to place this in the SIGNS, all right; and if not, all right.

From a poor, unworthy worm of the dust,

PETER MOWERS.

LEESBURG, Va., May 3, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose a letter from a dear sister. For the benefit of many I would like to have it published, providing you also think best.

Your brother,

E. V. WHITE.

BUCKEYSTOWN, Md., April 8, 1886.

MY DEAR COUSIN ELIJAH—MY BROTHER:—How thankful I am that I am privileged to call you my brother. You were very good and kind to me last Saturday, encouraging me to tell you my feelings, and at the same time giving me such beautiful words of comfort. Still I could not say anything, and so have felt since then like talking a little more to you; and I hope you will excuse this manner of so doing. In 1875 some intimate associates of mine joined the Episcopal

church. I felt like I must do something to save myself too. Before joining, however, I told one of the members that I did not feel worthy. I was told that all those feelings would pass away, and everything would come right when I joined the church. Still I found it was not so. I felt ashamed when I was sprinkled. I never loved the members (I know what it is now), and was so troubled I did not know what to do, and stayed away from church as much as possible. It went on in this way for two years. I was miserable. In the meantime you began to preach, and came to the little church while I was on a visit in Montgomery. I went to hear you preach, and you dwelt especially on these words, "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." It was then by that grace that I was made to see where I was and what I had done; and I felt when I came home that I was so great a sinner that I could not be saved. I tried to talk to my mother, but even to her I could not tell how and what I felt. I would try to pray, but could not. I then would grow cold, and almost indifferent. However, if I would hear the Baptist people talk, or hear a sermon, I would be roused again; proving I was not entirely forsaken. In this miserable state, with this dark deed I had done added to all other sins I was guilty of, I remained till this past winter. Then the cloud was lifted, the light was made clearer, the words more precious to me, and the beautiful promises given by our "King of righteousness" comforted me, and made me willing, wretched sinner that I am, to go before the loved ones and be baptized. I cannot describe my feelings that day. All who have been released from prison can tell. I came home that evening with the glad tidings to my mother, who rejoiced with me. But next morning it was all gone. Doubts and fears that I had deceived myself and the loved ones there, made me miserable again. But before many hours, after earnest prayer to God, and some reading, a quiet, peaceful rest came over me, and still remains with me. I know that trials must come. I know, too, that they will not be beyond that we are able. We read this in God's word. He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. I love him, and love all his people. I feel now that I have never been to the Lord's table, only in form; and I pray that as I have been buried with Christ in baptism, so I may be raised again in newness of life. I hope to be with you all on our next meeting day at Broad Run.

But I must close; my letter is too long already; yet I have not said half I could, as this subject is uppermost in my heart and mind. I will not trespass upon your time longer, but I felt I must tell you a little of myself, so you could see what an imperfect child I am. I know now in whose hands I am, and believe I am willing to yield to his power. My love to cousin Lizzie. I hope some time to

have the pleasure of seeing you both at our home. This letter is intended only for you, cousin Elijah.

Yours in hope and love,

GINNIE CHISWELL.

TODDVILLE, Iowa, June 5, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed the sum of two dollars, to pay my subscription for the present volume of our much beloved paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes to us regularly and richly laden with the truth we love to hear, proclaimed by the able contributors to its columns; and what seems strange to us is this, that any one who has been a reader of its columns, can drop it for something else. It is very well for those who are able to take several different periodicals to take them; but do not give up the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES that we have had so long and loved so well. Do not let it go down, but help to hold up the hands and strengthen the feeble knees that have endeavored to keep before our eyes and in our minds footprints and landmarks of the late lamented editor, our dear old father in Israel, who struggled hard through storms and calms, that we might have a medium of correspondence, and that the scattered saints through the length and breadth of the land should speak often one to another.

Dear brethren, we feel very thankful to the all-wise God, who rules and overrules our destiny, that our lot is cast where we can have the word preached to us once a month by our dear pastor, Elder T. Blake, of Waterloo, Iowa. We firmly believe he is one of God's chosen servants, to hand out food to the hungry ones of the flock.

Dear brethren, we trust that God will enable you to continue the publication of the SIGNS, and send it forth to gladden the hearts of its readers; and may God bless you, and all the saints, with temporal as well as spiritual blessings, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

HARVY GOTT.

COLLEGE HILL, Ark., April 12, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed find two dollars, for which please continue my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will continue to take it as long as I am able to pay for it, and it holds to the doctrine it now does. I am pleased with the articles of brethren Durand, Chick, Purington, Keene, and in fact all that I see in it. Having been a subscriber for (I believe) about ten years, and having never seen anything contrary to my belief set forth for doctrine, I am come to the conclusion that we have one medium through which we can drink down the blessed doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace unalloyed, unmixed with manism, pure from the fountain head, to our heart's content. I am pleased with the management of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, especially toward subscribers. I, for one, am not able at all times when my subscription expires to forward at once my dues; but still the paper comes

regularly, which has been a source of convenience for which you have my best wishes. I have been trying to get a few subscribers for the SIGNS, which is one reason why I have been so backward in sending my remittance; but I have quit in disgust. It is worse than useless to be showing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES around to the world, for they certainly have no use for it; and what few old "Hard Shells" (as they are called, and rightly, too) I know of are already taking it, and not many of them would or could afford to be without it. When I sat down to write I merely thought to send my remittance; but being at leisure, and having paper convenient, my mind has run out to the fact that it might be well enough for every subscriber to speak a word of encouragement to the hard worked and obliging editors.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

DAVE FUTCH.

PORTLAND, Ind., July 26, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Brother George Cottrell has requested me to write to you, and say that he is very much afflicted bodily, insomuch that he can only walk by the use of crutches. Our aged brother wishes to testify to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as he has many old acquaintances among the brethren, whom he expects to see no more in the flesh, that he believes as the prophet hath 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: 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. xlii. 10, 11. Yea, while in bonds, he has a hope in that God who by the mouth of the prophet hath spoken these words, establishing in his mind the predestination of all things, that the things not yet done are determined in the mind of Jehovah. Even as the Lord raised up Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar to fulfill the decrees that had gone before; and in so doing, he decreed all the obstinacy of both these men, to accomplish his wise and holy purpose, and all for the lifting of Jesus on high. Our brother was much comforted by the able letter of brother Purington on the predestination of all things.

NEWTON PETERS.

JACKSON, Tenn.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find P. O. order for four dollars. Brethren, I have been very hard pressed financially, or we would have sent our little mite before now. But we did not see how we could do without the SIGNS, so we have gathered up our little mite, and to-day send it on, in token that we indorse the doctrine it contains. We indorse and believe the doctrine of absolute predestination, as was set forth by brother Purington and others; and as far as my understanding goes, I indorse brother Durand on the resurrection.

I love to read all the communications and editorials, and can say of a truth that in each number I am "fed to the full." Brethren and sisters, write on. I sometimes feel like dropping in a few lines; but I feel so unworthy, and believing that the pieces that I might pen would be crowding out better matter from our dear paper, is why I desist and put it off from time to time. May God in his infinite goodness bless all the household of faith, both spiritually and temporally, is the prayer of your little brother, if one at all, in Christ.

J. M. WHITENTON.

RINGGOLD, La., June 26, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I now inclose two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes regularly to me, containing the precious truth of the gospel of the Son of God. I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and I believe it is sustained by the same unwavering Spirit that it always has been, through all of its persecutions. Had I not seen the obituary or heard of the departure of the senior editor, I do not think I could have discovered it in the conducting of the paper. Since my first acquaintance it has ever manifested a meek, loving, forbearing spirit, yet firm and unwavering, with an eye single to the glory of God and the good of his people. While it may contain some things hard to be understood, as Peter said of Paul's writings, yet I am aware that one with a small gift cannot measure arms with one of a greater gift. But all is for the edifying of the body. Dear brethren, I would like to send you a list of subscribers for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but times are so hard here at present that I cannot.

Yours in christian love,

Z. G. THOMAS.

WENONAH, N. J., July 1, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please find inclosed six dollars for my three subscriptions to the SIGNS, which comes promptly. It is all the preaching I have had for a whole year. The Master of assemblies has seen fit to hedge up my way so that I cannot meet with the Hopewell people.

"God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

I feel convinced fully that "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and that all things work together for good to his dear people, and that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. He is indeed altogether lovely, and so forgiving. O that I were more like him! But we have the promise that we shall be, "when we shall see him as he is." O what a blessing it will be to be freed from sin!

Yours in hope,

SALLIE NOBLIT.

"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.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Primitive Baptists, in session with the Occoquan Church, Prince William Co., Va., August 11th, 12th and 13th, 1886, to the churches, associations and meetings with which we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the abounding goodness and tender mercy of the great Head of the church, we are again permitted to come together in an associate capacity, to hear, as we trust, of the peace and welfare of Zion throughout our borders, and to mingle together in one sweet union and fellowship, and to hear through the ministers of that covenant which was ordered in all things and sure, those things which are for the upbuilding and comfort of the subjects of God's kingdom; for, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire."—Heb. xii. 28, 29. Such language as this is not spoken concerning the world of mankind indiscriminately, but in contradiction from the kingdoms of this world; for it is declared through the mouth of the prophet, "And 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; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."—Daniel ii. 44. Then it is this same kingdom to which the writer to the Hebrews refers as quoted above. It is a spiritual kingdom, and can be received by us in none other than a spiritual sense; for "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The Savior himself declares it thus: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." And as he expressed it to his disciples upon that memorable occasion when he instituted the supper, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptation: and I appoint unto you a kingdom: as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Our carnal ideas, which were born with us when we were born into this world, would teach us or lead us to believe that this kingdom is something that we could by our own act or volition receive or enter into; something that would be tangible to our natural senses; that we could understand with our natural mind. And in the strength of this very belief do men rise up to-day and profess to teach concerning this kingdom, and speak perverse things of it, and would thus turn away many from the truth, and turn them unto fables. It was so in the days of the apostles. Paul in writing to the Corinthian brethren declares it

thus: "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but 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 [that is, the subjects of this kingdom], Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God." When the Jews required this sign of the Savior, he declared unto them that "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." All of these characters show plainly that they are the subjects of some of these other kings, and not of that kingdom which the God of heaven has set up. These wise men declare that the God of heaven has entered into a contract with them, or in other words, has leased to them this kingdom, for the purpose of bringing into it promiscuously men, women and children, who are the subjects of these earthly kingdoms; and that as the number of those that they are instrumental in coaxing into this kingdom, so will be the stars in their crown of glory. And then how boastfully they would strut the streets of heaven, and point with an air of triumph to such, and say, "Had it not been for me, you would not have been saved; therefore render unto me all honor, praise and glory." But the prophet declares emphatically, "And the kingdom shall not be left to other people." The great King himself shall take care of his kingdom; for, "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." His kingdom is established in the hearts of his people; for he has said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." And the law of a kingdom always emanates from the throne, or seat of authority. And he has said, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." Whenever this kingdom that God has set up, comes unto one of his people, it always finds him striving to live under some one of these other kings, always in the capacity of a laborer, doing something by which he may earn the smiles and commendations of this false system, which is always crying out, "Lo, here," or, "Lo, there." And we find these earthly kings always binding burdens grievous to be borne, and laying them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But when the voice of this heavenly King speaks in the heart of such ones, then are these other kingdoms broken in pieces and consumed. As the apostles Paul has expressed it, "For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." This then is also a righteous kingdom; for the apostle to the Romans has declared that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and

peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And the prophet Isaiah has declared, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." In this day of darkness and delusion, when the love of many waxes cold, we find the kingdom of antichrist all arrayed in one grand phalanx against this kingdom of our God. But, brethren, fear not; for we have the testimony of the holy writ that it shall never be destroyed, but that it shall break in pieces and consume all these other kingdoms. And we know also that this King who reigns in this kingdom has not spoken in vain; for he 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 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." Now, in regard to the subjects of this kingdom, we would say that every one is born in it. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And again, when Nicodemus seemed to question this fact, showing that it was beyond all natural comprehension, "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Thus showing that the entrance into the kingdom was through birth. So every blood-bought child of God has a birthright inheritance in this kingdom. And as the kingdom shall never be destroyed, and it requires subjects as well as a king to constitute a kingdom, so the church of God, with every one of her individual members, stands secure forever from the attacks of antichrist. To make a kingdom complete, it is necessary that every one of the subjects thereof should be secure in his rights under the king, and that the walls and entrenchments around it should be impregnable, so that no enemy could enter, nor any subject escape therefrom. They are secure, for the apostle in writing to the Colossian church says, "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." Then, even your life is so secure that you cannot barter it away. The defenses of this kingdom are impregnable; for it is declared by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, "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." Hence we see that it is by the appointment or decree of God that salvation is come unto this people, and not that they have obtained it by their own willings and runnings. And the sum and substance of this salvation is, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This hope as received and cherished by the children of this kingdom is in striking

contrast to the delusions received and held by the children of these earthly or carnal kings, who hold it entirely as a reward of merit, brought about by some act of their own, such as their prayers or good deeds, so called, to their fellow-men; and the substance of whose prayer is like that of the Pharisee who went up into the temple to pray, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." These are the same characters who enter not in by the door of the sheepfold, but climb up some other way. The same who are spoken of by Christ as thieves and robbers. He says, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." There is another peculiarity about the subjects of this kingdom of which we would speak, and that is the willingness with which they serve the King; for it is declared by the psalmist, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." And as an evidence of that willingness, they desire more and more a knowledge of his ways, and in the language of the psalmist can say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." What a precious privilege to have such hope, based upon the immutable wills and shalls of this King in Zion. Christ said to Peter, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And he said to his Father, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." And if we are embraced in that prayer, we have nothing to fear, and can say with the poet,

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

We have been favored with good weather throughout our meeting, and therefore have had a good, as also an orderly congregation. The preaching has been Christ and him crucified, to the glory of God and the comfort of his people. No discordant or jarring note, but a rich dealing out of that bread of life, of which if a man eat he shall never die. And as he was pleased to give us such a manifestation of his love, may we ever be found unto the praise of the glory of his grace; for to him do we owe all we have and are.

Our next annual session 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, when and where we hope to greet your messengers and receive your messages of love again.

WM. M. SMOOT, Mod.
G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

In order to forward the work on the Church History as much as possible, we have had the sheets delivered to the binder as fast as printed, and expected to have the whole work out by the first of September, but owing to the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Alphabetical Index as soon as expected, we shall not be able to do so. We append a note just received from him, which will explain itself. As soon as we receive the Index we shall, providence permitting, rush it right through, and have the book out in about two or three weeks thereafter. The following is Elder Hassell's letter.—ED.

WILSON, N. C., Aug. 20, 1886.

I HAVE greatly overtaxed and enfeebled myself in working day and night on the Alphabetical Index, and have reached only the 357th page, chapter xi. I do not think it possible for me to complete it before the middle of September. I had no idea of its exceeding tediousness and laboriousness.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Covenanted Particular Baptist Church in Canada, to the eastern associations with whom we correspond, viz., Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River, Warwick and Chemung, greeting.

OUR yearly meeting, held in Ekfrid, Ontario, Canada, on June 26th, 27th and 28th, 1886, passed off harmoniously. Our church is in peace, and we hope, in gospel peace. All other peace is unprofitable to the saints, in a spiritual sense. We desire to live peaceably with all men naturally, but in the faith we cannot.

We received your messengers in the fellowship of the gospel, and their coming to us, we feel, was profitable. Finally, brethren, farewell. Live in peace, and have salt amongst yourselves.

By order of the church.

WM. POLLARD, Mod.

D. T. MCCOLL, Clerk.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please ask brother Wm. J. Purington to give his views through the SIGNS on Eccl. iii. 18-22, if not asking too much.

I will just say that I think the absolute predestination of all things is the most God-honoring doctrine that his ministers have ever set forth. I wish I was able to write for our dear paper, but I am not.

A sinner saved by grace,

WM. SMITH.

REDDING, Iowa, July 31, 1886.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1886.

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

I 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."

By request of several patrons of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we submit the following thoughts in connection with this portion of inspired record, which is often suggested by the tempter as forbidding the hope of the trembling little children of God. The letter of this text, detached from its connection, seems indeed to cut off every conscious sinner from claiming to be born of God, while it would not suggest a doubt to the self-confident Pharisee, whose expectation of acceptance before God rests upon his own fancied merit. But this cannot be the true meaning of the expression under consideration, since it would include the apostle John himself in the same condemnation; for he says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." It is important to notice that he does not refer to what was our condition before we knew the truth, but declares the present state of himself and those to whom he writes. This shows conclusively the error of such as imagine themselves to have attained unto sinless perfection in their own actions and words; for John agrees with Paul in the confession that "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." And with him also he had to complain that "when I would do good, evil is present with me." "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."—Rom. viii.

Like all the inspired Scriptures, this text is given for the benefit and instruction of them who are born of the Spirit of God; and to such it is exclusively addressed. To them its precious truth is revealed by the same Spirit which moved the apostle to record it; and however simple and ignorant they may be in nature, to them it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; while no amount of study can enable the most intelligent natural man to grasp one principle of the hidden wisdom of God which is written for the saints. The little children to whom John wrote knew the need of a reliable test to determine the question of which this text presents the correct answer.

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Jesus preached this new birth to Nicodemus; and it is so indispensable to the manifestation of the sons of God that no one can see the kingdom of God until he is born again. This is so clearly declared in the words of our Lord that there is no room for argument in regard to its truth; but the serious question with each tried

saint is, Am I born of God? Looking at the things which are seen in his actions, his words and his thoughts, he is forced to admit that they all testify against him. If he must be judged by these things, which constitute all the testimony that is tangible to the natural mind, the decision is that there is not one mark in them indicating that he is born of God. In these things, therefore, there is no evidence wherein he might rest. But in all the gloom and darkness of his conscious sinfulness, whence comes the longing desire for righteousness? Can that desire arise from the sinful enmity of the carnal mind? Such a holy desire must spring from a holy source; and as certainly as that desire exists, just so surely he in whom it is found is already blessed with the indwelling Spirit of Christ, which marks him as being born of God. To him who bears this seal of the Spirit there is no condemnation; for while he feels the law of sin still dwelling in his flesh, and warring against the law of his mind, this hunger and thirst after righteousness proves that he is led by the Spirit of God, and all such are the sons of God.—Romans viii. 4. There are two opposite principles in every one who is born of God, and these continue "as the company of two armies," while the subject of them remains in the flesh. Neither principle can ever be conformed to the other. In their war sometimes one power prevails and controls the man in whom they strive, and sometimes the other is in the ascendancy; but the victory in the end is secure to the Holy Spirit, of which the saint is born. Indeed, it is one of the glorious mysteries of this relentless warfare that the saints never gain a victory until they are so completely overcome that they are utterly without strength; and they are never so completely overcome as when they feel strong enough to trust in themselves. Yet even in this extremity of their helplessness, they have never sunk so low but that the everlasting arms of divine love and power were still underneath to take them up and set their feet upon the everlasting rock of immutable faithfulness and mercy. While the same Peter who was naturally a sinful man, impetuous, willful and headstrong, is born of God and has the Spirit of Christ, his earthly nature is still marked by its old characteristics, bringing him to weep bitterly at times; yet he is not the less beloved of the Lord, who specially ordered that Peter should be told of his resurrection.—Mark xvi. 7. Weak and sinful as he was in himself, the prayer of Jesus was his protection; and sin could not, therefore, pollute him. It is only by the purifying virtue of that all-prevailing prayer that all the recipients of his grace are kept from the evil of sin.—John xvii. 15. "Whosoever is born of God" has the Spirit of Christ, and that Spirit is just as holy in the members of his body as in him their Head; for their perfection is "in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteous-

ness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—1 Cor. i. 30, 31. Every one who is born of God is identified in Christ, and as he is to them the end of the law for righteousness, they are no more under that law; and consequently they cannot sin by violating its commandments, from which they are delivered by their Redeemer. "For, brethren, ye are called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. 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. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."—Gal. v. 13-18.

"For his seed remaineth in him." Every one that is born of God is "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. This fact forbids the possibility of those in whom this holy seed remains ever being again corrupted by sin. While they must still find sin in their flesh, and groan within themselves, anxiously waiting for the redemption of their body, that very groaning proves that sin is contrary to the Spirit by which they are led. Hence they can say with Paul, "That which I do I allow not; for that I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."—Rom. vii. 15-17. With the natural mind the saints can only judge their outward actions, but the judgment of God discerns the secret thoughts of the heart; for "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."—Heb. iv. 13. In this solemn truth they who are oppressed by sin find consolation; and they who love sin feel that they would rather be buried beneath rocks and mountains than endure that piercing scrutiny. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." Yes, he knows the secret groaning which is not heard by created ears. He knows the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ which has washed them from all pollution, and made them free from sin. He knows that their sins were borne by their Redeemer, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."—1 Pet. ii. 24. Every member of his body whose sins he bore, was not only ransomed from the curse of the law, but being dead to the law

with their Head, with Christ they are raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, that they should walk in newness of life. The life of Christ is that by which they are risen with him; for in his resurrection they were all raised above all condemnation, being justified by his grace without their own works. This is that eternal life which Jesus gives to his sheep, and they who have this precious seed remaining in them are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. This is that remnant according to the election of grace of whom it is written, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." Without the preserving power of that seed by which they are born and kept, the saints are not able to keep themselves one moment; but that vital power of which they are born is Christ in them the hope of glory. While all power remains in the hands of Jesus sin can never overcome this heavenly seed.

"And he cannot sin, because he is born of God." By this closing declaration of the text, the sole reason assigned for the impossibility of this one ever sinning is his birth. Language cannot express more definitely the absolute certainty of this immunity from sin, resting alone upon the sovereign will of God. If the will or works of man had any control over it, then it could not be in any degree because of his birth, since that birth must have preceded the power to will or work. The whole ground of creature opposition to the system of salvation by grace is met and destroyed by this positive statement of divine truth. There is no other cause for the freedom of the saints from sin but their being born of God. That this birth was wholly by the will of God would seem to be too evident to need confirmation. By the express testimony of inspiration, however, all cavil on that point is forever silenced; for it is written, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."—James i. 18. Then the birth of the saints cannot be dependent upon anything short of that eternal will. The result of their being born again is not less certain than the accomplishment of the purpose of God in their birth. Every one who is thus born is free from sin, because he is not under the law of sin and death. "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." He who is born of God is not subject to sin nor to the curse of the law, for that law is fulfilled in Christ. There is no curse in the law of the spirit of life by which every subject of this new birth is made free from that law whose sentence was death. They may be disobedient to the law of their King, and thus they may bring upon themselves the rod and stripes which are provided in the new covenant; but that fearful visitation is an assurance of the love of God to the chastened one. Hence "the exhortation which speaketh unto you as children, My son, despise not thou the chasten-

ing of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 5, 6. If there were no possibility of the saints disobeying this admonition, it would have been needless to record it in the Scriptures, but the tempted and weak child of God has frequent occasion to thank God for his faithful love even in severe chastening. So far is this experience from indicating that its subject is under condemnation, it is one infallible mark that God in love deals with the chastened ones as he deals only with his children.

It is a common device of the tempter to suggest to the troubled saints that they are cast off from hope by this text and many similar expressions in the Scriptures; and often they are ready to faint under the cruel assault. But when their great Deliverer is pleased to rebuke their tormentor, and to show them the true meaning of the text, it is always a source of joy to them that such expressions were left in the inspired Scriptures for their assurance. There is no more clear mark of a true child of God than the feeling of deep and bitter grief on account of indwelling corruption and evil thoughts and deeds. This manifests that he is indeed born of God, and longs for that perfection which is only found in the Lord. On the other hand, it is impossible for the carnal mind to produce even a counterfeit of this grief. This is practically confessed by all the adversaries of the truth; for they rely upon vivid pictures of future rewards and punishments to induce sinners to make a hypocritical profession of religion, and urge the terrors of hell as their most effective method of exciting them to what they call good works. This is as different from the experience of the saints as is darkness from light. The love of holiness causes those who are governed by it to hunger and thirst after righteousness, neither for the profits to be gained by it in future happiness, nor with the object of escaping torment: but they are led by the Spirit of God to love righteousness for its own sake, and this causes them to abhor themselves because of the sin which dwells in their natural mind. It would not satisfy their longing desire if they could be assured that they should go to heaven at last, while subject to the bondage of corruption in the body of this death. They can never be satisfied until, freed from corruption, sin and pollution, they shall awake with the perfect likeness of their righteous Lord. Until that full fruition of joy shall be experienced, they will continue to groan, being burdened. This burdened condition is the evidence that its subject is born of God, and that he cannot sin. There would be no conflict if the holy principle were not dwelling in the groaning one; and the grief felt because of sin in themselves is the abiding witness that they are born of God, and therefore cannot sin. This text is but the record of the truth which is experienced by every subject of grace; and its testimony abides with them while they remain in the body of this death.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wilson Housel, at his residence near Milltown, N. J., on June 16, 1886, Abram Reed and Bella Bennet, both of New Brunswick, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, on June 17, 1886, Christopher H. Striker and Carrie E. Breese, both of Spotswood, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, on July 14, 1886, Lawrence Emly and Julia Churchhill, both of Washington, South River, N. J.

By the same, at his residence, on July 13, 1886, Frank Slovea and Minnie Vanhiskill, both of Old Bridge, N. J.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Feb. 24, 1886, at the house of the bride's parents, in Salisbury, Md., Mr. Harvey Campbell, of Delaware, and Miss Jennie Staton, of Salisbury, Md.

By the same, on June 25, 1886, near New Church, Va., Mr. John H. Marriner and Savanna Townsend, both of Accomac County, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Jan. 9, 1886, at his residence at Hardenburg, Ulster Co., N. Y., very suddenly, Mr. Henry Crook, quite advanced in years. Mr. Crook was a firm believer in the doctrine of sovereign grace, and that the sinner must be saved by grace, and grace alone. His sudden demise left a widow and several children, with friends and neighbors, to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—Jan. 13, 1886, after a lingering illness of a spinal nature, Mr. John Cudney, of Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y. Mr. Cudney was a man past middle life. I have not the exact date. I do not know that he had ever made any profession of any kind; but when able, he generally went to the Old Baptist meetings. We believe he had an ear to hear spiritually. He has left a widow, who has herself passed through sorrow of mind and body for years before her husband's death; with a number of children and other relatives and neighbors to mourn; but we trust their loss is gain to him.

ALSO,

DIED—April 7, 1886, quite suddenly, Mrs. Marjery Hinkley, aged about ninety-seven years, of Hardenburg, Ulster Co., N. Y. Mrs. Hinkley was on a visit to a relative, and died quite unexpectedly. In her life she was said to be very exemplary and kind, a fond mother and companion, and in her advanced life left children and relatives to mourn; but they mourn not as those without hope for her welfare, believing that for her to die was gain.

ALSO,

DIED—April 10, 1886, at his residence, Cloversville, Delaware Co., N. Y., after a short illness, Mr. Hiram Kelly, aged about thirty-nine years. Mr. Kelly was no professor, but seemed resigned to his lot, although he no doubt sorrowed to leave his dear companion (who is a frail body) alone in this world of woe. He left his wife and aged parents, with many relatives, to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—June 11, 1886, brother John T. Bouton, of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., after a lingering illness of paralysis. His disease at last caused rather unlooked for and sudden change. He ran down quite rapidly until death did its office work. Yet we believe, and think we know, that though his earthly house was dissolved, he has a house eternal in the heavens. Brother Bouton with his wife were united to the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., by baptism, about forty-three years ago, of which church they were members still at his death. Therefore the church, with our beloved sister, his widow, one son, two daughters and grandchildren, with other relatives, friends and neighbors, are left to mourn. No one that I have been acquainted with in the past twenty-seven years, while he was in his usual strength, was more devoted to the cause or possessed a more untiring energy in behalf of the cause of the Redeemer of sinners, who himself felt that he, like Paul, was chief. His house was a home for the Baptists, where, with his beloved

companion and children in middle life, nothing was left undone that could be done to make visiting preachers, brethren and sisters comfortable. The disease with which brother Bouton suffered for several years affected his speech, often causing him (no doubt) sorrow while others were conversing with him; yet up to the last of our conversation he readily gave his assent to the doctrine of God our Savior. The Lord has wonderfully sustained our sorrowing sister through this trial, in granting her strength to minister to her afflicted husband to the last. His age was sixty-nine years.

ALSO,

DIED—June 22, 1886, brother **Levi Jenkins**, of Kelly's Corners, Delaware Co., N. Y., aged seventy-seven years. Brother Jenkins was a faithful and industrious man, and subject to many crosses. He had lived at the place where he died over forty years, and the greater part of that time he was obliged to go on crutches or canes because of injured or broken limbs; yet he seemed to think it all right. At heart he seemed in about usual health for an old man, when he was attacked with paralysis, which deprived him of the use of his right limbs, and also of speech, after which he lingered several days, and fell asleep in Jesus, we verily believe. In the year 1859 there was a reviving spirit in this part of the country, and brother Jenkins was exercised about his condition as a ruined sinner, and was constrained to flee for refuge to the Redeemer of poor, lost sinners. He united the same year with the First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, of which church he was a firm member at the time of his death. Therefore he has left the church, with his aged widow, our sister in Christ, two sons and two daughters, with other relatives and friends, to mourn. Our dear sister was wonderfully sustained to care for her afflicted husband to the last.

ALSO,

DIED—July 15, 1886, **Mr. Rudolph Hammy**, of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., aged eighty years. Mr. Hammy was one of Roxbury's most respected citizens, for candor and integrity as a business man, and died as he had lived, with malice toward none, and charity to all; feeling conscious, as he expressed to our sister (his wife), that all was well with him. He will be much missed by his family and friends; but we still believe that for him also to die was gain. He had been afflicted some time, and his affliction, with old age, took down the tabernacle. Thus do we realize the truth of Paul's words in regard to husband and wife, "This I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth that they that have wives [and we add, those that have husbands] be as though they had none," &c.

The writer of these notices was called upon and tried to speak words of comfort to the afflicted widows and fatherless children, in the presentation of the eternal life union or oneness of God's people with Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the everlasting God. For truly the terms "Everlasting Father" and "only begotten Son," are significant of the relationship of head and body, both in the love and justice of God, that mercy might reach the case of every member, according as judgment had been rendered. Hence Jesus said, "I in thee, and thou in me, that they may be one in us." For since the work of atoning is completed, nothing has necessarily to be done but to give repentance; for all the election of grace is complete in him, who is the head, and are being built up according as he hath chosen them in him before the world began; for it was the pleasure of the Father that in the Son all fullness should dwell, and also that his people should of his fullness receive, and grace for grace. In this is my desire full to all the afflicted of his care, and may they learn daily, with the unworthy writer of these notices, that afflictions are not in vain. And if ye endure afflictions, or chastisements, God dealeth with you as with sons. May the Lord sanctify these afflictions to the good of the tried ones, for Jesus' sake.

JOHN D. HUBBELL.

My beloved mother, **Rebecca Pugsley**, died of heart disease April 22, 1886, aged sixty-seven years, four months and thirteen days. She leaves a husband, three sons, two daughters, a sister, and numerous relatives

and friends, to mourn their loss; but we mourn not as those who have no hope; for as she died in the triumph of a living faith, we believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Her maiden name was Rebecca Rush, daughter of Wm. and Lydia Rush, and was born December 9, 1818, near Monday Creek Salt Works, in Perry County, Ohio. She joined the Old School Baptist Church called Monday Creek, in said county, about forty-six years ago, and was baptized by Elder Samuel Moody. She was married to my father, J. B. H. Miles Pugsley, April 14, 1842, settled in Athens County, Ohio, and afterwards lived a short time in Richland, Perry and Meigs Counties, Ohio. In 1847 they moved from Pomeroy, Meigs County, Ohio, to Le Roy, McLean County, Ill., joined the New Providence Church of Old School Baptists, in Dewitt County, Ill. In 1866 they moved to Jefferson Co., Iowa, and joined the Round Prairie Old School Baptist Church, in that county, by letter. In 1868 they moved to Ringgold Co., Iowa, near Redding, and about 1873 joined the Rock Creek Old School Baptist Church by letter, where they remained members in good standing at the time of my dear mother's death. Until she became enfeebled by age and ill health, she was a constant attendant at her church meetings, and seemed to enjoy nothing better than to hear the gospel preached. She was a firm believer in the doctrine held by the Old School Baptist Church. I had a conversation with her a few days before she died, about some of the doctrine most controverted by the popular religionists of the day, and I found her faith firm and unshaken in them, and in the goodness and justice of the unchanging God. Her health had been failing for some time, but she was up and about the house the day she died; so her last sickness was short. But she was conscious to the last, and knew that the time of her death was near. She passed over the dark valley of the shadow of death fearing no evil, and I have no doubt she felt that "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

On the 28th day of June Elder I. J. Claiborn preached a funeral discourse, to a large and attentive congregation, at Redding, Iowa, from Hebrews iv. 14-16.

CYRUS G. PUGSLEY.

DENVER, Worth Co., Mo.

DIED—At her home near Occoquan, Va., April 7, 1886, **Mrs. Margarette A. Mills**, in the sixty-first year of her age. She was born in Fairfax Co., Va., Oct. 8, 1824; was baptized by Elder Smoot in the fellowship of the Occoquan Church about ten years ago, and remained a worthy member to her death. She will be missed in the church and in the neighborhood where she lived. Her family have sustained a great loss in her death. Her children will ever miss her company, her words of instruction and comfort. She leaves nine children and her husband, Redmon Mills, to mourn their loss in her death. I believe that our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord graciously prepare us to meet her where parting shall be no more.

We have no mother now, we're weeping,

She has left us here below,
She beneath the sod is sleeping
Now there is no joy at home.

Farewell, dear mother, we give thee up,
'Tis God's most holy will,
Though hard it was to part with thee,
Yet may we all be still.

Why should we mourn, or grieve, or pine,
For what the Lord has done,
He took our mother to himself,
Where all the saints shall join.

SCINDIA R. PETITT.

OCOQUAN, Va., July 30, 1886.

DIED—At his residence near South River, N. J., June 4, 1886, **Deacon George W. Peterson**, aged seventy years, five months and nineteen days. Brother Peterson was baptized by the writer some years ago, and not long after was chosen deacon, which office he filled to the perfect satisfaction of the church. He was sound in the faith of the gospel of Christ, faithful as a deacon and member in the discharge of every obligation towards God and man. He was highly esteemed for his integrity in all his business

relations. As a church, we feel the loss, but we have no doubt our loss is his gain.

His funeral took place the following Sunday, at the Old Baptist meeting house in Washington, where the writer addressed a large assembly that had met to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed. His remains were deposited in the cemetery near by, in the family plot. He leaves a widow, one son and two daughters, with other relatives and friends, to mourn. He died strong in the faith, meeting his change joyfully. May the Lord comfort the widow and children, is our prayer for Christ's sake.

WILSON HOUSEL.

MILLTOWN, N. J.

JUNE 12, 1886, at the family residence near Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., **Mrs. Maria Forshee** fell asleep in the hope of a blessed immortality, after long suffering from nervous debility.

Sister Forshee was the third child of Captain James and Mary Wheeler Benedict, born May 7, 1800. She was married to the late David Forshee, Dec. 12, 1820. Her husband was baptized in the fellowship of Warwick Baptist Church, in September, 1821, and sister Forshee was received June 26, 1822, and baptized by the late Elder P. D. Gillett. With her husband, sister Forshee had removed her membership to Brookfield, and afterward to Middletown, of which church she was a member until called home. Left a widow in 1851, she spent the remainder of her earthly life at the old home with her only child, sister Mary E. Crissey. Her funeral was largely attended, and Elder W. L. Beebe spoke from Luke xx. 37, 38, after which her body was consigned to the tomb in the Warwick Cemetery.

DIED—At her home, near Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., on the morning of August 11, 1886, **Mrs. Ama M. Horton**, wife of Ira Horton, aged seventy-one years, five months and twenty-one days.

The deceased was united in marriage to Mr. Horton fifty years ago last January. She experienced a hope in the Savior many years ago, and has ever since been a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, although she never united with the visible church. In her last sickness she said the Savior had appeared to her, and had removed the cloud from her mind, and that all was well with her.

She leaves her aged companion and two daughters, with other relatives and friends, to mourn her departure. But for her to die was gain.

The funeral occurred on the 14th, when a discourse was delivered by Elder Benton Jenkins, after which the remains were deposited in the cemetery of the New Vernon Church, by the side of her kindred who had preceded her to the grave.

DIED—July 8, 1886, in Worcester County, Md., little **Lela A. Payne**, daughter of Silas and Janna Payne, and granddaughter of sister Anna Hancock, of Pocomoke City, Md., aged four years, six months and twenty days. Her disease was bilious dysentery. She endured the painful disease two weeks and then passed away. She was the eldest child, and the idol of a fond mother's heart. O how painful it seemed to be to have to give her up. Why it was that the opening flower should so soon be cut off, God only knows. But we trust that the sorrowing ones may remember that he is too wise to err, and may the Savior appear to the father and mother as more than filling the vacuum caused by the death of little Lela, and comfort them in their sad hours.

The writer attended the funeral and read as a text the latter clause of 2 Samuel xii. 23.

T. M. POULSON.

DIED—Feb. 21, 1886, after about three weeks of illness of typhoid pneumonia, **Daisy B. Morris**, daughter of Archibald H. and Mary Ann Morris, aged seven years, seven months and twenty-one days. Mrs. Morris, who has been called to part with an interesting daughter, is a granddaughter of Elder Warner Staton deceased, and a sister in the church at Little Creek. She with her husband have the sincere sympathies of the brethren and sisters, and their many friends and acquaintances, in this afflictive event, which has seemed to fall with crushing weight upon them. I feel to hope that the Lord will sustain and comfort them.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, will be held, if the Lord will, at or near the Willhelms school house, in Jefferson County, Kansas, three miles east of Winchester and five miles west of Easton, beginning on Friday before the last Saturday in September, at ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days.

Those coming by rail from the east on Thursday will stop off at Easton, where they will be met and taken to the house of W. F. Jones or John L. Bristow, near by. Those coming from the west will come to Winchester, 12 o'clock, and be taken to the house of T. J. Housh or John Miller.

Should any miss connection and not reach here until Friday, either from the east or west, they will stop off at Lee Station, two miles from the place of meeting, where they will be met and taken to the place of meeting. From the east the train reaches Lee at 11.30, and from the west at 12.30, on the K. C. or Union Pacific Narrow Gauge.

Those coming by private conveyance will inquire for the above named persons. Those coming to Easton will inquire for McGee Brothers or C. O. Warrell. At Winchester inquire of A. Barns.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and to as many of our ministering brethren as the Lord may be pleased to send, who can endure sound doctrine.

T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Particular Baptists will hold her next annual session, the Lord willing, with the Bethel Church, near Clay Village, Shelby Co., Ky., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1886.

It is the wish of the church for all that can come in their own conveyance to come in that way, as the Louisville & Lexington Rail Road is nearly twelve miles from the church, and the most of the members are three or four miles farther than that. Three or four families, myself with that number, live fourteen miles from the meeting house, which will make it very inconvenient to convey many from the railroad. Ministers and members who wish to come by rail, will write to Wm. Stone, Clay Village, Wm. Vannatta or Wm. Sleadd, Shelbyville, M. V. Money or myself, Finchville. Write in time and give the number as rear as you can, so we can arrange to bring all. It is too far to leave any. Those coming from the east, from Lexington, will get off at Bagdad, Thursday evening. Those coming from the west, or Louisville, can come to Shelbyville Friday morning in time for meeting. A full attendance is desired, especially of preachers.

By order of the church.

J. A. MONEY, Clerk.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Deer Creek Church, at the village of Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio, on the Columbus & Cincinnati Midland R. R., twenty-three miles from Columbus, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1886, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west, north and northeast will come by way of Columbus, Ohio, and there take Columbus & Cincinnati Midland R. R. to Mt. Sterling. Those coming from the south and southwest will come by the way of Cincinnati, and at the Central Depot take the same road to Mt. Sterling. There are four trains each way every day. Brethren will meet the friends at the trains. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and a special invitation to ministering brethren of our faith and order.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE thirty-fifth annual meeting of the Western Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Little Flock Church, seven miles northwest of Knoxville, Marion Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west will be met at Pleasantville, and those coming from the east and southeast will stop at Knoxville, where they will be met on Friday before the meeting. The Rock

Island R. R. runs to Knoxville from the east; also the branch road of the C. B. & Q. R. R. running from Albion to Des Moines. All those who love the truth as it is in Jesus are invited to meet with us.

WM. J. REEVES, Clerk.

THE Pocotalico Old School or Particular Baptist Association will hold her next annual meeting, the Lord willing, with the Providence Church, near Byrnside, Putnam Co., W. Va., on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, to begin at 10 o'clock a. m.

We wish all of our faith and order to come, especially brethren in the ministry. We are located here in the hills of West Virginia, and able ministers of our order never come from a great distance, as we are but few. Those coming from the west will stop at Hurricane Station, on Thursday before the meeting, and those coming from the east will get off at St. Albans, also on Thursday before the meeting, at which places they will be met with conveyances and taken to places of entertainment.

JEHU BYRNSIDE.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association, by divine permission, will meet with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1886.

Those coming on the Ulster & Delaware Rail Road will take the afternoon train (2:50) at the union depot at Kingston, the day before the meeting, and stop off at Kelly's Corners, or Halcottsville, or Roxbury, where they will be taken to an from the meeting. A general invitation is given to brethren, sisters, and ministers, and all lovers of truth.

I. HEWITT.

THE Pilgrims' Rest Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Gilead Church, in Franklin County, Kansas, four miles south of Wellsville, at ten o'clock a. m. on Friday before the second (not the third, as our Minutes state) Saturday in October, 1886.

Visiting brethren coming from the north or east will come to Wellsville, a station on the Southern Kansas Railway, on Thursday before the meeting. Those coming from the west will come to the same place on Friday morning. All will be met on those days. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

S. P. RAMEY.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Yearly Conference will be held this year with the church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing Friday, Sept. 3, 1886, at half-past ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days. All who have a mind to do so, we hope will say, if the Lord will, we will be with you at that time; for all such are invited to come. There will be teams at the depot the day before the meeting, to take all to the place of the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

By request of the New Providence Church, the Salem Association of Regular Baptists will meet on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1886, and continue three days (instead of Wednesday, as the Minutes read). The Association will meet at ten o'clock, near Ursa, Adams County, Illinois, on the Quincy & Burlington Rail Road. Our brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to attend, especially our ministering brethren.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet with Salem Church, in Marshall Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September. Those coming by Illinois Central R. R., will stop at Rutland, and those coming by Chicago & Alton R. R., will stop at Evans, and those from the west at Varna. Teams will be in attendance at these places. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

OUR next Association (South Louisiana Primitive Baptist) will be held with Mace-

donia Church, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, ten miles east of Sugartown, Calcasieu Parish, La.

W. M. PERKINS, Mod.
I. S. MEADOURS, Clerk.

THE next meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Little Creek, Sussex Co., Del., to commence on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1886.

THE Spoon River Association is to hold her fifty-fifth annual session at Waterford Church, four miles south of Lewistown, Fulton Co., Ill., to begin on Friday, Sept. 3d. Those coming by rail will get off at Lewistown, on the C. B. & Q. R. R., Thursday or Friday morning.

I. N. VANMETER, Clerk.
MACOMB, Ill.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, commencing on Friday, September 10, 1886, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

THE next session of the Juniata Regular Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., to begin, by divine permission, Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1886.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, has appointed to hold her next annual meeting with Unity Church, Platte Co., Missouri, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October, 1 2 and 3, 1886.

R. M. THOMAS.

THE next session of the Oconee Old School Baptist Association will convene with the church at Union, Madison County, Georgia, on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1886.

THE next session of the Amite Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the New Bethel Church, Pike Co., Miss., beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, and continue three days.

THE next session of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Barren Spring Church, Henderson County, Tennessee, one-fourth mile southeast of Reagan, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1886.

THE Tygart's Valley River Association have appointed their next session to be held with the Mount Olive Church, Barbour Co., W. Va., to begin at 11 o'clock a. m. on Friday before the last Sunday in August, 1886.

THE Redstone Old School Baptist Association has appointed to hold her next session with Indian Creek Church, Monongalia Co., W. Va., to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, at 11 o'clock a. m.

THE Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists is appointed to be held with the church at Sulphur Fork, Henry Co., Ky., on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1886, and continue three days.

THE Union Primitive Baptist Association have appointed their next session to be held with Antioch Church, Lafayette Co., Ark., to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1886, and continue the two following days.

THE Mad River Predestinarian Baptist Association will meet this year with the Thompson Church, six miles west of Columbus Grove, situated on the D. & M. R. R., in Putnam Co., Ohio, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1886.

THE Brazos River Association of Primitive Baptists have appointed to meet with the New Mount Zion Church, seven miles east of Graham, Young Co., Texas, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1886.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., commencing on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, at ten o'clock, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Avenue Station, Maryland Central or Narrow Gauge R. R., at four p. m., on Friday, for Long Green or Forest Hill Stations. Those coming by way of Delta will take train about 3.15 p. m., for Forest Hill.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Columbia will hold their yearly meeting, the Lord willing, to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1886. We invite all our dear brethren and sisters to attend, and we will try and make it pleasant for them. Elders Hanover and Cole are expected to attend.

Those who come from the southeast will come to Toledo, and from there to Napoleon. Those from the north and west will come to Napoleon. Those from the southwest will come to Woodstock. Be sure to be at these stations on Friday, and you will find teams to convey you to the meeting.

THOMAS SWARTOUT.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is appointed to be held with the First Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, at Batavia Kill, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the first Wednesday and Thursday in September (1st and 2d), 1886. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters, especially ministering brethren. Trains will be met at Roxbury from the east and west on Tuesday before the meeting.

WM. BALLARD, Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

Eld J S Corder 5, J A Robertson 5, Mary Sutton 2.50, Geo B Spitzer 2.50, Archer Robertson 2, William Neal 2, Allen Howard 2, John Terry 2, E V McKinney 2.50, John L Wright 2, Wm B Wright 2, W T Comer 2, John J Weedon 2, A W Rittenhouse 2.50, Mrs R M Runner 2.50, J F White 2.50, Mrs Sarah B Pierce 2.50, Mrs Ophelia Anderson 2.50, Julia A Brawley 2.50, Mrs Abbie Coddington 2, John Mason Sr 2.50, W E McAlister 2.50, Wiley Jones 2, Laban Moss 2.50, Mrs J H Reed 2.50, Jas A Perkins 2.50, P O Whitaker 2.50, A B Whatley 2.50, Louis Whitfield 2.50, A Moncrief 4, A H Patton 2.50, Mrs Anna Terry 3, W A Rigmy 2.50, W H Harrell 2.50, Levi Murphree 2.50, Mrs Mollie W Hubbard 2.75, John T Gifford 2, Isaac Holeman 2.50, Mrs J Lillibridge 2 50, Enoch Thompson 5, D A Mewborn 4, John P Moulton 2, T J Ruffin 2, A W Bloomfield 2.50, John W Mizell 2.50, J A B Walters 2, G T Snipes 2, J P Mewborn 2, C P Ellis 1, Eld B L Thorneberry 2, B M Idol 2.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

Smith Ketchum 2, Mrs J B Green 50c, W K White 50c, Turner Whitehead 50c, Jas M Howell 50c, Martha Knight 50c, W P Douglas 50c, E W Smith 50c, D T Barton 50c, H Moseley 3, L L New 50c, J C Shelton 50c, C West 1.50, Chas Ware 50c, Alfred Goode 50c, Delilah Winchel 50c, Thos Clark 1, J A Robertson 4, I C Addis 50c, Mrs E Chandler 50c, Dr R Cummins 50c, Christian Winter 50c, W B Sherril 50c, G A Williams 50c, C Nance 50c, J W Willis 50c, Wiley Mayes 50c, Mrs S H Bishop 1, W D Agee 1.50, W A Shelly 50c, Mrs M Swindell 50c, Annie Bryant 50c, Eliza Barb 50c, T G Flanary 50c, Wm Clymer 50c, A I Stout 50c, D Westell 50c, J E Taylor 50c, Mattie S Derr 50c, Elder Lewis Seitz 4, Abram Spitzer 50c, F G Taylor 50c, Elizabeth Scroggins 50c, J D Hardy 50c, Samuel Dennison 50c, Mary A Porter 50c, D C Askin 50c, Mrs U North 50c, G W Guernsey 50c, A J Chamblod 50c, Eld P McCay 1, J G Steers 50c, Mrs J F Davis 50c, E J Littleton 50c. Eld C West

50c, J W Harris 50c, B F Wait 50c, J Brimson 1, Edward Drake 1, Mrs L E Fleming 50c, Mrs M C Cooper 50c, G J Bothwick 50c, H Grant 50c, T H Crampton 50c, T H Dawson 50c, J H Dawson 50c, E Walton 50c, J F Sutton 50c, Ephriam Smith 50c, Elder A Shank 50c, Eddy Ketchum 1, Eliphlet Ketchum 50c, S B Mattox 1, H Laird 50c, J M Harris 50c, J E Hillsman 50c, J S Corder 1, Wm T Cobb 50c, A M B Oden 50c, A Belling 1, Wm B Ennist 50c, H B Howard 1, J L Bruce 50c, Edwin Clendenin 50c, H D Hines 50c, D W Massee 50c, Mrs N Fuller 50c, W H Coleman 50c, Jephtha Thornton 50c, Isaac Fessler 50c, A Busenbark 1, R G Marbury 50c, Henry Whiteman 50c, E N Holly 1.30, R M Wood 50c, J H Hall 50c, Mrs J M Theobald 50c, Elder I Hewitt 50c, Mrs M E Enderlin 2, A M Martin 50c, H Gibson 50c, J B Mann 50c, T S Mann 50c, N A Bell 50c, I M Oglesby 50c, Michael Gould 50c, David Gould 50c, J A Williams 50c, Mrs D Hoffins 50c, J S Burns 50c, Asa B Smith 50c, J H Biggs 3, Geo Hardy 50c, Mrs M E Lawrence 50c, J A Minus 50c, J M B Barnett 50c, H S Dover 50c, Wm Smith 50c, A M Smith 50c, J T Holbrook 50c, Robt Rowe 1.50, T J Hurst 50c, H Wolf 50c, Eli Scott 50c, Wm A Dawson 50c, James Graves 50c, Wm Adams 50c, Wm Ferguson 50c, O C Utz 1.50, A D Collins 50c, Wm A Sallee 50c, Jas E Dickinson 50c, R H Espy 50c, G C Farthing 3, H Farthing 2, Wm Farthing 2, R L Gooch 50c, W A Wilkerson 50c, W G Vickers 50c, J W Gerrard 50c, E A Meaders 75c, J H Caldwell 1, Thos Wheeland 50c, Samuel Durham 50c, Wm P Kirk 50c, John Thompson 50c, Jacob Yelvington 50c, J G Reeves' list 2, J A Bullock 50c, J B Eaves 50c, J K P Burns 50c, H F Henigan 50c, John Mier 50c, John McFarland 50c, J Mason Sr 50c, W R Daniels 1, L A Hall 50c, Benj Muddle 50c, John Morse 50c, W A Thompson 50c, Dr B F Carty 50c, Mrs Mary Black 1, Wm H Smith 50c, W P Watkins 50c, H M Smith 50c, S D Carroll 1, D R Daniel 50c, A J Hester 50c, J L Nelson 1, Jos J Heale 50c, J H Landing 50c, Mary W Boice 50c, D C Hix 50c, John Carter 50c, T B Waldrup 50c, Jonas Lamm 50c, T L Page 50c, E A Perkins 2.50, W W Perkins 2.50, W F McKay 50c, Jimsey Harris 1, Mrs R A Cratch 50c, Noah Galloway 50c, W A Owens 50c, Y I Chandler 50c, J C Jackson 1, E W Ayres 50c, R N Spakrs 50c, Lucy Benethian 50c, C D Robertson 50c, W A Seymour 50c, Wm J Renfroe 50c, Mary Powell 50c, W W Vicks 50c, Robinson Murphy 1, Wm H Price 50c, S T Riggs 50c, Wm B Owen 92c, Miss M E Blocker 50c, Wm Jones 50c, Thos P Davis 50c, N B Walden 50c, R D Sanford 50c, John Darnall 50c, Joseph Harris 50c, J D Staples 50c, John Brickley 50c, Sarah Smith 1, Wm G Wheelless 50c, H M Johnson 50c, Seth Woodall 2.25, W B Earnest 50c, Mrs W H Beck 50c, Joel D Conner 50c, J M Dameran 50c, Mrs O Hill 50c, Henry Hall 50c, John P Keller 52c, J W Norton 50c, Jane Fewell 50c, Samuel Tharp 90c, R H Walker 50c, P J Trueax 50c, W H Mahurin 2, E Purdy 50c, Aaron Davis 1, H Hatcher 50c, Robt Hatcher 50c, M Vanderpool 50c, S M Kennedy 50c, Nancy Brayman 50c, F M Vining 50c, B I Alsbrook 50c, Jas Watkins 50c, Hiram Lucas 50c, J S Morlan 50c, Mary Dell 50c, James E Deal 50c, J H Sellars 50c, F J Sayle 50c, J J Harris 50c, L C Harris 50c, A I Smith 50c, W D Wood 1, David Parker 50c, J L Blanks 50c, C C Heath 1, A M Jones 50c, M F Thomas 50c, Wm H Cress 50c, S F McKay 50c, T M Neal 50c, J W Wyatt 50c, Thos Ross 50c, J H Pearson 50c, John Proctor 50c, H C Swelt 50c, W Jackson 50c, J W Carter 1, J A Merryman 3, R D Purdy 50c, J A Money 50c, J L Gilmore 50c, Peter Fike 50c, Aaron Nichols 2, Dr S M Carlton 1, B White 50c, Jos White 50c, Annie D Mitchell 50c, G G Galleher 50c, John F Newlon 50c, Nathan Grafton 50c, Mrs Dr Ridgely 50c, G F Lamb 50c, T S Titus 50c, D T Arrington 50c, L L Harding 50c, B Roe 1, D McDonald 50c, A H Hagan 50c, Miles F West 50c, Isaac Van Housen 50c, Jacob Cloud 50c, Burton Hudson 50c, J T Swinney 50c, M B Moffett 50c, Emily Simpson 1.50, John R Roberts 50c, Elder Thos Felton 50c, P F Dodson 50c,

Fenwick Ellis 50c, Thos Farthing 50c, G H Thomas 50c, D Owen 50c, T H Brunfield 50c, Geo A Hodnett 50c, S P Terry 50c, S Phelps 50c, Abram Morningstar 50c, R A Howard 50c, R A Gilmer 50c, R T Powell 50c, Wm Fitzjerrell 2, Martin Lyles 50c, Joseph N Kemper 2, N H McQuerry 50c, J P Randolph 50c, J W Hargrove 50c, J M Elder 1, J M Hickman 50c, James O Keel 50c, Oliver Patterson 50c, Wm T Calvert 1, I S Meadows 50c, A B Chamberlin 50c. —Total \$341.89.

Williamston Academy.

FOR BOTH SEXES.

STRICTLY NON-SECTARIAN.

WILLIAMSTON, MARTIN CO., N. C.

For the especial purpose of rendering more regular and faithful service to my own church, of which my father was and I am a member and pastor, I expect, with the permission of providence, to transfer my residence, about the first of September, from Wilson to my native place, Williamston, N. C., and to take charge of the WILLIAMSTON ACADEMY, opening the Fall Session, Monday, September 13th, 1886.

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FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

This work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order, by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

Owing to the delay in the typographical work, the Hymn and Tune Book will not be ready to send to subscribers till the last of June. Please observe carefully the above directions for sending money. Do not send checks, nor postage stamps, nor post-office orders on any office but Philadelphia.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

As will be seen by reference to an extract from a letter received from Elder Hassell, on page 200, we have met with an unexpected delay in the completion of the Church History, caused by the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Index as soon as anticipated. We now have the History all in type except the Index, and the binder at work on the printed sheets, and as soon as the manuscript for the Index is received we will rush them through the press and mail the books at the earliest possible day.

We still have left of the first edition of the Plain Cloth binding @ \$2 00, 245 copies.
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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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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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DEVOTED TO THE

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THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH

OF EACH MONTH,

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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.

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We have discontinued the publishing of the subscription receipts, and have adopted the following method, which if strictly observed will give perfect satisfaction;

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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.

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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. 54. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1886. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GHEENT, Ky., Feb. 27, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother Philip N. Moyers, of Tennessee, asking for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES my views of the parable of the good seed and the tares, recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. As apologies are valueless, although they might come from able ministers of the gospel, and the able writers for the SIGNS, still they would be much less valuable when offered by the feeble writer of these rambling thoughts; therefore I decline to offer any apology by way of reproof to brother Moyers for not having sought other and more able pens to unfold to him the sublime beauties and glories of the great plan of salvation presented by our Lord in that parable.

Our blessed Lord said, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field."—Matthew xiii. 24. Our Lord introduces this profoundly interesting subject by speaking of the "kingdom of heaven;" and he tells us what that kingdom is likened unto. He says that it is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. The word kingdom pre-supposes the existence of a king, and this thought is clearly presented by our Lord when he says, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man." That man is the glorious Son of man; is the God-man-Mediator. He says, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man." Mark you, he uses the word "soweth," in the present tense; and glory to his exalted name, that word will remain in the present tense till the last one of the redeemed family has that good seed sown in his heart by the Son of man. They in whose hearts that good seed is sown are no longer aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, but by the sowing of that good seed in their hearts they have given to them that hope which is the anchor of the soul upon which they rest, trusting that they are made heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ, to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them; in the glorious, triumphant and everlasting kingdom of God, where that good seed in its heavenly growth will shed its sweet odors and unfold its never-fading beauties to the everlasting glory and honor of the great Sower, the Son of man. That kingdom was that about which our Lord was talking. It is that kingdom in which a King shall reign in right-

eousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. It was that kingdom which was set up in the days of those kings of which Daniel prophesied, and is none other than the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, of which our Lord spake to Peter, saying, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He sows the good seed, he builds his church, and glory to his exalted name, that kingdom will never be removed; and the glorious foundation on which the church is built will never be shaken.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word."

But the peculiar characteristics of all the inhabitants of that kingdom present to us a subject that is replete with interest. Its investigation presents to the dear saints the waymarks by which they are enabled to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. While here below they are often in gloom, darkness and sorrow; but when they behold one of those waymarks, their faith and hope are lifted above the vain and delusive things of earth, and they are made to rejoice in the power, wisdom and never-failing mercy of their exalted Lord and King, who hath sown in their hearts that good seed. Our Lord said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" and the apostle to the Gentiles said, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." But our Lord said further to that ruler of the Jews, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." All that are born of the Spirit are born of God. Being born of God, they have Christ in them the hope of glory; and he being a quickening Spirit, sows in them eternal life. He said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." That eternal life is the good seed that is sown in them, and that life existed in our glorious Lord from the very ancient of eternity; and they being one with him, chosen in him, have that life. The apostle says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 3, 4. They were chosen in him for a purpose, and that purpose was that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. In their relation to the first Adam they were not holy and without blame before him in love. The prophet says, "All

we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isa. liii. 6. Our iniquity being laid on him, he bore our sins on the tree of the cross, and thus by one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified, set apart, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Surely, then, they are a purchased possession. "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." They being redeemed by that great offering which was made upon Calvary, he had an unquestionable right to sow that good seed in them, and thus seal forever the redemption of the whole man, soul, body and spirit, of every one of the redeemed family, and bring them all off as trophies of that great victory which he won when he came to earth in that body which was prepared him. But the apostle says, "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. 47, 48. Here the inspired apostle presents the whole race of man in their relation to the first man Adam. There is no distinction; they are all under sin; and the same apostle files this terrible and awful indictment against them, "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. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes."—Rom. iii. 10-18. The history of the world from the slaying of Abel by his brother to the present contains a fearful proof of every charge made in that indictment. But the inquiry arises, Whence cometh that fearful array of sin and iniquity? Our Lord says the tares are the children of the wicked one. In our relationship to the first Adam we are all the children of the wicked one. The apostle says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, 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."—Eph. ii. 1-3. They were the children of wrath because they were the children of the wicked one. He sowed that seed in the garden of Eden when he deceived our mother Eve. Although her husband, Adam, was not deceived, yet she being flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones, could not be separated from him. It is written, "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."—Gen. iii. 6. "The serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made," and he sowed the seed of rebellion against God and against his law in these two from whom all our race has descended. They were told that "in the day thou eatest thereof [the fruit of that tree] thou shalt surely die." They did eat of it, and incurred that fearful penalty; and it permeated their whole natures, and also that of all their descendants; hence they are all children of wrath, even as others. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." Adam sinned in violation of an expressed command. In doing so he incurred that penalty which was death. Thus the seed of the wicked one was sown in all his posterity, and yielded its fruit in all who lived from Adam to Moses; for they all died, although we have no account of any command or law having been given them. They died because they were all sinners, and the wages of sin is death. They and all the rest of Adam's race have and must die, because they were all one with him, yea, in him, when he violated that law of his Creator, and incurred that penalty. Adam was a figure of him that was to come; a figure of Christ. The apostle says, "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; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming."—1 Cor. xv. 22, 23. Here the apostle presents the oneness of Christ and his people in the resurrection. Thus the unity that existed between Christ and his people from all eternity, in this clos-

ing scene of the wondrous plan of life and salvation upon earth is made manifest, and thus is completely fulfilled the wondrous words recorded in the tenth chapter of John, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." That life is eternal, because it existed in our Lord from the very ancients of eternity, and was made sure to all the heirs of promise, all the election of grace; for that life was in him, and they were chosen in him, and thus they had that good seed sown in them by the Son of man. They had that good seed sown in them in that new heavenly and spiritual birth which fits them for a place in that kingdom which our Lord set up on earth. That kingdom is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field. Our glorious Lord hath done all things needful for that kingdom, to fit it and all its subjects for time; yea, and all its subjects for their respective places in that kingdom. It is a spiritual kingdom. The apostle says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"—1 Cor. iii. 16. That Spirit is the good seed; it is that eternal life which existed in our Lord ere time began, and by its being sown in the hearts of God's dear people by the Son of man, they are created in righteousness and true holiness. But this is not the old man against whom the apostle has filed that fearful indictment. He is not created in righteousness and true holiness. The apostle says, "That ye 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. Here we have the contrast between the old man and the new man, which presents the good seed and the tares. The good seed are sown in the great work of regeneration—the new birth. All the spiritual children of that kingdom grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ. But their growth is because they are created in righteousness. 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."—1 John iii. 9. That seed that remaineth in all the regenerate sons and daughters of the Most High is Christ in them the hope of glory. My brother Moyers, do you not remember that the Lord said to old Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed?" That seed was Christ, and he is in all his people the hope of glory. What a wonderful blessing! The minds of men and angels can never grasp that wondrous mystery; that mystery in which is embraced the incarnation of Deity; yea, the advent to a sin-cursed world of him who is named, "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Yea, his advent to earth was that he might bless his chosen people by redeeming them from the curse of a violated law. Sowing his

good seed in their hearts, he thus fitted them for his service while clothed with mortality, and attuning their voices to chant forth his praise and adoration in sacred and heavenly melody. O what wondrous things, dear saint, are these your glorious Lord hath done for you! Surely you are ready to say, "Great is the mystery of godliness." But day by day you mourn because the tares are permitted to grow; because they often seem to overshadow and almost root out the wheat. But the servants were told to let both grow together until the harvest. Ah, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other." The two principles represented by the old man and the new man, one leading to bondage and corruption, the other to holiness and purity, are presented by the tares and the wheat. The tares produce no fruit, and are a fit emblem of the total barrenness as to all good of all the children of the first Adam. Our Lord said, "When the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." Now, dear saint, what is your daily experience? Do you not realize day by day that when you would do good evil is present with you? The tares are there, and often seem by their luxuriant growth to obscure the healing rays of the Sun of righteousness. But still they must remain till the harvest. O how numerous are these tares! Every evil thought, every unholy desire, and all the lustings of our human nature after the things of earth, are but tares, and surely their number is legion. Our Lord hath ordained that they shall remain till the harvest. While you, dear saint, are often made to mourn over the corruptions of your nature, and with one of old to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" yet you sometimes realize that these sorrows over the corruption of your heart are given to you in mercy, and then you realize that "All things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose." It is then your sorrows are turned to thanksgiving, and your mourning to songs of praise to your glorious Lord; for he says to you, "To this man will I look; even to him that is poor in spirit, and of a contrite heart, and trembleth at my word." Yes, you are afflicted and made to mourn day by day by reason of the presence of those cruel tares. But for your comfort your Lord hath assured you that "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Then you, like one of old, should "glory in tribulation." Then the tares are a part, yea, and a very large part, of all the things that work together for good to you. Thus you behold the wisdom, mercy and loving-kindness of our Lord when he said, "Let both grow together until the harvest." But our Lord says in this parable, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall

gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity." That kingdom was set up on earth, and in it were, and still are, his angels, the true ministers of the everlasting gospel. John was commissioned by him who said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore;" to write to the angels of the seven churches in Asia, and to tell what the Spirit said to each of these churches. At that very early day in the history of the gospel church, the infinitely pure and all-searching eye of the eternal Spirit saw corruptness in all those churches. Yes, he had somewhat against them. The record there made by John was made for our learning. They were solemn warning to those churches—warning against the heresies that had crept into them; and they were given by him who was "the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God."—Rev. iii. 14. All those messages were to the angels of these churches. Then he sent forth his angels, and he gave them the messages which they were to bear to the churches, and no one will doubt the truth of those messages. To the church at Ephesus he says, "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." There were in that church those to whom that charge applied, and in that they did offend; and when that charge was made by the angel of that church they were gathered out of his kingdom. To "the angel of the church in Thyatira write. * * * I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, king of Israel. Her name was proverbial on account of her idolatry, and she was called a prophetess because of her teaching idolatrous worship. Surely this was doing iniquity, and the preaching of the everlasting gospel to that church drove out, no doubt, all to whom this charge applied. Those idolaters were gathered out of the kingdom, because they had no place there. In this day of the world, wherever the gospel is preached in power and demonstration of the Spirit, the natural man will not receive it, for the reason that it is foolishness to him. When our glorious Lord is presented by his angels—true ministers of the everlasting gospel—in all his glorious fullness, the latent idolatry in the current mind rises and proclaims that enmity against the true and living God which characterizes all idolaters, and says, I would not worship a God of infinite wisdom and unalterable purpose; one who says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" one who spoke into existence the vast universe, and upholds the same by his omnipotent power, and then says, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them

shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are numbered."—Matt. x. 29, 30. No; the natural man could not grasp the idea of a God who created the seventy millions of planets that adorn night's sable arch, and holds and controls them in their wonderful and various revolutions without a jar, and then take cognizance of a sparrow. Such thoughts are foolishness to him. But to the saint, to the inhabitant of that glorious kingdom, they are heavenly truths which cause him to cry out, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky."—Deut. xxxiii. 26.

If this should be published, brother Moyers and all who are seeking to know the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel will please accept it as a token of my love for all the children of the kingdom; and you, brethren editors, will please dispose of it as you may deem best, and, believe me, affectionately yours,

H. COX.

GEORGETOWN, Ky.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel somewhat impressed to give some expression to my thoughts this morning for your consideration, and for the consideration of the household of faith, if you shall approve what I shall here indite. When moved by a right spirit, the truth is always spoken and received in the love of it; for it is only then that the heart of the Lord's servants is found inditing a good matter. Then they speak of the things which they have made (or experienced) touching the King, and their tongue is the pen of a ready writer, and they break forth in a song of adoration and praise with the sweet singer of Israel, "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." It is only when the heirs of immortal glory are living in the Spirit, and also walking in the Spirit, that they will ascribe all majesty, dominion, power and might unto him, who is "King of kings and Lord of lords," acknowledging his absolute predestination of all things, even those terrible things which he teaches them in their experience, to learn, as their blessed Master, obedience by the things which they suffer. The Scriptures of divine truth abound with lessons of instruction, showing how his body, the church, is brought into a fellowship of his sufferings; and it is only as the heirs of the heavenly kingdom are made to experience those things that they can and do believe, for it is in this way that our experience is in such harmony with the Scriptures that we realize that whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning. The Scriptures must be fulfilled;

and unless our experience is in harmony with them we are skeptics, just like all the sons and daughters of Adam in a state of nature. Nor will the testimony of men affect our belief, only as that testimony harmonizes with the Scriptures in connection with our experience. The Savior said to Nicodemus, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" (the word *of* is a supplied word). This language is very searching, and it should be remembered that it is the language of him who is the "faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God," and that he says, "We speak that we do know," &c. We suppose he means by *we*, all those who have the testimony, or all those who are born again, for that is the subject under consideration; and the *ye*, the Jews, or all who are not born again, and who receive not our witness, or testimony. Now, as the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, we see how the hearts of the fathers are turned unto the children, and the hearts of the children are turned unto the fathers, and how they see eye to eye and speak the same things concerning this great salvation; "of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace 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. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel [borne testimony] unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels [messengers] desire to look into." These messengers desire to look into the unfolding of those deep, profound and hidden (from the world) mysteries, which are revealed only by that Spirit which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. David says, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." In dwelling in the house of the Lord, let us remember that he dwells in the high and holy place; and though we be called upon for a time to dwell in the everlasting burnings and the devouring flame, yet your dwelling is on high, and the place of your defense is the munition of rocks. Bread shall be given you; your waters shall be sure. To our dear sisters, Cordie Yeoman and Mary Parker, of whose trials and afflictions I am somewhat cognizant, who spoke in the last number of the SIGNS of the strength and comfort received from a private letter that I wrote, I would say, though you pass through the fire, the flame shall not kindle upon thee. The Master has said, I will bring them through the fire; not

into it, and there leave them, but through it. How sweet are the words of the poet, dear sister:

"Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismay'd!

I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid. I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,

Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,

The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow; For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless, And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,

My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply; The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

My own pathway, my dear sister, and all the dear tried ones, is through deep waters and fiery trials; but when the glorious light of God shines in us, and we are enabled to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, we may be "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." You may know, my sisters, that I can sympathize with you, when I tell you that I have been so afflicted all my life that I do not know that I have ever spent a day free from bodily pain, besides having suffered the loss of all my property. But these are matters of small moment, when compared with the intense agony of a realizing sense of sin, without hope of (escape) deliverance. I do not like the word escape, for the guilty criminal may escape from prison and the demands of justice, but not from guilt. O wonder of wonders! amazing grace, infinite wisdom and everlasting love toward the elect bride, settled on the objects of love and care before time began or ere sin were born. O what rich treasure, wisdom, glory and power were given her in her head and husband! For "thy maker is thine husband" (not shall be); "The God of the whole earth shall he be called." When she (the church, the bride) was about to emerge from the shades of a legal dispensation, we hear John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, saying, "He that hath the bride [not he that shall get the bride] is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." This bride was the object of his love when the Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, and has been the object of his protecting care ever since; and were it not that she in her time state is developed with two antagonistic natures, there would never be a family jar. It is the promptings of the earthly nature that would lead to the adornment of earthly wisdom, that brings about bitter envyings and strifes; hence the apostle denounces it as earthly, sensual, devilish, and tells us that

where envyings and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work. The old prophet Habakkuk (a wrestler, *i. e.*, all the servants of the Lord are wrestlers; Jacob wrestled with the angel) had to see or experience, in wrestling with the angel in prayer, the burden of strife and contention; and in his wailing lamentation he cried out, "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention. Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth. Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously; for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves." I quote this from the inspired prophet because he was commanded to write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it; for the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; and to show that while we behold and see these things among the heathen (false religious organizations), that also the Chaldean (as demons, as robbers) is raised up even among the Lord's people for their punishment. Abram, it should be remembered, was a Chaldean by birth of natural parentage, but God called him out of Ur (fire, valley) of Chaldee, into a land that he should show him; a quiet habitation, not earthly. I believe that it was in view of the sentiment expressed by the prophet Habakkuk of the Chaldean being raised up, that the inspired apostle gave vent to the expression, "I know this, that after my departure 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." Hence Peter said, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." We would ask, Is not the way of truth (Christ says, "I am the way, and the truth") evil spoken of when it is denied that Christ embraced in him his bride and all his spiritual posterity, when the "Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old," or to deny that there was a Mediator until Christ was born of the virgin Mary? For to deny these things is to deny that Christ has a bride, or

that God has any children, and also that he is the everlasting Father; and yet more, a denial that he is the King eternal, immortal. But it is a glorious and comforting thought, my dear brethren, that as the old patriarchs, prophets, apostles and pilgrim fathers in Israel have passed away, God in his infinite wisdom and power has raised up others, who still proclaim the joyful sound known only by those (the church) blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, which is the fullness of him that filleth all in all. I rejoice that God hath given a banner unto them that fear him, that it may be displayed because of the truth, that his beloved may be delivered; and I greatly rejoice that the banner is his infinite, unchanging, everlasting love of his chosen bride. For "he brought me into his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God. It is only she who is the beloved that knows anything about the love of God. All others are lovers of self more than lovers of God, and have no care (where self comes in) for Zion, the city of our solemnities. When we look upon her we shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation. God fights her battles. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."

In love to the household of faith,
J. TAYLOR MOORE.

JESUS WEPT.

WHETHER we search the pages of the divine record in Genesis or Revelation, in the prophets or the apostles; whether we follow the Israelites in their fretful journey through the wilderness, or the Savior in his journey from the conception to the mount of Calvary; each page bears testimony to the advent, the death or the resurrection of our blessed Lord; and as a whole it is a full and complete record of him who came into the world to save his people from their sins. It is from first to last in testimony of him of whom we read in the first chapter of John, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Scriptures of divine truth are not the Word, but they are they which bear record of the Word. Jesus, while being persecuted by the Jews, who sought to slay him, said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." In this divine testimony we read of the sore afflictions, the trials and the sufferings through which our Redeemer passed; for in all the afflictions with which the children of the heavenly King are afflicted, Christ was also afflicted. In the christian experience of the child of God, when he is being led by the Spirit out of the darkness which precedes the light of God's glory, he groans in sorrow, and therefore weeps. There is sometimes a weeping for joy, which is oftentimes the result of the reception of God's glorious love shed abroad in the heart. There is a weeping which

proceeds from deep and heartfelt sorrow. It would seem that when Jesus wept, on an occasion as described by the apostle whom Jesus loved, in the eleventh chapter of the gospel according to John, that it was with a feeling sense of mingled joy and sorrow. Of joy, because he possessed the power given him by his Father to raise a dead Lazarus from the grave; for in speaking of the death of Lazarus, he said to his disciples, "Lazarus is dead: and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe." Of sorrow, because of sympathy and love for the weeping, sorrowing sisters, and of the great love wherewith he loved the brother; for it is recorded that when Jesus therefore saw her (Mary) weeping, and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled: immediately following which, Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, "Behold how he loved him." The spectacle of Jesus weeping must have filled the hearts of those trembling, weeping Jews with awe and wonder. Yet the scene was one in keeping with his character, for he was meek and lowly of heart, and was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. And when with a loud voice Jesus commanded the dead Lazarus to come forth, and the command was instantly obeyed, how much more stricken with awe and astonishment must have been the lookers-on. But (and mark the distinguishing point) many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him; but some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. While all looked upon the scene with the same natural eyes, those who believed were of the chosen seed of spiritual Israel, and with spiritual eyes beheld their Redeemer; while the others, having natural eyes only, could behold nothing except that which pertaineth to flesh. They could behold with natural wonder and amazement the power and greatness of the miracle performed, but they could not look upon Jesus as the Lord from heaven. Many times in the experience of the poor and afflicted people of the Lord, while in a cold and listless state, shivering from exposure to the cold drafts of fleshly lusts, groping in the darkness, to find but the barred and locked door of the prison cell, wherein is every ray from the Sun of glory shut out, what would they not give that they might weep great tears of sorrow, to relieve and pour out the pent up agony within? For "Blessed are they that mourn [said Jesus on the mount], for they shall be comforted." And to the mourner weeping is the soothing salve which comforts the sorrow-stricken.

Songs of praise and gladness are sung in Zion, the city of our God. There is no weeping there, for there is no sorrow to alleviate. It is only while passing through the low lands of this sin-cursed world, with the burden of the sins of his people upon him, that Jesus had cause for weep-

ing. When he returned to his Father's house, wherein he had before told his disciples there are many mansions, and where a place would be prepared for them, he did not go in sorrow or grief, because he had already declared, while expiring upon the cross, that his work was finished. Having now redeemed his people with his own precious blood, he could with joy and gladness prepare a place for them. And when he ascended into heaven, he did not leave his children to mourn and weep for him continually; but he said unto them, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever: even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." Every child of the heavenly kingdom, after having been quickened unto life eternal, feels sometimes within him a holy, heavenly fire burning, lighting up and brightening his once obscured pathway, sending sparks and rays of precious hope into his soul, filling his heart with God's wonderful love, putting a new song into his mouth, enabling him to sing songs of praise to the holy One of Israel. And this is the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive; the Comforter which should come, that the trembling little ones should not be left comfortless; the Holy Ghost, Christ himself within us the hope of glory. What a glorious hope, and what a happy looking to beyond the grave, when death shall be swallowed up in victory. And while we are rejoicing, a dark and ominous cloud will perchance arise in the horizon, obscuring our bright views. This is in consequence of that dread warfare between the flesh and the Spirit; and we are buried in doubts and fears because for a time the flesh has apparently gained a victory over the Spirit, and we are brought down into the very dust and ashes, with groanings and with weeping. And when we get into so low a state, all hope seemingly fled, our puny strength all exhausted, it is then that the strong arm of our loving Savior is stretched forth, lifting us out of deep waters, taking us again into his banqueting house, where his banner over us is love. Who can measure the depths of his great love, or reckon the riches of his grace? for he is chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. The cattle upon a thousand hills are his. It is he who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. It is the Lord from heaven who said, by the mouth of the prophet, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." And it was the same Lord from heaven, clothed in garments of humility, that wept at the grave of Lazarus. I know that he has all power, both in heaven and in earth, and I know that every spiritual need of his children is fully supplied; yet

my daily longing desire is for a richer and a clearer manifestation of his saving grace. And knowing there is no defect or deficiency in the Lord, I hope that I can fully realize that in my own fleshly body lies all the weakness and defects, and it is my own carnal mind that leads me astray from that strait and narrow path into the obscurities and quagmires of sinful lusts and passions. Yet through all my dark and troublous journey I sigh and weep, that I might have a thousand tongues to sing our great Redeemer's praise.

With the great love I bear to the saints of the Lord, I submit the few disconnected thoughts I have written, hoping that to some one they may add a grain of comfort, if the brethren Beebe see fit to publish them.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

SOWING IN TEARS.

"THEY that sow in tears shall reap in joy."
—Psalm cxxvi. 5.

But to whom does this sweet promise apply? Who is it that sows in tears? No one in nature. We would think it very strange to see a man weeping while engaged in sowing grain in a well-cultivated field. His tears and work would contradict each other. His work declares a confidence in the ground and in the seed, and an assurance that a rich harvest will reward him for his trouble, while his tears express a lack of any such confidence and assurance. The sowing of seed is a cheery, pleasant work, full of bright hopes and joyful anticipations. The husbandman does this work in full confidence as to the result. His ground has been thoroughly prepared, his seed is good, he has chosen the proper season, and he has no reason to doubt that he will in due time reap a satisfactory harvest. In this work, therefore, he has no cause to weep. In nature seed-time is not a time for tears.

The natural man, in doing those works by which he expects to gain the favor of God and obtain an entrance into heaven, cannot be said to sow in tears. The field is his own heart, and he regards it as good soil, which he is able to prepare in a suitable manner. In it he plants and sows the best of seed, as he regards it, and expects with the utmost confidence that his labor will be abundantly rewarded. He sees no more cause for weeping than a man who is sowing wheat in a rich, mellow soil, on a clear, beautiful day.

If one who owned a small piece of land, which was all his dependence, should find it failing from year to year to respond to his labors, yielding less and less, until finally it ceased to produce anything; and if again he should go forth with all his remaining seed, which he feared had lost all its virtue, and should scatter it with all his remaining strength upon the soil that had proven worthless before, making this last feeble effort with scarce a shadow of hope, even against hope, because he sees no other possible chance of preserving life; we

should expect to find that man sowing in tears.

So when one who has been working the field of his own heart with satisfactory results hitherto, begins to notice a failure in the returns, begins to realize the blighting effects of sin, and finds that he has no remedy for that deadly blight, from that time he begins to sow in tears. The field grows worse in his view, until he finds it entirely barren of all that is good, but fearfully and increasingly fruitful of all that is evil. It seems a terribly hopeless field to work in, but it is all he has, and he cannot get away from it. He cannot but still try and try, and hope against hope that he may yet succeed in finding some good spot, some little valuable soil, that may yield at least one good thing. If only one good prayer, if even one sigh or groan, that he could know was from a pure desire, could be brought forth, there would be some relief. But sin is in everything, in every cry, in every breath; and even the best of seed seems to become bad when it comes into his hand. If he tries to sow any part of the word of God, the very words seem to lose their pure and holy character as they fall into that field, and to be only the letter which killeth; to mean nothing when there but to manifest the hypocrisy and worthlessness of that deceitful heart and utterly corrupt nature. Here is one that sows in tears.

What an unspeakable blessing it is for one to be taught the corrupt and barren nature of this field, although in learning this solemn and important lesson he is reduced to such a wretched condition, and brought to the borders of death. What a blessed thing it is to be forced to scatter the last handful of seed upon what he now sadly believes to be a thoroughly unfruitful soil. Every effort to do some good thing in the sight of a holy God, every effort to cleanse ourselves from evil, and to make some atonement for sin, every sigh and groan because all such efforts fail, every cry for mercy, is well compared to sowing, but it is sowing in tears. But every poor sinner who thus sows in tears shall reap in joy. Here is the mystery of salvation, the miracle of grace, the wonder of redemption. Here is the soul-surprising experience of a new heart. The old, worthless, barren field is in the background now, and here is the field which the Lord hath blessed. Upon this new heart the Lord has written his law of love. Here is every plant that is desirable, every fruit that is good. All our desires, all our sighs and prayers, like good seed, seem to have fallen upon good ground here that we knew not of, and to have brought forth abundantly. Nothing is lacking of all that we longed for. We find everything in Jesus. Work has ceased. There is no need for work. Nothing is left to be desired when we have Jesus. Our works only discovered our helplessness and inability; his works have secured everything—eternal deliverance from sin, salvation from all villainess, redemption from death and the

grave, and every grace and blessing, with all the purity and joy and glory of heaven. In Jesus we have a soul-satisfying taste of love, and joy, and peace, and meekness, and goodness, and gentleness, and faith, and long-suffering, and all the fragrant and delicious fruit of the Spirit.

It is because Jesus went forth under the law weeping, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, bearing precious seed, and came again in the gospel, bringing his sheaves with him, that they who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He did the work which enables them to reap a rich and blessed harvest. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, which is infinitely better than would have been what once they hoped for, to have it fulfilled by them. He works in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight. In no other way could there ever be anything within a sinful man that would please a holy God. We are therefore made to realize how wonderfully good and glorious are his works, and how precious also are his thoughts concerning us, and how great is the sum of them. This fills our hearts with that sweetest of all feelings, praise to his great and lovely and most excellent name.

We do not make a harvest ours by reaping it. It must be ours, or we would have no right to reap it. Reaping is entering upon the enjoyment of it. When the rich harvest fields of the gospel are opened to our astonished view within our own poor hearts, we learn that this precious harvest of life everlasting, with all its infinite blessings which we now begin to reap in joy, was ours before we knew of it in Jesus Christ; and through the fellowship of his sufferings, who went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, we enter into the joy of our Lord.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Aug. 23, 1886.

CAIRO, Texas, March, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I will try and communicate to you and the many readers of the SIGNS a few of the thoughts and feelings of the unworthy writer. Brethren and sisters, writers for the SIGNS, write on, for I am often comforted by your rich communications through its columns. The grace of God that bringeth salvation is wonderful indeed. No wonder the apostle says, "God who is rich in mercy," &c. For were it not for that rich mercy of our God, Christians, where would be your hope? for it is alone in the mercy of our God that we were raised from that awful pit and the misery of our sinking soul. The sinner under conviction is brought exceedingly low, and while in this condition never calls for justice to be executed on him; but his only plea is, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." He feels, too, that God cannot save such a one without impairing or injuring his justice. And he is brought to wonder how God can be just and the justifier of the ungodly. He wonders in this way, which is a solitary way, until Jesus unveils his blessed face. Then

the light breaks in, and we see as we never did before, and are enabled to see the glorious plan of salvation, which is so well suited to our need. Yes, the secret that the psalmist speaks of is revealed. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant." They look away back and see that their blessed Jesus was set up from everlasting as the head of the church, and their salvation was embraced in that everlasting covenant which was ordered in all things and sure. This is what is called the "sure mercies of David." Thus the eyes of God's people are opened to see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, and to see that "Beautiful for situation is mount Zion, the joy of the whole earth." They are thus encouraged to say with David, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever, and inquire in his temple." O how I have been filled to overflowing while reading those precious communications from sister Mary Parker, brother H. J. Redd, and others. I sometimes think that this rich mercy of our God and the glorious beauty of his kingdom are the most sweetly felt and seen by those dear ones. My dear old mother is one of those continual sufferers from standing disease, and I observe that she is most all the time reading, meditating and talking of the glorious things of godliness. Just here I will say to sister Parker that her pieces are highly prized by her; and when she reads of your awful sufferings, and then sees how wonderfully reconciled you are to God, she (and I will say we) is made to rejoice. For we do love to see the dear people of God reconciled to his divine and overruling providence; for thus it becomes us as creatures of a day to inquire God's will concerning us, and say, "Thy will be done;" also to fill the place and station assigned us, in meekness and fear, and say, O how good is the Lord, who has blessed us with his grace; and we feel that it is only to fill up the sufferings of that blessed Jesus that are left behind. Brethren, patience becomes us. Let each say, I am willing to suffer for Christ's sake, knowing that he is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. Thus may I fill up the measure of my days. Just here flow the tears of love and gratitude to God for his many tokens of love and mercy to the unworthy writer, for they are more in number than the hairs of my head. For when I have felt forsaken of friends, he has been with me, both in sweet meditation by day and dreams by night, and I feel to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." Nowhere else can I go, but like Peter of old I say, "Lord, thou hast the words of eternal life." Then, brethren and sisters, when you get in trouble go and tell Jesus, as did his people in olden times; for his ear is not heavy, that he cannot hear. When you go to him, he has the healing balm. Yes, there is balm in Gilead, and a physician, too, and the most skillful of any; for he has but

to speak and it is done, to command and it stands fast. Thus we see he is rich in mercy, and can and does our needs supply.

Just here I will somewhat change the subject, and for consideration of brethren give my views on the parable of wheat and the tares. I have given this subject much thought and study. I have in days gone by taken the view that the good seed had reference to the first principle sown in man, and the last principle the tares or wicked infused by Satan. This view sounds very well until we turn and read the Savior's words to the disciples, "The good seed are the children [not principle alone] of the kingdom, but the tares are the children [not principle alone] of the wicked one." So this view does not seem to hold good when tried by the word. Another view is, that the good seed is the full family of God, and the only ones put forth in Adam, and the only ones that were in him when he transgressed, and the only ones that fall in him. And the tares were brought in afterwards by the multiplication of the woman's conception; which, if it were true, would not be done by the devil; for God says, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception," &c. And again, this would lead us into other errors, for we would be bound (to be consistent) to contend that one set of children were good, and the other bad; and if so, one set would contain the Spirit of God, and the other the spirit of Satan, born into the world; which would carry the idea that there is a difference in the human family in the state of nature, and would contradict the apostle Paul, who said that all were alike the children of wrath by nature. And it would contradict the apostle again, where he says, (1 Cor. xv.) that the first man was natural and not spiritual. So then we would have to conclude that man is good without the second birth; that is, the elect or good seed; and then we have Arminianism in disguise. The Arminian claims that God saves us because we do good, and the Twoseeders say it is because we are good (the good seed). So neither of the above views suits me; for it would set forth the children of the devil, or the wicked, as coming in after the fall of man, and thus represent them as not being under the law of God as the rest of mankind. We think if God's people will turn to their own experience, none will feel to say, I am or was saved because I was good. O no! but they will feel to say, If saved at all, it is because it seemed good in God's sight. They will rather wonder why so wretched a sinner was ever saved at all. The reader will perhaps by this time begin to want to know what is my view of the subject. I will now try and give them as briefly as I can. I will first say that I think the key to this mystery is in the words "kingdom" and "words." Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that sowed good seed in his field." This, I think, represents the Jewish kingdom. But

says the objector, It says, "the field is the world." But that does not always mean the entire earth, including all time; for it is said that Jesus "appeared in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." This certainly means the end of the Jewish kingdom. Just so with the other, it means the end of the law dispensation. We think that the first planted in that kingdom were the believers in the Lord Jesus, and had the faith of God's elect; but afterwards (as their history will show) there were those in that kingdom that were not God's chosen people (only in a natural sense); for "they are not all Israel that are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Israel shall thy seed be called." So we think that the faithless ones who were in that kingdom were the ones meant by the tares. And we think that perhaps the first ones were influenced by Satan to join in with that people, and perhaps while in bondage, or at some time when they were careless and unwatchful. Be this as it may, we see that when they brought forth fruit they were detected. And the servants asked, "Wilt thou that we gather them up?" His answer was, 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; but gather the wheat into my barn," (the gospel church). So we see John about the work, when they of Judea and Jerusalem and the regions round about Jordan came to John and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Others also came to him demanding baptism. Just here the servants began to gather out of his kingdom all things that offended and they (not a principle alone) that did iniquity; for he says unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth fruit meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." So we see that they could stand in the field, or Jewish kingdom, just like the five foolish virgins; but their lamps had gone out; they would only hold out through the law dispensation. They could stand in that kingdom without being the subjects of God's saving grace. We have heard the idea advanced that we ought to bear with the disorderly, for fear of rooting out the wheat; but I think it best to adhere to the laws of the King. I think that had reference to the past dispensation.

I am your brother in gospel bonds, if not deceived,

DURHAM RICHARDSON.

INGLESIDE, Steuben Co., N. Y.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please publish the following letter, if in your judgment you think proper. I think it would comfort some poor, trembling sinner like myself.

Yours,

W. W. GRAVES.

JUSTUS, Pa., Feb. 14, 1886.

DEAR BROTHER GRAVES:—Your kind and welcome letter was received, and I was glad to hear from you once more. Pardon my seeming neglect in writing to you. Could you know my feelings you would not blame me. If I could write like you, or any of the dear family, I would try oftener; but I feel as if mine was an outside case. And yet I hope I have the experience of the rest of my Father's family. But I feel so lifeless, so dumb, I seem to move along like one stupefied, groping along with but little manifestative light. Your letter was full of that blessed doctrine that raises me sometimes above this earth with all of its trials, and even above all the gloom within, to rejoice; yes, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I hope you may be enabled by divine power to speak forth this blessed truth, to the comfort of your Father's little ones. I often murmur and complain of my lot, yet am made to feel at times that all things work together for my good. I am glad that there is One that knew the end from the beginning, that there is no chance work, that all is fixed. And though I feel at times that my darkness is great, and my trials many, yet there will not be one too many for my good. I can truly say that I am glad that our God does all his pleasure. None can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou? I am glad this earth is not my abiding place. Though my flesh is weak, and shrinks from death, I do feel at times to have hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave, in and through the blessed work of the Son of God, that finished work. O, dear brother, are we not glad that it is a finished salvation? What would we, poor worms, do but for that hope in a complete Savior, when we feel so much sin and corruption within that we cannot do the things that we would? How good to know that it is not of works. I do feel so glad that we have such a God, who knows our feeble frame, and knew just what I would be from eternity. I often wonder at people believing in a beginning to eternal life. Can you tell the beginning of anything eternal? I hope I am one of that number whose life is hid with Christ in God. Great is the mystery of godliness. I am glad it is a revelation from God, for we cannot know anything of these great mysteries only as they are revealed to us. That excludes boasting, for what have we that we have not received? When I was at the association last June, and our little number was received so cordially as one with you, I felt to say, It is enough. O how I desired that we might be kept from bringing any sorrow to you; that we might walk carefully all our life; and above all things, that we may walk in the truth, steadfast and unmovable. That was a happy time for us, a day we had long looked for. I know that we cannot keep ourselves, but hope the association may never have cause to regret seeing us. We have great reason to rejoice that while there were but four who stood firm in the truth, there

have been four more added, and many more in our vicinity rejoice in the truth in its purity. You know what we have passed through. We know something of your trials. Friends according to the flesh are torn asunder, but we are to know no man after the flesh; and we do feel willing to forsake father and mother, and all earthly things, rather than the doctrine of God, for all earthly ties and things must be dissolved. Yes, we are greatly blessed. Elder Vail or Elder Bogardus comes once a month to minister to our comfort; great gifts, for which we feel grateful, and yet may we be enabled to look beyond the gifts to the Giver. We have conference once each month, and a covenant meeting once each month. When we were left so low, I did not know how great things were in store for us; but the Lord has done it, and blessed be his holy name. Great and marvelous are his works. I think of one and another of the dear family that I have met. Some I never saw, but have heard of them through the SIGNS, and I think, O what a wonderful family! How alike they are! Do you know the reason? Because they are taught of God. All rejoice in the same thing, salvation by grace, given us in Christ before time. All will awake with his likeness and be satisfied. Will I be there? Can it be possible that I am one of that number? I have felt that I could praise the Lord if he should cast me at the left hand; for I know justice would shine forth in my condemnation, if I am not one of his redeemed ones. But I have a hope that will not leave me, that some day I will praise him without this old carnal mind to annoy; for I feel the warfare more and more between the flesh and the Spirit. It is this that causes all my groaning; for I feel a desire to be perfect, a mind within that would praise the Lord continually; while I have another mind that seems more like Satan than anything else; hence the conflict.

And now, dear brother, I would say, Declare the truth boldly, with the ability that God giveth, knowing that he that is for you is greater than all. May the Lord make you submissive to his will in all things. Love to you and wife. I hope to meet both of you at Otego in June, at the association.

From the least, if a saint at all,
HELLEN AKERLEY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—I will send you a short letter which I received a few days ago from our friend and brother in Christ, for publication (if in your judgment you think it profitable), as I have the consent of the author.

OLIVER ROBINSON.

NEWBURY, Ontario, July 27, 1886.

TO OLIVER ROBINSON—DEAR BROTHER:—I received yours, and feel that I owe you a few words in return. Spiritual communications between the Lord's people are profitable. I have been favored many times to

prove this; not only in speaking together of the things of Christ, but also in writing to and receiving letters in return. My soul has many times been encouraged, refreshed and profited. It is in this way that such publications as the SIGNS OF THE TIMES (when the truth as it is in Jesus is published therein) are of benefit and unto edification to the household of God. In yours you speak of my visit among the churches of the eastern associations. It was a very precious time to my soul. The Lord our God was very gracious to me, and while listening to the preaching of the gospel of Christ I feel that I can say, The Holy Ghost gave me a hearing ear and an understanding heart. Many times my soul was full to overflowing, and there was raised up in my heart songs of sweet praises to our gracious and glorious Lord. Then another thing most precious was the privilege of seasons of heavenly communion with many of the dear saints of God; and as we communed one with another, Jesus was in the midst, and I think we could have said, with the two disciples mentioned in Luke xxiv., "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Another thing delightful to my soul was to witness the order of the churches of Christ, the steadfastness of the people of Jehovah's choice in the faith of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. One meeting of the church of Christ in Middletown was of peculiar sweetness to my soul. It was held on the Saturday afternoon after the Warwick Association. It was what I believe is designated a conference meeting. (The mere name is nothing). It certainly was according to the order of the gospel of Christ, in which the "gifts, differing according to the grace that is given" (Rom. xii. 6), were exercised unto the edifying of the body of Christ. I felt that I beheld the order in the house of God, the unity of the body, and how that the body is unto the edifying of itself in love. Jesus is our glorious, living Head, from whom our blessings and refreshing nourishment proceed, and the members are placed in the body as it pleaseth God. All are necessary, and it is not for the dear, trembling, tried child of God to say, Because I am not like this and that one, therefore I am not of the body. How very sweet is the record in 1 Corinthians xiii., Ephesians iv., and Romans xii., concerning the body, the church. I found it refreshing and profitable to my soul to hear the members of the body speaking one to another of the things of God. At the meeting in Middletown of the church, there was no schism in the body; the eye was not saying to the hand, "I have no need of thee;" and I saw that the weak ones were necessary; and in the sufferings of one member of the body all the members were in sympathy. So there was fulfilled that word, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

When I came to Burdett the Saturday before the third Sunday in June, I met with the "little flock" gathered together, as I found and felt, in Jesus' name. It was so blessed to hear the brethren and sisters speak of the Lord's dealings with them, of their joys and sorrows, conflicts, hopes and fears, and of the mercy and faithfulness of the Lord to their souls; all of which was perfumed with the name of the beloved Emanuel, whose name is as ointment poured forth. As the remembrance of the many that I met and talked with concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, the churches I visited, the wonderful, precious, edifying preaching by the ministers of Christ at the associations, all come up before my mind, I feel to bless the name of the Lord for his goodness and mercy to such a poor sinner like me. Most unworthy of the least of all the mercies of the Lord; but O how highly favored I have been! O that I could love and praise the dear Redeemer's name! but I am so forgetful, so ungrateful. Still I feel that I have received tokens which give evidence that the Lord does not forget me.—Isa. xlv. 21; xlix. 15.

I will bring these few lines to a close. Hoping I am your brother in Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

WAVERLY, N. Y., June 30, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having obtained the consent of the writer, I send you the inclosed letter for publication, if you think proper. Although short, I think it comprehensive, and has the right sound.

Your unworthy brother,

M. VAIL.

ROYALTON, Ohio, March 3, 1886.

DEAR BROTHER M. VAIL:—Your kind and refreshing letter of the 24th ult. came to hand in due time, and now lies before me. I draw comfort from those who can speak of darkness of mind and barrenness of soul, and who mourn as one alone indeed. Many years ago I thought I would have some great things to record about myself, should I live a long time. And so it is the case; but they are not the great things I once fancied they would be. If I have made any advancement in divine things at all, there seems to be a larger balance against me than ever before, and worse and worse I seem to be. Yet the Lord remembers me. But I can take some comfort in looking upon the road I have traveled, as I can clearly see the hand of the Lord in leading me. In reading Ezekiel xxxvii. 1. First, the Hand of the Lord was upon him. Second, he was carried in the spirit. Third, he was set down in the midst of a valley which was full of bones. Not a pleasant place, surely, nor of his own choosing. I can refer to a time when his hand arrested me; also when my mind was carried away from former joys, and when I was set down, not in a place of my choosing, but where God chose. And I was made to ex-

amine, or pass around about the corruptions of my nature. And I seem to dwell there yet much of my time. "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesek, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar." But I sometimes am permitted to get a glimpse of heavenly things, and then sorrows seem gone, with glories so near.

You ask my views through the SIGNS on Romans vii. 15-17. "For that which I do, I allow not; but what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." I prefer sending my views to you, rather than to solicit a place in the columns of our family paper, which, if published at all, would to that extent keep out richer food. I will briefly state my views. Ten times does the apostle use the pronoun I in these verses, and two opposing principles are presented, each one named I. Two families are spoken of; and though having one name, are no kin to each other; and though living in the same house, are against each other. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusteth against the flesh." Again, "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." Again, "the elder shall serve the younger." This state of affairs is found only in the man "born of God." "The wicked are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men."—Psalm lxxiii. To illustrate by comparison, two men of opposite principles go into partnership in business. They have one business room, and over the door is the name of the firm. In the transaction of business each one uses the name of the firm. A is honest, B is dishonest. A longs for a dissolution of partnership, but nothing but death can bring that about. B is continually getting A into trouble. A often says, "O wretched man that I am! when shall I be delivered? I would like to live in peace." But how came they in partnership relations? B once owned the house and the goods, as he thought. How did A get there? Answer, A is put into the building with B, by him who owns all things. B remains as he always was, no good thing in him; but he is made a servant of A. He is the elder, and the elder shall serve the younger. But sometimes servants get upon horses, and princes walk as servants upon earth.—See Eccl. x. 7. So when Paul speaks of I doing what he would not, I think he brings into view the two armies in one company, the flesh and the spirit, both living in one house, having one firm name, but two opposing elements.

I cannot add anything more to illustrate my views just now. Hoping this may find you well in body and mind, I will add no more. Reply at your earliest convenience.

Yours in affliction;

THOMAS COLE.

BUSSEY, Iowa, Feb. 27, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I will try and write a few things which are at this time pressing heavily upon my mind. We read, Hebrews x. 7, "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." The speaker is the Lord Jesus Christ, and it was the Father's will he came to do. It seems to me that the common professors of to-day do not believe this testimony, if we judge by the way they act. And I am convinced that if they had been taught of God they would not teach what they do; for God says, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth." But man gives God the lie, and says that it is of him that willeth. Christ says, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." But man says that any man can come if he wills to come. Christ said to certain ones, "Whither I go ye cannot come." But man says that all can go to Christ if they want to go. Truly God's ways are not man's ways. As I sit to-night with the Bible in my hand, and know that God knows the thoughts of all men's hearts (as I hope I have the evidence), I can set to my seal that God is true, and am glad that I can accept the words of the apostle, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." And with this record before me, I heartily accept it all; for if I do not believe the record that God has given of his Son, I make God a liar instead of man, which I know is false. Now let us examine our text. When a man makes a will he does not make it to all, nor for the benefit of any but those who have an interest in the legacy that is willed away. If I am an heir of my father's estate, I will get my portion though there be no will made. But if a man had twelve sons, and I was the son of another man, and my father was to die while I was a babe, and the father of the twelve sons was to adopt me into his family, I would become a joint heir with the twelve; but if I had twelve brothers, they would not get one cent, though they were just as good as I by nature, or even better. The benefit I would receive from this father who had adopted me would not be on account of my goodness, but because he had adopted me. I would not adopt myself, neither could I do so if I would, for that act must be performed by another. Paul tells us that because we are sons (not will be sons if we do some great work for God), God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son (Christ) into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. And if children, then heirs, and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. And as a joint heir cannot lose a joint legacy, there is no falling from grace with a child of God. But Paul tells us of the ones that fall. He says, "Abraham had two sons; the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman." The son that was born of Hagar was born after the flesh; and the apostle tells us that "the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." But the son that was born of the free

woman was by promise. So we see plainly that some have not the promise. "What saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman." "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." We are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Now some poor child of grace will say, How am I to know that I am a child of God? Why, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." And "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." How are others to know that I am a child of God? "By this shall all (men) know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." O that the children of God may study to know their Father's will, and also do it. I love to hear them asking, as did Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" Hear the mother of our elder Brother, the church, saying, "Arise and be baptized."

I have written more than I intended, and freely turn this over to your judgment, brethren Beebe. Keep the old blade, and let it be well whetted with the truth, for it is all that will profit. May God bless you in your labors is the desire of a well-wisher of the Old School Baptists throughout the world,

JOHN T. BIXLER.

NORTH BERWICK, Me., June 24, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I now feel to write to the readers of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of what it is to be born again. Christ said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. Then as man must experience the second birth before he can see the kingdom of God, I will speak of them in their proper order; for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Then as there are two births that a man must experience before he can see the kingdom of God, there are two lives for him to live, one natural, and the other spiritual. And there is but one way that he can live in either of them, and that is to be begotten and born in them. All the family of man were created in Adam, but not one of them could see in the light of this world, or have any experience in it, before he is born in the life of his father and mother. And it is evident that the child did not have any will in his birth; but the will to be born was in the father and mother. Then the child being born in the life of his father and mother, he then partakes of their nature; and that gives him love for them, and a will to seek and obtain the blessings of the life that he is born in. Then his natural birth fits him for all his natural experience, and no more. Now as this natural birth is a figure of the spiritual birth, Christ said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Then all the ways that men have invented for a man to see the kingdom of God, without being be-

gotten and born in the life of God, never have nor ever will accomplish it. Now if I should say that man in his natural birth had that in him that did teach him the way to see the kingdom of God, and by following on in that way he could see the kingdom of God, it would in substance be saying, you need not be born again in order to see the kingdom of God; for you have that in you by your natural birth, if cultivated, to see the kingdom of God. Again, if I should say that man with only his natural birth could seek to live in God's life, and obtain it in that way, there would not be the shadow of a birth in that. Then if a man could obtain God's life by seeking, without being begotten and born in it, he would live in it without father or mother, and in that life he would be self-existent. But such a thing cannot be; for there cannot be a child without father and mother, and there cannot be father and mother without a child. Then as there is but one way that a man can live in the life of God, and that is to be begotten and born in that life, if we do live in that life, and do partake of the nature of God, we shall love him, we shall love all his heaven-born children, and we shall love to walk in all his commands. I will now say that there is not one command in the Bible to be born again; but God's commands reach every child that is born; for he that loveth is born of God. And, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." For proof that the will to be born is not in the child, but in the father and mother, I will quote John i. 13. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." I will now say to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES who saw me at the Delaware River Association, at Hope-well, that I enjoyed the meeting well, considering what I am; and I arrived home in due time, and am now in as good health as I have been for years.

Yours as ever,

WM. QUINT.

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."—Acts ii. 32.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been requested by brethren to write for publication, I will offer some thoughts on the above Scripture. The resurrection is here brought to view in positive language, of which they all were witnesses, because Jesus hath shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs. A witness must have personal knowledge. (Hear-say testimony is not admissible even in our courts). The apostles witnessed the ascension of the Savior, and while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, they were informed that he should come again in like manner. And they were to be witnesses of these things, not only in Jerusalem, all Judea and Samaria, but also unto the uttermost part of the earth. And the gospel must first be published among all nations.—Mark xii. 10. And the apostle says, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in

the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance."—1 Thess. i. 5. Each and every one of God's people are enabled to bear testimony, in some humble way, as to the dealings of the Lord with them, and thus become witnesses of these things. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. The writer to the Hebrews enumerates many witnesses who accomplished much by and through faith, and died in faith, not having received the promises. And referring to the time he wrote he says, "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." "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. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and testify," &c. "To him give all the prophets witness." "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." As touching the order of God's house, he says, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." The Father hath borne testimony of the Son, and the prophet says, "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people."—Isa. lv. 4. John was sent from God to bear witness of that Light (Jesus), the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The Light was in the world, but not received by the world; for he came to his own, and his own (nationally) received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even those who were born of God. May each and every one who has the witness in themselves bear testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, is the prayer of the least of all.

J. P. CONAWAY.

ARCADIA, Ohio, July 4, 1886.

DELPHI, N. Y., April 15, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—I have felt for a long time, that an acknowledgment was due you for the kindness shown me in continuing the SIGNS to me since your dear father's death; but whenever I thought of writing, there was something within to oppose. Perhaps it was a conferring with the flesh; for I find that when I would do good, evil is present with me; and the good I would do, I do not; but the evil I would not, that I do. However I have been greatly comforted and instructed by the communications and editorials; and although unworthy such a favor, I wonder how I could get along without them. Many times, when cast down, our dear family paper (as it is well styled) has come with its cheering words. Often some particular communication is just suited for my present necessity, and I hope a feeling of gratitude sometimes arises to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for such a medium of correspondence for the household of faith. The Lord will take care of Zion. When one after another is called from time to eternity, we say, Who will fill the vacancy? But the arm of the

Lord is not shortened. He will build the waste places, and comfort all who mourn. We as a church are a little handful here, but have felt from time to time that the Lord was mindful of us. It has now pleased him to take our pastor to himself, to go no more out forever, and we are again left alone. We were greatly cheered, by the coming of Elder Vail, the second Sunday in February last, little thinking when he gave out the appointment for Elder St. John that our heavenly Father had appointed otherwise. The way often looks dark to God's people, but if there are a few names here desirous of walking in his commands, I believe he will not forsake them.

"It may not be my way,
It may not be your way,
But some way or other the Lord will provide."

Dear brethren, may your heavenly Father be with you in your labors of love, and grant you all needful blessings.

A. M. FUGGLE.

JULY 31, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—It is a little past the time for me to renew my subscription for your much esteemed paper, the SIGNS, which comes regularly to hand, filled with the rich experience of the children of God. When I read the experiences of the dear saints in different pieces, and they all seem to tell the same story, I am made to ask myself the question, Have I any evidence that I am one of the Lord's little ones? my experience looks very small, and I live so different from the way I thought a christian should. But I have this comfort, if I know my heart aright, that I do love the brethren; and the Bible says, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I do feel at times that I would like to write a word for your precious paper, if I only thought I could write anything that would be worthy your notice; but I feel that all I could write would not be worth the space it would occupy. I hope the Lord will enable you to continue printing the SIGNS, for the comfort of his afflicted children. Brethren Beebe, would it be asking too much of you to give your views through the SIGNS on Acts iii. 19-21? Oblige an unworthy sister, if one at all.

SUSIE HIXSON.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

WE are in receipt of a letter from Elder Silas H. Durand, informing us that the above named book in the round notes is now ready for distribution, and is being mailed to subscribers as fast as possible. They expect to have the shape note edition ready to send out in a few days. For full particulars concerning these books, see advertisement on last page.—ED.

"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., SEPTEMBER 15, 1886.

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

PERILOUS TIMES.

"THIS know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."—2 Timothy iii. 1.

Since by the disobedience of the first man the mystery of iniquity appeared with the entrance of sin into the world, finite intelligence has vainly sought for the key by which this deep secret may be explained. This search must remain as it ever has been, vain and unsuccessful, for the eternal God has hidden it in the secret place of his own sovereign purpose; yet by his Spirit he has revealed to those babes who are born of incorruptible seed the great truth that his counsel stands and his will is done, causing the wrath of man to praise him, and with supreme power restraining the remainder of that wrath. Even the saints who are led by the Spirit cannot comprehend the infinite depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. The inspired apostle could only exclaim, "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 counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 33-36. The pride of the carnal mind aspires to grasp this secret counsel of the will of God; and, failing to comprehend it, is ready to accept the suggestion of the tempter, even to the denial of the revealed truth. In this experience, however, the saints but verify the admonition of Paul, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Galatians vi. 7, 8. As reason is itself born of the flesh, all efforts to reconcile divine truth to the standard of reason must be sowing to the flesh. The experience of every one who has sought to understand the ground of hope by the power of reason confirms the truth that nothing but corruption can be gathered from that field. Reason looks only on things that are seen; consequently the testimony of faith is not comprehended by the natural or carnal mind. Faith sees the hidden truth of God as revealed by the Spirit, and by that internal witness they who are led by the Spirit know the things which even the natural mind of the saints can never receive. Hence the whole pilgrimage of the saints is one perpetual conflict between the assurance of faith testifying to their hope of immortality, and the opposing power of unbelief resting upon the

witness of blind reason. In this warfare the power of God alone can give the victory to his saints by revealing his love in them so clearly that all doubt flies before it as the darkness of night is dispelled before the rising sun. This deliverance always comes when they have been compelled to cry to God out of the depths of their own corruption and utter weakness. Thus they learn that in their individual experience the last days are marked by perilous times. Yet even in this severe trial faith reads the sweet assurance that "it is the last time;" and as they see dreadful perils threatening to destroy them, the grace of God in Christ Jesus manifests that their deliverance is at hand.

The importance of the truth announced in this instruction to Timothy in its application to the church in all ages is indicated by the solemn form in which it is announced. It is not suggested as a possible event which may come to pass, but as a fixed fact it is presented to the consideration of Timothy, as representing all ministers of the gospel who should ever be called to the work of caring for the church. There is no room for argument on the subject. This is the truth which we must know as servants of the Lord. The perilous times are not merely the result of persecutions from the enemies of the doctrine of Christ. These perils are not more manifest at one time than another. The very first step in the pathway of obedience to our Lord requires that the enmity of self and the world be encountered in denying self. This is found to be a delightful privilege instead of a burdensome duty when by grace the saints are enabled to take up their cross and follow Jesus. His yoke is easy and his burden is light. Then they are ready to conclude that their whole journey through the wilderness of time will be strewn with flowers. Especially do they feel when brought into the avowed fellowship of the organized church that they shall ever enjoy peace and rest in that quiet habitation; but they have to learn that they are called to be soldiers; they must war not indeed with carnal weapons against flesh and blood, but with the whole armor of God they are called to stand against the wiles of the devil. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."—Eph. vi. 12, 13. In the perilous times which shall come there will be need for every weapon of this heavenly armor. Let us not be so bewildered as to think that our eternal life is at stake in this warfare. Nothing in the Scriptures can imply that there is any possibility that one sinner for whom Christ died can ever forfeit the cleansing benefit of that blood which washes away all sin. The whole

peril of these times relates to the present sense of suffering under the cruel temptations of the enemy. While all our enemies are openly arrayed against us, we may feel safe in the impregnable walls of salvation which encompass our strong city; but when the most hateful foes are found not only within our ranks and of our own selves, but even dwelling in the very house with us, there is indeed terrible peril to be apprehended. When these treacherous enemies have secured a place in our most secret confidence, then indeed must perilous times for our peace and comfort be experienced in the last days, when their deceitfulness shall be exposed. Doubtless the fearful list of abominable characteristics specified in the immediately following verses is descriptive of such as have a standing in the visibly organized church; and it is indicative of the last days with any church when these causes of perilous times are seen ruling in her members. There is certainly such a thing as this which is so definitely described in this connection, and which is evidently the same with that announcement in 1 Timothy iv. 1-3. It can have its fulfillment nowhere but in the organized church. No others can "depart from the faith," and from none else can the obedient saint "turn away," as enjoined in verse five, of this chapter. Those who have known the pain of being compelled to separate from those with whom they have walked in sweet fellowship can realize something of the perilous times which must always follow the exhibition of those carnal characteristics which are assigned as their cause in this connection. Infidelity assuming the form of sound doctrine, while really inspired only by the carnal principles here enumerated, will tempt the saints as the devil tempted Jesus, to presume upon the immutable love of God by willful sin. But though it was written, as the tempter said, our Lord would not consent to tempt God by purposely casting himself down from the pinnacle of the temple.—Matt. iv. 5-7. It is always a perilous time with the saints when they will hesitate to meet temptation, as did the Captain of our salvation, with a prompt rejection by the inspired word, thus saying, "The Lord rebuke thee." Just as surely as we would reason with the adversary, the result will be that we shall be overcome by his devices, as was the mother of our race in the garden; for reason is not capable of resisting the arguments of the cunning tempter. There is safety from these perilous times nowhere but in the shelter of the name of the Lord.—Prov. xviii. 10.

In the visible organization of the church it is true that perilous times shall come. Such perils as can never be known anywhere else are encountered in this holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. Here they who love the Lord Jesus are required to be followers of him in all the conflicts and sufferings through which he

has led the way; and it is only through much tribulation that the disciples themselves must enter into the kingdom of God.—Acts xiv. 22. While the apostles were yet in the flesh with the churches, perilous times did come upon some of them, resulting from the very cause here assigned; and they were reprov'd and condemn'd by the inspired apostles, whose judgment was written for our learning. Since even they who enjoyed the personal ministry of the inspired apostles were not exempt from these perilous times, is it wonderful that with all our darkness and weakness we should experience the same? The fact that the trials we endure are included in the perils which witness that we are the followers of Christ, must necessarily be hidden from our sight while they are trying us; for if we could see them as the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, they would not be trials or perils to the organized church, as they would cease to be tribulation to us personally. In every peril through which the church of Christ is called to pass, the vanity of human wisdom is exposed. It seems that experience should have taught the saints to have no confidence in the suggestions of natural wisdom; but it is still needful that they be taught by severe disappointments that their precautions and devices for protecting the church are vain. This lesson is most deeply impressed in perilous times. The protection of the church is not left to the wisdom and watchfulness of men or angels. The eternal God is himself her refuge, and the Lord is at once "a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."—Zech. ii. 5. It is not accidental that perilous times come upon the church, even shaking the very heaven where the saints had supposed they might rest securely. It is the power of God which thus destroys the vain confidence of his chosen people when they would ascribe even their temporal salvation to the efforts or watchfulness of created beings. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."—Psa. cxxxvii. 1.

To finite intelligence it is a mystery that the very objects of the infinite love of God should be chosen in the very furnace of afflictions. The love of God, which is commended by the gift of Jesus to die for them, gives assurance that they are precious in the sight "of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Yet they must encounter these perilous times which shall come. Nothing can possibly avert them, nor can any prudence or caution on the part of the saints render them less perilous. So severe are these perils that every plant which is not divinely set shall be rooted up, and every branch even in the true vine which bears fruit to the glory of God is purged, that it may bring forth more fruit. In the fires of tribulation, therefore, the clearest evidence of their heaven-

ly calling is revealed to the saints, while the same fires consume or drive away every false pretender to a name among the disciples. Thus the visible church is relieved of lifeless members, while they which are approved are made manifest by the test of "perilous times." It may appear that the whole church is in danger of being destroyed in the commotion of these perils, but the result will certainly proclaim the glory of that power of God by which his elect are kept through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. When the multitude followed our Lord because they had eaten of the loaves and were filled, it seemed that he was more successful in his ministry than when they all forsook him; but in reality all who went back at his rebukes were just as destitute of love to him when they followed as when they deserted him. The trial did not change their character, but merely exposed it. The fire which consumes the dross attests the purity of gold; so the perilous times which drive away such as are governed by self-love manifest the power of that grace which constrains the true saint to ask, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." While every genuine disciple of our Lord is a willing follower, every one is made willing by the power of almighty grace. It is not by the action of their natural mind that they are willing to suffer the loss of all things for the fellowship of Christ.

The last days, in which perilous times shall come, do not refer to any specific period in the history of the natural world. The saints in every age from the time of Abel have found these perilous times; and they have always been the last days in the same sense that the conscious sinner is always "the ends of the earth." As long as there is any hope that we are prepared to enjoy this world, and have yet many days to spend here, we do not realize these perilous times; but just when we feel to rest in fancied security, we are made to see the sudden destruction of all our prospects, and then the perilous times come upon us by which we are driven to cry unto God from the ends of the earth, and out of the depths. As this is the experience of the saints individually, so it is true in the case of churches. When, like the church of the Laodiceans, they claim to be rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, they have reason to expect perilous times. Fire must try them, that the pure gold may appear, and it is well for the church in that self-satisfied condition if the Lord in mercy will even manifest a remnant saved by fire, rather than utterly remove her candlestick by blotting out her visibility as a church. In all the region where the churches were located in the primitive age desolation now reigns. No vestige of a gospel church is in all that wilderness. We have no assurance that it will be different with the churches now organized in America. Perilous times have

come to many of them, accompanied with all the fearful evils specified in the context. It may well engage our serious attention while we see the growing darkness which covers our land, and in view of the perilous times which seem to have come upon us, may we have grace to call upon the name of the Lord, and receive that salvation which shall deliver us from evil, and "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Psalm xc. 12. When we are humbled in the dust of self-loathing, and cut off from all glorying in men, then these perils cannot harm us, for Jesus Christ is our protection from the storm. Perilous times cannot shake the sure repose of such as dwell in the secret place of the Lord, whose shadow is their defense.

Since the fact is declared that such perilous times shall result from the presence of evil men in the church, may not each of us ask with painful anxiety, Lord, is it I? The very grief with which this question fills the trembling saint is positive proof that he is not the wicked one whom Paul here describes; but if any one can insist on his own freedom from defect, while seriously condemning others, he bears at least one mark of those from whom Timothy was commanded to turn away. He is clearly a *lover of himself*. May the Lord appear for the deliverance of his people from these perilous times, and to his name be glory evermore. Amen.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

IN order to forward the work on the Church History as much as possible, we have had the sheets delivered to the binder as fast as printed, and expected to have the whole work out by the first of September, but owing to the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Alphabetical Index as soon as expected, we shall not be able to do so. We append a note just received from him, which will explain itself. As soon as we receive the Index we shall, providence permitting, rush it right through, and have the book out in about two or three weeks thereafter. The following is Elder Hassell's letter.—ED.

WILSON, N. C., Aug. 20, 1886.

I HAVE greatly overtaxed and enfeebled myself in working day and night on the Alphabetical Index, and have reached only the 357th page, chapter xi. I do not think it possible for me to complete it before the middle of September. I had no idea of its exceeding tediousness and laboriousness.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

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

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. L. Rogers, August 11, 1886, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. J. A. Stewart and Miss Cassie Ryburne, both of Hood Co., Texas.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

By the request of the bereaved family, I send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary of our dearly beloved and aged brother, **Andrew Williams**, who died at his son-in-law's, Deacon Monroe Larkins, December 15, 1885. Our dear, lamented brother was born into this world of sin, trouble and sorrow, in Washington County, Abington, Virginia, November 20, 1802, being eighty-three years and twenty-five days old at the time of his death. His father moved to the state of Kentucky when he was an infant, and about the year 1831, he removed to Illinois, where brother Andrew Williams was united in wedlock with sister Hanna Jones, Feb. 17, 1831, by whom he had several children, only two of whom survive, to mourn the loss of a kind and affectionate father; but they sorrow not as others who have no hope. They are both daughters, and members of the Providence Church of Old School or Primitive Baptists. Their names are Grace Larkin and Eunice Snodgrass. In the year 1849 brother Andrew Williams was baptized upon a profession of his faith in Christ, by Elder John Couch, in the fellowship of Bethlehem Church, Bond Co., Ill., and from there, in the winter of 1855, he removed to Texas and united with the Cany Church of Predestinarian Baptists; and from there in the year 1867, he removed to Arkansas, where he remained three years. In the summer of 1870 he emigrated to Oregon, and united with the Providence Church of Predestinarian Baptists, in the fellowship of which church he lived, until by death he was called to join the church triumphant in glory. At the time of his uniting with the Providence Church I was pastor. He was then living with his son-in-law, Mr. Snodgrass, who shortly after rented my farm, and our houses in which we lived were not more than one hundred and fifty yards apart, and he and I became intimately and very agreeably acquainted. We spent many precious moments talking of our troubles, our trials, our temptations, our doubts and our fears. He was subject, like myself, to many sore trials and temptations, doubts and fears, so that we could feelingly speak the same things. He has now gone to try the reality of his hope in Christ; and I am still here, a poor, old tried sinner, with scarcely any hope at all, surrounded on all sides by a thick cloud of darkness, with scarcely a glimmer of light, so that I am in the right way only when I am crossing it. I am continually on one side or the other; never right; no, never. Alas! what a contrast there is between me and good Elder Thomas P. Dudley.

"I sometimes go where others go,
But find no comfort there."

In the fall of 1874 I removed to Scio, Linn Co., about fifty miles from my former residence in Clackamas County, since which time I seldom had the pleasure of conversing with the dear old brother, A. Williams. The last time I visited him was about one year ago; he was then in very feeble health, and very much cast down in mind, and appeared conscious that his days on earth were near at an end, and said to me that he was in great darkness, with scarcely any hope at all. Elder Wm. S. Matthews preached his funeral. I was sent for, but was myself at the time confined to my bed, and not able to go. I was down at their church meeting the 4th Saturday and Sunday in July, and sister Larkin, the daughter of the deceased, told me that her father left the world in full assurance of faith in the dear Redeemer, and that his last moments on earth were peace. Thus passed away our dear aged brother, after many years of labor, toil and strife, and struggling against sin and sore temptations, doubts and fears, and has at last entered into his eternal rest, to join with all who have gone before and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, in saying, "Amen: blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and

power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen."—Rev. viii. 12.

JOHN STIPP.

AUGUST 2, 1886.

P. S.—I had the pleasure of leading a dear sister, on yesterday, down into the Thomas Fork of the Santiam River, and burying her in the liquid grave, upon a profession of her faith in Christ; and the Sunday before, Elders Loofbourrow and Vanderpool each baptized, the one a brother and the other a sister, in the Calapooya River; all of Linn County. J. S.

By the request of the bereaved family of the deceased sister, I send this obituary of **Mrs. Mahala Price**. Our dear sister departed this life March 24, 1886, at her home in Fayette Co., Tenn., in the seventy-sixth year of her age. She was born in middle Tennessee, near Murfreesboro. Her father, Mr. Norman, moved from there when she was but a child, to Pike Co., Mississippi, where she was married to H. M. Price. They moved from there to Fayette Co., Tenn., where she resided until her death. In the year 1845 she followed her Lord and Savior down into the watery grave, and took her place among the members of the Old School Baptist Church at Mount Pisgah. At each stated meeting, when her health would allow, she was found at the church in her seat, her delight being to meet with the brethren and sisters, and to talk of the things of the kingdom. Her home was a home for the Baptists, where she tried to make all feel welcome when they would visit her. She was much beloved by her neighbors and friends, and was held in the highest esteem by her brethren and sisters in the church. She was mild in temperament, and never known to give offense to any. She was an affectionate wife and good mother. Her husband was called home July 19, 1880, leaving her a widow, but left her with an affectionate son and daughters, who cared for her while she lived. Her disease was of the bowels, which was long and painful, but her son and two daughters were ever willing to look after her welfare, and seemed not to tire. She bore her afflictions with christian fortitude. Before she died she became entirely blind, and neither ate nor drank anything for twenty days before her death. But when it pleased God to take her from her misery, she passed away without a struggle, in full assurance of eternal life. We sorrow not as those without hope, feeling sure that she is now at rest, and in the resurrection will awake with the likeness of Jesus. I can say from personal knowledge that sister Price was sound in the faith, a firm believer in the great doctrine of salvation by grace. We do hope that the gracious Spirit that sustained her through life, may sustain and reconcile all the bereaved kindred, friends and brethren to his holy will.

As ever, your brother in hope of eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.

D. G. CHAMBERS.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It is my sad duty to send you a notice of the death of my dear father, **S. P. Moshier**, which occurred at the home of his son-in-law, M. Eldredge, July 25, 1886, near Manchester, Delaware Co., Iowa. It was his request to have it published in the SIGNS, so that the brethren of his acquaintance in New York and elsewhere might know that he had passed from earth to that home where there is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. Father was born April 15, 1807, was baptized by Elder Peter Freeman, 1833, in Orangeville, N. Y., and moved to Iowa, in 1854. He was a faithful husband and kind father. He was firm in his convictions of the truth as taught by our Savior and his apostles, always contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. He was ever humble, placing no confidence in the flesh, but delighted in the doctrine of salvation by grace. He had Bright's disease, and the last five months he lived he was confined to the house, and much of the time to his bed. Through all his suffering he was very patient, and would often try to sing, "There is a fountain filled with blood," or some other favorite hymn. He enjoyed very much having the brethren

visit him, and talk with him of the things that belong to Zion. He leaves an aged companion, three daughters and their families, with the church and many friends, to mourn their loss; but we feel assured that our loss is his gain.

Elder Thomas Blake, of Waterloo, spoke words of consolation to the sorrowing friends, from Job xix. 25, after which his remains were followed to the Spring Branch Cemetery by a large concourse of friends and neighbors. May the Lord reconcile us to our affliction, and enable us to say, Thy will, not mine, be done! is my prayer for Jesus' sake. EMILY ELDRIDGE.

By request of our dear old brother, Elder George Wills, it becomes our painful duty to inform the readers of the SIGNS of the departure of his dear companion, sister **Sarah Wills**, who had shared his joys and sorrows from youth to old age. They were one in heart, and were betrothed to each other when but children. Sister Wills was born March 13, 1806, was married to George Wills September 18, 1820, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1826. After traveling with her dear husband through several states, she died in Oregon, March 15, 1886, leaving the dear old brother, together with children, grandchildren, sorrowing friends and the church to mourn their loss. To us it is a sore affliction, but to her it is eternal gain. I have been personally acquainted with sister Wills for twenty years, and know that she was well informed and sound in the faith, rejoicing in the plan of salvation by grace alone. She delighted to talk of the things that pertain to the kingdom of her dear Lord, and her house was always a pleasant place for the brethren and sisters, for it was her chief joy to make them comfortable. But she is gone, and her works do follow her. Blessed are they that die in the Lord.

The dear old sister requested that the writer preach a funeral discourse from Luke x. 42, which he tried to do, in the presence of a large congregation. May the good Lord by his sustaining grace keep the bereft old brother through the remainder of his days, and bring us all off triumphantly through Christ, is my prayer.

J. A. BULLACK.

GOLDENDALE, Wash. Ter.

THE cold hand of death is ever coming near and placing his seal upon some loved one, and severing the tie that binds them closely to their relatives and friends. The subject of this tribute is **Frances Lyle**, wife of George Lyle, and daughter of J. J. Snider, who died at her home in Lyle, Washington Territory, May 19, 1886. During the earlier part of her life she lived with her parents near Muscotah, Kansas, who, in the year 1879, disposed of their home, bid adieu to their many friends, and departed for Washington Territory, where they are still living, and where, in 1883, the deceased was married to George Lyle. She leaves her husband, a little daughter of two years, a little son just three weeks old, her father, one brother, three half-brothers and two half-sisters, her mother having died when she was very small. Her father then married his wife's sister, Miss Fenitia Pate, both members of the Old School Baptist Church, the latter having joined when but twelve years old.

"Frantie" was the favorite of all who knew her, her readiness to help those in distress, and her affectionate ways, making friends for her far and near. She died in her twenty-fifth year.

Our Frantie faded from us
When life was fair and bright;
She was our hope and gladness,
Our vision of delight.

Where angels bright are singing,
Where sorrow never comes,
We'll meet our cherished loved one,
In her bright, eternal home.

Written in deep grief and sincere sympathy,
by her cousin,

LAURA PATE.

MUSCOTAH, Kansas.

It has become our painful duty to record the death of our dear brother, **Sammie Ray**, which occurred very suddenly March 13, 1886.

Brother Ray was born in South Carolina, in 1817, and with his parents moved to Georgia, where, January 5, 1841, he was married to his faithful bride, Susan Jackson, the daughter of William and Susan Jackson. There he joined the Missionary Baptists. From Georgia they moved to Texas, where he lived until his death. He had reached the advanced age of sixty-eight years, nine months and fourteen days. He with his wife joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Little Vine, in Lamar County, March 27, 1879, and were baptized by me. He lived a devoted and faithful christian until death. He enjoyed his meetings very much, often riding many miles to attend them. In the morning of the day he died he rose in usual health, drove to the town of Honey Grove, returned, ate a hearty dinner, after which he went about his regular work until about four o'clock in the evening, when he was taken with heart disease and died in an hour. A few moments before death's summons came, he crossed his hands upon his peaceful breast, and exclaimed, "I am gone." Thereafter the battle of life had been fought, one of God's soldiers laid aside his armor and passed into the beautiful city, to receive the crown of righteousness which awaited him. He leaves one daughter, sister Browning, fourteen grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and the church, to mourn their loss.

Funeral services were held at his house on the day of his burial, conducted by brother Sikes and the writer of this sketch; brother Sikes speaking from Rev. xiv. 13, and the writer from 1 Cor. xv. 55-57. May the Lord comfort and bless his aged companion and many relatives, is our prayer.

JAMES M. MEADE.

DIED—At her home in Mounds, on July 6, 1886, **Mrs. Rose G. Brumback**, daughter of Abram and Martha S. Steed. She was born near Philadelphia, Mo., January 13, 1861, made a profession of christianity at about fourteen years of age, and united with the Presbyterians, where with her parents she lived a devoted and highly esteemed member until death. She graduated at the Lindenwood College, at St. Charles, Mo., in 1880, where she received the highest honors and delivered the valedictory address. She was engaged in teaching common or music schools, until December 11, 1884, when she was united in holy wedlock with Dr. A. H. Brumback, at Augusta, Ill., the then home of her parents. The fruit of this union was one little boy, who was left without a mother on the third day after his birth. Mrs. Brumback was a most worthy and exemplary christian, passionately devoted to her affectionate husband, whose lonely and sad appearance touches with sympathy his many friends. She was especially welcome among the devotional throng, where her sweet voice floated among the varied tones of song. She met death with a smile, and fell asleep in the embrace of the Savior's love. Many weeping friends followed her remains to old Providence Church, where a funeral discourse was preached by the writer to her memory. She was then interred in the family cemetery near Plymouth, Hancock Co., Illinois, to wait till Jesus comes.

T. B. AUSMUS.

CAMDEN, Ill.

Mrs. Louvina Wilson died on the 18th of April, 1886, aged seventy-six years, seven months and eighteen days. Her maiden name was Swain. She died of inflammation of the lungs. She experienced a hope in Christ in the twenty-ninth year of her age, united with the Baptist Church in the forty-first year of her age, and was baptized by the writer of this notice. I was intimately acquainted with her for many years, and knew her to be a firm believer in the faith of the gospel of Christ, as believed and maintained by the Predestinarian Baptists. At the time of her death she was a member of the Pleasant Hill Church, Delaware Co., Ohio, of which I am pastor. She was one of those meek and lowly ones, of a quiet spirit, manifesting great love for truth and the church; and when her health would admit, and she had the opportunity, she was glad to fill her place in the church. But now she is gone to her place prepared for her by her

dear Savior, and the wicked have ceased to trouble, and the weary are at rest. In sister Wilson's death the church has lost a worthy member, her children an excellent mother, and we mourn our loss, but not as those that have no hope; for we believe that those that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him; and when he appeareth, they shall also appear with him in glory.

J. H. BIGGS.

LEONARDSBURG, Ohio.

DIED—At his residence in Bluff Point, Jay Co., Ind., June 23, 1886, **Henry Moore**, aged seventy-one years. He was born in Pennsylvania, Dec. 7, 1814, moved to Jay County, Ind., on the farm where he died, forty-eight years ago. For many years he has been a firm believer in the Lord Jesus, believing that the Lord had forgiven his sins. He seemed at all times very humble, hardly daring to profess a hope in the mercy of God; yet he gave evidence of a foretaste of the joys he so much desired in his last days of suffering, which he endured so patiently. I was with him a few days before he died, and ministered to his wants as best I could; but I told him, after all that was done for him, that vain was the help of man. He suffered continually the last few days of his sickness (dropsy), and seemed to desire that rest that remaineth to the people of God. He died slowly, realizing that his strength was passing away. His children that were near enough, ministered to his wants with loving hands, and made him as comfortable as possible. Peace to his ashes. "Asleep in Jesus! Blessed sleep!" His companion is very old and feeble, and looks as though their separation would be short. She is a member of the Primitive Baptists, and in this affliction seems to realize in whom to trust, even in her Lord and Master.

NEWTON PETERS.

PORTLAND, Ind.

DIED—In Middletown, N. Y., July 29, 1886, **Miss Myra E. Boyd**, daughter of Horace T. and Fannie M. Boyd, and granddaughter of the late Dea. John C. Harding, in the 18th year of her age.

"The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth."

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

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YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford Co., Md., commencing on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, at ten o'clock, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take train leaving North Avenue Station, Maryland Central or Narrow Gauge R. R., at four p. m., on Friday, for Long Green or Forest Hill Stations. Those coming by way of Delta will take train about 3.15 p. m., for Forest Hill.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Columbia will hold their yearly meeting, the Lord willing, to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1886. We invite all our dear brethren and sisters to attend, and we will try and make it pleasant for them. Elders Hanover and Cole are expected to attend.

Those who come from the southeast will come to Toledo, and from there to Napoleon. Those from the north and west will come to Napoleon. Those from the southwest will come to Woodstock. Be sure to be at these stations on Friday, and you will find teams to convey you to the meeting.

THOMAS SWARTOUT.

SOMERVILLE, Fayette Co., Tenn.

THERE will be (the Lord willing) a yearly meeting held at Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., Oct. 13th and 14th, Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday. This meeting has formerly been held at Otego, but this year we meet with the brethren at Osborn Hollow, which is a branch of Otego church. This place is ten miles east of Binghamton, on the Delaware & Hudson R. R. Trains leave Binghamton 7.20 a. m., 12.40 p. m. and 5.00 p. m. A general invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, and we hope brethren in the ministry will not forget or neglect to attend with us.

B. BUNDY.

THE Old School Baptist church of Gilead will hold a yearly meeting, commencing on Saturday, October 9, 1886, and continue two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

Done by order of the church,
D. S. ELLIOTT, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, will be held, if the Lord will, at or near the Willhelms school house, in Jefferson County, Kansas, three miles east of Winchester and five miles west of Easton, beginning on Friday before the last Saturday in September, at ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days.

Those coming by rail from the east on Thursday will stop off at Easton, where they will be met and taken to the house of W. F. Jones or John L. Bristow, near by. Those coming from the west will come to Winchester, 12 o'clock, and be taken to the house of T. J. Housh or John Miller.

Should any miss connection and not reach here until Friday, either from the east or west, they will stop off at Lee Station, two miles from the place of meeting, where they will be met and taken to the place of meeting. From the east the train reaches Lee at 11.30, and from the west at 12.30, on the K. C. or Union Pacific Narrow Gauge.

Those coming by private conveyance will inquire for the above named persons. Those coming to Easton will inquire for McGee Brothers or C. O. Warrell. At Winchester inquire of A. Barns.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and to as many of our ministering brethren as the Lord may be pleased to send, who can endure sound doctrine.

T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.

THE Licking Association of Particular Baptists will hold her next annual session, the Lord willing, with the Bethel Church, near Clay Village, Shelby Co., Ky., to begin on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1886.

It is the wish of the church for all that can come in their own conveyance to come in that way, as the Louisville & Lexington Rail Road is nearly twelve miles from the church, and the most of the members are three or four miles farther than that. Three or four families, myself with that number, live fourteen miles from the meeting house, which will make it very inconvenient to convey many from the railroad. Ministers and members who wish to come by rail, will write to Wm. Slone, Clay Village, Wm. Vannatta or Wm. Sleadd, Shelbyville, M. V. Money or myself, Finchville. Write in time and give the number as near as you can, so we can arrange to bring all. It is too far to leave any. Those coming from the east, from Lexington, will get off at Bagdad, Thursday evening. Those coming from the west, or Louisville, can come to Shelbyville Friday morning in time for meeting. A full attendance is desired, especially of preachers.

By order of the church.

J. A. MONEY, Clerk.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Deer Creek Church, at the village of Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio, on the Columbus & Cincinnati Midland R. R., twenty-three miles from Columbus, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1886, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west, north and northeast will come by way of Columbus, Ohio, and there take Columbus & Cincinnati Midland R. R. to Mt. Sterling. Those coming from the south and southwest will come by the way of Cincinnati, and at the Central Depot take the same road to Mt. Sterling. There are four trains each way every day. Brethren will meet the friends at the trains. A cordial invitation is extended to all, and a special invitation to ministering brethren of our faith and order.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE thirty-fifth annual meeting of the Western Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists will be held with Little Flock Church, seven miles northwest of Knoxville, Marion Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, and continue the two following days. Those coming from the west will be met at Pleasantville, and those coming from the east and southeast will stop at Knoxville, where they will be met on Friday before the meeting. The Rock Island R. R. runs to Knoxville from the east; also the branch road of the C., B. & Q. R. R. running from Albia to Des Moines. All those who love the truth as it is in Jesus are invited to meet with us.

WM. J. REEVES, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association, by divine permission, will meet with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1886.

Those coming on the Ulster & Delaware Rail Road will take the afternoon train (2:50) at the union depot at Kingston, the day before the meeting, and stop off at Kelly's Corners, or Halcottsville, or Roxbury, where they will be taken to and from the meeting. A general invitation is given to brethren, sisters, and ministers, and all lovers of truth.

I. HEWITT.

THE Pilgrims' Rest Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Gilead Church, in Franklin County, Kansas, four miles south of Wellsville, at ten o'clock a. m. on Friday before the second (not the third, as our Minutes state) Saturday in October, 1886.

Visiting brethren coming from the north or east will come to Wellsville, a station on the Southern Kansas Railway, on Thursday before the meeting. Those coming from the west will come to the same place on Friday morning. All will be met on those days. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

S. P. RAMEY.

THE New Hope Association for this year will convene with the church at Bethlehem, in Jefferson County, Ark., on Saturday before

the third Sunday in October. We always welcome our brethren and anxiously desire them to meet in our association, especially our ministering brethren. The place of meeting is twelve miles west from Pine Bluff, Ark. Our brother, Elder D. Westfall, lives in Pine Bluff, to whom I would cite any strange brother who may come that way.

A. TOMLIN.

By request of the New Providence Church, the Salem Association of Regular Baptists will meet on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1886, and continue three days (instead of Wednesday, as the Minutes read). The Association will meet at ten o'clock, near Ursa, Adams County, Illinois, on the Quincy & Burlington Rail Road. Our brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited to attend, especially our ministering brethren.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet with Salem Church, in Marshall Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September. Those coming by Illinois Central R. R., will stop at Rutland, and those coming by Chicago & Alton R. R., will stop at Evans, and those from the west at Varna. Teams will be in attendance at these places. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE next session of the Juniata Regular Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., to begin, by divine permission, Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1886.

Those coming to the Association will be met at Hancock, Md., on the B. & O. R. R., on Tuesday, Sept. 30, the day before the meeting commences, and taken to places of entertainment and to the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to meet with us.

By order of the church.

MARCUS STARR, Clerk.

OUR next Association (South Louisiana Primitive Baptist) will be held with Macedonia Church, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, ten miles east of Sugar-town, Calcasieu Parish, La.

W. M. PERKINS, Mod.

I. S. MEADOURS, Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the church at Bowdoinham, Maine, commencing on Friday, September 10, 1886, and continue three days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend.

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, has appointed to hold her next annual meeting with Unity Church, Platte Co., Missouri, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 1, 2 and 3, 1886.

R. M. THOMAS.

THE next session of the Oconee Old School Baptist Association will convene with the church at Union, Madison County, Georgia, on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1886.

THE next session of the Amite Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the New Bethel Church, Pike Co., Miss., beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, and continue three days.

THE next meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Little Creek, Sussex Co., Del., to commence on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1886.

THE next session of the Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the Barren Spring Church, Henderson County, Tennessee, one-fourth mile southeast of Reagan, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1886.

The Mad River Predestinarian Baptist Association will meet this year with the Thompson Church, six miles west of Columbus Grove, situated on the D. & M. R. R., in Putnam Co., Ohio, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1886.

Williamston Academy.

FOR BOTH SEXES.
STRICTLY NON-SECTARIAN.
WILLIAMSTON, MARTIN CO., N. C.

For the especial purpose of rendering more regular and faithful service to my own church, of which my father was and I am a member and pastor, I expect, with the permission of providence, to transfer my residence, about the first of September, from Wilson to my native place, Williamston, N. C., and to take charge of the WILLIAMSTON ACADEMY, opening the Fall Session, Monday, September 13th, 1886.

Primary, Preparatory, Academic, Commercial, Music, and Art Departments. Experience of twenty-five years in teaching. Large and valuable library. Extensive apparatus. Pleasant and healthful location. PRICES TO SUIT THE TIMES.

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The Fall Session will commence on Wednesday, September 22d, 1886. For particulars address

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FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

THIS work is now in the hands of a publisher, and we expect to have it ready for distribution sometime in May. It contains 254 pages of hymns and tunes, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 620 hymns and 255 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We hope those who desire the book will send their orders and money as soon as possible, that we may know how large an edition to print at first, and because we need the money to assist in paying the expenses of publication. We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order, by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk.

We have prepared this book in response to the request of many brethren, and have bestowed upon it much careful thought and labor, and we hope for the favorable consideration of our brethren, and we humbly pray that our imperfect labors may be blessed of the Lord to his true worshippers.

Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

Owing to the delay in the typographical work, the Hymn and Tune Book will not be ready to send to subscribers till the last of June. Please observe carefully the above directions for sending money. Do not send checks, nor postage stamps, nor post-office orders on any office but Philadelphia.

SILAS H. DURAND.
P. G. LESTER.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

As will be seen by reference to an extract from a letter received from Elder Hassell, on page 213, we have met with an unexpected delay in the completion of the Church History, caused by the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Index as soon as anticipated. We now have the History all in type except the Index, and the binder at work on the printed sheets, and as soon as the manuscript for the Index is received we will rush them through the press and mail the books at the earliest possible day.

We still have left of the first edition of the Plain Cloth binding @ \$2 00, 194 copies.
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From the above it will be observed that the first edition is nearly exhausted, and those wishing to procure a book will have to order very soon or they will be too late. Address

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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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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.

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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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.

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.

RULES FOR ORDERING.

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.

Imitation Morocco, Elegant style, single copy, \$1 75; per dozen, \$18 00.

Blue, Gilt Edged, single copy, \$1 15 per dozen, \$12 00.

Blue Plain, single copy, \$1 00; per dozen, \$9 00.

At the above prices we shall require cash to accompany the orders.

OUR LARGE TYPE EDITION.

We still have a full assortment of our large type edition of Hymn Book, which we will mail to any address at the following prices:

Blue, Marbled Edge.....	1 50
Blue, Gilt Edge.....	2 00
Imitation Morocco, Full Gilt.....	2 50
Turkey Morocco, Full Gilt.....	3 50

Books of the large size ordered for pulp use, and having the name of the church written on the cover, will be supplied at half price.

"THE EDITORIALS,"

FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES,

are now ready, and for sale at the following prices for each volume, viz:

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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

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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Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

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."

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NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., July 4, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have long since promised to write upon the Scripture, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."—Rev. xxii. 1. Not claiming to have any special light on this, it is with a considerable degree of gloom that I make the attempt. It is true we sometimes enjoy a glory in trying to speak or write, yet with myself the most of the time it is as though I were laboring for the benefit of others. Hence Paul says, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Then this imperfect scribble, and my poor, broken, faulty speech, must come before the public for "Jesus' sake." I would always be willing and reconciled to this, remembering that it is for his sake. O that we could always go with our head bowed in humility, enduring all things for the elect's sake, "forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

"And he shewed me." Jesus said, when here on earth, in the midst of his enemies, and suffering, "When the Comforter is come, he will take the things of mine and shew them unto you." How strange it is that we cannot see and understand what is so positively written in the Scriptures, unless it is shown us by the Lord. I am sometimes made to wonder, after the truth is shown me, as I trust, why I did not see this before. Simply because it had not been shown me. So we ought to be patient with each other, if one does not see as quickly as we do. It is not "charity" that will condemn a brother and cast him out, simply because he does not see as far into the hidden mysteries of godliness as we do. And if we do not see as far as our brother, it is not right to say he is mistaken in what he contends for. There is a growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. I remember very well when the absolute, universal government of God was not clear to me. Why? Because God's appointed time to show it to me had not come. Solomon says, "There is a time to every purpose under the heaven." It has not been long since one asked me if I believed that God created the devil. I answered, "I do not know." I had heard the question argued by the ablest men on both sides, and the testimony quoted to prove his origin. Then why not know? It had not been shown me. When the appointed

time arrived, it came rushing into my mind of itself. Now I am established. It is clear to me, at least, that he is a creature of the omnipotent One. So, brethren, this teaches us to be patient with each other. We cannot know the truth till it is revealed to us. Hence Paul says, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling," &c., and farther says, "According to the working of his mighty power." Not that ye are to open your own eyes; nor that if you do not see as far as I do we will cast you out; nor because my eyes have not been opened to see all yours have, I will cast you into outer darkness; but, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened," and that by the "power of God." Hence the necessity of the "he shewed me." The apostles did not know some of the things of God until after the day of pentecost. The Savior said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offense unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Was Peter really the devil? No. Jesus had reference to his carnal nature. So when John says, "In this is manifest the children of God and the children of the devil," he has reference to the children of the flesh and the children of God, or the spiritual child. When the day of pentecost was fully come, the apostles received power from on high, and this enabled them to understand the things of God. When any Scripture is given us it is "profitable for doctrine," &c., and not until it is given us experimentally is it profitable to us, though it may be to others.

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life." All the rivers of this world have their origin in the earth, and are impure, and in almost every case the climate is more unhealthy near a river than away from it. I have some personal knowledge of this fact, as I lived some thirteen years in the swamps on the Ohio River, and have experienced the overflowing of it, the loss of property, and the dreadful suffering of malarial fever caused by the impure air that arises out of these swamps. I have been an eye witness to the distressing scene caused by the flood of this natural stream. All through the still night, when we were bound to lay down to rest our bodies, after riding, hunting and collecting the stock in the rain or snow, the water would be creeping stealthily and steadily over the low lands, and the cattle were crowded upon the high points, the stronger pushing the weaker into the water;

and amid the darkness, false lights are seen floating through the air, and the atmosphere is filled with this unhealthy vapor. How sad to awaken in the morning and hear the lowing of the cattle, and to behold the desolation of everything. Then those that are saved from drowning are driven up into large barns or stock houses, where they are kept and fed until the water abates. This picture only shows in part a spiritual overflow that comes in sometimes upon the people of God, from the floods of infidelity and from the various streams that have their origin in the natural mind. When the gates of our beautiful city are carelessly left open in the reception of members, we may look out for flood. I know of the distress of the natural flood by experience, but it is nothing to compare with what God's people are called to pass through sometimes. The lowing of the cattle is distressing, but nothing compared to the moans, groans and sighs of God's little ones during a spiritual flood. Almost always when the natural river overflows the land, it is a damp, rainy, foggy time. So it is spiritually; and all through the dark, gloomy night the prayers of God's people are going up for the day to dawn. Who would not desire the break of day when they behold the sorrow-stricken countenances of those whom they love better than life? Who would not groan when the very heartstrings of brethren are torn asunder, who have stood side by side for years, and have clasped hands in christian fellowship, and have encouraged each other from time to time, until care and suffering have whitened their locks? This is always the case when a flood comes in upon the people of God. There is this difference in the natural and spiritual flood: the owner of the natural stock cannot stop the flood nor save all he desires, while our God "gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment." And again it is said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." A natural sheep is the easiest animal I know of to drown, and a hog is the hardest. After a natural flood abates the earth is much richer than before, and raises the very finest corn of any land. So after we pass through these dreadful sufferings spiritually, we are richer in the knowledge of the truth than before. No chastening at the time seemeth joyous, but grievous, but afterwards yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby. After a spiritual flood we have the enjoyment of

the corn and wine which grows in the land of Canaan. So it is written, "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."

"A pure river of water of life." All natural rivers are impure; so all natural religion is of the earth, earthly, and impure, proceeding out of the productions of the carnal mind. Natural rivers are fed by the various streams along the banks of each one. Each river has its tributaries. The head of a river springs out of the earth, generally, and runs along some distance, and then other little streams flow into it, until it is swelled from a branch into a mighty river. Thus it was with the doctrine of Fuller; he started it, and others fell in, until there was a great stream sweeping down the steep of time, flooding almost the entire country. But this blessed, "pure river" does not originate in the earth, nor is it supplied by the productions of earth. Such corruptible things as silver and gold have nothing to do with the origin nor the supplying of it, nor to conveying the water to thirsty lambs that drink of it, nor are they assisted to its banks by natural aid; for God says, "In that day the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." How do they come? The Lord says, "I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion." This blessed water never made one sorry nor sick; no poisonous vapor arises out of it; no muddy sloughs filled with crooked brush and cypress trees and decayed logs are along its banks, nor is it like the impure river of the religion of this world, which is supplied by the various collections taken up daily along its banks, the love of which, Paul says, is the root of all evil. This "pure river" is like its author, eternal, fresh, cool, "clear as crystal," a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon; "a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."

"Proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." This river could not be otherwise than pure and clear as crystal, as it proceedeth out of the throne of God. "Proceeding out of the throne of God." Grand and gloriously sublime, quiet, smooth, broad, deep, and it comes flowing

silently along the course of time, reaching to the very remotest and most insignificant, lowest sunken and rebellious of the elect of God. So Paul says, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." Yes, no one knows it saving he that receiveth it. Brethren, how grand and glorious this subject is! I am made to say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" This is

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me."

When I think, Is it possible that I, even I, have been permitted to drink of this living water that is in us "a well of water springing up into everlasting life?" I fall at the blessed Savior's feet, with my hand on my mouth, in the very dust, speechless. O if we could only live as we ought. Here is where the poor, trembling little ones have to come when they experience what Isaiah says, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." Again, the Lord says, "I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." To this "pure river" the poor, perishing children of God have to come in their weary pilgrimage, to quench their thirst; not of their own choice, but they are led to it; for it is said, "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." How often, dear little one, have you been led to these living fountains of waters, and had all tears wiped away from your eyes. This is why the people of God delight so much in each other's company, because this pure river of water of life is found in each of them, "proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Found in each of them? Yes, "Christ in you the hope of glory." This river not only proceeds out of the throne of God, but also out of the Lamb. For a long time I was looking away off into the heavens for Jesus; but one night, after meeting, it came so forcibly to me that he was not away off yonder somewhere, but right in my heart, that it made me shudder, and I felt like I wanted to get away from myself. How wonderful is all this, how strange, and yet how true: Christ right in you, poor, little one; and if he is the pure river of water of life, often it flows from you, and the very ablest minister is allowed to drink of that water. Little do you think you often give a cup of cold water to these great ones, as you look upon them; and if you only knew it, they feel like they are less than yourself. The Bible proves that rivers of living water flow out of each one of God's little ones.—John vii. 38. "He that believeth, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of

living water." Jesus says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." When you are in the company of the people of God you are with Christ, for they are one. No wonder you love to be with them so well. How often have you nestled by one of God's little ones, and they have been to you all that heart could wish. While there, you would rest and the sweet words of comfort would come to you with such sweetness that you did not want a move nor stir made by any one, for fear you would lose one word; and then you have sat by them and esteemed them better than yourself, and they have been unto you "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." While you sit there, you forget all your cares and toils and struggles; you wish the time would never come for you to separate; yet you are called from your resting-place to battle with the world, the flesh and the devil. So on you go in your weary pilgrimage over the rugged road; but thanks be unto God, it will not be long before you shall hear the sound of your Father's voice, saying, "Child, your Father calls, come home." Then farewell to struggles here below, while higher you will rise above this vale of tears, to live eternally with God in glory.

"There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

Seeing these things are true, I only wonder the saints of God are not more desirous of each other's company. This "pure river," I think (though I may be mistaken), is the "gospel of the grace of God;" for when our ministers, who "have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us," stand and speak of the glory of God, and preach Jesus and him crucified, contending for the doctrine of God our Savior, this fresh, cool water comes flowing gently, silently, calmly, without a ripple upon its surface, "clear as crystal;" it quenches our thirst, and strengthens us, and makes glad the city of our God. Then we can say, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts." There we bathe our weary feet, and lift our voices with one accord, and sing the new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." Brethren, it is enough. What manner of people ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, "forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Brethren, I submit this to your better judgment; do with it as you think best. I have been sorry that I ever wrote an article to be published. Yet as I deem the one that made the request one of God's little ones, in that this is written for him, it is for

Jesus. Hence the Savior said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Brethren, farewell. May God keep you all, and guide your poor, little brother, if one at all.

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

"WHEREFORE laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."—1 Peter ii. 1-3.

Come, dear friends, and let us reason together. If we have been born of the same Spirit, we are brethren, and should strive to know the truth, for truth is all that will do us any good in this life or in the world to come. It will stand when all things else will be crushed under the mighty power of God. Should thousands, or even the whole human family, disbelieve, it does not make any difference; it still remains the truth. On the other hand, we may believe a lie, and be ever so honest in our opinion, but that does not change it from a lie or make it the truth. Take the case of Saul of Tarsus. See how he persecuted the saints from city to city, and thought he was doing God's service. Do you not think he was honest in what he did? Read the whole history. Truth is truth, and error is error, let who will believe it, or who will disbelieve it. This is a settled fact that all are bound to admit. Then, as children of the Lord, how carefully we ought to study the Scriptures and try to understand what they do teach; if they teach that God sent his Son into the world to suffer and die for the sins of the whole world, without any discrimination; or, as some teach, the Adamic sins; that is, place the whole human family in a salvable condition; or, in other words, in the garden of Eden, where Adam stood before he transgressed; that we are born pure and holy, and remain so until we arrive at the years of accountability; and all that die in this stage are saved under the head of infant salvation; that is, they have never committed actual sins; but that we who live to or beyond this age are held accountable for actual sins, and have to atone for them by our own righteousness; that the Lord Jesus Christ only made the way passable and possible whereby we may be saved, if we comply with the terms and use the means, which are said to be repentance and faith; and that this, too, is all left to our own opinion whether we choose or whether we refuse. Those claiming that this is what the Scriptures teach, are numerous, and are divided into many factions, and are compassing land and sea to make proselytes. Now if this is what the Scriptures teach, is it not highly necessary that we should know it, and teach it to our neighbors? For if salvation depends upon our works, we should lose no time whatever, but should be up and doing while it is called to-day; for when night cometh, no man can work. But there is another order of people, or disciples, claiming that the Scrip-

tures teach a different doctrine, or salvation by grace; that all of Adam's race are sinners, are born sinners, are conceived in sin, and go forth from the womb speaking lies. David says, "In sin did my mother conceive me," &c. That we are fallen and condemned creatures, and are unable to extricate ourselves from our fallen and depraved condition, by any ability we possess by nature; that there is no difference between the infant and the adult, so far as they, as condemned sinners, are concerned. "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. That it takes the same power to save the infant that it does to save the adult; that all who are saved are in the new covenant; that there is no line of accountability, as some teach. Now here is quite a difference; and I repeat that it is highly necessary that we understand the Scriptures, that we may know exactly what they do teach. And if after a careful searching of the Bible we find that salvation is conditional, and depends upon our works, we should "lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies," and use our utmost endeavors to comply with terms and use the means, live squarely up to the work, not suffer ourselves to speak an idle word, nor do an evil deed, but control our thoughts, so that we may not think an evil thought, and ever keep uppermost in our minds,

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never dying soul to save
And fit it for the sky."

But methinks I hear the poor, sick, heavy laden soul say, I have tried all my doing powers, and my strength has failed me. The way I thought to be unto life, I found to be unto death. I am no better, but rather worse. I once thought that I was a sinner, but now I know it. I feel it in every power of my soul. I feel that I am justly condemned, and can say with the poet,

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

I cannot see any way for escape yet, for I have become satisfied that if there is no other way to that better land than through or by my works, I am gone, world without end. Come, dear soul, let us lay aside all malice, &c. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Then if he is the way, we ought to know it; for there is but one way. "For there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Is this the way the Bible teaches? It certainly is. Then why not tell the people so, and teach the truth? Do not fear to teach what you find "Thus saith the Lord" for; but rather fear to teach for doctrines the commandments of men. And do not labor so hard to deceive them, by telling them that Sunday Schools, tract societies, &c., are necessary to help the Lord on with his work of converting poor sinners. Now tell me, dear child of God, what all of these, the mourners' bench, the prayers of the preacher, or of any

one else, can do to help the Lord forgive our sins. Can there be any virtue in any or all of these? Can all our works, all brought to bear upon one poor soul, ever raise that soul to heaven, or cause the Lord to change his purpose? If so, we ought to know it, believe it and teach it. Well, let us see what the Scriptures say about it. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that sheweth mercy." "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." You may find all these and plenty other Scriptures, to prove that men cannot do anything to extricate themselves from their fallen and depraved condition, by any ability they possess by nature. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may they that are accustomed to do evil, learn to do well." Well, says the objector, how then are we to be saved? Let us go to the Scriptures and see what Jesus and his apostles say about it. Paul says, "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." "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Now, dear children, this is plain and positive; there are no conditions in it, as some tell you. They tell you that Jesus has done his part of the work, or all that he can do, and the sinner is not yet saved; and unless you begin the work, and repent of your sins, you cannot be saved. That is, the Lord cannot save you unless you do your part. But the angel said, "He shall save his people from their sins." "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Are we to believe it and trust him, or shall we put our trust in the puny arm of flesh? "There shall be no flesh justified in his sight." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Then surely we will have to look to some other source. Look to Jesus, for there is salvation in no other. He died that you might live. O! stop and think, dear children; think what a precious Savior he is. That which you could not do for yourselves, he has done for you. The debt which you could not pay, he has paid for you. Just as you were expecting to hear the awful sentence, "Depart from me, for with me you have no part nor lot," you felt that you were sued at the law, and justice said, "Pay that thou owest." Judgment went against you, you were justly condemned, and that thou knowest. The stay is out, and the officer has come, and demands payment; but you have nothing in this world to pay with. You have tried to repent, by breaking off your bad habits; you have tried to pray to the Lord to have mercy on you; you have sought the secret grove and the secret chamber; on the right hand and on the left; you have tried your groans and tears; probably you inquired of the watchman; you tried

all your doing powers and they availed you nothing; your convictions seemed to grow deeper and deeper. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The executioner has drawn his sword, and you are almost ready to give up. O how dark it appears to be. Is there then no way of escape? The thought of being banished from the presence of God seems more than you can bear. But just at this critical moment Jesus, your Savior, hands over the receipt and tells you, "I paid the debt when I suffered on the cross." O how you were made to rejoice. You felt as free from sin as though you had never committed sin. Now, dear friends, if your sins and my sins were not atoned for when Jesus cried, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, I can assure you from the record that they never will be in time nor in eternity; for "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." He was offered up once for all, and of the people there was none to help. Justice is satisfied, the Surety has paid the debt, the children are free, all whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. Jesus says, "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 none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." O see what a sure foundation we have. Well may his saints rejoice; for he who was rich, for their sakes became poor, that they through his poverty might be made rich. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Dear child, do you ever mourn and weep? Yes, says the poor soul; I go about the streets all day, bowed down as the bulrush, and at night I lie and weep until worn out, and sleep seems to have departed entirely from me. Cheer up, cheer up, for I assure you the promise is to you that mourn. You shall be comforted. Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? O yes, says the poor child; my desire is to know that I have an interest in the blood of the Lamb, that my sins have been forgiven, and that I have right to the tree of life. Jesus says you shall be filled. Then can you not say, Glory to God for the plan of salvation, in the gift of his Son? That makes salvation free and sure, and not suspended upon conditions to be performed by poor, weak and depraved humanity. Praise him, all the powers of my soul! cries the heaven-born soul, which he can by an eye of faith see Jesus as a whole and complete Savior of his people, and feel at the same time that he is his Savior, and that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but through mercy we are saved, if saved at all. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that sheweth mercy." Yes, says the poor child of God, if it had not been for this dear Savior who

died that I might live, I should have no hope beyond the grave. Come then, dear child, you that have been caught in the Arminian net, let us lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisy, &c. If you have been taught by the Holy Spirit some or all of the above lesson, and have been caught by a people that teach a different doctrine, I ask you in the fear of God to consider the matter and see if you are not acting hypocritical. Are you not giving your assent to a doctrine that you do not believe? This is plain talking, but no plainer than true. All I ask of you is to read your Bible, and if I have not told you the truth, according to the teaching of the Bible and your experience, then you are under no obligation to receive it. But if the Bible and your experience both agree with it, for God's sake receive it. "Let God be true, and every man a liar."

Brethren, the above was written while meditating about some of my friends that I think have been born of the Spirit, but have been caught in the Arminian net, during a protracted meeting, while the excitement was high. I have concluded to send it to you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if it will not crowd out better matter.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

C. C. HEATH.

SCALESVILLE Ind., Aug. 11, 1886.

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS.

DEAR FRIEND PLUMMER:—It has been some time since your last letter came to hand, in which you asked me how brother Purington suited me on the "Absolute Predestination of All Things." I should have answered your precious letter long before now, but it has been out of my reach to do so, and yet perform the more pressing duties which I have already undergone since I heard from you last. But I will now proceed, hoping the time is at hand for me to answer you in my poor, feeble way. Now I will just say, in the first place, that Elder Purington's article on the "Absolute Predestination of All Things" has told and expressed my feelings to a jot and tittle; for do not the first words in the Bible teach the absolute predestination of all things? "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Does not this teach that God is the sole Creator of all things? I must think that it does; for I cannot admit what some of our brethren say, that is, that God is not the Creator of all things; for we learn from Paul that all things were made by God himself. Hence there is no self-existing devil, wicked spirits, &c. Paul says, "For by him [Jesus] 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."—Col. i. 16, 17. Now I would ask the candid reader, Does not this include angels, either good or evil? Yes. Does it not include all spirits?

To be sure it does; for does it not include those invisible beings (things) as well as visible? And if so, where is the room for a self-existing devil, evil spirit, or any other power outside of that self-existing God? For Paul said that there was none other save Jesus. Yea, Jesus, with the Godhead dwelling bodily in him, is the only self-existing and creative power. And we read of but two invisible powers or dominions. The one is the unbounded power and dominion of Jesus upon his majestic throne, and the other is Satan's limited power and dominion in the kingdom of darkness. And as Paul spake of thrones, powers and dominions, visible or invisible, he of a certainty included the devil, his throne, power and dominion. Then if Jesus created all things, whether visible or invisible, thrones, powers, principalities and dominions, he is the absolute sovereign over all his works, the sole dictator, &c. Then can any power move or go beyond the decrees of its Creator? Then do not all things work to the glory and honor of God? "Well," says some one, "you hold that God is the author of sin." By no means; for it is written, "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."—James i. 13, 14. Notwithstanding God is the Creator of the man, with every faculty, he is not the author of sin; for while men mean to commit sin, God means it unto good, and therefore worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Now when man is tempted, it is not the Holy Spirit of God that draws him into temptation; for God is so pure, holy and perfect in his divine attributes that he cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But it is the enticement of another spirit, yea, the enticement one of those spirits from the lower regions, which God has created and foreordained to that self-same condemnation. Then God is not the author of sin, neither tempteth he any man. But like as the machine in its work accomplishes the work its maker had predetermined for it, so in like manner all God's creation works in accordance with his decrees or absolute predestination. Now to confirm this glorious Bible doctrine, we would in all candor ask the question, Can anything exist by chance? If so, is there not chance existence? and if we admit that anything comes by chance, we then and there admit the Atheist's theory or system, that is, that the probability is that all things come by chance. But I do not propose to make any such compromise, for I cannot admit that anything can come into existence, or that anything ever has come into existence, outside of the creative hand of God. And to admit that there was, and is, and ever has been, a self-existing power independent of the creative power of Jehovah, is to make a power independent of and co-equal with God. Now I must contend, in harmony with the Bible, that there is

no self-existing being or power but God, hence none are equal to him, and he is the absolute sovereign over all things and all worlds. Nehemiah says, "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone: thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; the seas, and all that is therein: and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshipeth thee."—Nehemiah ix. 6. And again, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything; seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and 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."—Acts xvii. 24-26. But if the devil was a self-existing being, he would be lord over some. But he has no lordship, for God is his Lord and Sovereign, and he (the devil) cannot go one millionth part of a hair's breadth beyond God's decrees. How was it in the case of Job? The devil could not afflict Job until the Lord gave him that liberty. And several other instances we could give, where the Lord gave the devil privilege to do and commit his works of sin; but we will pass on to the evil spirit which Micah spoke of in second Chronicles. There the evil spirit went only by the permission of the Lord. "And the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab, king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one spake, saying after this manner, and another, saying after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out and do even so. 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 Chron. xviii. 19-22. It seems here that the Lord had predestined that Ahab should go to Ramoth-Gilead, that he might have him slain in the manner in which he had foretold by his prophets that he should die. And in that the time appointed for Ahab's death and destruction was near at hand, the question was, "Who shall entice Ahab?" The means were already at hand. And was not this spirit a thing, that is, an invisible thing? for I know that this spirit must be a spiritual power of some kind; and if it be an invisible thing or power, then, according to Paul, it is a created being, and this is why it was subject to God. And the Lord did not only permit the evil spirit to go, but commanded it to go and do even so; that is, to go and be a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets. Now we are not to understand by this sublime lesson that God did not foreknow who

was to entice Ahab, for there is nothing hid from him. But he seeth the end from the beginning, and all things stand before him as one eternal now, nothing being old or new with him. But this divine lesson of the lying spirit is designed for our instruction. Now we wish to call the reader's attention to the portion of Scripture which reads as follows: "Now, therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets." It does not say that the spirit came contrary to and independent of God's will or design, into the mouth of Ahab's prophets; but it says that God hath put a lying spirit into the mouth of those prophets. God's predestinated time was at hand that he had predestinated to destroy Ahab; for his pleasure must be done in earth as well as in heaven. Then it is that the Lord will do all his pleasure. For we read in sacred writ, "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel. Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself."—Isa. xlv. 21-24. Here the Lord speaks of being the Creator and ruler of all things, both in heaven and earth, and calls upon his people (the Israelites) to remember these things; that is, that God is the only Creator and sovereign of and over all things; yea, he gives them to understand that "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."—Prov. xvi. 33. The lots which men think to be of chance are only the divine dispensing of God in his providences; for all things are brought to pass by an aiming, yet invisible hand, even the invisible and disposing hand of the great Jehovah, who presideth over the armies of heaven, and ruleth among the inhabitants of the earth: for God is the sole conductor of what we call chance. For it is impossible for anything to come to pass through a blind and undiscerning fatality. There must be a dictator for all events; for if accidents happen, they must be according to the exact foreknowledge and conformable to the determinate counsel of eternal wisdom. O what a wonderful God we have to serve! I am filled with wonder and astonishment when I meditate upon his infinite greatness in bringing all things out of nothing. O what a creative power! which is able to call whole worlds out of nothing in the twinkling of an eye. Then, poor, finite, mortal man, who art thou that offerest to measure arms with Jehovah,

yea, that boastest thyself against Jehovah, in setting bounds to the rights of thy Creator. I am often made to sit in wonder and astonishment when thinking of the impudence of the Arminian world of mankind, that they should have the impudence to say that they have power to influence the eternal God. O! I sometimes am made to shudder at their God-daring impudence, in saying that the eternal salvation of mankind is founded upon creature works, or that God can be so influenced by the works of men as to turn to them and help them to save themselves with an eternal salvation. O what presumption! O what infidelity! Just think for a moment that poor finite man cannot even create a living gnat, and then to be so presumptuous as to contend that they can do something to influence the God of heaven to help them get religion. O man, did you not know that if God were to withdraw his power from this world one moment it would go into nonentity?

I close, in love to you.

WM. R. WELBORN.

STATE ROAD, N. C., Aug. 13, 1836.

GRANT, Ky., Sept. 4, 1836.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have had an impression of mind to write for your paper my christian experience, if indeed I have one. A short time ago I had such a forcible impression that I at once yielded and wrote the following, which you will publish or not, according to your better judgment. Knowing my weakness, I trembled to make the attempt.

From my first recollection I had a great fear of death, and thought I would grow up to be a good man, and thus bring God under obligations to save my soul. Well, I grew up to be a man, and always had a high regard for truth and honesty. About this time (1846) the war broke out between the United States and Mexico, and I went as a soldier in the army. There I acquired some very bad habits, among which was cursing and swearing, which proved to be my besetting sin; for when I thought I had enough of the world, and wanted to be a good man and go to heaven by my works (which I thought was only a matter of choice), it seemed that I could not quit swearing. I reckon if I promised myself and my God once, I promised a thousand times, that I would quit swearing, but as often broke my promise. Thus things went on for some time, when I began to think I was doing better, and so began to look around for a church good enough for me to join. I found the Missionary Baptist doctrine would do, but the members would do things that I could not fellowship. My father and mother belonged to the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists, but I hated that doctrine worse than any other on earth; yet I loved my parents dearly, especially my mother. Then I began reading and studying the Scriptures, to try to convince my mother that she was wrong, and get her to give up such a doctrine. Indeed I was very much

exercised over the matter. I would talk to and argue with her on every opportunity. After having a long talk with her one day, she said to me, "Albert, have you a soul to save?" I said, "I reckon I have." Said she, "Is it worth saving?" I said, "I think it is." She said, smilingly, "Do you do what you say people can do?" I could not say that I did. Said she, "Don't you think you had better be at it?" This set me to thinking more seriously about the matter than ever before, and I determined to do what I had said could be done. I went at it with renewed zeal and with a more determined will than ever before, but failed as usual. But thinking it my fault, I would renew promises and pledges, and try, try again. This kind of work continued about two years, when my mother was taken sick, and lay sick a long time, and suffered a great deal. I frequently heard her praying for the Lord to come and take her out of the great suffering and pain which she was in, but would say, "Not my will, but thine be done, O Lord. If in accordance with thy will, give me patience and strength to bear it, and abide thine own time." I was with her a great deal in her sickness, and I became thoroughly satisfied that she was a perfect christian. For two weeks before she died, all of her talk was in praise of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The night she died we had the light turned down very low. I did not think she could tell one person from another. I was walking across the room, when she called me. I answered, when she said, "Praise ye the Lord," and began singing this hymn,

"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?"

She sang three verses of this hymn in a soft, low, sweet, musical tone of voice, and in a short time expired, which affected me very much indeed. I then determined to serve God, if it was in man to do so, and I yet believed it was. But after a few months I found that I could not do what I would; but what I would not, that I would do. I would try to read the Bible, but could get no comfort from it; it was like looking into a sealed book, except that it condemned all I had done during my whole life. So I would lay the Bible down, and think I would not try to read it again; but it would not be long before I would think of something, and I would want to see what the Bible said about it, and would pick it up and try to read again, but with the same result. I went to hear all denominations preach, but found no comfort in any of them, for I knew I could not do what the will-worshippers told me I could do; and the Primitive Baptist doctrine was so hard that I could not harmonize it with the Bible nor my feelings. So I could find no relief anywhere. I tried to pray, but my prayers seemed to go no higher than my head. Then I would try to read my Bible again, but no relief could I find. O what a great load of trouble was on my mind! It seemed that I was pressed

down like a cart under many sheaves. It did seem to me that I was cast out into utter darkness. I really felt that I had not a friend on earth. I could not tell my troubles to any one, but tried to keep them hid from everybody. I was building this tower of works about sixteen years, and was under this terrible load of trouble and darkness about two years. One night, after reading the Bible for several hours, and trying hard to understand it, I went to bed in a great deal of trouble. I lay there studying about it until after midnight, when I fell into a condition that I never could describe to any one; but while in that condition it occurred to me that I and another person were sitting by the side of a great thoroughfare, and suddenly I heard a great noise, like the tramp of a great cavalry troop. I looked and saw a great multitude of people coming down that broad road, and this great thoroughfare was full from side to side with a mixed multitude of men, women and children, carrying banners and singing praises to their God. When they came by, they said, "Come, go with us, we are going to heaven." The man that was with me went with them at once, and left me hesitating, and doubting that being the way. Finally I went, but still doubting that being the way. After going a short distance we came to the top of a high ridge. From this ridge I could look down upon a large, beautiful valley, and this valley was covered with people. We pressed on down into the valley, and all at once this terrible multitude of people disappeared, and I was sitting in the center of a long piece of timber, lying across a terribly large pit in the ground. The next thing that occurred, I was hanging underneath this piece of timber by a string fastened to the bottom of one foot. While hanging down in this pit, I could see the rolling, leaping flames of fire, as far as the eye could extend. I then began trying very hard to get out of this terrible place. I looked up and saw two men, one on each end of this piece of timber. I tried very hard to turn back, get hold of the string and pull myself out of this horrible place, but could not. I called for those two men to help me, but received no answer. I looked, and they were gone. So then I was left without help and without strength, entirely cut off from the world. No human power could extricate me from that horrible pit. I then gave up, and hung quietly down, thinking if it was God's will it was just and right to send me to that everlasting place of punishment. I was astonished at myself to see how quietly and calmly I submitted to this terrible punishment. Then in a calm, quiet tone I said, "Lord, save, or I perish." Just then I felt the almighty arm underneath, and he dipped me without an effort in the hollow of his hand, and set me on good ground, and established my going. He put a new song in my mouth, even praise to the living God, and said to me, "I am the way, the truth and the life, and that is the way to heaven." He pointed

his finger in a southeasterly direction, and I looked and saw a narrow way, with railing on each side, reaching from earth to heaven; and the farther my eyes followed, the brighter it was, till I saw right into the gates of heaven, and the brightness was above the brightness of the sun. I turned to fall down at the feet of that beautiful being to worship him for taking me out of that horrible pit; but he was gone. Just then I came to my natural self, and was trying to sing praise to God; and I have had a will and desire to praise him ever since, but have not always had power to do so. I thought then that I saw the way of salvation so plainly that I could show it to any one. I therefore awoke my wife and began telling her what a wonderful deliverance I had experienced, and what a beautiful vision I had seen, when she said, "Why Albert, are you gone crazy?" She began laughing at me for being so simple as to believe in a dream. I said, "I have seen Jesus." "Nonsense," said she, "you have only had a dream. Give up such foolishness and go to sleep." I stopped, and began doubting, and trying to banish it from my mind, or forget it as a dream. I tried for years to do so, but could not. It seemed to me the harder I tried to forget it, the harder it bore upon my mind. But strange to say, the thing that gave me so much trouble, which I tried so hard many years to quit, has never given me any trouble since, which was swearing. I do not know how long I was in this condition, but when I came to myself my clothing was wet with perspiration, I had been working so hard to get out of that horrible pit. Now, brethren, I think I have been enabled by the power of God to see Jesus as a whole, complete and perfect Savior, able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto the Father by him, without the help of poor, weak man, means or money. Now I began looking around for a people that preached this doctrine. I thought if I found them, and they would let me, I would join them. After wandering up and down the earth for about ten years, I went to old Sardis Church, where I found a people living and walking in gospel order, and having the gospel preached to them by brother J. Taylor Moore, as I think I learned it of Christ. Well, I went to Sardis as often as I could. My wife disliked the Old Baptists so much that it always put her out of humor when I went; therefore I never went as long as I could stay away, trying to please her. It was ten miles from my house, but I had to go occasionally; and when I did go and see the brethren and sisters meet, they showed such brotherly love and christian fellowship for each other that I longed to have a name and place with them, for I loved them better than any other people on earth. Then I would look at myself and think, What are you, that you should think of a place with these God-fearing and loving saints? You are a poor, sinful worm of the dust. Sometimes when I was away from the church and from the brethren,

I would have seasons of rejoicing in the Lord. I would think then that if ever an opportunity presented, I would offer myself to the church; but when the time would come, I would feel so unworthy that I could not think of doing so, but seemed to be as far from it as ever, until the first Saturday in March, 1882. Brother Moore preached, and in his sermon he told a part of my experience, trials and tribulations better than I could have told it myself. When he closed his sermon I never was so anxious to do anything in my life as I was to talk to that people; and when the door of the church was opened, it seemed that I was just lifted up and set right among the brethren, and went to talking, and told part of what I have written. They received me. When they sang a song and gave the right hand of fellowship, I felt so unworthy that I did not know what to do or say. It was announced that I would be baptized the next day. It was a beautiful morning. As I went to the church, all nature seemed to be praising God. After the sermon, which I enjoyed very much indeed, we repaired to the water, which was beautiful. Brother Moore baptized me very nicely. When I came up out of the water I looked at the brethren on the shore, and their faces shined like those of angels, and I could not help crying aloud, Praise God!

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be present and everlasting praise, honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

ALBERT CORBIN.

PANOLA, Ga., April 12, 1886.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:— A year has elapsed since my last letter for our family paper, the SIGNS, and I have thought I would never make another attempt to write; but here I am, trying to lisp again. After reading the "Close of Volume Fifty-three," and "Introductory to Volume Fifty-four," I felt somewhat encouraged to write again, but kept putting it off from time to time, thinking perhaps I would get rid of the impression, but found I could not; therefore I will endeavor to communicate a few lines. It is our duty to love, cheer and comfort each other while traveling along together. I know that I do love my fellow-travelers, but how can one so weak and ignorant as I write anything to cheer or comfort any of the dear ones? The more I read your letters, which are precious to me, the more I am drawn to you in a sweet and tender love. I sometimes am made to shed tears of joy while reading your epistles of love. Some of the sweetest and most precious letters I read are written from one sister to another, and yet they have never seen each other's faces. There is beauty and sweetness in it. It is the love of God that dwelleth in the hearts of the saints that causes them to love each other. I do not expect any to derive any comfort from anything I may write; but writing will relieve my mind to some extent. If

there is a people on earth I love, they are the Primitive Baptists. The doctrine advocated by them is a safe, sound doctrine, glorious indeed to every child of God who firmly believes it. I fully believe that the Primitive Baptist Church is the "dove." Have you not, dear sisters, noticed in spring and summer how the sweet little mocking-bird will come and seat itself on the top branch of a tree? Sometimes right near your door they sit and sing ever so long, mocking every kind of a bird except the dove, which they cannot mock. You know the dove is a peculiar bird; so are God's people a peculiar people. You never see a dove sitting with its mate. She mourns the absence of her mate. So it is with Jesus' dove; she mourns the absence of her Love. Do you not, dear sisters, feel lonely when he hides his dear, smiling face from you, and do you not call in pitiful tones while mourning his absence? Such is often the case with me; I go mourning the most of my time. Like one alone I seem to be. I feel unworthy of a place among so good a people as the Primitive Baptists; professing to be one of them when I live so little like a christian ought to live. I sometimes fear that I am deceived, and have deceived the church; but if I know my own heart I do not want to deceive any one; and if I have deceived any one, I know the Lord is not deceived. He knows every secret of my heart. To live wholly right in this sinful world is more than I can do; and there is nothing good that I do. "For the good I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." The christian's road is indeed a hard road to travel, though they have seasons of joy as well as of darkness and trouble. They sometimes are in the light, and sometimes travel in darkness. Cold, hungry and heavy laden with troubles, trials and bodily afflictions, they struggle up the mountains; often sad, very sad, sometimes feeling as if their strength was almost gone. Yet at times they are able to shout as they journey (and they do have faith; for faith is the fruit of the Spirit); they believe that deliverance will come by and by. Then they will be delivered from the body of this death; and then it will be palms of victory and crowns of glory they shall wear. If I knew I was one of that number I would be happy. Here is one thing I do know, If I am saved, it will be by grace, and not from any merit of my own.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Twas grace that brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Many dark clouds obscure my hope; yet I would not, if it were in my power, give it in exchange for all the wealth and pleasures of this world. Like Moses, I would rather 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 treas-

ures of Egypt. The great hope of a home beyond the grave is very comforting and soul-cheering to the poor, little, heavy-laden pilgrims while passing through their many troubles and trials, and suffering bodily afflictions. At times I dread the thought of death; at other times I almost long for the time to come

"When I can lay my armor down,
And dwell with Christ at home."

Blessed are those that die in the Lord. My earthly cup is bitter, though probably not as much so as some of the little ones. I have been beaten with many stripes, but no more than I deserve; for I am very disobedient and sinful. I have often felt that my afflictions have been for my own good, and yet I have murmured at his dealings with me when he laid the chastening rod so heavily upon me. But of late I have been made more humble and submissive. O that I may never murmur again, no matter how heavily the rod is laid upon me! I do desire to be as humble as a literal child all the time. But I cannot do what I want to do, nor be what I want to be. But what I am it is hard to tell.

"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 sisters, we must be patient and submissive, ever looking unto him as our Protector. We must bear the cross if we expect to wear the crown. If we partake of his sufferings, so also will we partake of his glory. At longest, it will not be long before our journey here will be ended; then our suffering will be over, and all tears be wiped away. O glorious hope! I firmly believe that every child of God will be saved, and not one of them will be lost. Being deprived of the privilege of meeting with the saints is a hard trial to bear. The sound of the gospel bell is a sweet and lovely sound to me. I have been reading different views on the resurrection of the saints with deep interest. It is a subject that has never given my mind any trouble; neither do I claim to know anything about it; but I fully agree with our dear brother S. H. Durand in his views on every point. Brother Cox also wrote beautifully upon the subject. How the dead are raised up, and with what body do they come, is something that has never been revealed to finite mortals, nor will they ever know how it is until they experience it. We read in 1 John iii. 2, "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." Is this not enough to know? though I do not object to your different views on the subject. I love to read them, and everything else the SIGNS contains, though I do not claim to understand near all I read. The experiences of grace are plain to me, but the editorials and many letters on passages of Scripture, I do not fully understand; and it is a source of regret to me, for I would love so much to understand it all. To all the tried and tempest-tossed of the flock,

I want to say, Be of good cheer. Remember the sweet promises he has given you. He will protect you forever, and you shall dwell in the green and shady pastures, beside the cooling waters. Yes, little lambs, he will protect you forever, and welcome you to his dear embrace; and like a shepherd his flock he kindly feeds.

And now let me say a word to our dearly beloved and sorely afflicted sister, Mary Parker. Write again, dear sister, for our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Be not weary in well doing. Your last letter was indeed a lovely letter. I look upon you as one of the fairest and loveliest of the flock. Such letters as you write are good food for the little lambs that are bleating around the fold. May the good Shepherd ever watch over you in the sweetest and tenderest of love, and comfort you in your troubles, soothe you in your deep afflictions, and when sweet angels shall beckon you away from your earthly home, may your spirit be wafted on angels' wings to your celestial home above, is the wish of one who loves you well.

Dear brethren Beebe, this imperfect letter is at your disposal. If you think it worthy a place in your paper, you can use it; if not, lay it aside, and all will be right. I do not care to have my name appear in our loved paper too often, and do not want it to appear at all unless you think it would be of some profit. It is the love I have for the dear little children of God that prompts me to write. Please overlook mistakes and imperfections. My education is limited, and I cannot write like the other sisters that write for the SIGNS.

May grace, mercy and peace ever be with you, and with all the dear ones of the Lord. That we may ever keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is my sincere desire.

In hope and tender love, your little sister,

A. L. DULIN.

HOPEWELL CAPE, N. B., Aug. 25, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel much delicacy in addressing you, as I know that you are so busily engaged in better matter; besides, I have such a poor faculty of conveying my ideas to paper, and am exceedingly averse to flattery. You are aware that truth needs no apology, and the SIGNS needs no praise. All praise belongs to the Lord.

We are a few here, dwelling alone. There is no preaching of the gospel, though there are plenty of meetings. Is it any wonder that we (including Dorchester Church) should hail with delight the welcome visits of "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," as presented in the editorials and by the writings of your many correspondents, which tend to the glory of God and the welfare of Zion? And this seems to be the sole object in view. Take for instance the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from its first issue to the last, and is it not as a "table prepared by the Lord in the wilderness," containing food suitable to the children of

God of any age or condition? There are two kinds of children spoken of in Scripture, and Paul speaks of some being sickly and weakly; but he does not say that sound doctrine was the cause of it. I should like to know what those disastrous results are which are likely to result from the too faithful preaching of the word of God, referred to by brother McLeroy. The Lord says, "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." I know that Paul says that we who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak; but he is referring to mere matters of conscience, and not to doctrine at all. The family of Hagar never could endure sound doctrine. It appears that the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and their children's teeth are set on edge. I have heard some of their principal leaders, who professed to be Calvinistic, preach that high doctrine, like strong meat, though good for the adult, yet was exceedingly dangerous to children; that it was death to revivals of religion, that it was damnable doctrine, and the principal cause of all the crimes committed in the land. Now, all that are acquainted with the annals of crime know as a matter of fact that all those unfortunate creatures that have disgraced the gibbet or the penitentiary belong to some Arminian church, or like the drunken man, they lean that way. For my own part, I loved the same truth forty years ago that I love now, but then it was as rich, delicious milk, while now it is as strong, wholesome meat; that is, I can understand or comprehend it better now, though I am still dull of comprehension. I should like to know at what age it would be safe to administer strong meat to a young Ishmaelite. As far as I know, the older they grow the worse they are. The Lord told Abraham to cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. Paul says, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

I should like to speak in detail of the glorious things spoken of Zion and her King through the SIGNS, but to attempt it would only be darkening counsel by words without knowledge. The apostle, in speaking of the advantages of the resurrection over the present militant state of the church, compares the saints in this time state to stars differing from each other in glory, that is, brightness or magnitude; but in heaven they will be no longer stars, for we read, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." So I was thinking of the many bright and shining lights of the present century which God has placed in the gospel firmament, of which I should have no knowledge but for the SIGNS; and God has placed them in their several positions, so none can do the work of another; and though differing in brightness, no one can boast

of his magnitude, seeing they all borrow their light from the Sun of righteousness, and shall in the glorious future be like him. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. The natural, I think, was sown in Adam; the spiritual body will be raised by the mighty power of God, through the virtue of the first resurrection.—Eph. i. 18-23. But whether the spiritual will be made of the natural, or whether it will be a new creation, matters not to us; it is just as God will have it to be. (The Savior does not say a spiritual body hath not flesh and bones.) As regards the term "change," compare 2 Corinthians v. 1-10 with Philippians iii. 21. See also Zechariah iii. 3, 4; Hebrews vii. 12; viii. 13. It appears to me that the personal pronouns apply more generally to the soul than to the body, when speaking of matters of salvation. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." This is my principal concern.

I was glad to hear from brother Redd, and to know that he is recovered from his long illness. I am glad to hear from any of the children of God; but brethren and sisters suffering affliction seem to demand our warmest sympathy. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

Yours in the bonds of love,

GILBERT DIXON.

ELLISVILLE, Miss., Aug. 29, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is in much weakness that I attempt to write to you or the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I certainly appreciate all the news it brings. O! it is so comforting to all poor, hungry saints of our God. There are some of the brethren in our southern country that do not agree with you and other noble brethren on the absolute predestination of all things; but I cannot see how it can be otherwise. We know God created all things for the purpose of his own glory; the evil as well as the good; the darkness as well as the light; and I understand that what he called evil was just as good for the purpose he created it, as the good was; for he pronounced all good that he did create. Well, then the evil was undoubtedly included. I know these are too deep and sublime things for as ignorant a worm as I am to solve. The Scriptures teach that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field that the Lord God had made, and it is agreed by all sects that that serpent was the devil. Then it is plain as to who made him, and all are bound to acknowledge that God has all power both in heaven and on earth, and he has said by Paul that all things work together for good to them that love God. Well, has this "all," as some understand it, only reference to the things that pertain to Zion, or the kingdom? Some precious brethren say this doctrine is dangerous, and some have written some noble pieces on this question, and say they cannot believe the absolute predestination of

all things. But after I read their comments, I cannot see any great difference between them. All agree that nothing happens by chance; then, if not by chance, it must be a decree. If the Lord removes his restraining power from the wicked, and permits them to do those wicked acts, I still am at a loss to know why it is not predestination; for it at least was known to him from the beginning, as he saw and knew that all things will be as he foreknew and foresaw them. I think Peter understood election to be according to the foreknowledge of God, for he says, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God."—1 Peter i. 2. "But," say some, "there is a difference between the foreknowledge and decrees of God." But Peter seems to make no difference, and what right have I? Then, in short, to take the foreknowledge of God, it proves the predestination of all things, according to my humble judgment. But this is only the opinion of a poor, fallible man. I believe in the eternal purposes of God, that he rules in the armies of heaven and in the habitable parts of the earth. And I hope I have been made willing, by the working of his mighty power, to be reconciled to his will, and to go forth in what I believe to be my duty; and I hope he has given me grace sufficient to bear all the persecutions that can be heaped upon me by the adversaries, and to try in much weakness to preach that unpopular doctrine of election, and predestination, and declare to the heirs that Christ has paid redemption's price for all the Father gave him in covenant before all worlds were, and that he does and will send forth the Holy Spirit to quicken and make alive, not by the preaching nor persuasions of men; but he calls them with a holy calling, and that not according to their good works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus, and that before the world began. Then, dear saints, let us go on in obedience, and not worry ourselves about deep and mysterious things; for God's judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Let those that are strong bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please themselves; for Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

I will close this imperfect scribble by saying, May the Lord bless and comfort Zion, is my prayer.

Now, dear brethren Beebe, this is at your disposal. If you think proper, you can publish it; if not, cast it away, and all will be right. I am as ever, your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

S. BUSBY.

WATERLOO, N. Y., July 25, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please find inclosed a letter written by my dear father, living in Iowa, who is

trying to comfort the dear children of God by telling them of Jesus and his love. His heart was made to rejoice when I wrote and told him I had found a people here that could talk of salvation by grace, and not of works. I left Iowa last December, and did not know whether I would find any Baptists near here or not. I visited May's Mill on the fourth Sunday in May, and found some very precious brethren there. I have permission of my father to send his letter for publication, if you see proper. Should you or any of the dear children of God ever come near here, your poor, weak brother will try and make them welcome.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

WM. J. BLAKE.

WATERLOO, Iowa, July, 1886.

MY DEAR SON:—This morning I thought I would drop you a few lines in answer to your letter that you wrote to some of the family, perhaps to me. I was glad to hear you had found a few of the despised people of God, who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and that you are privileged once more to drop in and hear the truth as it is in Jesus. Tell the dear brethren, and especially the brother that preaches there, that it made my heart glad, and I rejoiced that the Lord of hosts had a few people in that part of the state who are separated from the nations of the earth. God's people are a separate people, and Israel of old was commanded to live alone. And the blessed Savior, speaking to his disciples, says, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Although we are despised by the religionists of the day, and are regarded as narrow and contracted in our views, yet hear what Peter says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Pet. ii. 9. Read the chapter through, and may the Lord bless it to your soul, and enable you to endure the persecutions of the religionists of the day, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, which is never to be found in the enemy's camp; knowing that we are called to be soldiers, and the Lord hath prepared us weapons to fight with; and the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

No doubt you are anxious to hear something about our association. We had a good time. About eleven ministers were present, and the preaching was generally good, salvation by grace alone, through the merits of the crucified and risen Redeemer. I am so glad you can meet the brethren at May's Mill, and that Elder Bogardus preaches the truth as it is in Jesus. Give our love to him, and may the Lord bless him abundantly the remainder of his days, that when called from this life he can say with the apostle, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is

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."

I must now close, as my time is nearly all taken up every Sunday in speaking of Jesus and his love, at the Green's Grove Church and our own. Our love to you and yours.

From your loving father,

THOMAS BLAKE.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

In order to forward the work on the Church History as much as possible, we have had the sheets delivered to the binder as fast as printed, and expected to have the whole work out by the first of September, but owing to the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Alphabetical Index as soon as expected, we shall not be able to do so. We append a note just received from him, which will explain itself. As soon as we receive the Index we shall, providence permitting, rush it right through, and have the book out in about two or three weeks thereafter. The following is Elder Hassell's letter.—ED.

WILLIAMSON, N. C., Sept. 9, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In packing up and shipping, and unpacking and arranging my books, furniture, musical instruments and apparatus, I have had to lose a week from indexing. I have finished indexing the general Church History (660 pages), but nearly 300 pages of the Primitive Baptist History remain; and, as I have to begin my school here next Monday, I really fear that I cannot complete the Index before some time about the first of October; but I will earnestly try to get through with it earlier. The great number of facts and names with which the book is crowded, makes the indexing extremely tedious and laborious.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

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.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Mt. Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Sulphur Fork Church, Henry Co., Ky., on Friday before the first Saturday (and the two succeeding days) in September, 1886, to the churches composing her body, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—The return of another year gives us once more the privilege of addressing you in an epistle of love and admonition; and while as an advisory council we would not neglect the first principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, we desire on this occasion to mingle them with practical things, which so much make for our peace and welfare while we sojourn in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. Paul admonishes, "Let love be without dissimulation."—Rom. xii. 9. This address, of course, was to the brethren at Rome, and is now to those of like precious faith, having been born of the Spirit, and called to be saints. Peter admonishes, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Pet. i. 22, 23. Peter also says that ye are made partakers of the divine nature.—2 Pet. i. 4. Thus the apostles show that we must be born of God; for God is love, and he that loveth is born of God. Jesus says, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Yea, we understand it to be the same identical spirit. "For there is one body and one Spirit."—Eph. iv. 4. That is the Spirit of Christ.—See Rom. viii. 9. If there is any other spirit, it must be antichrist, for there are many—more than one.—See 1 John iv. 1. Hence the christian while in the world is two-fold in his nature—of the flesh and of the Spirit; one contrary to the other. For Paul says, "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."—Gal. v. 17. Such being our condition, Paul recognizes the necessity of admonishing us "That ye 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. And as we possess in our old or Adam man all the deceitfulness of our former lusts, and are likely to dissemble, hence the admonition, "Let love be without dissimulation." How sad it is when brethren walk as other men, stirring up strife, and yet so dissemble as to meet such a brother or brethren as though they were walking in fellowship. It only shows what all the dear children of God have learned by their own experience, that their nature is not changed in

the new birth, but that they have only received a new or divine nature that does not sin (see 1 John iii. 9), while they are sinners in deed and in truth in the flesh.—1 John i. 8. "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 [messengers of the first covenant] 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 first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?"—Heb. ii. 1-3. If we recognize in this connection only two men, as set forth above, let us mean two—the inner and outer man, the old and the new man. Numbers are too simple to deceive us. What would you think of a witness in court that would claim to have seen three men, and describe them by saying that one was black, one white, and one red, and afterwards say that he did not mean three, but only spoke of them as they appeared by the way, as they might be contemplated separately in their bearings, as qualifying each other when such is the case? If an earthly tribunal would rule out such a witness, as it certainly would, should not the dear saints heed the solemn admonition of Paul, "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them?"—Rom. xvi. 17.

Brethren, let us walk as dear little children, redeeming the time, knowing the time is short. Let us not love in word only, but in deed and in truth; and while we, as God gives us ability, unflinchingly maintain the "old footpaths," let us endeavor, as much as in us lies, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Though we have conflict in time, this conflict will cease. The Spirit by which we are led, even the Spirit of adoption, causes us to wait for the final consummation, to wit, the resurrection. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." There will be a glorious change when these bodies are changed, and we awake in the likeness of our blessed Jesus. Then will we be satisfied. The glorious theme that cheers the hearts of the dear saints is Christ and the resurrection. Should we not heed the admonition, "Let love be without dissimulation?" May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

J. M. DEMAREE, Mod.

W. C. SAMS, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, convened with the church at North Berwick, Maine, September 3d, 4th and 5th, 1886, to the churches and associations with whom she corresponds, grace, mercy and peace be multiplied.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Another year, with all of its events, is now among the things that were; yet we are blessed with another yearly conference, for which we desire to be thankful to God. As it has

been our practice for fifty years or more, we send this our annual letter, informing you that we yet feel to take the Bible for our only rule of faith and practice, and to follow none of the commandments and doctrines of men, of which many are not so old in years as some of us are.

Perhaps there is no branch of the gospel meditated more upon, or more comforting, than the mission of our dear Redeemer here on earth, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 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."—2 Tim. i. 9, 10. Again, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These are the declarations of the apostle Paul, yet they are as comforting and soul-cheering to the children of God as though spoken by God himself. And when he made this great sacrifice for us, what are we? We are sinners by nature and practice, dead in trespasses and sins, and there is no good thing in us, and we are by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Yet we were the objects of his love, ere the sun, by the word of God, mounted the starry heavens and commenced its course; for he says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Now as he has given himself for us, we are not our own, but we belong to him, for we are bought with a price. As we have already stated, we were given to him ere time was, and of course before the transgression. But by that transgression we sold ourselves into bondage; we contracted a debt which it was impossible for us to pay. No earthly power could, or can, pay that debt. But what a glorious way was provided to meet that demand. The dear Redeemer came forward and redeemed his people, and paid the debt with his own precious blood on Calvary's cross. Yes, when he said, "It is finished," the whole debt was paid, the children of God set free, and he had fulfilled his mission here on earth. We are now complete in him, and all the powers of earth and hell combined can never pluck one of them out of God's hand; for they are all the children of promise, as Isaac was. All of them will be begotten and born of God, and then they will live in the life of their Father eternally. Let us bear in mind that he redeemed us unto himself for his own glory, and it was of his own self-moved goodness, which was all in himself before time was. Dear brethren, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Then as God hath loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn us, may that everlasting love help us to live not unto ourselves,

but unto him who died for us, and rose again for our justification, showing that we are a people which worship God in the spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Then as the children of God are chosen in the furnace of affliction, may we endure hardness as good soldiers, yes, and endure all things for the elect's sake. Finally, may we all learn to behave well in the house of God; the strong to bear with the infirmities of the weak ones, and so work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

All through the days of our meeting the weather was pleasant, and the meetings were well attended, and on Sunday it was estimated that seven hundred people came, but only about one-half could get into the meeting house, and it was the general expression that we never had a better meeting. It is now expected that on Sunday, the 19th of this month, two or more candidates will be baptized.

We still wish to correspond with you.

WM. QUINT, Mod.

LEWIS BUTLER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the church at Sulphur Fork, Henry Co., Ky., to the associations with whom we correspond, greeting.

In the providence of God we have been permitted to meet you again in another annual association, and have had the pleasure of receiving your ministers and messengers in the bond of love. Your ministers have come to us bearing the marks of the true ministers of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Scriptures; speaking to us of the glory of the kingdom of God, and talking of his power in the salvation of ruined sinners; manifesting a disposition to know nothing among us save Jesus Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life; and the quickening power of the Spirit of Christ, independent of all human means or instrumentalities, in bringing dead sinners to life, and from under the power and dominion of Satan, to the service of the true and living God; by which the sinner dead in trespasses and sins is prepared by grace divine to receive the glorious message of salvation proclaimed by his servants, receiving the truth in the love of the same.

Dear brethren, we send you this our epistle of love, to express our desire of your christian company and correspondence in the future, as in the past. For further particulars we refer you to our minutes and messengers.

And now may the God of all grace guide you through life, and finally take you home to himself, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

J. M. DEMAREE, Mod.

W. C. SAMS, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1886.

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

PSALM XLII. 6--8.

"O MY God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life."

To the faith of the children of God all inspired Scripture glows with the one testimony of Jesus. Whether it be in the record of the creation and making of the material heaven and earth, in the inspired history of the old world as written by Moses, in the account given of the nation of Israel, in the prophecies, or in the clearer revelation in the New Testament, the essential truth is all embraced in Jesus Christ, the Savior of his people from their sins. It was this glorious theme by which the Psalms were tuned to that heavenly melody which shall resound through all the ages till time shall cease to be. Christ Jesus is "The perfect Man," including in himself "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," and every member of his redeemed body, the church, over which he is the Head.—Col. ii. 9; Eph. i. 22, 23. There never was and never will be any other perfect man, in whom all that is written in the holy Scriptures in the law and in the prophets is fulfilled. Whenever we read any portion of Scripture, therefore, and fail to see in it the testimony of Jesus, it is certain that we have not grasped the essential truth of the record.

The bitter expressions of agony in this Psalm can apply neither to the body of Christ separate from him as the Head, nor yet to him in his essential perfection separate from that body. Without that life which is Christ in them, the members of his body have no desire after God; and aside from his vital unity with his redeemed body the holy Lord has no sin to bring sorrow and tears to him. It is important to consider this truth, for therein the afflicted and poor saints shall find evidence by which their severest sorrows shall abound with joyful comfort, and their deepest griefs shall well up with assurance of everlasting consolation. In this true application of the mournful notes of the psalmist the saints in deepest distresses read in clearest lines their title to everlasting bliss; so that they may well join with Paul, "and rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: 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. 2-5. In this tribulation they know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, for it is the Spirit of Christ in them which realizes all their painful suffering; and that earnest hunger and thirst after righteousness which causes them to abhor themselves, can be felt only by those who are led by the Spirit of God, and all such are surely born of God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 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; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. viii. 14-17. Every sinner who feels sin as a grief and burden, in that experience is partaker of Christ's sufferings in a deeper and far more intensely real sense than if he had been literally nailed with the Redeemer to the cross of Calvary; for it was the burden of all the sins of his body under which Messiah gave expression to the earnest prayer in the text under consideration.

"O my God, my soul is cast down within me." The exceeding sinfulness of sin appears in this appeal wrung from the Mighty One in the depth of his anguish when he bore our sins, being made a curse for us. "Out of the depths" of the lowest pit of our condemnation this cry arose from the suffering Savior. The mystery of his unity with God, and also with his sinful members, is too deep for a seraph to comprehend. God has hidden it from the wisdom of creatures. No stretch of intellectual energy can even approach unto it. Yet the infinite depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God is manifested in revealing all its unsearchable truth to every babe in Christ, who is "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." These all have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things.—1 John ii. 20. Yet this knowledge is only by the faith of the Son of God; and as the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, the reason of even these favored babes is as ignorant of this revelation as the reason of the most stupid infidel. Faith being the fruit of the Spirit, is not received, neither can its witness be known by the natural mind. This fact is manifested by the perpetual opposition of reason against the assurance of faith, in which rests the hope of every saint. These conflicting principles in the christian cause him to cry unto God in the language of the text. It is not the Spirit of Christ alone which thus groans and cries, neither is it the carnal mind which thus complains. The free Spirit of Christ cannot be oppressed, and the carnal mind is not cast down by the sense of the absence of God. It is the chosen vessel of

mercy, the saved sinner, in whom dwell both these conflicting principles, who experiences the agony of this prayer, which is the unutterable intercession of the Spirit. Without the living faith of the Son of God none can even in thought appropriate this language to himself, "O my God!" This is not the uncertain appeal of one who is a stranger to the God addressed; the very intensity of anguish with which the cry is fraught attests the deep assurance by which the sufferer is driven to make this last appeal. In such distress he cannot trifle with experiments. He can only cry in the certain assurance that God is able to deliver him out of all his distresses. So the poor leper said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Such faith is the gift of God, and the prayer which is dictated by that faith is always heard and answered. The very appeal in such distress bears witness to the confidence of the suppliant not only that God is, but also that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.—Hebrews xi. 6. The precious privilege of feeling that this is "My God" is never so sweetly realized as when the saint feels that "My soul is cast down within me." The full meaning of this expression cannot be understood from the letter of the words alone; only they who have personally experienced the "horror of great darkness," when thick clouds hid from them the face of the throne of God, can know what it is to be thus cast down. In this text it is evident that the whole being of the sufferer is included in the word *soul*. So when God breathed into the nostrils of man the breath of life "man became a living soul."—Genesis ii. 7. There is nothing about the dejected one which is not "cast down." His heart fails, and his tongue is unable to speak his wants. He feels that he is alone in this deep distress; for it is an individual matter, wherein every heart is made to know its own bitterness, and the unspeakable anguish of this dejection is entirely within himself. In this serious distress he is not looking to creatures for relief; he has learned that "Vain is the help of man."

"Therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan." The great Captain of our salvation himself "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."—Heb. v. 7. In this as well as in all that is recorded of him he gave us the pattern for our guidance. In the way which he went is the only possible path for us to follow him. We can be his disciples only in learning of him in all his afflictions. His Spirit moved the psalmist to foretell exactly what should be fulfilled in the wonderful work of our Redeemer. When the hour had come in which he must pass through the land of Jordan (that is, the river of judgment flowing down), he did remember God even from that terrible place where

the great deep of the unsearchable judgments of God was justly poured out, flowing down upon him, so that he cried from the end of the earth unto God when his heart was overwhelmed. In this awful conflict our dear Redeemer was made to be sin for us. Being perfect and holy in himself, neither pain nor death could touch him except as identified with his body whose members are involved in sin; therefore his every cry and groan gives assurance of his vital and real unity with them for whose transgressions he was wounded, and who are healed with his stripes. From the land of this dreadful experience he remembered God; and out of all his distresses he was delivered, though he must pass through death to destroy him that had the power of death. Looking at the things which are seen, reason says the strong crying and tears of Jesus are in vain, for he did bow his head in death; but faith beholds him victorious over death and hell, gone up with a shout of triumph, and sees that "he was heard in that he feared." So, his dear followers often seem to cry in vain for deliverance from their severe trials, and even to themselves it appears that the Lord has forsaken them; especially "in the land of Jordan" when they contemplate the just judgment flowing down from the spotless purity of God's throne, it seems that they are hopelessly lost in sin and death. But the glorious victory over sin already accomplished by our risen Lord is given to the needy sinner in the very moment when his strength has failed and he is ready to perish. So, the glory is clearly shown to belong to Jesus; while his people, saved from their sins, and clothed in his own perfect righteousness, are in him made holy with the holiness of God.

"And of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar." The land of Jordan, signifying the experience of righteous judgment flowing down upon the sin-burdened one, is identical with Hermon, which signifies *anathema, destruction*. It is a very striking symbolic expression of gospel truth that the literal Hermon was the very hill which was afterward called mount Zion, the type of the church, which is a monument raised up to exhibit the infinite grace of God.—See Deut. iv. 48. From this land of hopeless condemnation the lost and ruined subjects of electing love are by divine grace raised to the spotless justification of sons of God; so that their very sinfulness in themselves but serves as the dark background, in contrast with which the unspeakable fullness of that grace is made to shine with clearer lustre, to the praise of their Redeemer. It is not needful that the whole family of spiritual Israel should be assembled in one earthly location in order that this call may go forth to the declarative glory of God. As indicated by the hill Mizar (that is, the *little hill*), each individual vessel of mercy is a solitary little hill, whence arises that prayer

of faith in which God is worshiped; and when God setteth these solitary ones in families (Psalm lxxviii. 6), they are still little and solitary. Still their only refuge and strength is in remembering their Lord, and trusting alone in him for righteousness and grace to help in every time of need. Neither individually nor in their collective character as the whole church do these subjects of salvation ever grow so large that they cease to be little children; and as a monument of divine grace they are ever a little hill, whose praise and worship of God consists in asking every good gift of him.

"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." In this sublimely figurative language the infinite mystery of the eternal purpose of God is the great deep of his judgments.—Psalm xxxvi. 6. The righteous condemnation of his holy law resting upon his chosen people, who "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," is the deep whose dreadful voice calls in thunder tones for their life. The bottomless deep of their conscious guilt trembles at the call, while forced to confess the justice of the deep decree. This is the experience of every quickened sinner in the first view of his just condemnation. By those who have long pursued their pilgrimage here, the same truth has been again and again experienced as they have been called to suffer the just chastisement which the Lord visits upon his chosen people. In their Redeemer it is true of every saint that all the billows of divine wrath have gone over them; so the divine judgment is recorded, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. As partakers of the sufferings of Christ, each one in the measure given by divine love must drink of his cup and be baptized with his baptism. The expression of his immutable perfection may be signified by "the noise of thy water-spouts." Certainly when the purity of God is revealed in the heart, the waves and billows of condemnation do pass over the conscious sinner. In this severe suffering he is following the Lord Jesus; and as the victory is already secured by him, it is certain that he will give it to every one who is made partaker of his sufferings. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."—2 Tim. ii. 12. Their sufferings and afflictions are abiding witnesses that they are following him whose Spirit moved the writer to record this testimony of his agony.

"Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life." This assurance of perfect trust in God may seem to express more than the tried saint can say in the distress described in the preceding portion of the text; but a close examination in the light of the holy shekinah within the Sanctuary will show that every

one who mourns his own vileness and pollution has in himself the love of holiness; and his desire for the righteousness of God bears witness that he is led by the Spirit of God. As all such are the sons of God, they are identified in the Lord Jesus, and all his righteousness belongs to them. Their daytime is made by the light of the face of their Lord manifested to them, and then they see his loving-kindness in all his providence concerning them. In the night, when they cannot see his hand leading them, by that living faith which abides with them they realize his song with them. If it were their own song it would be affected by their changing feelings; but as it is his song it is ever full of his glorious victory, even in their darkest night. Therefore by that faith which God has given they can with assurance address their prayer unto the God of their life, however dark and gloomy the night which envelops them. It is not simply to God as the Creator that their prayer in the night shall be, as if he were afar off; the ground on which they can assuredly pour out their prayer unto him is the indwelling witness that enables each one to claim him as "The God of my life." The dying cry of our Lord called upon his own God, even though then forsaken of him; and while to the reason even of his disciples it seemed that he prayed in vain, yet he was sustained by the power of Omnipotence, and his death was the door of hope opened in the gloomy valley of Achor, through which he brought to light the life and immortality of all his people. So, when the saints pour out their petitions to their God it may seem to their view that the Lord does not hear them; but the answer is assured to them by his immutability and his truth, as he has said, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. "Wherein 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: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."—Hebrews vi. 17-20.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

WE have received a copy of this book, compiled by Elders Silas H. Durand and P. G. Lester, for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist Churches. This work has been advertised in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the names of the compilers give assurance that it is well adapted for the place it is designed to fill. It contains one-half the hymns in Beebe's Collection with reference to the number of hymns in that Hymn Book, and a number of other hymns, with appropriate tunes for each. For terms see advertisement on last page.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. M. True, at the residence of the bride's parents, near Waco, York Co., Neb., on Sept. 1, 1886, John C. Dewey and Rebecca E. Stevens, both of Waco, York Co., Neb.

In North Berwick, Maine, August 23, 1886, by Elder Wm. Quint, Mr. James Downs and Miss Lenora Trafton, both of Sanford, Maine.

By the same, in North Berwick, Maine, August 30, 1886, Mr. Charles S. Libby and Miss Mira B. Ford, both of Sanford, Maine.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

EVER since the departure of our loving old sister **Mahala Spurgin**, I have been waiting for some one who knew more about her than I do, to write and send to you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a more full account of her life and death. Having been personally acquainted with her, and living by her for two years, and being in her company often during two years, and having been requested to do this, I now undertake it, with the assistance of sister Wragg. Our dear sister departed this life October 20, 1885. She was born March 10, 1805, in Bourbon County, Kentucky. Her maiden name was Kendall. Her father died when she was about eight years old. She professed a hope in Christ when young (all readers of the SIGNS will see, from her letters published, at what age), and was baptized at the town of Elizabeth. Her first husband was named Elliott. They moved to Indiana, and from there to Alton, Illinois, and then to Randolph, where her husband died. She remained there until she was married the second time. This husband's name was John W. Spurgin. By her first husband she was the mother of three children, and only raised one, a daughter, who died several years ago. She was the mother of one child by her second husband, a son, who died in his fourth year. Then they moved to the eastern part of Texas, in the year 1846, when she became acquainted with the Baptists in this part of Texas. I do not know the year of her husband's death. He was a preacher of our order. When she moved to Texas, she became a member of Little Hope Church, Elder Lumpkin, pastor. She finally got into this settlement, with a letter from Little Hope, and here among them she got acquainted with brother and sister Wragg, and made their house her home eight or ten years. Here, with them, I got acquainted with her. I think when she died, she was holding the letter that Little Hope Church gave her. Now some would like to know why she did not unite with some church here. She had her reasons; and I think, from what she told me, and from what I could see, some of the reasons were on account of some troubles in Union Association, which all the churches here belonged to. So, dear brethren, I see, were I to speak for her all that I wish to, it would make this letter too long. As brother Vanmeter has said, I have several sweet letters on hand from her, which she wrote me while she lived with Dr. Dillard, near Shreveport, Louisiana. There she spent her last days. Her last letter to me a short time before she died, was to encourage me; for she knew I was trying to preach, and that I had a great deal of opposition. She said, "Goon, brother Bell. Be obedient unto the heavenly calling, for I verily believe all this will redound to the glory of God and to your good." She wrote me that she regarded Dr. Dillard and his wife as subjects of grace. She said they were very good to her, and lavished upon her things which she did not really need. Then, brethren, we should ever feel grateful to them for their loving kindness to our dear old sister in her last days. Our sister is gone. She will advise me no more. Her kind instructions, gentle reproofs and christian admonitions are all hushed in the stillness of death, and we who have read her writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if we wish to know who she was, will have to go back, gather up and read, and then we will find she was established in the doctrine of God our Savior. She will write no more; for the trembling hand that held the pen, which was guided by the Spirit of truth to write nothing but truth, which by reason of old age had become weary, now lies in sweet

rest and undisturbed, till the time shall come when she will arise immortal, incorruptible, spiritual, and in every way be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body.

Sleep on, dear sister, and take your rest,
For in this sleep God hath you bless'd;
For 'tis this sleep that you must take,
That God may from it you awake.

U. J. BELL.

Robinson M. Patton was born in Butler County, Ohio, October 4, 1808, was married to Miss Nancy Hamilton September 29, 1831, who departed this life January 16, 1879. Father Patton joined the Old School Baptist Church in Ohio, in June, 1841, and has lived an honored and respected member ever since. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination and election, salvation by grace, and the final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory. His conversation of late years has been almost altogether that of religion, and the bright prospects he had in view. His faith was unwavering to the last, and he passed quietly away on Saturday evening, July 24, 1886. We never before saw such bright evidences left of a humble christian life and peaceful death. He left a written request that Elders S. H. Moffett and C. W. Kemper preach his funeral; but as Elder Moffett was from home at the time of his death, and could not reach home in time to take part in the service, the writer, in connection with Elder Kemper, preached the funeral discourse at Providence Church, near his home, to a large and attentive audience, after which his remains were laid away beside those of his companion, in Tonica Cemetery, there to rest in peace till the great resurrection day. The hymns and text used were all selected by our departed brother. The first hymn was, "And must the body die?" &c.; and the second, "Why do we mourn departed friends?" &c. "Hark from the tombs a doleful sound," was sung at the grave. The text used was 1 Peter i. 24, 25. Surely a great man in Israel is fallen. Father Patton was faithful to attend his church meetings while he was able to do so, and when his health would not admit of his going to the house of God he would take his chair near the door or window and listen to the songs of Zion; and though he could not be present in body, he was there in spirit. Providence Church has lost a beloved brother and father, the community a kind neighbor and good citizen, his children a cherished and faithful father. But our loss is his eternal gain. He leaves six children, one (Andrew H.) a minister in the Baptist Church, and one a deacon, twenty-two grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and a large circle of friends, to mourn their loss; but we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

M. B. MOFFETT.

KANSAS, Ill., Aug. 15, 1886.

DIED—At his residence in Union, Boone County, Kentucky, June 4, 1886, our beloved brother, **Volney Dickerson**, in the seventieth year of his age. Brother Dickerson had been more than a year previous to his death sorely afflicted with paralysis of the throat, which greatly affected his speech and caused serious trouble while swallowing. Often while trying to eat or drink he was seized with strangling, which was very alarming. He had confessed a hope in Christ to his wife several years ago, and last fall became much distressed that he had not made this confession before men; and on the first Saturday in November he, by writing and talking, gave a satisfactory reason of his hope to the church at Sardis, was received, and baptized by our pastor, Elder J. T. Moore. For weeks he seemed perfectly happy, though so much afflicted. He could still walk and visit his brethren and sisters living near him, and it was his delight to have them visit him. He could not talk much, but could listen and assent. He was much beloved by his neighbors, for a more faithful friend in sickness, sorrow and death could not be found, and the long procession that followed his remains to Richmond Cemetery, proved the high esteem in which he was held by all who knew him. The Presbyterians of Richmond Church very kindly postponed their own services, giving us the use of their house, and a dis-

course was delivered by Elder Edmund Stephens, and some consoling remarks added by the Presbyterian minister. Brother Dickerson leaves a loving wife (who but seldom left his side during his long illness), three devoted children, a son and two daughters, several grandchildren, to mourn their loss. For some time previous to his death, he could not articulate at all, yet his patience and the serenity of his countenance were so remarkable, that we feel assured he is now with his Savior.

Blest is the soul that sleeps in Jesus' arms,
Saved from all dangers, quiet from alarms;
A shock of corn into the garner brought;
A ransomed soul safe up to heaven caught;
Now resting from their labors on his breast,
Who toiled that thou might enter into rest.
M. B. B.

DIED—At her home near Pine, Pulaski Co., Va., August 14, 1886, **Mrs. Elizabeth Rebecca Holmes**, the wife of J. Atchley Holmes Sr., aged sixty-four years, two months and twenty-four days. She leaves five sons and one daughter, besides numerous relatives and friends, to mourn their loss; but we mourn not as those who have no hope; for as she died in the triumph of a living faith, we believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Rebecca Calfee, daughter of John and Margaret Howard Calfee, of Wythe Co., Va., who were both members of the Old School Baptist Church for a great number of years. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptist Church, and for more than forty years lived the life of a consistent member of the church of Christ, though it was not till the second Sunday in October, 1884, that she and her husband were united with the membership of her forefathers at Pilgrims' Rest, in Pulaski Co., Va., in baptism, by Elder Isaac Webb. She was always possessed of a very meek and quiet spirit, and always loved to serve her family, friends and brethren. She was always glad to have the brethren come to the church meeting, and frequently preaching would be at her home, which she enjoyed very much. She was buried in the old family lot of the Holmes', two miles south of Newbern, the county seat.

Yours in the faith,

JOSHUA ATCHLEY HOLMES SR.

PINE, Va., Aug. 30, 1886.

It becomes my sad duty to chronicle the death of a near friend, **Mrs. Sarah A. Hubbard**, who departed this life July 28, 1886, in her fifty-seventh year. Her disease was tumor in the side, with which she was only confined about four days, making her suffering indescribable, and a quick and unexpected death. I was informed during her suffering that she expressed a willingness to depart and be with Jesus. I suppose she professed a hope in Christ some thirty years since, and lived a pious life up to the time of her death. She was not a member of any visible church, but often expressed a desire to be with the Primitive Baptist Church, if she could only be sure of her fitness. It has been my privilege to converse often with the deceased on the subject of grace. She was a dear lover of the SIGNS. Her disposition was kind, and when exhorted to the discharge of duty in laying her case before the people of God, whom she seemed to love, the fear of being deceived and deceiving them was more than she could bear. It was her sad lot to live many years a widow; but her release has come, and no doubt our loss is her eternal gain. She leaves friends, one son, sisters and brothers, to mourn, some of whom are members of our body and readers of the SIGNS.

The funeral was attended by the writer, speaking from the words recorded in John xiv. 1. May God in mercy sanctify this dispensation of his providence to the good of the bereaved.

P. M. WRIGHT.

CHAMBLISSBURG, Va., Aug. 10, 1886.

Ruanna Sanford was born in Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., Jan. 26, 1808, baptized by Elder David Mead, in the year 1831, married to Uriah Every, May 2, 1832, and died August 28, 1886. She moved from the state of New York in the year 1836, to Jackson County,

Michigan, where they lived till the spring of 1851, when they moved to Bridgewater, Washtenaw County, where she resided the remainder of her life. Her every day life was an example for us all, and she died trusting in Jesus. She leaves an aged companion and was the mother of five children, all of whom survive her. Her loving counsels and good advice, and above all her good example, will not soon be forgotten.

Her funeral sermon was preached at her home by Elder William Palmer, from Rev. ii. 17.

EMMA EVERY.

By request of the aged brother and surviving companion of the departed one, I will say that she was a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, laying aside all other matters to read them as soon as brought into the house. They sometimes visited our little church here at Columbia, and we learn to miss the scattered ones who come to us no more. When with us at church meeting the last time, she spoke more freely than usual for her, and seemed to enjoy the meeting. Her mind at the last seemed much established, and when the parting hour arrived, she talked to her children, giving a bright manifestation of her hope and faith in him who was all her trust. Her aged companion said to her, "Have you no word for me, mother?" A smile came over her dying face as she said to him, "The Lord will take care of you;" and she then sank peacefully away.

How sweet the scene when christians die,
When weary spirits sink to rest;
How mildly beams the closing eye,
How gently heaves the expiring breast.

Her disease was dropsy, from which she had long suffered with sweet christian patience, until the final release came with welcome to her. At the close of the funeral they sang that hymn which was felt by all to be appropriate for the time,

"Why do we mourn departing friends,
Or shake at death's alarm?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends,
To call them to his arms."

KATE SWARTOUT.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, Mich., Sept. 4, 1886.

THE subject of this obituary, **Elder E. T. Morris**, was born in Kanawha County, Virginia, June 4, 1810. He lived there until his sixteenth year, when he came to Sangamon County, Ill., with his father, and has lived there and in Morgan County ever since, except twelve years which he spent in Missouri. He was married to Miss Sarah Simms at the age of thirty years; was baptized in the fellowship of the Regular Baptist Church while living in Missouri, by Elder Williamson, about forty-seven years ago, and was ordained a minister at South Fork of the Mauvaisterre Church, in May, 1855. Brother Morris has ever been a faithful christian, sound in the faith and doctrine of God our Savior, ever ready to comfort the afflicted, strengthen the weak, and to reprove and correct the erring; always opposing error, in whatever form, with all his might; being ever ready to entertain, given to hospitality, a kind father, husband and neighbor.

WHEREAS, God in his providence has removed from our midst our much esteemed and highly beloved brother; and,

WHEREAS, His family has sustained a great loss, as well as the church and association of which he was a member;

Resolved, That we, the Morgan Association, extend our sympathy to our dear sister Morris and family in this her great bereavement, and to South Fork of the Mauvaisterre Church in their loss.

Resolved, That these resolutions be printed in the minutes of our association.

James Benedict Wood died at his home near Warwick, N. Y., at 2.45 a. m., August 2, 1886, aged seventy-six years, five months and twenty-four days. Mr. Wood was born one-half mile east of the village of Warwick, and has been a life long resident of the town. He received a liberal education for his day, chiefly through the influence of an aunt who resided at Lenox, Mass., where was located at that time a noted academy. His religious views were in harmony with the Old

School Baptist doctrine, and for a long number of years he held the position of trustee and treasurer of the Warwick Church.

The funeral took place August 5, at the church house, when Elder Wm. L. Beebe preached to a large gathering of people from 1 Cor. ii, 9, 10.

A FRIEND.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

PURSUANT to a former appointment a presbytery and council met at Cammal, Lycoming Co., Pa., August 17, 1886, at ten o'clock a. m., to take into consideration the propriety of organizing the following named members into a Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, to wit: J. L. Campbell, Priscilla Campbell, Charity Campbell, Virgia Campbell, L. D. Campbell, W. A. Campbell, Matilda Fackenthal, Matilda Williams, Jennie Campbell, Jacob Badgley, Malinda Badgley, Sarah Miller, Rachel Callahan, Alice Elliott.

After preaching, Elder M. Vail was chosen Moderator, and G. S. Parsons Clerk.

Names of churches and messengers enrolled as follows:

Asylum & Vaughan Hill—Elder C. Bogardus.

Charleston & Sullivan—Deacon L. H. Elliott, Delos Eley, James Cudworth, G. S. Parsons.

Chemung—Elder M. Vail.

Canton & Columbia—D. T. Scudder, E. Vermilyea.

Burdett—Deacon H. Ayres.

Caroline—Elder C. Bogardus.

Abington—Elder M. Vail.

May's Mills—Deacon J. May.

Utica—Elder Wm. A. Campbell.

Finding them desirous to be constituted into a church, proceeded to examine their letters, which were found in order, and were received.

Examined their Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum, which were satisfactory.

Elder M. Vail gave them the right hand of fellowship.

The Moderator then declared them a Regular Old School Baptist Church.

The clerk was requested to send this constitution to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

M. VAIL, Mod.

G. S. PARSONS, Clerk.

The church then chose Elder W. A. Campbell pastor, Jehiel Campbell deacon, and L. D. Campbell clerk. The church also decided to meet on the second Sunday of each month for preaching and church meeting. The church to be called CAMMAL.

G. S. PARSONS, Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

J C Shelton 5, Mrs Lydia Mullock 2.50, Sarah Worcester 2.50, Solomon Bishop 2.50, Benson H Owen 5, Mrs J N Umstead 5, John Miller 2.50, Spencer Prickard 2, Wm O Smith 2, L Hecker 3, C C Melton 2.50, Henry T Brown 2.50, Martha E Davis 2, Frank P Cowart 2, M M Hanna 2.50, M S Beakes 2.50, Mrs E M Davis 2, Gideon Kaufman 2.50, Jacob Mulberry 2.50, Joseph Burgess 5, F P Clay 2, D S Elliott 2.50, J L Fuller 2.50, Mrs Dr A C Hull 2.50, J Matthews 2.50, Wm H Barlow 2.50, Caroline M Cole 2.50, Wm Landlin 2.50, Ann E King 2, Alanson Hull 2.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

Miss P E Petty 50c, A Corbin 50c, Cath A Gaines 50c, Anderson Gorden 2.50, A H Parkes 60c, Mrs J T Bouton 50c, James Laws 50c, Mrs T J Housh 50c, U N Tyson 50c, J A Long 50c, T J Wesley 50c, W H Jennings 50c, Kantharine Cheatman 50c, W H McClain 50c, B F Flagg 3, Henry Nave 1, F A Chick 50c, Rachel Ensor 50c, O J Daniel 50c, P P Elmondorph 50c, John Clark 50c, Daniel Vail 50c, T J Bazemore 50c, A H Denton 50c, —Total \$98.50.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is appointed to be held with Hephzibah Church, in Alexandria, Va., to begin on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, and we cordially invite all who wish to meet with us.

By order of the church,

N. P. REED, Mod.

JAMES LANE, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, will be held, if the Lord will, at or near the Willhelms school house, in Jefferson County, Kansas, three miles east of Winchester and five miles west of Easton, beginning on Friday before the last Saturday in September, at ten o'clock a. m., and continue three days.

Those coming by rail from the east on Thursday will stop off at Easton, where they will be met and taken to the house of W. F. Jones or John L. Bristow, near by. Those coming from the west will come to Winchester, 12 o'clock, and be taken to the house of T. J. Housh or John Miller.

Should any miss connection and not reach here until Friday, either from the east or west, they will stop off at Lee Station, two miles from the place of meeting, where they will be met and taken to the place of meeting. From the east the train reaches Lee at 11.30, and from the west at 12.30, on the K. C. or Union Pacific Narrow Gauge.

Those coming by private conveyance will inquire for the above named persons. Those coming to Easton will inquire for McGee Brothers or C. O. Warrell. At Winchester inquire of A. Barns.

A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and to as many of our ministering brethren as the Lord may be pleased to send, who can endure sound doctrine.

T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.

THE Pilgrims' Rest Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists is appointed to be held with Gilead Church, in Franklin County, Kansas, four miles south of Wellsville, at ten o'clock a. m. on Friday before the second (not the third, as our Minutes state) Saturday in October, 1886.

Visiting brethren coming from the north or east will come to Wellsville, a station on the Southern Kansas Railway, on Thursday before the meeting. Those coming from the west will come to the same place on Friday morning. All will be met on those days. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

S. P. RAMEY.

THE New Hope Association for this year will convene with the church at Bethlehem, in Jefferson County, Ark., on Saturday before the third Sunday in October. We always welcome our brethren and anxiously desire them to meet in our association, especially our ministering brethren. The place of meeting is twelve miles west from Pine Bluff, Ark. Our brother, Elder D. Westfall, lives in Pine Bluff, to whom I would cite any strange brother who may come that way.

A. TOMLIN.

THE next session of the Juniata Regular Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., to begin, by divine permission, Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1886.

Those coming to the Association will be met at Hancock, Md., on the B. & O. R. R., on Tuesday, Sept. 30, the day before the meeting commences, and taken to places of entertainment and to the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all our brethren and friends to meet with us.

By order of the church.

MARCUS STARR, Clerk.

THE next session of the Kehukee Association is to be held, if the Lord will, with the Hopeland Church, at Whitaker's, on the Wilmington & Weldon Railroad, about twenty-five miles south of Weldon, the first Sunday in October, 1886, with Saturday preceding and Monday following. The place is very accessible, and we hope that a large number of our brethren, especially in the ministry, will visit us.

S. HASSELL, Mod.

OUR next Association (South Louisiana Primitive Baptist) will be held with Macedonia Church, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, ten miles east of Sugar-town, Calcasieu Parish, La.

W. M. PERKINS, Mod.

I. S. MEADOURS, Clerk.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, has appointed to hold her next annual meeting with Unity Church, Platte Co., Missouri, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 1, 2 and 3, 1886.

R. M. THOMAS.

THE next session of the Oconee Old School Baptist Association will convene with the church at Union, Madison County, Georgia, on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1886.

THE next session of the Amite Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the New Bethel Church, Pike Co., Miss., beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, and continue three days.

THE next meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Little Creek, Sussex Co., Del., to commence on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1886.

The brethren and friends contemplating attending the Salisbury Association by public conveyance will please take their tickets for Delmar, on the Delaware Railroad, on Tuesday, the day before the meeting. All trains from both ways will be attended to. The afternoon train leaves Philadelphia at 11:55 a. m., and Baltimore 10:08 a. m., and arrives at Delmar about 4:18 p. m. A general invitation is extended.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

OUR yearly meeting is appointed to be held at London Tract, to commence on Saturday before the third Sunday in October 1886, at 2 o'clock p. m.

The brethren and friends who come through Philadelphia will please take train leaving Broad Street depot at four o'clock on Tuesday p. m., change cars at Wilmington, and take the train at the foot of Market Street at 5.40 p. m., for Landenburg. About six of the number will please get off at Hockessin, and the rest at Landenburg. Those coming through Baltimore will all come to Newark depot, leaving Baltimore about three o'clock the same day.

Friends coming from Salisbury and on the Delaware Rail Road will get tickets for Wil-son, and change cars at Porters.

We hope for and will be glad to see a goodly number of brethren and friends. We hope they will have it in their hearts to visit us, and that they will be permitted to do so.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Columbia will hold their yearly meeting, the Lord willing, to begin on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1886. We invite all our dear brethren and sisters to attend, and we will try and make it pleasant for them. Elders Hanover and Cole are expected to attend.

Those who come from the southeast will come to Toledo, and from there to Napoleon. Those from the north and west will come to Napoleon. Those from the southwest will come to Woodstock. Be sure to be at these stations on Friday, and you will find teams to convey you to the meeting.

THOMAS SWARTOUT.

THERE will be (the Lord willing) a yearly meeting held at Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., Oct. 13th and 14th, Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday. This meeting has formerly been held at Otego, but this year we meet with the brethren at Osborn Hollow, which is a branch of Otego church. This place is ten miles east of Binghamton, on the Delaware & Hudson R. R. Trains leave Binghamton 7.20 a. m., 12.40 p. m. and 5.00 p. m. A general invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, and we hope brethren in the ministry will not forget or neglect to attend with us.

B. BUNDY.

THE Lord willing, the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., will hold their yearly meeting on Wednesday and Thursday after the fourth Sunday in October, 1886, at their house on Schoharie Hill, at 10 a. m. each day. A general invitation is extended to ministers and brethren, and all who love

the truth. Those who come by rail will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday and cared for.

G. W. GURNSEY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, Schoharie Co., N. Y., will hold their yearly meeting, commencing on Saturday, October 9, 1886, and continue two days. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to attend with us, and those coming on the cars will be met at noon, at Grand Gorge, the day previous.

Done by order of the church,
D. S. ELLIOTT, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held on the second Saturday and Sunday in November, 1886. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends.

WM. P. KIRK, Clerk.

Williamston Academy.

FOR BOTH SEXES.

STRICTLY NON-SECTARIAN.

WILLIAMSTON, MARTIN CO., N. C.

For the especial purpose of rendering more regular and faithful service to my own church, of which my father was and I am a member and pastor, I expect, with the permission of providence, to transfer my residence, about the first of September, from Wilson to my native place, Williamston, N. C., and to take charge of the WILLIAMSTON ACADEMY, opening the Fall Session, Monday, September 13th, 1886.

Primary, Preparatory, Academic, Commercial, Music, and Art Departments. Experience of twenty-five years in teaching. Large and valuable library. Extensive apparatus. Pleasant and healthful location. PRICES TO SUIT THE TIMES.

EXPENSES PER SESSION OF 20 WEEKS:

Board, in private families...	\$35 00 to \$50 00
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" " Preparatory " 	15 00
" " Academic " 	20 00
" " Commercial " 	20 00
Use of Instrument, one hour per day.	5 00
Tuition in Drawing.....	10 00
" " Painting.....	15 00

Entire average expenses, without Music or Art, \$75 per Session of twenty weeks.

SYLVESTER HASSELL, A. M.,
Principal.

HOPEWELL SEMINARY.

The Fall Session will commence on Wednesday, September 22d, 1886. For particulars address

MISSES BOGGS, Principals,
Hopewell, Mercer Co., New Jersey.

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FOR USE IN OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCHES.

THE above named book is now ready for distribution. It contains 272 pages, one tune, and sometimes two, being on each page, with hymns to which they are suited. There are 627 hymns and 256 different tunes, 35 tunes being repeated. We have endeavored to select such hymns and tunes as are most commonly used in churches of our faith and order in all the different sections of our country. The book will be made of the best material, printed in good, clear type, and bound in cloth in the best style.

We are publishing two sets of books; one in round notes and one in shape notes. Each order should state expressly which kind of note is desired.

Money should be sent by post-office order, by draft, or by registered letter. Get P. O. orders on the post-office in Philadelphia, but make them, and all drafts, payable to Silas H. Durand, and send all orders and remittances to him at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. Write in a plain hand the name and post-office of the one sending the order; and where books are to be sent by express, write the express-office and post-office both. Money sent as directed will be at our risk. Price per copy, sent by mail, post paid, \$1.25; per dozen, sent by express, \$12.00.

SILAS H. DURAND,
P. G. LESTER.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

AS will be seen by reference to an extract from a letter received from Elder Hassell, on page 223, we have met with an unexpected delay in the completion of the Church History, caused by the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Index as soon as anticipated. We now have the History all in type except the Index, and the binder at work on the printed sheets, and as soon as the manuscript for the Index is received we will rush them through the press and mail the books at the earliest possible day.

We still have left of the first edition of the Plain Cloth binding @ \$2 00, 210 copies.
Leather " @ 2 50, 205 "
Imit. Morocco " @ 4 00, 44 "
Best Morocco " @ 5 00, 15 "

From the above it will be observed that the first edition is nearly exhausted, and those wishing to procure a book will have to order very soon or they will be too late. 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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.

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:

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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 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.

RULES FOR ORDERING.

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.

Imitation Morocco, Elegant style, single copy, \$1 75; per dozen, \$18 00.

Blue, Gilt Edged, single copy, \$1 13 per dozen, \$12 00.

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At the above prices we shall require cash to accompany the orders.

OUR LARGE TYPE EDITION.

We still have a full assortment of our large type edition of Hymn Book, which we will mail to any address at the following prices:

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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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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 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. 54. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1886. NO. 20.

POETRY.

ALL IS KNOWN TO THEE.

"WHEN my spirit was overwhelmed within me, thou knewest my path."

My God, whose gracious pity I may claim,
Calling thee Father, sweet, endearing name;
The sufferings of this weak and weary frame,
All, all are known to thee.

From human eye 'tis better to conceal
Much that I suffer, much I hourly feel;
But O the thought does tranquilize and heal,
All, all is known to thee.

Each secret conflict with indwelling sin,
Each sickening fear I ne'er the prize shall win,
Each pang from irritation, turmoil, din,
All, all are known to thee.

When in the morning unrefreshed I wake,
Or in the night but little sleep can take,
This brief appeal submissively I make,
All, all is known to thee.

Nay, all by thee is ordered, chosen, planned;
Each drop that fills my daily cup; thy hand
Prescribes for ills none else can understand;
All, all is known to thee.

The effectual means to cure what I deplore,
In me thy longed for likeness to restore;
Self to dethrone, never to govern more;
All, all is known to thee.

And this continued feebleness, this state
Which seems to unnerve and incapacitate,
Will work the cure my hopes and prayers
await;

That can I leave to thee.

Nor will the bitter draught distasteful prove,
When I recall the Son of thy dear love;
The cup thou wouldst not for our sakes re-
move,

That cup he drank for me.

He drank it to the dregs; no drop remained
Of wrath for those whose cup of woe he
drained;

Man ne'er can know what that sad cup con-
tained;
All, all is known to thee.

And welcome, precious, can his Spirit make
My little drop of suffering for his sake;
Father, the cup I drink, the path I take,
All, all is known to thee.

THE SURE FOUNDATION STONE.

If Jesus died to save my soul
From endless grief and woe,
Eternal bliss shall be the fold
Of this poor sheep, I know.

For those for whom he died he bought
Redemption with his blood;
He suffered in my stead, and ought
To make his promise good.

If God demand a second time
Payment, or pay of me,
Then such demand would be a crime,
And justice cease to be.

Is he my Surety? then am I
As sure of heaven as he;
And did he death and hell defy?
He did it all for me.

Was he my Shield? then every dart
From Satan's cunning bow
Did pierce his hands, his feet and heart;
So justice lets me go.

In this dear refuge I will hide;
My hope is anchored here;
Though tempests howl and seas divide,
I'm safe; how can I fear?

O what a blessed Rock is this!
A sure foundation stone;
Though wolves may howl and serpents hiss,
The victory is won.

I. J. TAYLOR.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MORDECAI AT THE KING'S GATE IN SACKCLOTH AND ASHES.

DEAR BRETHREN:—When I was in Middletown last month, in company with brother Jenkins I called to see our dear aged sister, Mrs. Lydia Mullock, upon her ninety-second birthday, and enjoyed a most pleasant hour in hearing her speak of the Lord's goodness to her, and of her early experience of grace. It seemed to me a wonderful evidence of the unity of the experience of the Lord's people, to hear this aged believer speak of her travel of mind seventy years ago, and find that it was the same as mine of twenty-five years ago, and the same as that of others to-day. My faith and hope were confirmed by the clear and strong testimony of this sister. In her old age she could bear full testimony to the faithful care of God. In the course of our conversation she spoke of the subject named at the head of this letter, and asked that I should write in the SIGNS upon it. Our sister said that it had been blessed to her of late. She had felt a oneness in this subject with her own experience. For she was once like Mordecai, lying at the King's gate in sackcloth and ashes, and through the intercession of another she had found pardon and comfort. I feel to-day, in trying to comply with this aged believer's request, that I can say nothing more valuable or suggestive than what I have already referred to as falling from her lips. And yet I do much desire to comply with her request as a token of veneration and love for a mother in Israel. And so I will suggest a few thoughts as they occur to me.

1st. In the history of the Old Testament we see no effort to give a narration of the rise and progress of mankind for the sake of gratifying curiosity, or of exalting any man or nation. Only that portion of the history of man is given that was needful to exhibit the power and wisdom of God, and to show forth his providence and grace. Every word of the Old Testament was written to teach us something concerning God. We may not be able to read the lesson, or to see God in it; but it is the fault of our blindness. Whether we can see it or not, still he is in all the narration of the Old Testament. Jehovah has seen fit to give us the track of his chosen people as he led them along from Adam to Christ, and he brings in other people or nations only as they serve to set forth his care over his chosen ones. In

this book of Esther the one object is to set forth the providential care of God over the Jews, and his power to protect and deliver them from the wrath of *their* foes and *his*, in astonishing ways. The lesson we learn from it all is, that God lives and cares for us, and we need not fear what men can do unto us.

2d. Another thought that suggests itself just now is, that in some sense every natural event is but a type of that which is spiritual. If this be not so, then the things that are made could not declare the eternal power and Godhead of the great I AM. And furthermore Jesus himself could not have used the parables to illustrate and present divine truth; and, still further, all the figures of speech in the Old and New Testaments are vain and of no value. I believe that this world and all that it contains is but a book on which is written divine, spiritual realities. We may not be able to read the book aright, and may make miserable failures in applying these types and figures; but still the truth is revealed in them, and the Spirit can open the meaning to us even as it does the Bible, and then we can read it aright. And so in this book of Esther there are presented in types wonderful things concerning the mystery of God and Christ and salvation. And our dear sister was given to see and to speak of some of these things, as in spiritual vision they had been revealed to her. Here is the narrative of the impending destruction of one who realizes it, and who is filled with trouble because of it; who flees to the intercession of one who is of the same people, and yet a favorite of the king; whose intercession proves effectual, and who thus confers life and victory upon the condemned people. How strikingly similar to the case of the condemned sinner, and Jesus' work in his redemption! There have been many other instances in the world of danger averted by some one's intercession; but this was the chosen people of God, and so they, more fittingly, are taken to show forth the work of the Lord in delivering his people out of all their troubles.

3d. We learn from this narration that God does care for his people always. His eye is ever upon them. In their dark hours it is sure that he sees their pathway just as distinctly as when it is light to them. Here is where we must walk by faith. This was a dark hour for Israel, but her God still rode upon the heavens in her help. He had brought them into this captivity for their sins; they were not here by chance. God was

still working out his will in them, and by them. Though they could not see him, he saw them. Job had also said that turn where he would, to the right or left, forward or backward, he could not behold the Lord; but faith said in him, "But he knoweth the way that I take, and when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." When the people of God are passing under the shadow of Sinai, it is as much the guidance of the Lord as when they dwell in peace on mount Zion. The night cometh as well as the morning, and one cometh from the Lord as well as the other. Mordecai and his people could not now see the hand of God outstretched, as they could afterward, but that hand was outstretched all the same. O may God help us to be sure of this truth *at all times!*

4th. Another thought here suggests itself, that the darkest hour is, often at least, just before the dawn. How dark were the prospects of Mordecai and his people then. The laws of the Medes and Persians were unalterable, and the decree had gone out that all over the land every Jew should die. What could save them? They were a race of unarmed slaves among their conquerors. Surely affairs were at a low ebb. But all this was but the occasion for a marvelous display of the power and goodness of God toward this distressed but beloved people. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." When we are at our wit's end the wisdom of God shines forth. How many times have we been in straits out of which we saw no way of escape, and yet we have been delivered, and we knew it was the Lord. He had made bare his arm in our sight, and the darkness that was so thick that it could be felt has given place to such a comfort and joy as we could not express. God's hand was in it for our good and his glory. And in the personal, inward experience of grace which we trust that we have felt, was not this also true? It was the darkest hour, and our feet drew near to death when the Lord gave us light and life. Our hope had perished from the earth when Jesus, the blessed hope, appeared. Our righteousness had been consumed as a garment by the moth, when the robe of Christ's infinite righteousness was put upon us. It was the darkest hour, but how light the hour that followed! For the people, life from the dead; and for Mordecai, not only life, but riches and honor and an everlasting name that shall never be blotted out as an inheritance forever.

5th. We are reminded of the need

of an interpreter; an intercessor, too, who is one of ourselves, and who has power to prevail for us. Mordecai could not venture into the presence of the king in his own name. He was but a Jew. He had no credit at the court. His name was unknown. He belonged to a condemned people. He himself was condemned to death. He must find an intercessor: but who would venture so much for him and his people? Surely none but one of themselves. Who could make an effectual plea? Surely none but one in favor with the king. And there was one who filled both places. Esther was both a Jewess and a favorite at court. How good it was that they had such a mediator. And so we needed one to intercede for us. We felt that we were sinners. We were condemned to death, and had no merit to plead. We expected to die forever. But we also found a Mediator. Jesus came as one with us. He knew our call, and he was also a favorite in the courts of heaven. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And for us he intercedes, and that intercession is always effectual, and its result is life and honor and riches everlasting. I cannot begin to describe this glory.

I have no doubt that our dear sister can say, as an aged sister in North Carolina once said to me after I was done preaching one evening, "Child, I knew all that long before you were born." If it shall be so, my aim in writing this hasty letter will have been met.

May God bless the word of truth to us all.

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

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Sept. 21, 1886.

STATE ROAD, Del., Sept. 15, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The SIGNS of this date is at hand, and instead of writing you an article for your next issue, I feel disposed rather to criticise an article published in this. It is on the first page, written by brother H. Cox. The points to which I propose to invite brother Cox's attention are not doctrinal points at all, as the general drift of the letter, and all its main points, are in perfect accord with sound doctrine; but as an exposition of the parable of the wheat and the tares. Brother Cox, and probably most of your readers, will recollect that the Master expounded the parable himself. I do not object to comments upon that explanation, or carrying it out to its legitimate ends; but it will not do for us, in our attempts, to conflict with inspiration. Brother Cox begins with the sowing of tares, and rehearses the whole story of the devil's work in the garden of Eden. And then he tells us, "He sowed that seed in the garden of Eden when he deceived our mother Eve." After telling us how that seed "permeated their whole natures, and also that of all their descendants," he goes on: "Thus the seed of the wicked one was sown in all his posterity," &c. Now the trouble with me is this: This exposition has the

devil sowing first, and then ordering that they shall both be allowed to grow together to the end of the man's life. These tares are described by brother Cox to be a "fearful array of sin and iniquity," and, in short, he evidently understands by tares every wicked, rebellious and idolatrous principle of the depraved human heart; and as having been sown there by the devil. There is nothing said in this article about breaking up the fallow ground, or destroying the tares; but the *Son of Man* sows his wheat, which is declared to be *spiritual life*, in that depraved and wicked heart; and then he quotes from the apostle, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." This seed is further described as being *the Spirit of God*. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "That Spirit," says brother Cox, "is the good seed," &c. I have looked over the article to find the harvest of fruit that this *good seed* produced, but have failed to discover it particularly brought out. Instead thereof, I find complaints of the tares seeming to overshadow and almost outroot the wheat. One more quotation: "Here we have the contrast between the old man and the new man, which presents the good seed and the tares." I do not know but what the exposition of the parable by brother Cox in some of its features is in accord with the theory, as it is called, of "the old man and the new man." When we go to the Master himself to declare to us the parable of the tares of the field, we find there some emphatic declarations to which I thought it would be well for us to give attention. "The good seed are the children of the kingdom," and "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man." This certainly presents to my mind folks—sons and daughters of men. None the less does the other side present folks. "The tares are the children of the wicked one." An order was given to gather the vintage of the earth; for her grapes were fully ripe. "Behold I say unto you, Look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor." "In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather together first the tares, and bind them into bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." "So shall it be at the end of *this world*." It will not be disputed that the Jewish dispensation was the world that was about coming to an end, and that these angel reapers were of that company that were sent forth with great sound of a trumpet to gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. The wicked should be cast into a furnace of fire. "All things that offend, and them that do iniquity," must be gathered out of his kingdom, "and cast 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."

I think, brother Cox, you will see

some things, at least, that have stumbled me. The field was the world, and not the hearts of men. It is men and women who are gathered into the garner. When the Lord says, "*Them that do iniquity*," I understand him to mean *them*. And when the Lord came to his temple, the day burned like an oven, and the proud and those that did wickedly were stubble. "A fire should devour before him, and be very tempestuous round about him." I see nothing in the closing part of the article to criticise at all. When the angels of those churches in Asia encountered evil doings in the churches, such as taught the doctrine of Balaam, &c., they were gathered out of that part or branch of the kingdom, as brother Cox truly says. But this latter application does not seem to me to harmonize with the former.

If I am wrong, brother Cox will, of course, see it. I can do nothing against the truth. I hope that nothing I have said will sound harsh or unbrotherly. I am much oppressed in Spirit, and cannot always speak and write as kindly as I would like to, and as I feel. Every reaper knows, and every good pastor ought to know, that wheat must mature and ripen before it can be gathered into the storehouse, and the tares must have time also to fully develop themselves before the reapers can detect them to gather them out. With either our depravity—the evil passions of our hearts—considered separately from ourselves on the one hand, or our spiritual life, separate from ourselves, on the other, I cannot understand what the reapers can do, either to gather in or gather out, with either; and especially so in view of the order to let them both grow.

I submit the above to you and your readers.

Yours to serve,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

MARSHALLVILLE, Ga., Aug. 8, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The following is a copy of a letter written by brother Wm. S. Montgomery, of Social Circle Ga., to express his sympathy with me on the death of my second daughter, who died after a protracted illness of a complication of diseases, April 12, 1883. The letter is so full of sympathy and comfort to me, I am willing to share it with others, if you see fit to publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your brother in the Lord,

D. W. MASSEE.

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga., June 10, 1883.

DEAR BROTHER D. W. MASSEE:—It has been a long time since your truly interesting favor was received. A press of worldly cares is my only excuse. I feel to deeply sympathize with you and your dear companion in the loss of your daughter. I hope the Lord is giving strength as your day. All our trials and afflictions in body or mind are but driving the child of God nearer and nearer into a manifest union and oneness of Christ, our Rock, Refuge and hiding-place. When we are completely cut off from

all else, then in mercy he takes us in, where we are safe and secure. If we could find all our joys here, then we should not desire a better country, even a heavenly one. The child of God must receive all his evil things (speaking after the manner of men) here. Even our blessed Savior humbled himself as a servant under the law, before he could be received up into the glory that he had with his Father before the worlds were. As his disciples and followers we must partake of the wormwood and gall, must feel that this world is not our home, before we can wear a crown of unfading glory beyond. But our blessed Father in his own infinite wisdom is the best judge as to how and when he will cut us off, or which object to remove first; always tempering the blow as we are able to bear. I feel sad, too, to think of your isolation from all church privileges. Here, if I have to stay at home Saturday, Sunday I do not know what to do with myself. It seems to me I should perish out. But the Lord, for a purpose only known to himself, has these hidden and solitary ones scattered as the salt of the earth. But, my brother, you are not alone. Where the Spirit of the Lord is with his saints, there is company. Elijah seemed to be alone as he sat by the daily wasting brook, with the ravens to bring him bread and meat in the wilderness, where all earthly substance was dried up in answer to his own prayer. But he was not alone; God was present, and no doubt he had sweet communion as he ate of the food miraculously prepared and miraculously brought. "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world," is a promise that every child of God can claim as belonging to him personally. Should he not have the promise manifestly verified, it is just as true and applicable. Could we only have our own way, we would be basking in the light of his countenance all the time. But darkness serves its place in nature and grace, as well as the light; winter as well as summer. So the Lord orders our seasons for us as seems good in his sight, and it is always best that he should. What a pleasing thought to the child of God, that no good thing will he withhold from them who walk uprightly. We cannot imagine anything more terrible than the fiery furnace, the lion's den, the fish's belly, or the Red Sea; and yet his saints were all safely delivered, so no harm was felt by them. Still in this day our God is as potent as then, and his work in the rescue and preservation of his children is as complete. Surely the child of God may well ascribe all power, might and dominion to our God, the God of salvation. The gods whom the large majority of mankind blindly worship are simply idol gods, newly come up. They have hands, but cannot handle; feet, but cannot walk; have, to all their carnal senses, all the forms and features of a god; but they are dead gods, and can render no service, no aid. The child of God daily feels in his heart, "Lord, undertake for me." I am poor and needy, full of vice, all

unholy, all unclean. O come on the wings of love and heal me, save me from the corruptions that I see daily in my members. He feels that the Lord is able to do all things, but unbelief suggests that he is not willing, that we are not his, that we are deceived, and no child, else relief would be instant. But our God will be magnified, and we brought into the dust. But, my brother, though I thus write, I feel that the Lord has shut me up to-day, so that I cannot come forth. He shuts, and no man can open. I was anxious to make some return to you for your good letter to me. It only fulfills inspiration, "Without me ye can do nothing." I cannot talk, pray, preach, write or think, I am so helpless; yet I am so often forgetful of where our strength is. I can no more command the Spirit where my gospel privileges are so great, than you without them. I must be made able to feel and realize this. You have learned that lesson long ago. All our times and seasons are of the Lord. He can open up springs in the desert; he can turn a fruitful land into a desert, a place of dragons. It may be the Lord is with you to-day, or may be with you when this reaches you, so that your soul is full. You may have a feast at home, and need not go abroad for joys. That, too, is all ordered of the Lord. I cannot write. I want to assure you of my continued love and sympathy. My dear wife unites with me in fellowship and christian love.

I am your brother,
WM. S. MONTGOMERY.

WARMIC, Wasco Co., Oregon.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request I will try in my feeble way to write what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, a poor worm of the dust. Until the twenty-third year of my age I was, like all others in a state of nature, running after the pleasures of this world, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, without any serious reflections as to the future, until it pleased the Lord to take from me my little girl, the idol of my life. Then I was caused to reflect on my past life, and to my horror there was nothing but sin and corruption. I would try to banish such reflections from my mind, but still they would cling to me. I could not shake them off. I would form resolutions to live better, but would as often break them before I would know it. My conscience condemned me. I was a sinner against the holy and just God, and I felt that it would be a just sentence if he should forever banish me from his holy presence. I would try to pray to God for mercy, but my load of guilt seemed to press me down so that I could not. When I would read the Bible, there was no comfort there for me. Wherever I would turn, there was nothing but condemnation. Thus for about three long, weary years I was in this frame of mind. I had almost given up in despair. I went to bed at night so wretched and miserable that I was almost afraid to sleep. But on

awaking, expecting to take up my burden again, to my surprise and astonishment I was singing praises to God and rejoicing with exceeding great joy. Old things had passed away, all things were made new, everything seemed to be praising God, and the earth, O how beautiful it was to look upon.

"Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

I thought then my troubles were over, and that I never should doubt again. But I soon found out different. I felt a desire to be baptized, and as there was a Methodist revival meeting going on in the neighborhood I had a thought of joining them and being baptized; but I began to hold correspondence with Elder G. E. Mayfield, my uncle, who then lived at Weston, Umatilla Co., Oregon. His letters were so comforting and full of love that I was made to rejoice in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As there was no Baptist Church near, he advised me before joining any church to visit the Pleasant Grove Church, Klikitat Co., W. T., which I did as soon as it was possible for me to do so, Pleasant Grove being nearly seventy miles from where I lived. Saturday, May 10, 1884, was the regular church meeting day, and then was the first gospel sermon I had the privilege of hearing. The minister, Elder J. A. Bullock, preached. O that I could express my feelings while he was preaching. It was the certain sound of the trumpet, a joyful sound, so unlike anything I had ever heard before. O how my love went out to the brethren. Though they were all strangers in the flesh, I felt that there was a relationship existing, so that I felt to say as did Ruth of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." An invitation being given, before I knew what I was doing I went on to tell the brethren what I hoped had been the dealings of the Lord with me. What I said, I know not. I was kindly received, and baptized on Sunday following. I returned home rejoicing; but soon after I arrived home I was thinking over all that had taken place, and thought that I had deceived the brethren, and that I had myself been deceived.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

But a few days before I had thought I never should doubt any more. My cry now was, "My leanness! my leanness!" But I was comforted with the words, "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." And also, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." These words have ever been a great comfort to me in all my afflictions. As I said before, there is no Old School Baptist Church closer than seventy miles from where I live, and I am not

blessed with the privilege of hearing the gospel very often. But the SIGNS OF THE TIMES comes, bearing good news to a hungering and thirsting soul. It affords me much pleasure to read the experience of the dear children of God, and that the great Shepherd is gathering them into his fold.

Dear brethren, these are some of the exercises that have been my lot to pass through. I have written in much weakness, fully realizing that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing; nothing but corruption, sin and death; so the things I would not, them I do; and the things that I would, them I do not. How beautiful are the words of the poet,

"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."
A. HORNER.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, July 13, 1886.

MRS. FETTY—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—By the urgent request of my cousin, Martha Parker, I will try to pen you a line; although it does not seem quite proper for me to write to you, whose face I have never seen, when I am sure my cousin could interest you so much more were she to write to you herself. I do not feel that you are altogether a stranger to me, sister Fetty, for I remember well of hearing my father speak of you as one with whom he had sweet spiritual intercourse among the little band of the despised Baptists in Lancaster; and dear sister Pearce is one who ever has a warm and tender place in my heart because of her love for my dear departed parents. Please tell her that her letter published in the SIGNS last winter was a blessed comfort to me; and the mention she made of my father and mother caused the tears to flow unbidden. I also very pleasantly remember her sister, Mrs. Hauser, from whom I received almost a mother's kindness years ago, when dear father took me to her house to rest when I was weak and ill. Little did I think then that my feeble, unprofitable life would be spared this long. But God knows best; he sees not as man seeth. It is well for us that we cannot look into the future and see what it has in store for us, as many of us would faint by the way. But when the trial comes we find strength is given us to endure it, and we are made to realize the truth of the blessed promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." O the blessedness of the precious Savior's love! How inexhaustible is its fountain spring, and how soothing its influence to the weary, tempest-tossed, stricken souls. Without it we should sink to the regions of eternal woe. With it we can come boldly to the throne of grace and find strength and help in every time of need. Compared to his love, the love of relatives, though very sweet, sinks into mere nothingness. Though we mourn, and our hearts almost break, when our earthly love,

our human ties, are broken, what a strength to feel that the golden chain that links us to a glorified Redeemer and to an eternal life can never be broken or severed. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." My mind often recurs to this passage, especially that he is "a very present help in trouble," and I am made to wonder that he does help us, that he does give us strength, when we so often go everywhere else—look to this source and that source—before we go to this dear Friend, who loveth at all times, and who "sticketh closer than a brother," and who is indeed "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

I want to send a special word of remembrance and love to sister Pearce and Mrs. Hauser. Tell them I do so thank them for the words of approval they sent me concerning my poor letters in the SIGNS. I particularly needed just such help and comfort as their message through my cousin gave me. My father used to tell me I was not one bit of a soldier, and I find his saying absolutely true. A woman in Connecticut wrote me an unkind letter in which she assailed me for having said in the SIGNS that my sickness was of the Lord. She says it is the work of Satan, and that if I were not given over to unbelief the Savior through my prayers, and those of others, would help me. I do, and have asked the Lord to heal me if it be his will; but his will, not mine, be done. I cannot raise my voice to the infinite and holy God in any other way. And for me, a poor, sinful worm, to tell the Lord what I say he must and shall do, I cannot, if the whole world should turn against me. Yet the woman's unkind letter grieves and troubles me. Will you not pray for me, sister, and tell those who inquire after me I crave an interest in their prayers. I want to thank you and the other friends who kindly received my cousin Martha in your homes. You will be rewarded by him who said, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." I am very certain that Martha is one of those dear little ones, and although she has no name among us here, I feel assured her name is written in the Lamb's book of life. Poor woman! she, like myself, has been deprived of all that makes life desirable in this world—father and mother, a pleasant home and soothing influence. It is hard, O very hard, to give up such ties, and find oneself unloved and unwelcome in other people's home. Thus I feel, dear sister, that any one who shows kindness to the homeless orphan and gives food to the hungry will not themselves go unblest. The Sciota Association is held so near you I hope you and sister Pearce will get to attend. I presume it will be a feast to the hungry poor who may be there. I think a great deal of the church as a body at Pleasant Run, and they have a dear and noble man for their pastor. I personally know Elder

Louis, and many of the dear ones at Pleasant Run. I am afraid you will be disappointed when you receive this letter that it is not written by cousin Martha. I beg you to excuse poor writing; for I suffer so, and have to change position so much on account of bed sores that it is painful and difficult to write.

With christian love, in which Martha joins me, to all the household of your little band, I am your sister in deep affliction, but in hope of the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whose love and watchcare I commend you.

MARY PARKER.

WAVELAND, Ind., June 5, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The following letter of welcome was written and read at a meeting held at Pleasant Grove Church on the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May, and explains itself. This was a meeting long to be remembered by many of those present. At an early hour Saturday, the brethren and friends from all parts of the country began coming, until we had quite a large congregation. On Sunday the congregation was very large. We had brethren from about four different associations, and some of them had not met together for thirty years or more, on account of the high fencing put up by associational lines, and divisions over doctrine, such as are too common among Baptists. We had for our preachers Elders E. D. Thomas, D. Bartley and M. B. Moffett; none of whom had ever met in the pulpit before, and whatever jealousies might have existed when they met, they were soon gone, and they parted as warm christian friends, bound together by the strong cord of brotherly love. And as for their hearers, all were pleased, and constrained to say, "How pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." There was one dear brother baptized on Sunday morning, and brother Thomas' remarks at the water on why we were there were sublime indeed. Thus you see the middle wall of partition, that has destroyed more Baptists than any one thing, has been broken down as far as we are concerned, and we truly are thankful to see so many good brethren willing to let past foolishness go, and come together as brethren, and try to build up the cause of Christ. And who is to blame for the scattered condition of the Primitive Baptists but the Baptists themselves? Come, brethren, let us lay aside all jealousies, and inquire where we are, and where the stopping-place is, and see if we cannot all meet as brethren indeed, having the one Father, and desiring to know nothing but Jesus and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life, the christian's hope and the sinner's friend. Pray for us at old Pleasant Grove.

I am your brother in hope,
M. M. CANINE.

The Pleasant Grove Church, near Rockville, Parke Co., Indiana, to her brethren and sisters of like precious

faith, who meet with us on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in May, 1886, greeting.

It is with profound pleasure and gratitude to the Giver of all good and perfect blessings that we welcome you to our midst to-day. When brethren and sisters of the same heavenly family from different localities, regardless of former associational lines or difficulties, can meet and hold sweet communion and fellowship together, we hail it as one of the happiest periods in our lives, and hope that while together all may hide their past prejudices behind the cross of Calvary, and come indeed as a band of brethren desiring to know nothing but the right way, and seeking to heal all wounds, and meet on common level at the foot of the cross of Christ. How sweet such a meeting will be!

"'Tis heaven below
Our Redeemer to know,
And angels could do nothing more
Than to fall at his feet
And the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners adore."

One year ago the first of this month we, by mutual consent of all parties, agreed to disagree, and no longer walk together as we had done in the past as a church. There having been so many new things contrary to our Articles of Faith and former practices, we thought it best to become separate for a time, at least, trusting providence to confirm the one that was right. As such, there now exist two parties, claiming to be the "Pleasant Grove Church," holding meetings on separate days of the month, and sharing equally in the property belonging to them. As a consequence, we met one year ago to-day as a separate body, seven of our members meeting with us, and continuing faithfully on; several others having never met with either party. We have never failed to meet, and have never been without a preacher. On the third Sunday in December we called brother M. B. Moffett to the pastoral care of the church, which he accepted, and has been with us all the time since, except in April, when brother Shields was with us. Thus you see we have had the promise fulfilled with us that he will never leave nor forsake those that trust in him, and to whom else can we go? for he alone has the words of eternal life, and from him all blessings, both spiritual and temporal, come. As a further evidence that we are right, there have been two added unto us by experience, three by relation, and three by letter; so our present number is fifteen. And we trust that the day is not far distant when others will be united with us. To those who profess a little hope, we would say, Come along, and help us maintain the banner of King Immanuel where our grandfathers and grandmothers met and worshiped.

Now, brethren and sisters, we say once more, Hail, happy day! The worst trouble we have is that we are so scattered that we cannot attend to your temporal needs as we should do. But you are in the midst of friends, both in and out of the church, and

what we lack in temporal things we hope will be made up in spiritual things. We most cordially invite brethren and sisters of Primitive Baptist faith and order from any and all parts of the country to visit us, especially the ministry. We need your words of comfort and support.

Now may grace, mercy and peace be with and abide among all God's people, is our prayer.

M. B. MOFFETT, Mod. *pro tem.*
M. M. CANINE, Clerk.

WEST SHOKAN, N. Y.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some verses written by my dear grandfather, in England, composed by himself and sent to my dear grandfather in Junius, Seneca Co., N. Y. They are both gone to the reward that awaits every true servant of Christ. Grandfather Blake and grandfather Brown were both Old School Baptist ministers, and for that reason I send the verses to be published in the SIGNS, thinking perhaps they will meet the eyes of the flocks they have presided over.

Respectfully yours,

MRS. CARRIE ENNIST.

FROM W. M. Blake, shepherd of a flock of the King of kings, folded on Mount Zion, Broughton, England, to his excellency Elder Brown, an ambassador of the King of kings, at his court at Clyde, North America.

Dear brother in Christ, though I ne'er saw your face,

Your name is engraved on my heart,
And oft with delight I contemplate the place
Where soon we shall meet, ne'er to part.

But O to that grace which has saved us from hell,

What debtors we have been and are!
We must be content, if the whole we would tell,

To wait till we both arrive there.

Yet though I am conscious the height of God's love,
And depth of his wisdom and grace,
Will never be known till we sing them above,
I cannot but aim at his praise.

Though high is the theme, and the ransom'd in heaven

To reach it exert all their skill,
For one to be silent whose sins are forgiven,
Is surely more difficult still.

Look back then, my soul, and by mercy constrained,

Declare what thy Savior has done,
When first over Satan and sin he obtain'd
That conquest which prov'd thee his own.

A slave to the passions which fetter mankind,

And mark them as servants of sin,
And yet to self-righteousness strongly inclin'd,

My heart was both proud and unclean.

I sin'd and repented, I promised to mend;
If patient, I'll try and pay all;

And by future works myself recommend,
And raise myself up from the fall.

Too often I vow'd, if the Lord would forgive
My many iniquities past,
That holy and just I in future would live,
And merit his favor at last.

But vows, when my passions recovered their fire,

Like Samson's green withes from his hands,
Gave place to the strength of unholy desire,
And proved ineffectual bands.

But neither the danger of hell I was in,
Nor dread of displeasure divine,

Could turn from the love or practice of sin
A heart so rebellious as mine.

I went on in sinning, nor could I forbear;
Behold the loag-suffering of God!

Though conscience accused, made me tremble,
and fear

Destruction would burst on my head.

And thus I continued to sin and repent,
To stifle conviction within;

And but for rich grace, my soul must been sent
Forever in hell to remain.

Yet thoughts of eternity oft would intrude,
And conscience on judgment would muse;

If lost, to be banished from all that is good,
Through eternity my soul to be lost.

Thus I could not take pleasure in sin as I would,

Though I strived unto the last hour,
When the arrows of God pierced deep in my soul,

Arrested by Almighty power.

Thus he watch'd o'er my path, when Satan's blind slave,

I sported with sin and with death;
He purposed to call, determined to save
From hell, and his peace to possess.

For pardon of sins I most earnestly pray'd;
My soul I feared utterly lost;

I view'd God indeed in terror array'd,
In justice my sentence to pass.

But though without plea for mercy I sought,
Lord, save, or I perish, I cried;

Eternal destruction must be my sad lot,
If mercy thou justly deny.

By faith in his blood, joy and peace quickly came;

My burden removed from my heart;
From a voice saying, "Ask what thou wilt in my name,

"I'll give it"—I ne'er can forget.

The Spirit of Jesus revealed him to me,
The gift of unchangeable love,

And taught me in him as my Surety to see
My title to mansions above.

More than forty-four years I have lived on his grace,

And still to his word find him true;
And oft as I gain a fresh glimpse of his face,
My strength in his ways I renew.

His frown more than death or destruction I dread;

His smile from all care sets me free;
His mercy, full-orbed, when it shines on my head,

Is glory's bright morning to me.

And soon, when my work in his vineyard is done,

I hope to behold him above,
To sit with my Lord on his glorious throne,
And taste all the fruits of his love.

To him that is holy, and righteous, and true,
My Lord, my Redeemer, my God;

To him all the glory forever is due,
Which flows from redemption by blood.

O help me, dear brother, to shout forth his praise,

And sound his salvation aloud;
For nothing but sovereign, omnipotent grace
Could bring such a rebel to God.

What was there in us that could merit esteem,

On us for to look with delight?
'Twas even so, Father, we ever will sing,
Because it seem'd good in thy sight.

Farewell, my dear brother; if never we meet,
An ocean there being between;

My dear brother Brown, and his friend William Blake,
Whose faith, hope and love are the same.

Yet in glory above we hope soon to meet,
With the children never to part;

With palms in our hands, our crowns at his feet,
Salvation our song, with one heart.

O! that will be joyful, joyful, joyful,
When we meet to part no more.

JANUARY 1, 1852.

DECKERTOWN, N. J., Sept. 13, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—And the saints scattered up and down in the land, whom I love in the truth:—Dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, in reading the communications in the SIGNS for September 15th, I felt to

exclaim, What a privilege is mine! Although I have not placed my feet upon the ground since the first of June, yet how much better so than to be deprived of my sight, and not be able to read the precious letters contained in our dear old family paper. Often I feel somewhat disheartened, when I know of a place where the truth will be spoken without mixture, that I cannot make one of the number to sit under the sound; but he that knows no variableness nor shadow of turning is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. And may I at all times and under all circumstances feel to say, Thy will, O God, be done. It is safe to trust him for time and eternity, knowing that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. We often speak of our hope as being small, and I feel we err when we use the expression, as Christ is our hope, and he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

I have occasionally written a communication for the SIGNS, and some of my letters to the Middletown & Walkkill Church have been published. I felt sorry at the time that my productions should crowd out better matter; but be that as it may, they have been the cause of my receiving a number of letters from brethren and sisters whom I have never met, for which I feel truly thankful, being almost without kindred according to the flesh, all my father's family having preceded me to the grave. In a letter from a lady in Nebraska, she writes that she is not a member of the visible church, but she loves to talk and write to those who know and love the truth as it is in Jesus. I feel she speaks the shibboleth plainly, and the words, "Arise and be baptized," are surely addressed to her, and to all others who so entirely hope in the mercy of a crucified and risen Redeemer, and have no confidence in the flesh. One week ago to-day my mother's only sister was carried to her last resting-place, dying with a disease that many of our family seem to inherit—heart disease, ending with dropsy. I am suffering from the same cause, and think sometimes, when enduring severe pain, that if earthly suffering could atone for sin, I might look with confidence toward heaven. But as suffering is a part of humanity, may we bear it patiently, knowing that if we have an interest in that covenant that is well ordered in all things and sure, all will be well finally. Nothing but the atoning blood of Christ can cleanse us from all sin; and when he cried out, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, is it possible that anything can be changed? "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." Then "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

I have written more than I intended when I commenced, but that is one of my many failings. I may never write again, and I may write many times. God alone knows what he has in store for me, both of joy and sorrow. I am sitting alone while my cousin's family,

with whom I am stopping, are busy; but I have had a rich feast, as the presence of that Friend that sticketh closer than a brother has been sensibly felt, and to his care and keeping I commend you all.

From your unworthy sister,
HARRIET LEWIS.

TUESDAY EVENING, Oct. 23, 1877.

DEAR SISTER:—It is eight o'clock. I have just finished my work, and put the children to bed. Jimmy is in the cornfield, and mother has gone to her room, so I thought I would pen a few lines to you, but not knowing what to say. I received your letter in due time, and have thought a great many times of sitting down and writing to you. No doubt you have looked for a letter. I was very glad to hear that you enjoyed yourself so well at the association. I can say the same for myself. I do not think I ever enjoyed myself so well before at a meeting. But, Sarah, dark clouds are hanging over and around me, and I know not what course to pursue. I wish I could say I felt as happy as you did; but I think I never heard such good preaching before, and so sympathizing for such poor, guilty ones as I. It would seem as though the preaching was for me, sometimes, and for no one else. How clearly they did explain the Scriptures, and seemed to tell me to walk in the commandments. "Go on, and do thy duty, and be baptized." But for all, I sometimes think I am doing wrong to cast a thought in that direction. All I can say is, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner;" for I know that without him I can do nothing, and what have I accomplished? I have been trying to do, and ever since a child I had serious thoughts, and O the chills and shudders of that awful day in which my Lord would try me, the day of the resurrection! Would it be my lot to be gathered with the wheat into the garner, or to be cast with the chaff into unquenchable fire? But I pray, "Lord, deliver me from this last death." O what a terrible thing it is to think of it! I have had for quite a good many years a desire to join the church, at times. Sometimes at protracted meetings I would almost conclude to do so; but something would keep me back from it. I cannot remember the time when I did not love to hear christians talk on the subject of religion, especially the Old School Baptists. Perhaps it was because I was brought up and taught in that way by man, that I preferred Old School Baptist doctrine to any other. I was always glad to have ministers or members come to our house to talk on the subject; but I did not want them to know, or even think, I was a listener. And O how often I would wish I could experience the goodness of God that they talked so much about! It would seem as though I would surely have to join the church, and try to do better, to obtain this desire. These words would come to me, "Deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow me." And then I felt as though I must join the church, and would promise myself I would at a certain time. Then all would fail.

F. E. BIGGS.

(See obituary on page 239.)

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

IN order to forward the work on the Church History as much as possible, we have had the sheets delivered to the binder as fast as printed, and expected to have the whole work out by the first of September, but owing to the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Alphabetical Index as soon as expected, we have not been able to do so. We append a note just received from him, which will explain itself. As soon as we receive the Index we shall, providence permitting, rush it right through, and have the book out in about two or three weeks thereafter. The following is Elder Hassell's letter.—ED.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., Sept. 30, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to say to the subscribers of the Church History that the entire work is printed, except the Alphabetical Index, which is to appear at the end of the book, and which will *very greatly* increase the value of the work. As all must be aware, the Index could be prepared only from the printed and numbered pages. Very much to my surprise, and doubtless to the surprise of the subscribers, the preparation of the Index alone will have required *between three and four hundred very close and very hard hours' work*. Since the latter part of last July, with the exception of the two weeks which it took me to remove from Wilson to Williamston, and open my school here, I have labored diligently from five to fifteen hours a day upon the Index, sitting up, at times, for this purpose, as late as two or even three o'clock at night, and I feel that nothing but special divine power has sustained my constitution under such a strain.

The book contains twenty-seven chapters and an Appendix. I have now indexed the first twenty-six chapters and the Appendix, and only the twenty-seventh chapter remains to be indexed. This chapter contains forty-six pages, and a great number of names of persons, churches and associations; and the indexing of it will probably require thirty hours at least. I have then to arrange, in more exact alphabetical order, the topics already placed under each letter, and to transcribe the whole—a task which will require, I suppose, about fifty hours. To accomplish this eighty, or perhaps ninety hours of work, while I am teaching school, will probably require about three weeks; but as soon as I transcribe in exact alphabetical order the topics under each letter, I expect to send that installment of the Index to the publishers, so that they may be engaged in printing that part while I am engaged in arranging and transcribing the next part of the Index. In this way I hope that the entire Index may be printed by the first of November, with the permission of providence, so that the subscribers may receive their books some time during that month.

The book exhibits the most important facts in the religious history of

the human race from the creation to the present time, and will be of unique, intrinsic and permanent value, not only to the Primitive Baptists, but to all religious denominations. I have, on all subjects, been as just and accurate as I could, and stated *the plain, candid, honest, straightforward truth* as I have found it, no matter whether the truth pleased or displeased myself or any other human being. All persons who wish, not a truthful history, but a flattering and false historical romance, will have to resort to the pages of some other work.

Yours in love,
SYLVESTER HASSELL.

MEMORIALS.

(From the Licking Association.)

WHEREAS, He who worketh all things after the counsel of his own sovereign will hath in the dispensation of his providence called from our midst our beloved, venerable and faithful brother and Elder, THOMAS P. DUDLEY, to that eternal home to which the redeemed of every land and clime are rapidly hastening;

Resolved, That as a member of this Association, and Moderator thereof for more than half a century, he gave undoubted evidence of his unswerving devotion to the great and glorious cause of our ever-to-be-adored Redeemer. As a faithful and able minister of the gospel, he endeared himself to the lovers of truth and order wherever he was called to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, except it may be that some good brethren may have dissented from his views of the doctrine of the christian warfare; for he as a good soldier of Christ waged a constant warfare, with his face set as flint against error in every shape. While we greatly mourn his absence from our solemn feasts, and his wise counsels in all the business of this Association, yet we realize this soul-cheering truth, that his whole life among his brethren gave undoubted evidence that he was an heir to the unsullied glories at the right hand of God, where there are joys forevermore.

Resolved, That this Memorial be spread on the Minutes of this Association, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

(From the Lexington Association.)

SINCE we last met in Association the Lord has seen fit to remove from our midst, and has discharged from his earthly labors, our brother, Elder BUEL MABEN, who has for about fifteen years labored in the ministry in this Association, and served as Moderator. We feel to unite in this tribute of respect and love to the memory of our dear brother, and sympathize with the bereaved family, and with the church of which he was a member and pastor. In his death we have lost a true brother and good watchman, and sincerely mourn his departure; but we feel assured that God's will has been done in his death and removal from among us. We desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our God, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Particular Baptists, in session with the church at Bethel, Shelby Co., Ky., Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1886, and continued two days, to the churches composing her body, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Desiring to continue in the time-honored customs of the fathers, and because of a desire that you continue sound in the faith once delivered to the saints, we will again avail ourself of the opportunity we have from time to time to stir up your pure minds, and admonish you not to be shaken in mind by every wind of doctrine and cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. None but those that have been created in righteousness and true holiness, completed in the image of Jesus, translated into his kingdom, know the sweets of those personal interviews so often granted the followers of the blessed Redeemer, united in the same cause, followers of the banner of the same King, and equally interested in the conquest. Who would not grasp the hand of his brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, and join in concert to praise the God of their salvation? The solidity and permanence of our religious enjoyments arise from the truth of what God is in himself, and the relation we bear to him. He is in one mind, and none can turn him; the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. The unchangeableness of his character is assigned as the reason why his people are not consumed. Again, it is of his mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassion faileth not. These, compared with the language of the apostle, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself," "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," clearly and conclusively sustain the fact that our God is one Lord, working all in all; while the Holy Spirit, who is the same God, is bearing the testimony and confirming it in the heirs of salvation, interested in the covenant of grace, according to the appointment of God, as purposed in himself, making known to them its rich treasures through Jesus Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; which treasures are deposited in the same divine storehouse, for them who are divinely appointed to obtain salvation thereby; being therein secured as the chosen and preserved in Christ, his body and fullness, having been sanctified by God the Father. This view of the subject is further sustained by David, when personating God, speaking concerning Jesus Christ our Lord: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and

build up thy throne to all generations."—Psa. lxxxix. 3, 4. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation."—Psa. xxii. 30. Again, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old."—Isa. lxiii. 9. Thus we see the chosen of God, his saints, or children, were expressly spoken of as the *seed of Christ*, in view of his whole church, or body, being his fullness, and concerning which it is said, "He shall see *his seed*;" "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."—Isa. liii. 10, 11. And this is not all; for they were denominated the *seed, substance and members of Christ*, before they were fashioned or formed, or born again. David, when personating Christ, said, "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."—Psa. cxxxix. 15, 16. This corresponds with the doctrine taught in Isa. vi. 12, 13: "There be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil-tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: *so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.*" It is here clearly manifested that the *substance of Christ* was in view while he was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth (his earth, the earth in which the will of the Father will be done, as it is done in heaven), in a dark figure in his body, the church; and although his substance was unperfected, not collected together, yet in the Lamb's book of life, developed in the accomplishment of God's eternal purpose, all his members were written, while as yet there was none of them; none developed in actual personal existence; only existing as a unit or seed in him; and in the process of time, as God has purposed in himself and has appointed, that they shall be fashioned like Christ their Head, and consummated in his glory, being the seed and substance of Christ. Wherefore it is said that Christ is the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.—Eph. i. 22, 23. They are his fullness, and he filleth them; yea, he filleth all, and is all. This goes to prove the eternal, vital and indissoluble union or oneness of Christ and his church. The superabounding and everlasting love of God (which is the bond thereof) that exists on his part with and toward them (the chosen in Christ), to be the securing and preserving cause that makes the gift and choice of God to and in Christ effectual to their salvation, and which will be carried on and completed by the Spirit of the God of Israel, through Christ Jesus, is clearly sustained by the apostle when

speaking of God making known the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself. Thus it is very evident that the gathering together of the members of Christ's body, or church, by the distinguishing grace of God, in being born again, was not bringing them into union with him, but unfolding and bringing to view its previous actual and everlasting existence, and making known his divine will and purpose, which he purposed, not in human agency or effort, but in himself; and he will, in the dispensation of the fullness of times, remove every let and hindrance, and gather in one all things. Not things out of Christ, to be brought and inducted into him, but things in him to be gathered together in one; that is, one body or church; whether they be things in heaven or in earth; chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and thus in him when chosen, and hence before they were born again: preserved in him, gathered together in him, created in him, unto good works. And because they are sons, or children, they are heirs of the eternal inheritance which is in reserve for them, and fadeth not away. Wherefore the apostle saith, "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Again, because they are sons (not to make them sons), God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore no more a servant (in the likeness thereof), but a son and heir, through Christ; manifestly lords of the inheritance; heirs of God, jointly with Christ, being one with him and one in him; for it is thus written, "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Again, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," &c. A heart-consoling and soul-cheering thing it is, that Christ is not ashamed to call such unworthy beings as we are his brethren. And wherefore? Because he and his body, church or people are *all of one*. Blessed and glorious oneness in deed and in truth. And when did it first exist? When we were born again? No. For if so, previous to that time he would have been ashamed of his people, and never would have espoused their cause; consequently they would have been lost forever. The whole chain of divine record teaches us that this oneness has been, is now, and eternally will be with Christ and his; for there can as well be a head without a body, as Christ without a church. Here we learn the reason of his coming, to sanctify it, in order to present it to himself holy and without blemish. And the children being partakers of flesh and blood before he took part of the same, not only shows their prior existence thereunto, but shows the reason why he himself likewise did so, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them, the children, his people, his elect, his sheep, from

the bondage of death. Hence the law was violated and the curse incurred by man in the flesh. The law was magnified and made honorable and the curse removed from his chosen seed (who sinned in their Adamic or natural relation) by God manifest in the flesh. How plain it is that the whole chain of divine truth runs in the channel and presents so beautiful a connection, that there could be no deliverance or salvation in the absence of their having been eternally in Christ as a unit, dwelling together in unity, and God in Christ their dwelling place in all generations. Yea, the whole attention of the brotherhood is summoned to this point, to behold how good it is. All its sweetness arises from their relation to the subject. Thus Christ is both the root and the offspring of David. "Thou bearest not the root, but the root thee." Again, "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." "Members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." "A bone of him shall not be broken." And this carried out thus, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." "Of all that the Father hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." It is also said that "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head," &c. The foregoing fairly and clearly develops the manifold wisdom of God, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. This compares with the following, "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners [dead in trespasses and sins, and carnally minded] Christ died for us." Even when we were dead in sin, God quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together with him, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. What are the consequences growing out of the great love wherewith he loved us, and who will not suffer his compassion nor his faithfulness to fail? It clearly brings to view the fact that as it relates to the preservation of the children, or elect, from eternal death, God has purposed in himself their regeneration and their being born again, in order to the love, faith and practice of the gospel as a rule of life, to be the order of his house. And as it respects the gospel itself, he will not suffer its true features to be altered from that in which it has ever stood in Christ, our glorious Advocate and Redeemer, to accommodate it to the views of carnal men; and it is wickedness to attempt such a thing by dressing, concealing or handling the word of God deceitfully. There is as much difference between the law and the gospel as there is between life and death. The former is conditional on the part of the creature, for by it is the knowledge of sin which reigned unto death. And the latter is an exhibit of life from the dead; the power of God unto salvation to the believer, brought from death to life, turned from Satan unto God, delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the

kingdom of God's dear Son, brought from darkness into light; the conditions of which are retained in God, permanently standing in his divine, eternal and immutable will, purposed in himself, according to his good pleasure. And he will not be frustrated, for God's chosen are his elect according to his foreknowledge, having from the beginning chosen them (the sheep) to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Hence it is entirely his act and of his own will that their embodiment manifestly takes place; baptized into one body by one Spirit, and made to drink into one Spirit. As such it is said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Born of water and of the Spirit, to enter therein. It is also said, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." What are we to understand from this language used by Christ, compared with what Paul said in this place? First, we are to understand that as natural men we are born children of the flesh, and can neither see the kingdom nor enter therein. Why? Because God is a Spirit, and his kingdom is spiritual; consequently the subjects must be spiritual to obey the laws thereof, it being set forth as one body and one Spirit, even as its inhabitants are called in one hope of their calling, as a sufficient inducement to obedience. If they had no seminal existence as the seed of the second Adam (Christ), there could have been no spiritual generation; if not spiritually generated, there could have been no spiritual quickening; and if not spiritually quickened, they would not have been born a spiritual birth; all of which exists as a consequence of the vital union or relationship of Christ as Head of the body, and they being a unit in him as a seed. Hence their being spiritually generated proceeds from their being that seed; as perfectly passive in their being generated, quickened and born spiritually, as when naturally. The question may arise, How can these things be? We answer, It is all the Lord's work. He generates, he quickens, and he brings both to the natural and the spiritual birth. So when they are born of the Spirit, they are born in a spiritual kingdom, possessed of spiritual life, with eyes, ears and a heart, to see, hear and understand spiritually, and are now in a condition to do spiritually all that is required, through Christ, who strengtheneth them. For as a natural father can make his children understand and do his will, so our heavenly Father communicates to his children by his Spirit and makes them understand and do his will.

Second. That this body is not one member, but many, and so being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of this one body; being many, are one

body, so also is Christ." Its number is so completely definite that it can neither be increased nor diminished, which fact is fairly sustained by Peter. "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." This compares with the saying of Paul, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."—Rom. iv. 16. That is the reason why "we," as members of this same body with you, dear brethren, beloved of the Lord, are bound and under obligation to render or give thanks unto God for you, because he hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, how cheering the prospects opened to the view of faith by the key of knowledge exhibited in divine revelation, the Lord appearing in his kingdom and glory, the glory of his wisdom, power and love, to gather his elect from one end of heaven to the other; for which reason he will say to the north, "Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him."—Isa. xliii. 6, 7. The glorious Mediator, seated on the right hand of power, on the throne of his Father's glory, and in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the four and twenty elders, yea, our yesterday and to-day Mediator, said, "Behold, I make all things new." He will fulfill all his promises. He will work, and who shall let it? Then let the Deist under another name deny his God-head or proper divinity, and the infidel deny his power or hate his truth, mock at his revelation and experimental religion; let the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers thereof take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed; let hell from beneath be moved at his coming; let her marshal all her numerous legions; let them act in their sable attire of impotent rage or otherwise; let them unite their forces and make war with the Lamb; and he will overcome them. For he is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful. With such prospects as these to confirm our hope in our Deliverer and sustain us, dearly beloved brethren and sisters, with what unyielding and uncompromising perseverance should we adhere to the doctrine which is according to godliness; with what earnestness should we contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints; with what interposing zeal, according to the principles laid down in the oracles of God, should we engage for the spread of gospel truth; and with what sacred joy should we contemplate the victories of the cross. Brethren, would we abound in hope, in

power of the Holy Ghost, let us abound in every good word and work.

And now may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you and us perfect in every good word and work, working in you and us that which is well pleasing, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

H. COX, Mod.

J. W. ROYSTER, Clerk.

W. F. SLOANE, Ass't Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 15th and 16th, 1886, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—According to our usual custom, we desire to send you this our annual epistle of love, in the way of a Circular Letter. Through the abounding goodness, tender mercy and loving-kindness of our covenant-keeping God we have been preserved through another year, and favored to meet again in an associate capacity. We have great reason to be thankful to our heavenly Father that it is as well as it is with us, when we realize what poor, weak, shortsighted creatures we are, and how prone we are to wander into by and forbidden paths. Truly, as saith the apostle, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." "I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me." And this makes manifest the two natures which we have; one of the flesh, the other of the Spirit. These cause the warfare in the Shulamite, a company of two armies. We will present a few thoughts in this Circular on the subject contained in 1 Peter iv. 17. "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?" The persons this was sent to were those that the apostle says were a chosen generation, and lively or living stones, fitted of God for the spiritual building, or God's house, or church. Hence they are built up a spiritual house, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Here God dwells. This house or church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building, fitly framed together [Jews and Gentiles], groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord.—See Ephesians ii. 20, 21: All the laws and ordinances of the Lord, the Builder of the house or church, are to be observed by the inmates of this house. Christ Jesus is the Door into the house. He is the way, the truth and the life. This is what the psalmist meant when he said, "I love the habitation of thy house, the place where thine honor dwells." The inhabitants of Zion, or Jerusalem, the

church of the First-born, are brought in their experience to understand that justice and judgment are the habitation of this throne, where God dwells. "Blessed are 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."—See Psalm lxxxix. 15, 16. These are the characters that obey the gospel and keep the commandments. Jesus says, "If a man love me he will keep my words." In the house of God, or the church, there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all his spiritual children. Peter was one of the twelve judges of Israel; and what they bound on earth was bound in heaven. In short, their decisions were final. The time had come when judgment must begin to be administered in the church. Some got among them in the visible church and perplexed and disturbed the peace of Zion, in Paul's time, to wit, Judaizing teachers, and said, "Except ye be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved." So they had to consult the apostles, whose decision settled that matter. There are various difficulties and trials which the children of God are brought into, by not strictly adhering to the laws of Christ. The Corinthians, by not observing the laws of Christ, became confused; but when Paul came among them, and presented the necessary course for them to pursue in regard to their communion, he set them right. There were reports of their keeping in their fellowship an individual whom he calls a wicked person, who must be dealt with and excluded from their fellowship, according to the laws of Christ. And he says in another place, "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 traditions which ye have received of us."—2 Thess. iii. 16. "If it first begin at us," who obey the gospel, of which God is the author, and who is the God of all grace. He qualifies men for preaching it, for the edifying of the church. "If the righteous scarcely be saved." The eternal salvation of God's people is not meant in the above words of Peter; but, if they are "scarcely saved" from transgressing the laws of the King of kings, so that they have been enabled to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith they are called, and enjoy the fellowship of the dear people of God, and of their home, and enjoyment, and the privilege to inquire in his holy temple, and the sweet hope of a blessed immortality beyond this vale of tears. "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" These are such as the people of God cannot have fellowship for, nor enjoy their company. May the Lord lead us into his truth, and enable us to walk in his commands, and keep his statutes and judgments, and accept us for Jesus' sake.

I. HEWITT, Mod.

JAMES MILLER, Clerk.

JOHN A. MORSE, Ass't Clerk.

The Redstone Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Indian Creek Church, Monongalia Co., W. Va., September 3d, 4th and 5th, 1886, to the churches composing the same.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Time on its onward march has again marked off another year in the past, and we in the providence of our God have had another blessed privilege of meeting together as an association; and we desire to thank the Father of all our mercies for his goodness and mercy in permitting us to assemble in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Dear brethren, allow us to drop a few suggestions to you, as has been our custom these many years past, that we may continue steadfastly in the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the foundation, author, finisher and giver of our faith; and that we may remind you of the importance of contending earnestly for that faith which was once delivered to the saints. It is not enough that we say, "We believe;" but if we have living faith, it will be manifest by some outward sign or work; for faith standing alone is dead. Let us not love in word only, but in deed and in truth; for love, like faith, is a fruit of the Holy Spirit; and we show our love for God and his people by acts of kindness to one another; not absolutely because of our duty as it is enjoined upon us by Jesus and his apostles, but because of the holy fruit within, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. And a mind that serves the law of God will control to a limited degree the fleshly members. Not that the flesh is capable of serving the law of God; but, yielding to the mighty power within, is overpowered and held at bay—always a rebel; overpowered, but not slain. To aid us in our trials and in our efforts to serve our Lord and Master, and to follow him through evil as well as good report, he commands us to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him. Also, the apostle imperatively tells the saints to put off the old man with all his lusts, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God: for sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace."—Rom. vi. 12-14. We believe it to be the duty of the faithful gospel minister to point out to the saints, as did the apostles, their errors, and show from Scriptures the way to reform, as the Lord may give him ability.

The limits of this Circular Letter will not admit for us to notice in detail the many things that are recorded in the Scriptures that have immediate bearing in regard to the indissoluble tie that unites the Lord's people as one people, and the way they should

walk together, and the lawful manner in which they should strive or contend for the truth when assailed by the world.

1st. The Lord's people are one people; for we read, "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." They are called by his name, "The Lord our righteousness." They are a people formed for himself, a peculiar people, distinct from all other people. "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." And Christ's coming was to save his people from their sins, and to save none others.

2d. The tie that unites the Lord's people is the same that unites them with the Head. They are of God's building; Jesus Christ is the chief Corner and Head of the corner. He is the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. This tie, then, is *vitality*, a life tie, and is manifested to us under the banner of love. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1. God by the prophet declares, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." God is love. He that loveth is born of God. He is the author of our love to him. We love him because he first loved us, and the power of that love is wonderfully shown by our Savior in giving his life for his people. This work that Jesus did is more than amply sufficient to prove his everlasting love for his people. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Again, "I give you a new commandment, that ye love one another." If we love him that begat, we also love them that are begotten of him. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." How many of us are willing to lay down our lives for the brethren? This is a hard question, yet the apostle says we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." "Be ye therefore followers of God as little children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us."

3d. Brethren, shall we provoke a controversy with the world in regard to Bible doctrine? We should not; but when assailed in regard to the solemn truths of the Bible, we are earnestly to contend for them in humility of Spirit; for our weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. As the Lord therefore gives us ability, we are admonished to take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and which is sharper than any two-edged sword, and is quick and powerful, so that Zion's enemies cannot stand nor prevail against her.

Now may God keep and bless you. Amen.

J. BEEMAN, Mod.
GEORGE HAZEN, Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Bowdoinham, Sept. 10th, 11th and 12th, 1886, to the churches composing the same, and to all of like precious faith to whom this may come, sends love in the Lord.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—As the time is come for us to send you our annual epistle, we have chosen the words of Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, xiii. 1, "Let brotherly love continue." For without this grace of the Spirit all our forms of worship will be as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal; for God is love, and he that dwells in God dwells in love. "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." It is for this love, we trust, that we have chosen the above text. "We love him because he first loved us." "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?" "And this commandment we have from him, that he that loveth God, love his brother also." The sweet singer of Israel saith, "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 the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments."

We will now, the Lord helping us, bring forward some things conducive to the continuance of brotherly love. First, Jesus has commanded his disciples to love one another. Also, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And in his great commission to his apostles he says, "Teaching them [baptized believers of all nations] to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Some of the teachings we will name. "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; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality." "And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments; for this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." James saith, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the

wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."

In closing, we will refer to Jude, who says, "But, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lust. 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. And of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. 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."

H. CAMPBELL, Mod.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., September 15th and 16th, to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the mercy of our covenant-keeping God we are permitted to assemble again in an associate capacity, according to appointment and former custom, to worship the Lord whom we profess to love and adore for his loving-kindness toward us poor sinners. We hope we are of that class that Jesus came to redeem, though it is through great tribulation we enter the kingdom. No trial or tribulation shall overtake them that is greater than they are able to bear; for "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." He is to them a hiding-place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He will give them grace in every time of need. He is a wall of fire round about Zion, the glory in her midst. Underneath his children is the everlasting arm; through his mercy and everlasting love they are enabled to cast all their care upon him; for he careth for them.

While some with whom we have met in former years have been called to lay their armor by and enter into rest, others have been called into the fold, and added to the brotherhood. The Lord has not forgotten Zion; in his own time he will build her waste places.

We have your Minutes, and some of your messengers are with us. We would have been glad had there been more present. Those who are here have come in the fullness of the gospel of peace, proclaiming salvation as of the Lord; for which we feel to thank our God, and take courage.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope we shall receive a goodly number of your messengers at our next association, which will be held, if the Lord will, with the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley, on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1887.

I. HEWITT, Mod.

JAMES MILLER, Clerk.

JOHN A. MORSE, Ass't Clerk.

The Licking Association of Particular Baptists, now in session with the church at Bethel, Shelby Co., Ky., on the 10th, 11th and 12th days of September, 1886, to the associations with whom she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

BY THE mercy of an all-wise and all-powerful God, we are permitted once more to meet, with our messages of love, relying on the mercy of him who hath all power on earth and in heaven, and whose love never fails; by the revelation of which we are made confident that all things work together for good to them that love God. It is written in the prophets, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." God rules all things to the good of his people; and the peace and fellowship which we enjoy comes from him from whom all blessings flow. If God be for us, who can be against us? "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." Our God says, "Fear not, little flock," "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Therefore may we have faith to trust in him to guide and protect us through the meandering scenes of this life, and in the end take us to himself to forever bask in the light of his countenance.

We are always glad to receive your epistles of love and your messengers, when they come sounding the trumpet of sweet fellowship and gospel peace.

The next session of our association convenes at our sister church at Drift Run, Robertson Co., Ky., on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1887.

H. COX, Mod.

J. W. ROYSTER, Clerk.

W. F. SLOANE, Ass't Clerk.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham, Sept. 10th, 11th and 12th, 1886, to the several associations with whom she corresponds, sends christian greeting.

BRETHREN:—We desire to be thankful to our God for the great love he has toward us, in keeping us in the truth. We stand firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace, the predestination of all things, effectual

calling, and the final preservation of the saints.

We have been made glad by your messengers; they have made our hearts glad, and we have rejoiced in the God of our salvation. The preaching has been in harmony with our belief, and as we understand the Scriptures. It has been rich food to us.

We are composed of three churches. The Bowdoinham Church the past year has received five members; whole number, forty. Whitefield Church, no addition; whole number, seventeen. Jay Church, number not known.

Our next association is appointed to meet with the Jay Church, on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1887, and continue three days, when we hope to meet your messengers and receive your letters of correspondence.

May Israel's God keep and protect us.

H. CAMPBELL, Mod.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

The Redstone Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Indian Creek Church, Monongalia Co., W. Va., to the associations with whom we correspond.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the all-wise providence of our God and King, we have been privileged to meet again as an association, and we desire to feel grateful to our heavenly Father for his abundant mercy in preserving us, a small body of believers, to testify of his grace, that freely comes through Jesus, our Mediator.

We have had a refreshing season from the presence of the Lord, and your messengers have come to us in the power of the Spirit, testifying to the glorious doctrine of salvation by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We still desire your brotherly correspondence, and may the great Head of the church bless you and us, for Jesus' sake.

Our next session will be held with the Meadow Run Church, Greene Co., Pa., to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1887, at 11 o'clock a. m.

J. BEEMAN, Mod.

GEORGE HAZEN, Clerk.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1886.

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

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

REPENTANCE AND CONVERSION.

"REPENT ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts iii. 19-21.

In compliance with the request of sister Susie Hixson, on page 212, (No. 18), we submit some thoughts in reference to this portion of Scripture, not knowing the exact point on which our views are desired. These words were spoken, as the context shows, by the apostle Peter, to "all the people" who ran together "as the lame man which was healed" at the beautiful gate of the temple held Peter and John. It is worthy of special observation that the apostle did not take advantage of this occasion to seek the favor of the wondering multitude. On the other hand Peter charged upon them the most terrible crime of which men or devils ever could be guilty—the murder of the Prince or Author of life, the Son of God. This was not calculated to secure their favor, and then he proceeded to preach the hated doctrine of the absolute predestination of God even in their awful crime. No more complete refutation of the whole theory of man's choice in salvation could be presented than that which is shown in this connection. The man born lame asked alms, without any thought of being healed. The miracle wrought through faith in the name of Jesus came to him as the gift of divine grace comes to every quickened sinner, in a time and manner entirely unexpected. There is no record that the helpless man had ever heard the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth until Peter in that name commanded him to rise up and walk. Was obedience to that command the condition on which his healing depended? Certainly not; for Peter "took him by the hand and lifted him up;" as stated in verse seven. Having noticed the circumstances under which Peter spoke the words on which our views are solicited, we cannot see how any unprejudiced reader can understand the apostle as offering conditions to his hearers, by compliance with which they might secure the remission of their sins, and thus become the subjects of salvation. The last expression preceding the text declares that God himself had fulfilled by the wicked hands of those murderers those things which he had before showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer. Language cannot be more definite than this inspired assertion of the direct control of the wrath of man for the

fulfillment of the predestination of God. If any are prepared to reply against God in this matter, their controversy is not against us, nor alone against the inspired apostles, but they must meet the eternal God and settle the matter with him. So Paul disposes of all objectors who deny the absolute, unlimited sovereignty of God. "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? 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?"—Rom. ix. 18-21.

The seeming inconsistency of this text with the doctrine of unconditional salvation arises from an incorrect definition of the first word, *Repent*. It is the popular notion that this word enjoins a certain grief or sorrow for sin as a duty incumbent upon the sinner, by which he may to some extent remedy his deplorable condition, and place himself in a condition more pleasing to God. This is neither according to the literal meaning of the word, nor consistent with its use in the Scriptures. Esau "found no room for repentance [or way to change his mind], though he sought it carefully with tears." The grief of the traitor Judas proved the sorrow of the world by working death. There was no repentance in their cases, although there was evidence enough of remorse. There is but one source from which true repentance can come, and that is by the gift of that same Jesus who was slain by those sinners to whom Peter spoke. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts v. 31. The command to repent did not only require that they should turn from Judaism and cease to fight against the truth of salvation by the blood of Jesus; it forbade the honors they were ascribing to Peter and John as though by their own power or holiness they had done the miracle of healing. They must "be converted" from their error in ascribing the work of God to men, even though those men were inspired apostles. They bore witness against themselves as opposers of the salvation of God in Christ Jesus, so long as they continued in that opposition. There was no evidence manifested that they had received repentance or been converted from their carnal enmity until they were enabled to repent, to turn from their trust in Judaism, and to be converted from trusting in themselves as being righteous while despising others. While they manifested that self-righteous principle, there was nothing to show that their sins were "blotted out;" and indeed to themselves the reverse appeared to

be true. Probably many to whom Peter then spoke were subjects of salvation, though they may not have been as yet brought to know the truth. As Saul of Tarsus was consenting to the stoning of Stephen, he might have been a representative of many of them.

There is no such thing possible as "blotting out" that sin which has brought condemnation and death upon all the children of Adam; for the truth of God has decreed that every one of them shall die. So the Savior does not say that he came to prevent any one from being lost, but that it was his mission "to save that which was lost."—Matt. xviii. 11. To those who are dead in sin, on whom the wrath of God abides, this command cannot apply, for two very sufficient reasons; first, having no love of righteousness, they cannot be converted from their natural love of sin; and second, no "times of refreshing" "from the presence of the Lord" can come to them while they are still in that condition. To those who have been translated by the irresistible word of God from the power of darkness "into the kingdom of his dear Son," the command comes from their King, not simply as written with ink in the letter of the Scripture, "but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart." To those who have thus heard the voice of the Son of God, this word does not come as enjoining a duty, or requiring the performance of some hard condition in order to secure the blessing that their "sins may be blotted out;" it is the fact that they have received the remission of their sins through the name of Jesus, which is attested by his having given them that repentance by which they are so converted, or changed, that they feel sin to be a burden and distress instead of their desired element. To them sin is now exceeding sinful; because they are "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. vi. 11. So radically are they converted that the very sin in which they formerly delighted is now become their most distressing bondage. While they are made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, they realize that in themselves dwells no good thing.

Thus far the experience of every conscious sinner is one in substance; but there is a practical sense in which the sins of the saints are blotted out in their experience, which is only understood by such as have known the terror of the Lord in being called personally to appear before the judgment seat of Christ.—2 Cor. v. 10. In the glorious display of divine grace in his gospel kingdom, there is power in Jesus to forgive sins; and all sins forgiven by him are blotted out, and shall nevermore be remembered against the forgiven sinner. The blessed subjects of his grace can never come under the condemnation of the law of sin and death, from which they have been made free by

the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; for to them Christ is the end of that law for righteousness.—Rom. viii. 2; x. 4. Yet these favored ones are "not without law to God, but under law to Christ."—1 Cor. ix. 21. The repentance which Jesus Christ is exalted a Prince and a Savior to give to Israel is inseparable from the forgiveness of sins, so that no sinner ever received that repentance who failed to feel the gracious power of that forgiving love by which his sins were blotted out "when the times of refreshing" did come to him "from the presence of the Lord." But to all such the repentance and conversion come with convincing power before they receive the refreshing assurance that their sins are blotted out.

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you."

There is no question that the promise here expressed is experimentally fulfilled to every one in whom repentance is wrought by the Spirit of Christ. The awful "mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," is infinitely beyond the grasp of created intelligence; therefore our inquiring sister will excuse us from the hopeless task of explaining that which God has not revealed on this subject, that is, how "all the fullness of the Godhead" dwelleth bodily in Christ, yet God sends him unto his people in their pilgrimage through this wilderness of sin. Every one who has seen his own just condemnation, knows that nothing short of the power of God could save him from his sins; therefore he must see in Jesus all the God he knows, else he could not hope in him for salvation. How that God was manifest in the flesh and clothed in weakness and suffering, is known only by the faith of Jesus Christ as a mystery. But by that faith they who have been taught by the Spirit are enabled to know God in Christ as their God; and this knowledge is eternal life.—John xvii. 3. In the first revelation of this truth the saints receive the assurance that they are cleansed from all sin by the precious blood of Christ; and ever afterwards they are longing for a clearer evidence of their interest in that fountain wherein all pollution is forever washed away. They cannot live upon the remembrance of their first experience. In times of darkness and trial they have often to cry unto God, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word."—Psa. cxix. 25. In all their trials and distresses, as well as in their seasons of comfort and rejoicing, the Lord gives them the answer of this prayer; and it always is when the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord, and when he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached, unto you.

"Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Whatever difficulty may be met in understanding this last verse

of the text, it is clear that nothing is meant by it contrary to the whole testimony of inspiration. The throne of our glorified Redeemer in his eternal Godhead is not limited to time, and cannot be destroyed at any future period. Time cannot effect any change in his eternal glory. Even all his own work and suffering could add nothing to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.—John xvii. 5. The heaven which must receive him therefore, until the times of restitution, appears to be that heaven in which he is exalted as Head over all to the church in her gospel glory as freed from legal bondage. In this heaven he is ever the hope and refuge of his saints in every trial and sorrow; and in every trouble he is to them a present help. He keeps them as the apple of his eye, though they are often unable to see his hand leading them. In this heaven there is the fellowship of suffering which is given to the saints as the earnest of their unity with their Redeemer in his glory. Here the hand of the Savior God wipes all tears from the eyes of the blessed mourners, and comforts them with the strong consolation of his immutable counsel. They can need no such comfort in the heaven of eternal bliss where there is no sin or death. In this world they have tribulation, and here they have need of that comfort which is realized in feeling the everlasting arms of the love and power of God bearing them above all their griefs. As we cannot look beyond the clouds which obscure the natural heaven, to see the sun still shining, even when all is dark with us, so we often feel that our Savior is hidden from us, when it is only ourselves who walk in darkness. Jesus has not left our heaven. He is still the glorious Sun of righteousness, and still he shines in triumphant glory with healing in his wings as the great center of light and fountain of life to all the new creation of God. They who feel themselves dark and dead receive from his abounding grace such supplies as his wisdom sees sufficient for them; and his strength is never so perfectly revealed to them as when they are made most conscious of their own utter helplessness. So he answered the thrice repeated prayer of Paul, saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." In the gospel heaven Jesus must ever be the almighty Sovereign until the whole of his redeemed people shall be brought into manifest participation in his sufferings, and in his victory over sin and death. Then will be fulfilled all that "God hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began;" "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" and the angel who announced to Joseph his advent into the world said, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS [that is, Savior], for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. Then when that salvation shall be fully revealed in its application to

the last vessel of mercy, then there will be no further need of the material universe, and of the weary, sluggish wheels of time. In perfect conformity to the glorious likeness of their Lord, the whole purchase of his blood shall see him as he is. Then will his dying prayer be fully answered, and there will remain no more to be accomplished of all that was written of Jesus by inspired prophets, and of all the eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ Jesus. Then the riches of his grace will be fully displayed, "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."—Eph. i. 8-10.

To finite reason this definite purpose of our God must ever remain a mystery; for by reason we can never understand how time shall cease, and grasp the reality of eternity. All the wisdom of man has never understood the declaration of Jesus, "Before Abraham was I am." Eternity cannot be compared with time. This mystery shall never be revealed until the saints learn it in their individual experience. Until we shall be thus taught, may we have grace to be satisfied with what is written by inspiration for our learning, as the old apostle has said, "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."—1 John iii. 2, 3.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER James Wagner having changed his residence from Dechard, Tenn., to Blanco, Blanco Co., Texas, 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.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder P. G. Lester, Sept. 15, 1886, Mr. W. F. Slone and Miss Sallie B. Bariger, both of Shelby County, Ky.

ON Tuesday morning Aug. 15th, at the residence of the bride's parents, in Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Mr. Harry D. Reninger to Miss Laura L., daughter of Wm. S. Marvel, all of Delmar.

SEPTEMBER 15, 1886, at the house of the bride's father, Elder John G. Sawin, in Loxa, Ill., by Elder Silas H. Durand, Mr. Jacob P. Stout of Springfield, Ill., and Miss Ida Frank Sawin, of Loxa, Ill.

ON the 29th of August, 1886, at the residence of the bride's parents, by Elder G. N. Tusing, Elder George Waddle, of Fayette County, Ohio, to Miss Almy Blue, of Fairfield County, Ohio.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In much sympathy, I send you a notice of the death of my dear sister-in-law, Mrs. Frances E. Biggs, wife of James Biggs, who died at her home in Licking County, Ohio, Aug. 14, 1886, aged thirty-eight years, three months and ten days. She was the daughter of William and Annie Davis, and was born in Delaware, Delaware County, Ohio, May 4, 1848. Her father died when she was an infant. When she was three years old her mother married for her third husband Mr. Edward Parmer, and moved to his home in Knox County, Ohio, where she remained until July 12, 1868, when she married James Biggs. She has been much afflicted with heart trouble and other diseases for many years, but her last sickness was only six days of severe suffering with a fever. The fever changed for the better, when she died unexpectedly to all, of paralysis of the heart. She leaves her dear companion, four children (three daughters and one son), the oldest an afflicted daughter seventeen years old, the youngest a little daughter five years old; also her aged mother and mother-in-law, three half-sisters on her father's side, three half-sisters and two half-brothers on her mother's side, five step-sisters, two step-brothers, besides many other relatives and friends, with the church. But we mourn not as those that have no hope. She was received into the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church called Hartford, in Delaware Co., Ohio, Sept. 23, 1865. She had been much interested in the things of the kingdom for many years, but for lack of confidence in herself she could not take up her cross and follow her Lord and Master. But when she was enabled to come, she came in full confidence, nothing doubting. It was at a time of our communion. After our meeting was all over, and the congregation dismissed, she made known to our pastor that she could not carry her burden any longer. We were called to order again, and not any to our surprise was her dear husband enabled to come with her; for he, as well as us, had felt it his duty for some time. By her request we went to the water the same afternoon, which was some distance away. It rained incessantly until we neared the water, when the clouds dispersed and the rain ceased. I felt that their baptism was acknowledged by our heavenly Father in the bright rays of the setting sun. She told me that she had always desired to be baptized at sun setting or sun rising, and so it was. Since that time she has had great enjoyment in the fellowship of the Spirit and hope in Christ; and her chief desire was the welfare of the church, that they might dwell together in unity and peace. She was a lovely singer. The five hundred and ninety-sixth hymn of Beebe's Collection was one of her favorite hymns.

"Jesus, Lord, we look to thee;
Let us in thy name agree;
Show thyself the Prince of Peace;
Bid all jars forever cease," &c.

She sung this hymn the last time she was at our church meeting, which was the day before she took her bed. She was not well then. Her seat was never vacant when it was possible for her to fill it. I hope every sister and brother that can will turn to this hymn and read it all. She was very happy in her last sickness. She sang one hymn after another, and when she could not have breath to sing, she would repeat aloud, and tell to those around her what great comfort she was receiving, and that her sickness was a blessing, not worthy to be compared to the glory she had already received. She said to her dear husband that she thought it was her last sickness, and she was ready and willing to go. Thus she died with a sweet smile on her countenance. She was a kind and affectionate wife, a loving and indulgent mother, ever ready to administer to the need of her dear children. O how often I heard her say she wanted her children to feel that they had a home and a mother that cared for them. That peace and quiet so much desired in a family circle was always at their home, with an unbroken love throughout. May that comforting grace that sustained their dear mother be and continue with the family, is my sincere desire. I will send you a letter

that she wrote nine years ago. After she had written the letter she had not the courage to send it, and said she would destroy it; but her husband prevailed on her to keep it. And although we have been on most intimate terms, I did not know she had such a letter until after she was baptized last fall. She sent it to me by mother one day. I thought it was very good, and said I would take care of it. Little did I think to make use of it in this way so soon, or even ever. In her times of sickness, which were many, she would feel conscience-smitten for living as she did so long, and sometimes would feel that her sickness was a judgment for her disobedience. Thus she lived nine long years. Her home was always a welcome place for the Baptists, as those of our brethren and sisters can testify who have had the pleasure of partaking of her hospitalities. Her acts always truly corresponded with her letter. Elder L. B. Hanover, our pastor, married, baptized, and preached her funeral. He preached a most excellent sermon from John xi. 25.

SARAH C. BOYD.

(See communication on page 233.)

AGAIN I am called upon to record the death of another dear sister in Christ, which I hope you will publish in the SIGNS, that those of the brethren and sisters who have been personally acquainted with her may know that she is gone to rest. Of sister Mary A. Overton, wife of Nelson Overton, I would speak, who died at the home of her youngest daughter, Mrs. Seth Morley, of disease of the heart, July 7, 1886, and was buried the 9th. Her burial was largely attended by her many friends, who looked the sorrow they felt at the loss of so good a mother, sister, friend and neighbor. Brother Marvin Vail, pastor of Chemung Old School Baptist Church, of Waverly, of which she had been a very highly esteemed member for many years, (in fact ever since she experienced a hope in the mercy of God), spoke comfortably, I trust, to the friends, before laying her remains out of sight, of the preciousness of our dear sister's hope, and her unwavering trust in God, who is all-wise, all-powerful and unchangeable. She always loved to hear the Savior exalted; and none knew better than she that she had a nature totally depraved, as all of Adam's race have, which made the mercy and grace of God bestowed upon her most wonderful to her, and very precious. She was devoted to the church, and always attended meeting when able to do so. She was liberal in her family and in the church, remembering all in her last will. I should have mentioned that she will be better known as Mary A. Watkins, having married Mr. John Watkins, of Milan, with whom she lived very pleasantly until two years ago, when he died. Four children were born to them (two sons and two daughters), all now living. She remained a widow until about four years ago, I think, when she was married to brother Nelson Overton, of Lime Hill, who was to her a kind, pleasant companion until her death. She was the daughter of David Proudfoot, who emigrated to America from England with his family when she was but sixteen years of age. Our dear old sister is gone to rest. We all miss her, but she was ready and waiting for the summons, and quietly passed away, beyond this vale of tears. She rests, from all toils set free. In her Savior's presence she is satisfied. Blessed satisfaction! Desire is swallowed up in sweet reality. May those who mourn her absence feel the presence of the Lord very near, and be enabled to say, It is well.

Yours in a precious hope,

WATIE A. BEARD.

ATHENS, Pa., Sept. 28, 1886.

Nelson Sweet, a pioneer of Ogle Co., Illinois, was born in Delaware Co., N. Y., Aug. 17, 1815, and died in Ogle Co., Ill., Sept. 17, 1886, aged seventy-one years and one month. Mr. Sweet came to Ogle County in 1845, and by forty-one years of earnest toil and good economy added to the wealth of the county. He experienced the religion of Jesus Christ in the year 1857, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church of Buffalo Grove, Ogle Co., Ill., and together with his devoted wife have been earnest members and zealous defenders of the church

and faith they espoused for thirty years. Nelson Sweet, the subject of this notice, was married to Miss Sarah M. Patterson, Sept. 25, 1836. Together in holy wedlock they lived fifty years, less eight days. Eleven children were given them as pledges of their love and fidelity, seven of whom (five sons and two daughters), together with a dear wife and mother, survive him and mourn the loss of a kind husband and a loving and indulgent father.

His burial services were solemnized on Sunday, Sept. 19, 1886, and were attended by a large concourse of relatives, friends and old settlers. Elder E. H. Gillet officiated, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 49, "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." His sickness was borne with christian fortitude, leaving behind him for the consolation of mourning ones a bright evidence that to him the exchange from the seen to the unseen world was a happy one.

"Why do we mourn departing friends,
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to his arms."

May his dust rest in peace until the resurrection morn. May we, the survivors, throw the mantle of charity over his mistakes, if any, and treasure up and imitate his worthy words and acts, that we may be benefited by a life so earnestly lived amongst us, and so recently become extinct.

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, July 29, 1886, Mr. Furnald W. Worster, aged about sixty-seven years. He never made any open profession of a hope in Christ. He was a very hard working man through life as long as his strength held out. A large number of people attended his funeral. He has left his sorrowing wife and brothers and sisters to mourn, with many other relatives.

ALSO,

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Aug. 4, 1886, Mrs. Sarah Reed, aged sixty-six years and six months. She gave good evidence that she was a child of God by birth, and told me years ago that she was with us in belief; for she said that she was a great sinner, and nothing but grace could save her. I called to see her the day before she died, and prayed with her. She was waiting to go home, and hoped that she should be prepared and ready when the time came. She has left two sons to mourn.

WM. QUINT.

I WRITE for publication the obituaries of our twin babes, Mary Altha and Eunice Alma. One was taken sick on the morning of July 31, and died August 15, a few minutes before four o'clock in the morning. The other was taken sick July 30, and died August 5, a few minutes before six o'clock in the morning. Their disease was cholera infantum. They were two years and three months old. Both were placed in one little coffin. Their father and mother, brothers and sisters, and an aged grandmother, grieve for them; but our loss is their gain.

MARY J. TOLAND.

STEPHENS, Ark., Aug. 17, 1886.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is appointed to be held with Hephzibah Church, in Alexandria, Va., to begin on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, and we cordially invite all who wish to meet with us.

By order of the church.
N. P. REED, Mod.

JAMES LANE, Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

J M Savidge 2.50, Mrs C C Hazen 2, C Mennefee 1.95, Mary F. Cobb 3, Jasper Thomas 2.50, Hattie L Duncan 2, M H Varnes 2.50, T B Yates 2.50, Robt Miller 2.50, Z G Thomas 7.50, Robt B Webb 2.50, Mrs Joshua Lester 2.50.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

Littleton Bethards 1, A D Smith 50c, Hugh Hamilton 50c, R E Sanders 50c, W B McAdams 1, James Hamar 50c, W C Travathan 1, Mrs J C Bateman 50c, B F Wilkinson 50c, J C Wilkinson 50c, Elder Isaac Webb 50c, Mrs E W Yarbrough 1.50, Jas A Stanaland 50c, John A Davis 50c.—Total \$43.95

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Little Creek, Sussex Co., Del., to commence on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1886.

The brethren and friends contemplating attending the Salisbury Association by public conveyance will please take their tickets for Delmar, on the Delaware Railroad, on Tuesday, the day before the meeting. All trains from both ways will be attended to. The afternoon train leaves Philadelphia at 11:55 a. m., and Baltimore 10:08 a. m., and arrives at Delmar about 4:18 p. m. A general invitation is extended.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

THE New Hope Association for this year will convene with the church at Bethlehem, in Jefferson County, Ark., on Saturday before the third Sunday in October. We always welcome our brethren and anxiously desire them to meet in our association, especially our ministering brethren. The place of meeting is twelve miles west from Pine Bluff, Ark. Our brother, Elder D. Westfall, lives in Pine Bluff, to whom I would cite any strange brother who may come that way.

A. TOMLIN.

OUR next Association (South Louisiana-Primitive Baptist) will be held with Macedonia Church, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, ten miles east of Sugar-town, Calcasieu Parish, La.

W. M. PERKINS, Mod.

I. S. MEADOURS, Clerk.

THE next session of the Amite Primitive Baptist Association will be held with the New Bethel Church, Pike Co., Miss., beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1886, and continue three days.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

OUR yearly meeting is appointed to be held at London Tract, to commence on Saturday before the third Sunday in October 1886, at 2 o'clock p. m.

The brethren and friends who come through Philadelphia will please take train leaving Broad Street depot at four o'clock on Tuesday p. m., change cars at Wilmington, and take the train at the foot of Market Street at 5.40 p. m., for Landenburg. About six of the number will please get off at Hockessin, and the rest at Landenburg. Those coming through Baltimore will all come to Newark depot, leaving Baltimore about three o'clock the same day.

Friends coming from Salisbury and on the Delaware Rail Road will get tickets for Wilson, and change cars at Porters.

We hope for and will be glad to see a goodly number of brethren and friends. We hope they will have it in their hearts to visit us, and that they will be permitted to do so.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley have appointed their annual or two days meeting to be held on the 20th and 21st of October, 1886, at their meeting house, where they hope to meet as many brethren and friends as can come; also ministers and brethren from abroad are especially requested to attend. Those coming from the east on the Ulster & Delaware R. R., will stop at Olive Branch, and those from the west on the same road will stop at Shokan and Brown's Station, the day before the meeting, where they will be met and cared for by brethren and friends.

A. BOGART, Church Clerk.

THERE will be (the Lord willing) a yearly meeting held at Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., Oct. 13th and 14th, Wednesday and Thursday after the second Sunday. This meeting has formerly been held at Otego, but this year we meet with the brethren at Osborn Hollow, which is a branch of Otego church. This place is ten miles east of Binghamton, on the Delaware & Hudson R. R. Trains leave Binghamton 7.20 a. m., 12.40 p. m. and 5.00 p. m. A general invitation is

extended to all lovers of the truth, and we hope brethren in the ministry will not forget or neglect to attend with us.

B. BUNDY.

THE Lord willing, the Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., will hold their yearly meeting on Wednesday and Thursday after the fourth Sunday in October, 1886, at their house on Schoharie Hill, at 10 a. m., each day. A general invitation is extended to ministers and brethren, and all who love the truth. Those who come by rail will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday and cared for.

G. W. GURNSEY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held on the second Saturday and Sunday in November, 1886. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends.

WM. P. KIRK, Clerk.

Williamston Academy.

FOR BOTH SEXES.

STRICTLY NON-SECTARIAN.

WILLIAMSTON, MARTIN CO., N. C.

For the especial purpose of rendering more regular and faithful service to my own church, of which my father was and I am a member and pastor, I expect, with the permission of providence, to transfer my residence, about the first of September, from Wilson to my native place, Williamston, N. C., and to take charge of the WILLIAMSTON ACADEMY, opening the Fall Session, Monday, September 13th, 1886.

Primary, Preparatory, Academic, Commercial, Music, and Art Departments. Experience of twenty-five years in teaching. Large and valuable library. Extensive apparatus. Pleasant and healthful location. PRICES TO SUIT THE TIMES.

EXPENSES PER SESSION OF 20 WEEKS:	
Board, in private families.....	\$35 00 to \$50 00
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Tuition in Primary Department.....	10 00
" " Preparatory " 	15 00
" " Academic " 	20 00
" " Commercial " 	20 00
Use of Instrument, one hour per day.....	5 00
Tuition in Drawing.....	10 00
" " Painting.....	15 00

Entire average expenses, without Music or Art, \$75 per Session of twenty weeks.

SYLVESTER HASSELL, A. M.,
Principal.

HOPEWELL SEMINARY.

The Fall Session will commence on Wednesday, September 22d, 1886. For particulars address

MISSES BOGGS, Principals,
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P. G. LESTER.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

As will be seen by reference to a letter received from Elder Hassell, on page 233, we have met with an unexpected delay in the completion of the Church History, caused by the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Index as soon as anticipated. We now have the History all in type except the Index, and the binder at work on the printed sheets, and as soon as the manuscript for the Index is received we will rush them through the press and mail the books at the earliest possible day.

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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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VOL. 54. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1886. NO. 21.

POETRY.

THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—My mother composed the following, two years ago, at the age of sixty-eight years. She still feels the sentiment true, and wishes you to publish it in the SIGNS, as an expression of her feelings. Truly yours in bonds,

A. B. BREES.

O God of heaven, the sinner's Friend,
As such I look to thee;
I know I am a sinner vile,
Yet, Lord, remember me.

Although a sinner all my days,
Yet thou hast been my Friend;
To thee I look, in thee I trust,
On thee I now depend.

Dear Savior, didst thou come to save
Poor sinners such as me?
Hast thou not signed my full release,
And set the captive free?

I cannot serve thee as I would,
My thoughts I can't control;
My wondering mind soars far away,
And flies from pole to pole.

I'm tired of sin and unbelief,
And all my cruel foes;
Dear Savior, guide me on my way,
Till this poor life shall close.

And when I'm done with all things here,
And laid into the tomb,
Dear, precious Lamb, my soul receive,
To dwell with thee at home.

'Tis grace, free grace, that's all my plea;
No merit of my own;
O did my Savior die for me,
My Father's precious Son?

Now to my dear Redeemer's name
All praise and thanks be given,
For all my blessings here below,
And for my hope of heaven.

K. L. BREES.

JOHN VI. 67, 68.

WOULD we turn away from Jesus,
From the way, the truth, the life?
Though God's chastening hand seems grievous,

Yet we know with love 'tis rife.

Would we turn away from Jesus,
From the Lord our righteousness,
Who from all our foes can shield us,
And our every wrong redress?

Would we turn away from Jesus,
From the Lord of hosts, our King,
Who can more than conquerors make us,
And the dumb for joy to sing?

Would we turn away from Jesus,
He who bore our sins and shame,
Who will grace and glory give us,
If we rightly know his name?

Would we turn away from Jesus,
Who can all our sorrows feel,
Can in every strait relieve us,
And our sad backslidings heal?

Peter turned away from Jesus,
And we're off like Peter, too,
Till the Savior turns towards us,
With a look that pierces through.

If we turn away, dear Jesus,
Tell us, whither shall we flee?
For the words of life so precious
Can be found alone with thee.

A. G. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SCIO, Linn Co., Oregon, August 23, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I was written to by sister M. A. Bowie, of Herndon, Va., March 26, 1886, for my views, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on the Revelation xx. 1-3, also 7-9. The first three verses read thus: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season." The seventh, eighth and ninth read: "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Now here I have a great task before me, and I feel sensible of my inability to write to either the edification or instruction of sister Bowie, or others of the readers of the SIGNS, on so mysterious a subject as that before me. I deferred writing till now, thinking I would not undertake such a great task; but here I am seated, with pen in hand; not however with the expectation of doing anything like justice to the subject, but merely to give my views, such as they are, and let them go for what they are worth, which will (necessarily) be very little. But to the subject.

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand." I will speak of the angel and the heaven he came down from, under the same head, in order to expedite the subject as fast as possible. I will necessarily be compelled to omit the mention of many things that might be considered applicable; for were I to speak of everything that is in connection with this subject, it would require a large volume. The angel that John saw come down from heaven was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, the great and only Archangel. And the heaven from which he came down is the third heaven, the glory he had with the

Father before the world was. Jesus says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."—John vi. 38. "Having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand." The Lord Jesus appeared to his servant John at the introduction of the revelation, like to the Son of man; "And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength." "And [saith John] when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

—Rev. i. 13-18. And he never committed the keys of hell, death or the bottomless pit to either angels or men, or any other being in heaven, earth or hell. "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years [which represents the whole gospel dispensation. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years], and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up." Pharaoh, king of Egypt, was sometimes called the dragon, as in Ezekiel xxix. 1-4. "In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt: speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself." And Isaiah had the same thing in view, saying, "In that day [gospel day] the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan, that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."—Isa. xxvii. 1. This is the same in signification as casting him into the bottomless pit, and is manifested or accomplished at the setting up of the gospel kingdom, or the coming down of the New Jerusalem, and the establishment of the covenant of grace; for it is added immediately, "In that day sing ye unto her [i. e., New Jerusalem] a vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." The first mention we have of a dragon, in the revelation of Jesus Christ to John, is in chapter twenty, and, in

my opinion, is in exact harmony, and has reference to precisely the same occurrence as in chapter twelve. In chapter twelve John was representing the church of Christ under the figure of "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." This description of the church, under the similitude of a woman, occupies the first two verses, and the third commences thus: "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads; and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman, which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man-child [Christ], who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness [valleys of Piedmont], where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand, two hundred and three score days" (years). This is the date and length of time of the prophesying of the two witnesses, clothed in sackcloth, the emblem of mourning. "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth."—Rev. xi. 3. The dragon in the twelfth chapter is set forth metaphorically to represent Pagan Rome, or rather the Emperors of Pagan Rome, who were the representatives of the Devil and Satan of our text. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 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 death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in

them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."—Rev. xii. 1-12. Now the question is, When and where was this war, or this battle fought? The answer is, In heaven. "There was war in heaven." But John says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away," &c.—Rev. xxi. 1. So it could not have been in the first or legal heaven. When I was a small boy, as far as I now remember of having heard Baptists express an opinion on the matter, it was that Satan was once a tall archangel, an inhabitant of the third heaven of glorified saints and angels, and rebelled; and he with other angels was cast out of heaven; and I then believed it. And I think that the Baptists of England still hold to that absurd idea. Now then, my business will be to endeavor to show from Scripture testimony when, where and by whom this battle was fought; and in my attempt to do so I will connect the binding and casting the dragon into the bottomless pit, as set forth in chapter twenty, with the casting out of the dragon and his angels into the earth, contained in chapter twelve; for I believe they both refer to the same event. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. * * * And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon" (that is to say, a destroyer—Margin).—Rev. ix. 1-11. This king is the same as the dragon. I have already quoted from Ezekiel, where Pharaoh was called the dragon. I will now quote a similar passage from Isaiah: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab [Egypt—Psa. lxxxix. 10—Margin], and wounded the dragon? [Pharaoh]. Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."—Isa. li. 9-11. So we see that the noun dragon has no literal meaning in those several passages of Scripture quotations, but is spoken allegorically to represent wicked men, especially kings and emperors, and are neither sea nor

land monsters; and in our text are

called "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan." So called as the originator of all manner of wickedness, and in opposition to all that is good. Hence then the war. In the chapter immediately preceding the one containing our text, we have a grand description of the war spoken of in the twelfth chapter and seventh verse. Commencing at the eleventh verse of chapter nineteen, we read, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." This heavenly personage was Michael, the Archangel (spoken of in chapter twelve), who with his angels (apostles) fought against the dragon and his angels. This war took place at the time of the setting up of the gospel kingdom, as spoken of by the prophet Daniel: "And in the days of these kings [Roman emperors] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."—Dan. ii. 44. Now we must understand that at the time of the setting up of the gospel kingdom, the Jews as a nation of people were tributary to the Roman hierarchy. Cæsar's was the higher court. All matters pertaining to the Jewish nation had to be tried at Cæsar's court. Paul, in his apprehension by the Jews, took an appeal to Cæsar, the Roman emperor. Hence the Roman emperors were the dragon, and the Jews were his angels. And they united together to destroy christianity, but prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. Now under the old covenant of works they had nominally a place in the first heaven; but the dragon was cast out to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Jesus said, "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, [meaning from among the 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 kingdom [first or legal kingdom of heaven] shall be cast out into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."—Matt. viii. 11, 12. Now these children of the kingdom were all those who belonged

to the priesthood, together with the Pharisees, Sadducees and lawyers. And although they had a place in the first or legal heaven, nevertheless they had no place in the second or gospel heaven, but they were cast out. When they came to John to receive gospel baptism, John called them a generation of vipers (serpents as belonging to the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan), and compared them to trees that brought forth evil fruit, and were to be hewn down and cast into the fire; which actually took place at the desolation of their city and nation; and John refused to baptize them. Now the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, is bound a thousand years, and cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up, and a seal set upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years shall be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. Not the nations of the earth, for they are deceiving and being deceived; nor yet the nations of the first heaven, or legal covenant; for it had passed away. Therefore the dragon and his angels were cast to the earth, there being no heaven for them; the first heaven, to which they formerly belonged, having passed away; and no place being found for them in the new heaven of grace, they were cast to the earth. I have said that it was not the nations of the earth, nor yet the nations of the first heaven, that the dragon should deceive no more. I may be asked, What nations then were they? To which I answer, They were the nations of them that are saved; as it is written in the description that John gave of the holy Jerusalem, saying, "And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 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. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." So we see that the dragon and his angels could not enter into the holy Jerusalem. And Isaiah prophesied of the same things about seven hundred years before, saying, "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 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 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. "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken."—Isa. lxii. 12. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter ii. 9. These are the inhabitants of the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem, the new heaven and new earth. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements [i. e., the legal heaven, dispensation or kingdom, with all its ordinances] shall melt with fervent heat." "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. 10-13. The reason why the word heavens in both cases is given in the plural, is because it embraces the two kingdoms with all their ordinances.

This must suffice on the first three verses of chapter twenty of the Revelation. I will now write a few things, at the sister's second request, in relation to the seventh, eighth and ninth verses, which read as follows: "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." We have been treating on the Pagan beast until he was bound, cast into the bottomless pit, shut up and sealed. But now we have to do with a so-called christian beast, more formidable than the other. John says, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." "And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." "And all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" &c. (My limits will not allow me to make lengthy quotations). The dragon continued in power until about A. D. 300, when (under Constantine) he gave his power, and his seat, and great authority, unto the Papal beast. Constantine gave birth to the Papal beast, or great whore of

Rome. Constantine was a pagan by birth and education, and embraced pagan religion, and under that religion was made emperor of Rome; but he afterwards professedly claimed to become a convert to Christianity, and proclaimed himself head of the Christian church; and his empire extended over the entire eastern world. And he issued an edict that no person should hold any office, place of profit or honor, unless he would become a Christian. Thus the flood gates were opened for all manner of corruption to flow into Constantine's Christian church. Thus it continued from bad to worse, until the whore of Rome was seated upon the scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, which scarlet colored beast was the great red dragon; for the pagan emperors, which were the great red dragon, had their seat at Rome; but they gave it to the beast (the pope of Rome), who exercised all the power of the dragon in persecuting the saints. Thus Satan was loosed out of his prison under the reign of that man of sin, the son of perdition, spoken of by Paul. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy 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 received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."—2 Thess. ii. 7-10. The third and fourth verses read, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 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, shewing himself that he is God," &c. Now there are two women named in the Revelation, and set forth allegorically as representative figures of the so-called christian world; and every man and woman that has made a profession of the christian religion belongs to either the one or the other, no matter what they call their names. The names of these two women are, "Mystery, Babylon" and "New Jerusalem." First, "Mystery, Babylon." "And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast [the great red dragon], full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. [Here we see that the popes of Rome were

seated upon the pagan emperor's chair.] And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication; and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not." Was (in the past tense) and is not (in the present tense), and shall (the verb in the future tense). Now let us apply these tenses. We understand this beast to be the dragon. He was, when he appeared a great wonder in heaven, a deceiver. He is not, after the angel cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up. "And shall [the future tense] ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition." That is, when Satan shall be loosed a little season, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Thus the dragon goeth into perdition after being loosed a little season. Now, for further information concerning Gog and Magog, I will call the attention of the christian reader to the thirty-eighth and thirtieth chapters of Ezekiel. I will only quote a small portion of them. The thirty-eighth chapter commences thus: "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; and I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armor, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee. Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.

After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee," &c.—Ezek. xxxviii. 1-9. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea; and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it, The valley of Hamongog" [that is, the multitude of Gog]. "And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land. And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God, Speak unto every feathered fowl, and unto every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken of my sacrifice, which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God."—Ezek. xxxix. 11-20. Now compare the last of this quotation with Revelation xix. 17, 18, and we will perceive that they both refer to the same things; differing somewhat in words, but the same in meaning, as follows: "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together, to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

I will now return and take a little further notice of the two women spoken of in the Revelation. I was writing concerning Mystery, Babylon,

the Mother of Harlots. Now if this mother has a husband, he is the Devil and Satan. But her harlot daughters are the daughters of Babylon: but they are ashamed of their old mother, and refuse to be called by her name. Isaiah prophesied of this hundreds of years ago, saying, "And with that day [gospel day] seven women [these seven signify a full, finished and complete number, hence all the harlot daughters of Babylon are represented by the seven women] shall take hold of one man [this man is the man Christ Jesus], saying, We will eat our own bread [they had a sufficiency of bread of their own, they did not hunger for the bread of life that came down from heaven, they had no desire for it] and wear our own apparel [they greatly prefer their own pharisaic apparel to Christ's pure, spotless, white robe of righteousness], only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."—Isa. iv. 1. Yes, they want to be called christian. The same angel that showed John the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, showed him also another woman. He says, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." This woman was not arrayed in purple and scarlet color; for her raiment was pure as the light that shines within and round about her, from the glorious Sun of Righteousness, her heavenly Husband. She also has sons and daughters; but they are all born in wedlock. And Paul says concerning her, The "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."—Gal. iv. 26. All her children are also her Husband's children. Hence they are joint heirs with him, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for them. And to her it is said, "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west: I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him."—Isa. xliii. 5-7. "This people have I formed for myself: they shall shew forth my praise."

Brethren Beebe, the foregoing is at your disposal; and if published, I submit it to the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS generally, and especially to sister M. A. Bowie.

Yours, &c.,

JOHN STIPP.

FREMONT, Neb., Dec. 23, 1885.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—You will no doubt be surprised to so soon receive another letter from me, as when I last wrote you I felt fully determined in my mind to never again attempt to write upon any subject, and so I expressed myself. But ere one short month has passed over my unworthy head I am again found with pen in hand, trying to do just what I promised myself not to do; thus verifying the words, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." But by way of explanation I will say, I received a letter from a person unknown to me, from Texas, who says he saw my letter of October 7th, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and read it with much interest; and it is by his request that I again attempt to write. I judge by the tone of his letter that he is a professor of religion, but he does not say of what denomination he is. In his letter he makes the remark that he thinks me to be interested in the religion of Jesus. Let me say to him, by way of answer, or to any others who may see what I write, that it is in the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and no other, that I am sometimes permitted to hope and trust for a better life beyond this world of confusion and strife. It is not the religion arising from philosophy and vain deceit, which is after the rudiments of the world, that brings consolation to the tried and mourning ones; nor does it bring any assurance of heavenly comfort to those who have been brought to know their own helplessness, and to see the end of all perfection in the flesh. In fact, there is no other religion but the religion of Jesus. There is no other name given under heaven that can lead the poor Israelite out of Egyptian bondage into the glorious knowledge and liberty of the children of God. There is an imitation in the world, which may satisfy the worldly mind. And if we attempt to hold forth this Jesus as the way, the truth and the life, the one who reigns supreme, who rules his people Israel, those whose religion is of a worldly character, who make flesh their arm, their strength and their salvation, will cry out against us. "Away with him; we will not have this man to rule over us." Thus by their own words they condemn themselves, and prove by what spirit they are led.

I will withhold the name of my inquiring friend, as he does not give me permission to publish it; and as his letter denotes him to be a man of prominence, it is sometimes mortifying to be found in poor company. He asks me to lay aside my opinions and prejudices, and take the plain declarations of the word of God, and honestly tell what is my understanding. And as he puts the question, "Can we know when the day of God is at hand?" let me say to him, I would not dare to assume the position of teacher on any portion of the written word of God (it is not my province), much less upon a subject that God in his wisdom saw fit to hide from angels and holy men of old, so

that of that time no man knoweth, not even the Son, but the Father only. Let us first notice and be careful that we do not confound the coming of God to establish his kingdom, with the coming of God in his kingdom to execute vengeance upon an ungodly nation; which, perhaps, I may speak more fully of before I finish this. But it is the day in which the Judge of the world shall come to declare that time shall be no more, that I suppose our friend alludes to. Although not by any means professing to know the time, I cannot deny that I have marked the signs of the times, and had deep meditations upon this wonderful, mysterious and awful subject; and as I have freely received, I freely give. I must say that I feel very unequal to the task of complying with the request of our friend in writing upon this subject, and giving my understanding of it; for if this be accepted by brethren Beebe, and is published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it will not only come to our inquiring friend (who, since he has asked my candid opinion, will expect it), but before many others who have always been strongly opposed to us who ascribe all power to the hand of God, to do battle for us, and have no power in and of ourselves. We feel that we are in a degree strengthened with the assurance that caused the timid Samuel to go forth, not fearing the slaughtering king, and who, when he considered his own weakness, said, "How can I go?" But when God had assured him that the Lord looketh not on the stature nor the countenance of men, but on the heart, he himself acknowledged that he went peaceably to the sacrifice.—1 Sam. xvi. Our friend asks me to lay aside my opinions. I do not see how I can do this; for I confidently trust that such opinions as I have are founded upon what I have learned only from the written word of God, which I hope to take as the man of my counsel, with the Holy Spirit as my teacher. Jesus says, "If I go away, I will send the Comforter, who shall guide you into all truth." Then how expedient that he should go away. We do not feel willing to ask of men for information upon any of the written word of God, but choose to sit quietly down with the word of God, and to walk in the narrow way of its exact teaching, rather than be found in the broad way that leads to destruction. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Our friend also asks me to lay aside prejudice. I earnestly desire the good will of all who may differ with me in understanding the Scriptures, and I bear no malice nor prejudice toward any; but I must contend that we have no christian fellowship for the loud and stubborn woman, that wear the attire of an harlot, that runneth abroad in every street, and lieth in wait at every corner to deceive (Prov. vii.), nor any of her numerous progeny. By John, in his wonderful vision while on the isle of Patmos, she is styled, "Mystery, Babylou the Great, the Mother of

Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth." Let us look at her first-born, the church of Rome, who pretends to be the faithful spouse of the absent Bridegroom, while in fact she only acts the part of a prostitute. She revels in lusts and lucre. She says, "I have peace offerings with me: this day have I paid my vows." In fact, no language can describe the enormity of her crimes. Great Babylon has heaped to herself wrath, against the day of wrath. She has trampled the truth under her feet, and drenched the earth with the blood of her victims. She has descended to the infamy of professing to turn the course of eternal justice for a consideration in money. There is no religious folly of which she has not been guilty, and from the sole of her feet to the crown of her head she is one mass of spiritual putrefaction. Yet "she wipeth her mouth and saith, I have done no evil." She says, "I sit a queen, and am no widow." It would seem that she has nearly run to the end of her allotted time, and that her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. But the sound of the song of triumph is very near, even at the door, when God will avenge the blood of his saints. O may we be prepared for that day! The Judge of all the earth will do right. "Judge me, O God, with righteous judgment," is the prayer of all who love his appearing. Again, let us take Paul's words, as recorded in 2 Thess. ii. 3; and as we meditate upon his words, let us look about us and satisfy our own minds as to what is our standing to-day. The world tells us that religion is on the increase, and they are satisfied with the thought that they are evangelizing the world. But is it so? Are not infamy and vice, that go stalking abroad throughout the world, exalted above all that is called God? Is not the time of falling away from the truth at hand, when the man of sin has thrown off his covering, and stands revealed? In fact, are we not in the time of the pouring out of the sixth vial? How do we stand religiously and politically? Look toward the east and see the dreadful tumult, wars and rumors of wars, nations rising against nations, which the apostles have told us are indications of Christ's second coming. Surely the time of the pouring out of the seventh vial is near; the time for the reaper to thrust in his sickle, for the time of the harvest of the earth is ripe. Our friend calls my attention to 1 Thess. v. 4, and gathers from it the impression that some will know of the coming of this day of which we have been speaking; yet he admits that they will not know the definite day nor hour. He also says that the signs spoken of by Matthew and Luke have all come to pass, and adds, "Thus we stand, looking for the Son of man from heaven." I think I see where our friend is confused. He has failed to see that there are three different periods, with as many different forms, spoken of in Scripture, of the kingdom of God, yet all terminating in the one great fact that Christ now reigns in his king-

dom. Having finished the work of redemption, he is now set down at the right hand of God, the King in his kingdom, and will rule his kingdom until his second coming, when he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and God will be all in all; for then the Son himself will be subject to the Father. If we take the books of prophecy, the coming of Christ in his kingdom is plainly set forth in types and shadows. How frequently do the prophets speak of "the last days," and "that day," when Christ shall come in his kingdom. God says by the mouth of the prophet Malachi, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant." In speaking of the temple, my mind is turned to 1 Cor. vi. 19, when Paul says to the brethren, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?" And again it is said, "Christ in you the hope of glory." And when Christ had occasion to speak of the destruction of the temple, in answer to the disciples, he spoke of the destruction of his body, as well as the destruction of that massive structure to which they pointed with such carnal pride. They had forgotten the prophetic language of Daniel, if they ever knew it: "In the days of these kings [Cæsars] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." The kingdom of the Jews was now about to pass away. That Jerusalem which was under the law with its temple and altar, would no more be required, for the great antitypical High Priest was about to be sacrificed and enter into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption, and fulfilled its law in its every jot and tittle. "Heaven and earth shall pass away [the Jewish heaven and earth], but not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Jesus said that not one stone should be left upon another of that great building. It was to be a total destruction. Hence we are not to look to that temple, nor its laws or ceremonies, since Christ has come and fulfilled them, and taken them out of the way, having nailed them to the cross. He said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, he has taken them out of the way. Therefore let no man judge us in meats, or in drinks, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moons, or of the Sabbath days. We are not to esteem one day above another, but let every day be holy unto the Lord. Paul says, "Let no man beguile you of your reward." Then why so much confusion in this world about the holy Sabbath day? Why bind burdens upon us which our fathers were not able to bear, and were only typical of the great sabbath of rest that God's people have entered into by reason of the finished work? If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?

"If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." "For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior." Then why go to the empty sepulchre to look for him? for he is risen. But those disciples having only a worldly ambition about the matter, could only see the destruction of that great building of stone and mortar, which they pointed to with such worldly pride. They called Jesus privately aside, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things come to pass?" no doubt thinking to prepare themselves against it. But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "The day and hour no man knoweth. But watch and pray, lest it come suddenly [or in an unexpected manner] upon you, and you be found sleeping." How did the Savior find the apostles when he came to fulfill this portion of prophecy? Did he not on the very eve of his crucifixion have occasion to say, "Sleep on now, and take your rest; for the Son of man is delivered into the hands of his enemies?" Has that prophecy of Malachi been fulfilled? Turn to the third chapter of Matthew and see.

I have only spoken of a very few instances, and must pass on, for I find I am making this quite lengthy. But I must take a little more notice of 1 Thess. v. 4, 5, as our friend has called my especial attention to them. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief in the night. Ye are the children of the light, and the children of the day. We are not of the night, nor of darkness." I do not understand by Paul teaching this, that he himself was aware of the time, and could tell them, if it was needful; for he had said, "Of the times and seasons it is not needful for me to write unto you." But he was assuring them that when the day did come, they were prepared for it; for Christ had already come, and had secured to them the victory. He says to them, "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith, and for an helmet the hope of salvation; for God hath not appointed [their destiny had already been appointed by God] us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." But it would seem that the mystery of iniquity has been working in their midst, and had shaken their faith, when he wrote his second epistle. He asks them why they are so soon shaken in mind, "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you. And to you who are troubled, rest with us." "Remember ye not that when I was with you I told you these things?" What a faithful apostle!

Now our friend may say, You have written a long letter, and have said many things true, but with all you have failed to make it plain to my understanding that God has at any time established his church on earth. If you will bear a little further with me, I will in as brief a manner as possible give you a little of my own personal experience in this matter. I had been told, I had heard it

preached, I believed it to be so, because those who, I believed, knew the truth and understood it, could see that the Acts of the Apostles contained an account of the visibly organized church of God. I could read it, but I could not see it, until at an unexpected time, I know not how, I found that I knew for my own self. I could see it as well as they. And so I say to my friend, Take the first two chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, and what God himself does not see fit to reveal to you of his mysterious ways, do not ask mortal man to tell you, much less a poor, ignorant creature like myself.

What I have written has been written at intervals, and under difficulties, so you will excuse whatever is amiss. What has been written has not been written in ill feeling toward any; and as these are the days of peace on earth, good will toward men, let the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King." Amen. This is without prejudice, without malice toward any, and without hypocrisy.

May God's blessing rest upon us, is my earnest desire.

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

GHEENT, Ky., June 22, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The word "works," in Rev. xv. 3, is in the plural number, and the psalmist says, "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvelous works."—Psa. ix. 1. Again, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."—Psalm cxxxix. 14. The words, "marvelous works," in these quotations have been hitherto regarded by me as referring alone to the work of redemption; but as it is given to us by the sacred writers in the plural it is but fair to conclude that it points us to more than one work; and if more, then it surely points to the work of creation as well as the work of redemption. John says, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." This question here appropriately suggests itself, Why did John present him in his two-fold character, as Creator and Redeemer? The answer to that question involves infinitely more than the feeble writer of these thoughts is able to tell. The prophet says, "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." All things were made by him that he might make manifest that everlasting love with which he loved his people. Then love, which is one of his divine perfections, one of his infinitely glorious attributes, is harmoniously connected with his omnipotence, his creative power. The revelation of God as Redeemer could not be made without revealing him as Creator. The dust of which Adam was formed must be created, and a home for that man and his innumerable posterity must be created before that everlasting love with which he loved his people could

be manifested; before that body could be prepared him in which he came as Redeemer. But just here another one of his infinitely glorious attributes rises before us in harmony with all the others, and that is his wisdom. The wise king of Israel says, "Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars." Here is presented in glorious harmony the seven divine perfections of Deity, standing as eternal and immovable pillars, upholding the church of the true and living God. The same sacred penman, in speaking of that wisdom says, "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: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."—Prov. viii. 24-31. Here that wisdom, which is the foreknowledge of God, that power by which he made all things that were made, and that everlasting love with which he loved his people, were all declared; and that, too, in the great plan of salvation. His delights (the church of the Lord Jesus Christ) were with the sons of men. He in his infinite wisdom beheld his delights—those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. He beheld them among the sons of men. Then for their redemption and final glorification the vast universe of God was created and brought forth; all, all in complete harmony with his firm decrees and his eternal purpose which he purposed in himself before time began. Then how marvelous are his works, both in creation and redemption, and what joy pervades the hearts of the dear saints when they are enabled by faith to behold his wondrous works, all of which are underlaid by that everlasting love which he bears towards his people. In that love he bare them and carried them all the days of old. In that love he created the vast universe of God for them. He says by his Spirit to them, "All [things] are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." The apostle says, "Let no man glory in men: for 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." All these things belong to the saints in their union and oneness with Christ. The apostle also says, "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." O how glorious is that unity of Christ and his redeemed! In it they are made heirs of God and

joint heirs with Christ. Heirship cannot exist without relationship; but the redeemed being one with Christ are joint heirs with him to all things—to all the inheritance of the saints. The apostle says, "All things are yours." In the words "all things" are embraced the world, yea, all created things; and they in that unity have all things needful for both time and eternity. Let it be observed that life is embraced in the catalogue given by the apostle. He says, "Life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours." That eternal life which he gives to his people existed in him from eternity, and therefore their life is hid with Christ in God; and immutability being one of his glorious attributes, one of the seven pillars upon which he upholds his church, there never was a period when that life which is secured to all his redeemed was not hid with Christ in God. If such a period did ever exist, then a change took place with him when that life is hid in him, and the attribute of immutability was destroyed. Such an idea is abhorrent, is disgusting to the spiritually-minded sons and daughters of the Most High; for in it they discover a denial of the existence of him who says, "I am God, and change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." But glory to his exalted name, their life was hid with him from all eternity; and for the development of all those whose life was hid in him, and for their final and eternal glorification, his creative power was made manifest when he spoke into existence the vast universe, and his redeeming power was made manifest when he in his own glorious person suffered the penalty of the law which they had violated, and rose a triumphant conqueror over all the powers of darkness. It was thus upon this earth which he had created he suffered, and triumphed. In that triumph all whose life was hid with Christ in God had eternally and immutably secured to them all the inheritance of the saints. In that inheritance is embraced all things needful for them, both in time and eternity. In that is embraced life and death. Ah, dear saint, how often in your meditations do you look to the agonies of death and the lonely caverns of the tomb; but when you by the Spirit's power are enabled to hear him say, "I am the resurrection and the life," you rise in holy triumph and proclaim with one anciently, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."—Job xix. 25-27. It was thus that Job rejoiced in beholding his Redeemer, and it is thus with you, dear saint, amidst the afflictions of earth, that you are upheld and made to rejoice in the immutability, love, power, wisdom and justice of that God in whom are treasured all spiritual blessings; yea, riches and righteousness evermore. It is then that you can say with our dear and

afflicted sister, Mary Parker, "O that the few remaining days of my stay may redound to the glory and praise of our dear and risen Savior, who gave his life a ransom to save poor sinners!" With her your desire is to give to the Lord the glory due to his name. O how blessed are the saints when they by faith are enabled to behold him as their "risen Savior!" It is then they can say, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." While the hand of affliction is resting heavily upon that dear sister, O how exalted, how rich she is in spiritual things! Her "risen Savior," by his servant, says to her, "All [things] are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Surely that is enough; to be his, and share with all saints the ineffable joys of his redeemed, for whom all things were created, and for whom he laid aside the glory he had with the Father before the world was. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and prepared them by grace divine to sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty," to whom be glory forever and ever.

The brethren editors will please dispose of the above as they may deem best, and, believe me, affectionately yours,

H. COX.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., Sept 1, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have felt a strong desire for a long time to write, and speak one time more to my dear kindred in Christ through the SIGNS, whose flag has long been unfurled for truth, and in letters stained with blood, "Salvation is of the Lord." "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." For about forty-five years I have been a reader of its pages, as they have been opened and wafted over our land, and have entered thousands of habitations; and, as its pages have been opened and read, it has instructed, comforted and cheered thousands of hearts in the midst of their manifold trials and temptations, and the storm and raging billows that have surrounded them. I can testify to the truth that it has come to me as a message of peace in times of deep distress, and it has given me to realize how sweet is the fellowship of saints. I so often think of your dear father; how hard he fought, and how bold he stood with staff in hand, with the banner of truth unfurled to the world. He was faithful and bold; he toiled and labored, not fearing the reproaches of men, nor did he seek the applause of the world. And when he had finished the work God assigned him, as a bold and faithful soldier he was called to lay his armor by. And as you are called to stand in his place, may the manifold grace of God rest upon you, and as faithful stewards may you act until you are discharged. How many of his companions in tribulation who labored with him, have also fallen and entered into their rest,

and they are now realizing the infinite value of the precious truth for which they labored. We believe they are now basking in the full blaze of eternal glory, with all the millions who have gone before.

Dear brethren, I feel weak, and my hand trembles as I hold my pen to address the faithful in Christ. I feel my unworthiness and my inability to write for the edification of God's dear people. I trust it is love which constrains me to bear my feeble testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. I feel to be so barren, so empty, and have so little of the spirit I desire. I am all emptiness in myself, and helpless. I often fear that I am a stranger to grace. So many of our dear brethren and sisters write as though their pens were dipped in the fountain of love, and their hearts were lit up by the light of the Holy Spirit, so that they are enabled to go into the deep and precious things of the gospel, both in doctrine and experience; for these are gloriously and harmoniously combined, and cannot be separated. How precious is the doctrine of Christ, so much despised by the world and thousands of those who profess his dear name. How great his power and mercy to save the wretched, the lost, the ruined sinner. There is forgiveness with the Lord, that he may be feared. I can bear testimony to the goodness and mercy and long-suffering of my God. Of all his creatures I have the greatest cause to bless and praise his holy name. I desire to exalt him in the congregation of the righteous. How can I shew forth his praises? for I am clogged with sin and mortality. His goodness and mercy and love to me it seems should absorb all the powers of my soul; but here am I in a cold and barren state, longing and panting to know more of Jesus and my interest in him. Jesus! his dear name is enough to fill my whole soul. How much it contains; salvation, redemption, freedom from sin, eternal life, immortal glory! Jesus, our righteousness, our sanctification, our all in all. Jesus; his precious blood speaks better things than the blood of Abel.

Dear brethren, when I hear and read of those who have had such wonderful manifestations in their experience, I feel that I do not know anything in spiritual things; yet I know and am assured that if one has had any light given them, it is all by the same spirit, if it be little or much. It is as God pleaseth to work. If I am a child of grace I never have had any great manifestations in visions or in dreams. I have so often wished that I could have them; but if this was the case perhaps I might rest too much upon them. If Jesus has revealed himself to me, which I humbly trust he has, in giving me to feel my lost condition, helpless and ruined, his forgiving mercy and love, if given to me, has been by the still, small voice of his Spirit, which whispers sweet words of forgiveness and peace, which came to my bowed down, sin-sick soul. Those still whispers would be so faint and low that I would often fear that it was not his heavenly voice.

But how thrilling and sweet the accents, though small the voice of love, when it comes. "Daughter, be of good cheer. Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee." What a thrill of joy would penetrate the soul with such accents of love! And still the voice speaks, "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." O Lord, my Lord, with what sweet power do these words come to the weary soul, ready to faint. "My Lord." He is our refuge and strength; a very present help in time of trouble. The Lord is my shield and buckler, my strength and Redeemer. He whispers again, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." "All [things] are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." How many thousand precious whispers does Jesus give to his redeemed ones! Sometimes they are a long time before they fully understand so as to trust in Jesus wholly; but his sheep must and will hear his voice. It whispers, Jesus, salvation through the blood of the Lamb. Grace, grace, how sweet the sound! The religion of our Lord and Master is not the religion of this world, and those who follow him truly must expect and will suffer persecution in some form or other. Their names will be cast out as evil, if nothing more. This is trying to the flesh; but it is better to be despised by the world than to be rejected by the King of glory. Trials, afflictions and tribulations are a part of the heritage of all God's chosen people in this world; but on the other side of the river glory, immortality and eternal blessedness in that heavenly land of rest where God and glory dwell. There the soft breezes of holy love will be wafted over the bright plain from the throne of God and the Lamb.

In the seventy-one years of my life which have already passed away, I have experienced much of the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Mercy and goodness have encircled my pathway, although I have passed through many deep and trying afflictions. The waters have been deep, and the waves and billows have risen high, and my weak, tottering heart has been ready to faint under the trying conflicts; but the strong arm of my God has held me up. The spiritual conflicts of a child of grace are manifold, with the world, the flesh and Satan, and they can only be met and conquered by the great Captain of our salvation. At times I feel to rejoice and bless the Lord for all the way in which he has been pleased to lead me, and would not have had one trial less; yet I do not always feel thus. I do not know how to praise and exalt the name of the Lord; for he has loaded me with his mercies. But I trust ere long my unfettered soul will burst forth in rapturous strains of immortal and sinless praise of him who has washed us in his blood. How often

does my heart go out in love toward all God's tried and afflicted people, many of whom I have met. I feel to take them in the arms of my affections, and claim them as my people, and their God as my God. O may the dear Lord cheer and revive his dear, tried and weary people, and keep them in this day when trial and iniquity abounds and the love of many waxeth cold. May they be enabled to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering, not being conformed to the world, but as strangers and pilgrims live and walk, knowing that in heaven they have a more enduring inheritance. The mighty God of Jacob is and ever will be with his people, and at last they will all be gathered to the great marriage supper of the Lamb.

Dear brethren Beebe, will you please excuse my long letter, which contains so little, and cast the mantle of charity over all my imperfections? As your dear and honored father said to me once, when letters fell into his hands they were his property, and he had a right to do as he pleased with them, so I leave mine in your hands, with love to all my dear kindred in Christ.

In gospel bonds, your sister in affliction,

M. M. HASSELL.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Sept. 28, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As is frequently done, I feel to address you a few lines (in connection with a small remittance), which I wish to see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It may be the last time I shall ever trouble you to examine and correct my imperfect writing for publication. I know that I am a poor sinner, weak and liable to err; and in truth, aside from the grace of God, I am nothing but error and sin. But my hope does not rest in myself, and therefore I may freely speak of it without egotism; for ever since Christ appeared to my poor heart, turning me away from sin, in which I delighted, I have been constrained to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."—1 Cor. xv. 10. I have been led often to review the lessons of my whole life, as far as memory recalled them, and have never been able to use a more appropriate expression than this blessed text. Yes, indeed, I am what I am by the grace of God.

"By the grace of God." What holy words, suited to every condition of spiritual life; for they can be understood by no other life, and in no other light. When once delivered from the love of sin (it is by the implantation of spiritual life that holy desires and obedience are felt), our memory may go far back of that blessed day and trace some of the mysterious workings of that grace, even when we were "dead in sins;" for we can all remember now, with feeling and with renewed judgment, the acts that we then committed without any knowledge or true fear of God. Tradition and parental or guardian care was all that we could understand in reality as the rule of our conduct and the code of our

morals; but when the "grace of God that bringeth salvation" appeared unto all men (or men of every condition in life, as the context enumerates them, as aged men, aged women, young women, young men, and thyself (Titus), as well as servants and others), it taught them that, denying ungodliness, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.—Titus ii. 11, 12. This judgment was not given in the fear of the devil, but in the fear of God; not in the fear of man, as our former training taught us, but as before the eye of one whose judgment looks upon the very secrets of our lives; thoughts unspoken, desires ungratified, passions unrestrained, save as the divine hand wrought unseen and unknown in their subjugation; so that now every child of God can count over many wonderful restraints from outward sin, when the whole tide of influence seemed bent on their total moral ruin. In saying this I but express the secret of my own private life; not to set myself before the world as a magnificent confessor, but to express some feeble sense of my indebtedness to grace.

It is only by the grace of God that I am what I am. In view of that matchless grace I have often stood as on the summit of my years, and tremblingly gazed at all the past, and viewed the pitfalls of temptation that beset my youthful feet. If I have never murdered, it was not because of my innate goodness of heart, but the dear, directing hand of God, that would not let the rising passions of the hour have their full sway, but kindly restrained them by wondrous providences. Have I not stolen? It is alone that blessed grace, which would not let this greedy heart fulfill its native gift but once; that, when not in my teens, I pocketed a few walnuts which I knew my cousin did not wish me to have. This, alas! reveals to me what matchless thefts have been passed by without partaking, and yet the native tendency of my heart to steal. I am humbled under an ecstatic sense of gratitude; not that I am better than other men, but that his kind and fatherly care has been so graciously extended to me, when there was apparently no one to afford proper counsel in the ways of this sinful world. Should I recount the many crimes in the catalogue of sins that almost universally prevail among men, I can only see one way to satisfy my desire to know why it is that I have thus escaped the deep humiliation that has fallen to the share of many others, and that is God's eternal and unchangeable decree of grace; and to show me how that grace abounds, he revealed to me my sinful heart, which men could only know by my outward acts. But God revealed to me my heart itself, and then his wondrous grace, that both humiliates and exalts my soul in reverence. Even the drunkard's state of feeling when under the influence of intoxicants is wholly unknown to me, never having called for nor drank a glass of anything stronger than beer, and I cannot remember of

ever drinking that at the bar. Indeed, so heinous have my own thoughts of evil been made to appear to me, that I wonder how any child of God can seek so base a resort as the saloon, where a passing glance reveals enough of evil to disgust the sober-minded saint and warn him to pass it by, if he would enjoy a quiet mind.

Dear brethren, I am in the height of manhood, but feeble in body and mind. I feel that I do not wish to leave a splendid record for my name, but I wish I could live so as not to cast a blot on the name of him who has shown himself so good to me.

"Yes, when the earth close o'er my head,
I'd be forgot as the nations dead."

Were it not for conjectures that might affect my brethren, I would always prefer that my feeble writings should be anonymous; that the substance, and not the style or name, should be considered.

I hope the Lord will enable you to contend still for the truth of his grace and the full purpose of his sovereignty, and that he will bless each event in life to the good of his people, whether I am one of them or not.

Truly yours in love,

A. B. BRES.

CRAMER, Ill., Aug 21, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Feeling lonely, and my mind wandering far and near after those I hope I love, I will pen a few lines. Very many dear ones who have in days gone by enriched the columns of the SIGNS, have laid their armor by, and entered into the joys of the eternal world, no more to see through a glass darkly. I feel that it will not be long until I shall put off this tabernacle, in which I groan on account of sin. And what is my hope for that eternal world? If I have any, it is in Jesus, in that righteousness which he wrought out on Calvary when he suffered for the sins of all his people, who were and are his bones. He was and is the Head, and they the body. They had violated the righteous law of God, and were justly condemned, being in a deplorable condition. This every one of them realizes when quickened. They feel that they are ten thousand talents in debt, without one farthing to pay. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." This is from the mouth of God, whose law must have its demand, and be fulfilled in every jot and tittle. Now the only way in which I can have hope is that Jesus is my life. He is the Head of the body, and he has paid the debt. This was very forcibly presented to me when I verily believed I was forever banished from God. I was raised up, and was enabled to praise him for his mercy; and that God of mercy has been my stay for many years. I often get very low down, have many sore conflicts by the way, and often cry out, Is thy mercy clean gone forever? Wilt thou be gracious no more? Like Job, that dear servant of the Lord, I have been sorely tried by the enemy. But I verily believe that God has a wise purpose in it, though it often seems dark and

mysterious to us. It is declared that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. This, I believe, includes all things. The wrath of man shall praise God; the remainder of wrath he will restrain. I believe in predestination; and it seems to me that if I would attempt to limit it, I would undermine the foundation and my hope. God ever has dealt with the workmanship of his hand as seemed good in his sight. Shall we attempt to limit his power? And dare we say that he is the author of sin? Sin is a transgression of a law. But God is under no law from sinful man. Like Job, we often utter words without knowledge. But when God spoke to him out of the whirlwind, what did Job say? and what did God say to him? I do believe that the enemy that tempted our mother Eve, with all the wicked men from Cain down, is only the sword of God, and is for the good of his chosen people; and whatever he has not a wise and gracious purpose in he will restrain. How many of the saints of God through all ages have been martyred. Was that chance then with our God? The Old Baptists, so long as I can remember, have believed that we cannot die until the Lord's time come. Then if we die by the hand of an assassin, would we dare say that was not the Lord's time? John was beheaded in the Savior's time. Surely he had the power to have stayed Herod, if it had been his will. When I read of God's dealings from the beginning of time, and of his special favor to some, and not to others, I am led to believe that my God is in the heavens, and that he doeth whatsoever he pleases. To Abel he gave living faith; and we see the wrath of Cain. Did not God purpose that to be? Why, brethren, I thought we believed that what is to be will be, and that God has determined it. I may be wrong, but my firm belief is that God has a purpose in the wicked acts of men, and that makes up the man of sin, that must be revealed in his time. God has created them for a purpose, and in the end God will be as much glorified in the condemnation of the ungodly as he will be in the salvation of his people. Like as at harvest time the wheat is gathered into the garner, but the chaff is destroyed. "The Lord hath created all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "He turneth man to destruction, and saith, Return, ye children of men." The Savior, in whom only is my hope, was delivered according to the determinate counsel of God, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain. This, we are bound to believe, was predestinated. It was spoken of by the prophets long before. Jesus is spoken of as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. To deny predestination in part not only tends to Arminianism, but, as Webster says, is Arminianism. And it seems foolish for brethren to ask, Then did God predestinate the disobedience of the children of God, and all the wicked acts that we see?

They all come from the flesh, which is corrupt, and was corrupted in Adam when he violated God's holy law, which was no chance thing.

Now, brethren, if you see fit you may publish this in the SIGNS. If it is not according to truth throw it aside, and I will be satisfied. I have written this because I wanted to converse with some one of my feelings. May the Lord enable his saints to stand faithful on the foundation of our God, who hath all power in heaven and earth, and will do his pleasure in time and eternity. Amen.

E. D. VARNES.

BURDETT, N. Y., Sept. 26, 1886.

ELDER BEEBE'S SONS:—In compliance with the wish of the Burdett Church, I send you a letter which I received from brother A. B. Dickerman, and read the same at our last covenant meeting. The letter is worthy of all Old School Baptists, especially those who live remote from their church, to know of the whereabouts of brethren and sisters, and their good will in sending some little remittance to help defray expenses. I will say that it has been the custom of brother Dickerman to send such letters as the one inclosed, not forgetting what was caught in the fish's mouth.

I would gladly say something to you, brethren editors, of the satisfaction I have in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the editorials, and the many communications from brethren and sisters. I will say that I love you all in Christ. Your Savior is my Savior, and your God is my God. Entreat me not to leave you, or to return from following after you. I am sorry it was not my privilege to attend the Chemung Association; but brother Keene came here on his way home, and preached twice for us. We were glad to see him and hear him preach.

The church wishes you to publish as much of brother Dickerman's letter as you think will be of interest.

With much love to you and all the household of faith, I will close. From your brother in Christ, if a brother at all,

H. B. ELLIOTT.

BOONVILLE, N. Y., Sept. 14, 1886.

DEAR BROTHER ELLIOTT:—I will once more try to write you a few lines, that you may know where I am, and that I have not forgotten that sacred place where I have so many times met with my Father's children and enjoyed so many happy meetings; and our precious Savior often met with us. Was not that the house of God and the very gate of heaven to our souls? Yes, truly it was; but my hope is weak, my evidence is dim, and I have to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"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?"

My mind is often led away back, sixty years ago, when the Lord found

me in a waste howling wilderness. He opened my blind eyes, so that I saw myself a lost and ruined sinner; and I was led to cry for many days and nights, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." "Lord, save, or I perish." The pains of hell gat hold of me; and I would have given all I possessed in this world for the least gleam of hope, or the least evidence that my sins were pardoned. But the Lord saw fit, in his own good time, to let a ray of light break into my soul, which caused me to rejoice, and gave me a little hope, which has been like an anchor to my soul; and I never have seen the time since then that I would exchange it for all the wealth of earth. It is a blessed hope. I will praise the Lord for it while I have breath; and when my voice is lost in death, praise shall employ my nobler powers. O how I would love to meet once more with our little band of redeemed ones, with whom I have so often met. As we are living so far apart, I sometimes think perhaps I shall never be able to meet with you again, for I am now in my eightieth year, and it is with a trembling hand that I write this. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Live in peace and fellowship with one another, for the time is short.

"Soon the joyful news will come,
Child, your Father calls; come home."

"O for a closer walk with God."

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise."

I want to be a humble follower of the Lamb. I want to sit where Mary sat, at Jesus' feet, clothed in my right mind, and to hear the blessed words that proceed from his mouth. All my own works and righteousness are as filthy rags. I must be saved by grace alone, or be forever lost. If Christ died for me, I am safe, for Christ and his people are one. He is in them (and they in him) the hope of glory. Now in what way can they be separated? They cannot be separated. My great trouble is, Am I included in that happy number? It is an important question. Remember me in love to our little church.

Your brother in Christ,

A. B. DICKERMAN.

PRAYER.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Feeling very low in spirits, I am constrained to take up my pen to write a few lines; and as the subject of prayer has been much of my meditations since I professed a hope that God has for his dear Son's sake pardoned my many sins, I will, as briefly as I can, tell of some of the thoughts and feelings I have had in regard to prayer. I sometimes feel that there is no one like me as to prayer. Prayer has been to me at times one of the sweetest blessings that I have been permitted to enjoy, and at other times it has been the greatest task that I ever undertook to perform. When the evangelist John fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, the angel forbade him, saying, "See thou do it not;" but he commanded him to

"worship God." I might be tempted, in my dealings with my fellow mortals, to knowingly deceive them; but when it comes to the worship of God, or trying to worship that God who discerns the secret thoughts of the hearts of men, there is nothing that could induce me to act hypocritical knowingly; yet how often I have feared and trembled, lest I was acting the part of a hypocrite, when I have attempted to open my mouth in prayer. I have ever felt that for a poor, sinful mortal as I am to attempt to worship God, it is the most awful, serious and solemn task I ever tried to perform. And yet at times, as I said, it has been the sweetest blessing I ever enjoyed, when I could leave out of sight earth and earthly things, and in simplicity of soul hold sweet communion with God; oft, too, when none but God was near. Again, I have often bowed upon my knees before God for the purpose of prayer, when it would seem that my every thought ought to be centered upon God, and God alone; and yet some of the most vile and evil thoughts would come into my mind, and I could not help it, if the existence or safety of ten thousand worlds like this, with all it contains, depended upon it; so that often I am made to cry out, "Is there any one else like me?" I have often desired from the very depths of my heart that God would give me a heart of thankfulness, a spirit of prayer, that I might be enabled to thank, praise and adore him in spirit and in truth, as I ought, for his goodness and mercy toward me. Yet I do not know that I have ever uttered an acceptable prayer to God in my life. Ah, says one, I would not give much for your religion if you do not know that you are a saint of God. Well, I do not know it, but I do know that often during my pilgrimage in this life I have had to pass through many troubles and afflictions; and when the dark clouds of despair seemed to shut out every ray of light from the Sun of righteousness, and I was made to feel that I was forsaken of all earthly friends, and even God seemed to frown upon me, I have been by grace divine permitted to go to that Friend, Jesus, who sticketh closer than a brother, and in the simplicity of my soul tell him of all my trials, afflictions and temptations of this life; and in his name ask God to be merciful to me, a poor, sinful mortal of earth; when all my mourning on account of the trials and afflictions of this life would vanish in a moment, and I would be made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Yes indeed, no mortal tongue can tell the joy that follows, when Jesus says to the troubled soul, "Peace, be still." It is not the form of words that constitutes an acceptable prayer with God. The poet has comprehended it in these words:

"Prayer is the saint's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

"Prayer is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near."

Brethren Beebe, I often get to meditating upon some subject, or portion of God's word, and I can find no rest in mind until I take up my pen, as I have to-night, and write upon the subject. Then my mind seems relieved, no matter if no mortal eye ever reads a word of it after I have written it, which is often the case. It gives me relief. If you think the foregoing worthy a place in our family paper, publish it; if not, all is well.

Yours in hope,

J. H. YOEMAN.

SILVER CLIFF, Colo., Sept. 24, 1886.

ALBANY, Mo., Sept. 7, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been led to meditate upon the words of the psalmist David, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Psa. cxxxiii. 1. We must be led experimentally into the truth before we can rejoice in or appropriate it to a profitable degree. One must be hungry before food would be relished or desired; thirsty before we seek in truth for water. And so with christian grace; the Lord gives to his people the spirit of supplication, and then peace like a river makes glad the city of God. The great calm which the presence of Jesus brings is followed with great rejoicing and increased desire in the hearts of his children to walk in the light of the Lord. "The glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers." Thus his presence is felt and known in Zion, when her inhabitants are brought to taste the sweets of his love, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of the Lord. Behold, how good and how pleasant are such seasons of peace. The gentle heavens bow down, and a sacred awe overspreads the countenance of the redeemed, and the image of Jesus seems risen upon them. Those that behold the scene may take knowledge that they have been with Jesus and have learned of him. How good indeed it is for brethren to dwell thus together where peace flows like a river. It is good to be where the presence of Jesus is felt, and drink out of the wells of salvation. The gift of God is known, and we ask of him for the water of salvation. The power is his to give, and

"Love flows from heart to heart,
And joy from breast to breast."

The unity of the Spirit prevails, and we are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Raised up to the full confidence of faith, the fruit of the Spirit abounds, and love unfeigned through the brotherhood prevails, through the ministrations of the Spirit of God through Jesus Christ.

Such precious seasons, dear brethren Beebe, I have reason to believe have been experienced among the saints of late, among the churches. Our (Siloam) associational meeting passed off as a practical exhibition of what David said in the text quoted at the commencement of this article. No disturbing questions prevailed, and the saints were much refreshed and comforted by the preached word.

Our esteemed and venerable brother, Elder Isaiah Guymon, though somewhat feeble, was with us, and preached the word with power, as did also others. Elder Guymon closed with one of the most powerful exhortations that I ever heard, and I feel that it will always do me good to remember the precious season. It was "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." The Lord be praised in Zion. May peace richly dwell in the hearts of his dear people, and abound in all his churches. Amen.

Yours in hope of the gospel,

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

STOWE, Kansas, Aug 20, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—How often have I, in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, seen communications from brethren and sisters, stating that all the preaching they got was through the SIGNS. I could not then realize their position; but for the last six months I have been made to experience it for myself. None but those similarly situated can know the loss of the society of brethren and sisters, nor fully appreciate the glorious privilege of being among the brethren and sisters.

Now, brethren Beebe, I will ask for space in our old family paper to make some inquiries as to the brethren. I left North Henderson, Mercer Co., Illinois, on March 4, 1886, and came to southwestern Kansas, and am located in the southeastern corner of Finney County, twenty-five miles from Cimarron, on the Santiff Rail Road. I have not yet met with one Old School Baptist in this part of the country, with the exception of my wife, and my old father and mother, who have made us a visit and returned home.

Now, brethren, you who read the SIGNS, if any of you know of any brethren in this part of Kansas, I will take it as a great kindness if you will give me their address, that I may once more find some of God's humble poor. I yet have hope that God has children in this wild western country, and I hope I will have church privileges yet. Last Sunday I tried to preach at my own house, for the first time in almost six months. There seemed to be an interest taken, and I have been solicited to make other appointments. I am in the hands of the all-wise God, who doeth all things well.

I want to say to the brethren and sisters that compose the Spoon River Association, of Illinois, that they have my christian love, and that their memory will ever have a green place in my mind, and the sweet seasons we have spent together. I hope we may meet again. I will say that I am the same poor, vile sinner that I ever have been, and I ask an interest in your prayers at the throne of grace, that God will keep me in the way,

that I may show forth his praise. I would be greatly pleased to hear from any and all at any time. My address is Stowe, Finney Co., Kansas.

JOHN M. BROWN.

CLINTONVILLE, Ky., July 29, 1886.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As the time for renewing my subscription for our much valued paper is near at hand, I thought I would do so, and also write a short notice concerning our much lamented brother Dudley, who has passed from time to eternity. I was permitted, through the kind providence of God, to be one of the many who attended his funeral. I was in Mt. Sterling, visiting friends and some of the Old School Baptists, when a telegram announcing his death arrived. It caused sad and solemn feelings, although not unexpected. I was carried back forty years in mind, to the time when I first heard the glorious gospel proclaimed by him. Very many of his favorite texts of Scripture came to my mind, and also his favorite hymns, one of which I will mention.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways,
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

This verse seemed to express his feelings fully. I now feel my ungratefulness. I was not as thankful as I should have been for the privilege of sitting under his ministry for so many years, and listening to the heavenly droppings from the sanctuary, where I so often feasted, and learned what I know of my own imperfections, and the glorious righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to sinful worms of the dust. Brother Thompson, wife and myself got on the train at Thompson Station, Monday morning, arrived at Lexington at nine o'clock, and went to the house where the dear old soldier of the cross lay a lifeless corpse. While looking at him lying so peacefully and calm, I thought he was then realizing that rest I had so often heard him in his sermons speak of; that rest that remains to the people of God. I fully believe he has entered into Christ's rest, which is glorious.

Brethren Beebe, I am nearing my seventy-sixth year, and every time I remit for the SIGNS I think it will be the last. The Lord only knows why I am continued here. I want the paper as long as I can stay and am able to read. It is all the preaching I hear, and I esteem it highly. My time is not out until October, but it is convenient for me to send now. Inclosed find two dollars. May God bless and sustain you, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

CAROLINE ASHBURN.

FRANKFORT, Ohio, July 30, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am very desirous of information on one point of practice among the Baptists, viz.: What authority have they for laying on the hands when a brother is ordained to the ministry? I know of but one instance where it was done by any save the apostles, and that is where Ananias laid his hands on Saul, that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost.—

Acts ix. 15. We have no information that Ananias was even an Elder; he was a devout man according to the law. In all other cases I have noticed the Holy Ghost was given by laying on of the apostles' hands. I understand from the different narratives that when the Holy Ghost was thus given, he fell or came in visible form; for this reason Simon wanted to have that much of apostolic power. We do not believe in apostolic succession; and when or where did the apostles as princes ruling in judgment authorize the Elders of the church to lay hands on one being ordained or set apart to the ministry? When the Holy Ghost was given in the Apostles' day, or by them, those on whom he fell received power which they did not before possess. Now, in our day, when the hands of the Elders are laid on, there is no visible manifestation—there is no extra power felt. I have asked a number of ordained brethren if they experienced any manifestation in any way when the hands were laid on, and they said no. If this is a fact, does it not look like a formal ceremony, devoid of that which it possessed in the apostles' day? Paul instructs Titus to ordain Elders in every city.—Titus i. 5. And Paul and Barnabas ordained them Elders in every church.—Acts xiv. 23. But in neither case is anything said about laying on of hands. When a church selects a man by lot from among their number, and sets him apart by solemn prayer, is he not then properly and truly invested with the authority of a gospel minister? In First Timothy v. 22 Paul instructs Timothy to lay hands suddenly on no man. Here I think Paul was speaking in regard to discipline in the church, that Timothy should not rebuke hastily. It does not say who composed the presbytery that laid their hands on Timothy. I am led to believe it was the apostles.

I have been a subscriber for years to the SIGNS. All requests heretofore made have been passed by in silence. I hope this request will share a different fate; still it is left to your judgment. Unworthily,

WM. N. CORY.

(Editorial reply on this page.)

WAVERLY, Ill., March 25, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR SIR:—I am no church member, and am a poor man in every respect, but I desire to take your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for which I will inclose the money. While the paper is new to me, I find that it is old to a great many. Please send me the back numbers of the present volume, as they contain Elder Purington's communications on the subject of the absolute predestination of all things, which I certainly believe, so far as I can understand it. My opinion is that it takes years of experience to attain to the knowledge of the glorious doctrine set forth in those communications. I feel that it is a glorious privilege that we are permitted to believe it, and we should only thank him who maketh it manifest to us through his Son Jesus Christ, who is the true Light. In this light Jesus

is presented to the understanding of God's believing children. They then believe in God, and also in his Son Jesus Christ. They could only view him before as the Son of man, being destitute of this true Light, and could not tell how his sufferings, death and resurrection could accomplish any more than that of any other man. But in this true Light we see that Jesus died as the Son of man; and in that he died, he died unto sin once. That is, he laid down the life that the sinner possessed, which he received by being manifested in the flesh, in which he was numbered with the transgressors. Had he not assumed that life, he never could have died, and the enmity would still exist between God and the sinner. But thanks be to God, over eighteen hundred years ago that work was done, the enmity was removed by or in his death, and reconciliation was made. "Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." That is, by the almighty power that exists in eternal life. This life is hid with Christ in God, and is revealed through Jesus Christ, in which is given the knowledge of God's salvation, and that there is none outside of him; and as he possesses all power, everything that has, does or ever will exist must derive its power from him by which to exist. His purpose is going on as undisturbed as the sun that appears in the east in the morning, and disappears in the west in the evening. As he is God Almighty, there is no opposition to him that is sufficiently wise to frustrate his purpose. Sin and all its consequences are condemned in the flesh, in which it is impossible to please God. Jesus, whom God hath exalted a Prince and a Savior, has risen over sin and death. "Death hath no more dominion over him; for in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

WILLIAM BOZER.

STAYTON, Oregon, Oct. 3, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am now in my seventy-third year, and badly afflicted, and expect to depart to another world in a short time; but my hope is strong in my Savior, through the testimony I have received from God, my all in all. If I were able to write, I would like to talk to my brethren through the SIGNS, as I have lived in three different states, and have acquaintances in many states.

Now, brethren, if it will not be asking too much, please give these few lines a place in the SIGNS, for the information of many of my friends and relatives, that they may know my whereabouts, and that I am yet in this body of flesh. But I hope to meet all the heavenly family in a heavenly and brighter world of glory, as much brighter than this as the sun is brighter than the moon. I was shown, in one of my visions or dreams, where Christ, the Head, and the members, the body, filled that world of glory, and Christ was the light thereof. I saw the city of God, with Christ, the Head, with a rainbow above and about his head.

JOEL SANFORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1886.

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

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

LAYING ON OF HANDS.

IN compliance with the request of brother Wm. N. Cory, on this page, we submit such views as we have on this subject, assuring him that our failure to respond to previous requests resulted from no intention to disregard his queries, but from the impossibility of answering all the inquiries received. Our very limited ability to understand the inspired record renders it preposterous to profess that we can explain all that is contained in any portion of Scripture. Even those who heard the gospel from the lips of our Lord himself could not understand until he gave them the light. Doubtless brother Cory has personally experienced the utter impossibility of attaining any spiritual knowledge by his own efforts, and also the wonderful clearness with which the most hidden depth of divine truth shines in the heart when the blessed Comforter takes and shows it unto him.

The desire for clear scriptural authority for all our doctrine and practice is very commendable; for there can be no worship of God in anything which he has not enjoined in his written word. If it were possible that we should do a good deed without his direction, it would not declare his praise; for in his law everything lawful is provided, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii. 17. Obedience to his commandments is the only way in which the saints can glorify God in their body and in their spirit, which are God's. In the doctrine of God our Savior is included not only the glorious truth that Christ Jesus is of God made unto each one of his redeemed people wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; but the revelation of this fact invariably produces the desire of holiness in every one to whom this grace is made known by the Holy Spirit. In order that they may manifest this desire practically our Lord has established his organized church for the temporal abode of his saints; and in the church he has given direction for their guidance in every relation, both in natural and in spiritual duties and privileges. This law is "written not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." So that they need not look to Moses for guidance, since they are led by the Spirit to hunger and thirst after that righteousness which can be experienced only in keeping the commandments which he has enjoined upon those who love him. The answer of a good conscience toward God, which is found in observing all the precepts of our Lord, is the great reward of such as walk in the order

of the church, as the inspired apostles have bound it on earth. It is always wrought in them both to will and to do of the good pleasure of God, so that they who in spirit obey the law of Christ are willing followers of God, "with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."—Eph. vi. 7, 8.

In maintaining the order of the visibly organized church it is necessary that some form be observed; and provision is made for all needful forms of service in the precepts of the apostles, both in the letter and in their examples as recorded by inspiration of God. While the enmity of the carnal mind may indeed distort and pervert this rule, even to turning the truth of God into a lie, the simple child of grace need not be deceived; for the law of God is in his heart, and the Spirit of truth leads him into all truth. Conferring with flesh and blood in consulting natural reason, there is nothing but confusion and darkness to be found in the order of the church; but looking alone by living faith to the hand of the Lord, and submitting with cheerfulness to his direction, the perfection of beauty appears in all the laws and ordinances of this heavenly kingdom. It is not for the government of the nations of them who know not the love of God that this inspired code is recorded. Only to those who love the Lord Jesus is it given. The most carefully framed human laws may be distorted to injustice or evaded by artful devices; but the law of the church of Christ is perfect, so that it can neither be evaded nor distorted. The rigor of the law of Moses but faintly typified the perfect equity of this law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus as applied to his ransomed people. So it is written, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For 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. 28-31. This fearful thing can apply only to the living subjects of divine favor, for they are the antitypical Israel to whom the Lord says, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. Thus it is provided in the everlasting covenant, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless

my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips."—Psa. lxxxix. 30-34.

While it is not our design to present our understanding of the subject as binding upon others, it does appear very clear to us that when the Holy Ghost said to the prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," those prophets and teachers who laid their hands upon them were not apostles.—Acts xiii. 1-3. This example alone is sufficient to authorize the form of laying on hands in ordaining a brother to the work assigned him by the Holy Ghost, whether that work be the ministry of the word or any other service of the Lord. But there is repeated reference to this ceremony in the epistles as well as the Acts of the apostles. When Paul admonished Timothy as a subject of this ordination, he does not say that the gift which was given him was with the laying on of the hands of apostles, but of the presbytery, or *Elders*, as the same original word is translated in every other case where it occurs in the New Testament.—See Luke xxii. 66; Acts xxii. 5; 1 Peter v. 1. That this action of the presbytery should be in harmony with the mind of Christ in the church seems too evident to admit of any question. The Elders themselves have their official standing only in connection with the church; and in common with every member of the church the law of Christ requires that they all "be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." This mutual subjection of the members of the body of Christ renders it very essential that they "Do all things without murmurings and disputings." Observance of this rule in the love of our Lord will produce unanimity not only in the ministry, but in all the assemblies of the saints. In this they manifest that they are led by the Spirit of God. While this indwelling Spirit is known to God and felt by each subject of divine grace, it is only by open obedience to the law of Christ that the saints are manifested to each other. Walking in his ordinances they declare their love to the King in Zion; hence the examples left on record by apostolic authority are safe for the saints to follow, always remembering that their literal form without the spirit of obedience is mere mockery instead of worship of our Lord; for "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 24.

The suggestion of brother Cory that Ananias was no more than merely "a devout man according to the law," appears inconsistent with the record that he was a disciple especially commissioned of God for that very work, and by inspiration enabled to tell Saul what he had experienced before

we have any account that Saul had told him anything.—See Acts ix. 17. If he had stood in the favor of the Jews as a legalist, he would have had no cause to object to meeting the zealous Saul. In order to consider the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the apostles' hands, it will be necessary to understand what is signified by the expression. It does not appear that the apostles ever claimed the power, which is assumed by idolatrous professors of our day, to command the Holy Ghost, or to control the blessing of God. The believing sorcerer (Acts viii. 9-24) erroneously thought that "the gift of God" might be purchased with money, and proposed to buy it of Peter and John. Peter rebuked this wicked thought. The apostles themselves were governed by the Spirit, and did not have control of the power of God. "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they essayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not."—Acts xvi. 6, 7. The act of laying on hands by the apostles appears to have been the expression of the faith given them that God had bestowed his grace on those on whom they laid hands, whereby they were blessed with the favor appropriate to each case, whether it was of healing physical infirmities or conferring spiritual qualifications. When the blessing was visible to the eye, as in healing the sick, it was natural for the world to suppose the apostles conferred the benefits by their own will; but this they constantly disclaimed.—Acts iii. 12; xiv. 15. It is true that the apostles have no successors in their apostolic office, as our brother says, for they are set upon thrones judging the tribes of Israel to the end of time; but the gifts and graces of the Spirit are not buried with the mortal bodies of the apostles. Even they could do nothing without the Lord; and he is with his saints always, even unto the end of the world.—John xv. 5; Matt. xxviii. 20. The empty form of observing any ordinance of our Lord without the spirit of obedient worship, is at least a vain thing, if it does not amount to idolatry. Yet the saints are not justified in disobedience to his literal directions on the account that they are consciously unworthy of the exalted privilege of following in the pathway which he has ordained. If they could in their own strength obey him, they would have that much room for glorying in themselves; but in the gospel kingdom none can glory in anything but the Lord. "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—1 Cor. i. 31.

The references of brother Cory to cases in the Scriptures where ordination is spoken of without the mention of laying on of hands, are hardly admissible as conclusive evidence that it was done in any other way. Some have inferred that some other mode

of baptism was practiced by the apostles from the fact that it is not said in every case that they went down into the water and came up out of it; but our brother would not accept such reasoning in that case. As to the gifts conferred by the laying on of the apostles' hands, the argument would equally apply as against the literal observance of baptism, or the Lord's supper. It is only when the Spirit reveals Christ in his ordinances to the faith of his obedient followers that they experience the blessing of the answer of a good conscience toward God in observing his commandments. Even on the great day of Pentecost there were those who "mocking said, These men are full of new wine." The gift of the Holy Ghost was not visibly manifest to them. Certainly it would be wrong to lay hands on one in whom faith discovered no manifestation of the spiritual gift for whose exercise the brother was ordained. The church would not be authorized to call for the ordination of such a subject; and no presbytery would be justified in ordaining such a one, whether it was to set him apart for the ministry or for any other place in the church.

We do not know of any case in which a church has ever selected a man by lot for the gospel ministry. We read of such a selection by the disciples of a successor to the place from which Judas fell.—Acts i. 15-26. As this was done before the eleven apostles were endued with power from on high, we have thought that it is not given as an example to be followed by the church. The apostle whom the Lord had chosen was not in the lottery there drawn, as he had yet to keep the raiment of them that slew Stephen, and to imprison and beat in every synagogue them that believed on the Lord.—Acts xxii. 19, 20. We have thought that when one is called of God to the work of the ministry he receives a gift which is to profit with all to whom he is sent to minister; and as the ways of the Lord are equal, when he calls one to preach he always prepares those to whom he is sent to hear the word at his mouth. So it is true that "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men."—Prov. xviii. 16. It is very questionable whether one is called of God to preach if the church knows nothing of it until informed by the one called. When the Spirit has shown the gift to the church, it will not be needful for them to be urged to make room for it.

To some of our readers the application given by our inquirer to the direction in First Timothy v. 22, will be at least a novel thought. In no other Scripture do we recall an instance where the application of gospel discipline is called laying hands on a man, while in the preceding chapter the same expression is used in reference to the ordination of Timothy himself. It appears to us more consistent to let it have the same meaning in both these texts. Whether the

presbytery whose hands were laid on Timothy was composed exclusively of apostles or not, does not affect the subject under consideration, since it has been already shown that others did lay hands on Paul and Barnabas; but the fact that it is not recorded as an apostolic ordination, shows that Paul recognized the authority of the presbytery or Elders.

In walking according to the gospel rule they who love the Lord Jesus show their desire to follow him. Guided by this desire, they are prepared to run with patience the race set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith. It is impossible that they should ever pursue this narrow way while looking in any other direction; and it is the continual effort of the tempter to attract the attention of the saints by presenting alluring vanities to draw their eyes from Jesus to self and pride. It is only by grace that any of them are enabled successfully to resist the devices of this artful and persistent adversary. With their whole heart set upon the perfect example of our gracious Lord, there will be little difficulty in the saints finding the way of his commandments. That we may all be found walking in humble obedience to the gospel of God, and confessing in our conduct and conversation that our whole dependence is in the guidance of the Holy Ghost, is our earnest desire for all who love the order of the house of God.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

In order to forward the work on the Church History as much as possible, we have had the sheets delivered to the binder as fast as printed, and expected to have the whole work out by the first of September, but owing to the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Alphabetical Index as soon as expected, we have not been able to do so. We append a note just received from him, which will explain itself. As soon as we receive the Index we shall, providence permitting, rush it right through, and have the book out in about two or three weeks thereafter. The following is Elder Hassell's letter.—ED.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., Sept. 30, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to say to the subscribers of the Church History that the entire work is printed, except the Alphabetical Index, which is to appear at the end of the book, and which will *very greatly* increase the value of the work. As all must be aware, the Index could be prepared only from the printed and numbered pages. Very much to my surprise, and doubtless to the surprise of the subscribers, the preparation of the Index alone will have required *between three and four hundred very close and very hard hours' work*. Since the latter part of last July, with the exception of the two weeks which it took me to remove from Wilson to Williamston, and open my school here, I have labored diligently from five to

fifteen hours a day upon the Index, sitting up, at times, for this purpose, as late as two or even three o'clock at night, and I feel that nothing but special divine power has sustained my constitution under such a strain.

The book contains twenty-seven chapters and an Appendix. I have now indexed the first twenty-six chapters and the Appendix, and only the twenty-seventh chapter remains to be indexed. This chapter contains forty-six pages, and a great number of names of persons, churches and associations; and the indexing of it will probably require thirty hours at least. I have then to arrange, in more exact alphabetical order, the topics already placed under each letter, and to transcribe the whole—a task which will require, I suppose, about fifty hours. To accomplish this eighty, or perhaps ninety hours of work, while I am teaching school, will probably require about three weeks; but as soon as I transcribe in exact alphabetical order the topics under each letter, I expect to send that installment of the Index to the publishers, so that they may be engaged in printing that part while I am engaged in arranging and transcribing the next part of the Index. In this way I hope that the entire Index may be printed by the first of November, with the permission of providence, so that the subscribers may receive their books some time during that month.

The book exhibits the most important facts in the religious history of the human race from the creation to the present time, and will be of unique, intrinsic and permanent value, not only to the Primitive Baptists, but to all religious denominations. I have, on all subjects, been as just and accurate as I could, and stated *the plain, candid, honest, straightforward truth* as I have found it, no matter whether the truth pleased or displeased myself or any other human being. All persons who wish, not a truthful history, but a flattering and false historical romance, will have to resort to the pages of some other work.

Yours in love,
SYLVESTER HASSELL.

ERRATA.

ATHENS, Pa., Oct. 10, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Will you kindly correct an unpleasant error in the obituary notice of Mary A. Overton? Her first husband, Mr. John Watkins, died ten years ago, instead of two. You will greatly oblige me.

Yours in sweet fellowship,
WATIE A. BEARD.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish this notice of the death of my son, **Joseph P. Broders**, who died at our home, on Friday, September 17, 1886, about one o'clock a. m., in the twenty-sixth year of his age. My son has been troubled with pulmonary symptoms for about five years, but seemed to keep his strength and appetite tolerably well, although subject to the varying of the seasons, until the Friday night preceding his death. After eating his supper on that evening, he arose from the table, and was taken with a coughing spell. I, noticing him, asked him if he was spitting blood, to which he replied that he was, which continued at intervals until about the middle of the next day, before the physician could stop it, making a very large hemorrhage, after which he seemed cheerful, and we had hopes that he would soon recover. On the night of his death his wife called me and said he wished to see me, as his breathing was very strange, only on one side. As soon as I could I summoned the physician, but of no avail, for in about two hours death had claimed its victim.

Dear brethren, I feel cast down and broken down; for in the last few months my dear wife has been taken away, which occurred last December, and now my only son; both in less than a year. I know and believe that all things are ordered in wisdom, and all my trials and afflictions in this life are kindly and affectionately dealt out according to God's purpose, though they may seem severe, and often change all our purposes; for we all predestinate for our own households. Yet in this event I feel to close my lips and not utter a word, for fear I will complain unjustly; but with that old, tried and faithful servant, Job, I would say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

My son made no profession of religion, but was inclined to be moral in his walk and conversation, and was always friendly to the Old Baptists. I had no religious conversation with him, as his demise was unexpected to us. All I learned of his future hopes was from his wife. He told her he was not afraid to die, and during his last sickness told her two dreams he had, which seemed to trouble him very much, and bear upon his mind. One was that Jesus had come to him, in a company of friends, and said to him that he had selected him to go with him. He replied to him that he did not want to leave his wife. The second one was that his mother came to him, and told him that she had come after him, and he must go with her.

Elder E. V. White attended the funeral, and preached a discourse from 1 Cor. xv. 22, to an attentive congregation.

Your brother in tribulation,
JOSEPH BRODERS.

ALEXANDRIA, Va.

DIED—At the residence of her son, Ira C. Horton, in Jersey City, N. J., October 6, 1886, **Mrs. Adaline Horton**, widow of the late Deacon Loton Horton, of the New Vernon Church, aged seventy years, ten months and four days.

For more than forty years sister Horton has been a consistent and highly esteemed member of the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., having been baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. She has been in feeble health for many years, suffering from a complication of diseases, and at the last was stricken with paralysis. She had her mind till the last, but the last paralytic stroke deprived her of the power of speech. She was resigned to the will of the Lord in her last sickness, and awaited with patience the hour of her discharge from the conflict here below. She was dearly loved by her kindred in Christ, as well as by all who were intimately acquainted with her, being possessed of a remarkably pleasant temperament. We all feel that our loss is great, and sorrow that we shall see her dear face no more in the flesh. She is survived by two sons and a number of grandchildren, her husband having died twelve years ago last June.

Her remains were brought to New Vernon for interment, on the 9th, when a discourse was preached by her pastor, Elder Benton Jenkins, from the twenty-third Psalm, which

was a favorite portion with her, the Lord having applied it to her with power and comfort during one of the greatest trials of her pilgrimage. May the Lord comfort all who mourn, and resign us to his will.

Moses Barnes died in the Insane Asylum at Mt. Peters, Minnesota, aged eighty-three years, ten months and eleven days. He was born in Springfield, Mass., and was married to Polly Bingham, Jan. 9, 1825. They joined the Honey Creek Church in April, 1836. In 1846 they took letters, as they were going to Wisconsin, and from there to Minnesota. They first located in Fill County, and later went to live with their youngest son, at Marshall, Lyon Co., Minn., where mother still lives. He had at times, since twenty-five years of age, shown signs of insanity, if sick or greatly fatigued; but he always would talk perfectly sensible on religion, even when insane on all other topics. And no matter how much he suffered, he would say, "I shall not have one pain more than is right, nor die until my time comes. God will do all things right." When in his right mind he was a kind and indulgent husband, a good father and neighbor. They still held the letters taken from Honey Creek Church, though urged many times to join new organizations; but their views were so different from the churches of the day that they never joined. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been their church companion, with their Bible and hymn book. They were both sound in the faith of God's elect, and we have every reason to believe he is praising his God in heaven. Mother was very sick at the time of father's death, and was not able to see the remains; but she bore her trouble and sorrow as none but a christian can.

MRS. R. DUXBURY.

MINEOLA, Nebraska.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Death has visited our little church (Fairview) again, and taken from us one of our aged members, sister **Malinda Hall**. She was born May 16, 1810, professed a hope in Christ about nineteen years since, joined the church about thirteen years since, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, until the fatal disease, paralysis, took her from us.

I was called on for a funeral sermon, in which I tried to talk as best I could from the words recorded in Hebrews xi. 28, 29, to a very large and attentive audience. After which her remains were laid away in the family burying ground to await the resurrection morn, when no doubt she will come forth with all the ransomed of the Lord, not to return here to meet her children again, for children, Mother is gone, and the only chance for a meeting is for you to go to her.

May God in his providence guide us in the way of truth and holiness, is the prayer of the humble writer,

P. M. WRIGHT.

CHAMBLISSBURG, Va., Sept. 28, 1886.

DIED—In Roxbury Village, Delaware Co., N. Y., April 5, 1886, **Miss Elizabeth J. Davis**, aged seventy-one years, six months and six days. Our dear sister united with the Second Church of Roxbury, July 6, 1843, and was baptized by the late Elder David Mead. She was sound in the faith of the Old School Baptists, always filling her seat in the house of God unless providentially prevented. Her disease was consumption, from which she was confined to her bed for many months; yet she was never heard to murmur, knowing that the Judge of all the earth doeth all things well.

Elder Hewitt preached a discourse on the occasion, after which her remains were laid to rest, to await the resurrection, when these vile bodies will be fashioned like unto that of our glorious Redeemer.

EMILY VERMILYA.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y., Oct. 11, 1886.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

The Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held on the second Saturday and Sunday in November, 1886. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends.

WM. P. KIRK, Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

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P. G. LESTER.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

As will be seen by reference to a letter received from Elder Hassell, on page 233, we have met with an unexpected delay in the completion of the Church History, caused by the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Index as soon as anticipated. We now have the History all in type except the Index, and the binder at work on the printed sheets, and as soon as the manuscript for the Index is received we will rush them through the press and mail the books at the earliest possible day.

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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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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 address he may desire; but in all cases the FULL AMOUNT OF CASH MUST ACCOMPANY THE ORDERS.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Oct. 20, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—When in New York City last summer, in conversation with some of the friends, a dear sister referred to the words found in Luke xiii. 24, and after some talk about them asked me to furnish a letter upon them for the SIGNS. They read as follows: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Our conversation at the time to which I have referred had been concerning christian obligations, the various hindrances attending the performance of them, and the blessing that followed the deed. We had spoken of the difference between our title to the promised land and the entering into and enjoying its possession. We could not claim a title to any blessing by our own worth or merit, but still it remained true that the willing and the obedient did eat the good of it, and were blessed in basket and store, while the disobedient are still beaten with many stripes. In connection with this theme many portions of Scripture came up, and among them the above named. To-day I feel like trying to comply with the dear sister's request as best I can.

1st. A distinction should always be borne in mind between the salvation of God and the present enjoyment of that salvation. David makes this distinction in the fifty-first Psalm, when he says, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He does not say, Restore unto me thy salvation, but the joy of it. The salvation is secure in Christ, but David's disobedience had cost him the joy of it, and now he prays for its restoration. The blood of the Lamb, our passover, shed on Calvary, atones for all our guilt, and those who are sheltered beneath it can never come into condemnation so as to lose the inheritance above. But yet there is a proneness to wander on our part, and for this wandering we shall be visited with the rod. Therefore believers are warned and urged to be careful not to go astray. And Paul said that, "knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Here is plenty of room for reproof, for warning, for admonition. Sinners dead in sin are not to be exhorted to come to life, but sinners quickened of God and made alive in Christ are to be exhorted to the life of the living, that they may not appear dead while they live. There is danger that the living should walk in the broad road with the ungodly world; therefore they

are commanded to seek to walk in the narrow way. Every word of admonition in all the epistles is addressed to the churches, which are composed of men and women called saints, &c. In these epistles ungodly men are sometimes spoken of, but never to. So in the Old Testament the commands, exhortations and promises are addressed to the chosen people of God. Gentile nations are spoken of in their law, but never to. Now in considering the commands, warnings and reproofs of the New Testament, this should always be kept in mind.

2d. In the verse preceding the text, it is said that one said to him, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" And to this inquiring one he replied, I say unto you, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." We are not told who this one was, and we know nothing about him except what this question and answer would imply. It would seem from the Lord's reply that he recognized in this man one who could be taught, who had a spirit of honest, sincere inquiry in him, and yet was just now busying himself about what did not concern him. Even could he know how many or how few were saved, it would advantage him nothing. To find out such a matter as this would only be to foster a spirit of idle curiosity. All such questions as this are equally vain and useless. Where is heaven? Of what do its glories consist? How do people look there? It would do us no good were they all answered. We would not become more humble, spiritual, loving or Christlike; and what does not tend to produce these results, it is of no use for us to know. All of them are overtopped by the greater and more important question, What am I, and where do I stand? Am I heavenly-minded? Am I prepared to dwell in such a state? As Jesus knew what is in men, and when in the flesh could read their inmost thoughts, the manner of his reply seems to imply, as said before, that the man was not an enemy or scoffer, and that some ray of light dwelt in him. Therefore while Jesus seems to reprove a curiosity that was of the flesh, he at the same time appeals to the spirit of truth that was really in him by a word of exhortation and warning. He also included his disciples, and all who had ears to hear, in this warning. "He said unto THEM." No doubt this one but put into words the query which Jesus saw was in all their hearts; and so he replies to all, as though all had spoken. If any such question is employing our minds to the exclusion of

better things, to us, also, Jesus speaks, and his words are words of warning to us as well as to them.

3d. The question, "Are there few that be saved?" in their minds meant, I have no doubt, just what we should mean by the same question; viz., How many will go to heaven in the end? Looking at the question in this way, the answer of the Lord would bring out another great truth; viz., that if any man is to be saved in the future world, he must first have an experience of salvation in this world. Simply going to heaven is not what salvation means. It means a salvation from sin and falsehood here first. If a man finds his heart full of the love of the world here and now; if he loves not the better way; if he does not delight in christian company and conversation; if he does not seek the word of the Lord, and find in his heart a spirit to strive against sin here and now, he can have no assurance of heaven beyond. This reply of Jesus seems to me to recall us to a consideration of this fact. Salvation is a present thing. It is to be saved from sin rather than its results; though, of course, if saved from sin we shall be saved from its consequences as well. The words of the angel to Mary were, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." And my own feelings for years have been not so much, Shall I be saved in the world to come? as, Am I saved from my sins now? My trouble has not, of late years, been as to whether I am embraced in the everlasting love of God, but, How can I best honor the name I have professed to love? One thing is sure, if we are saved here, we shall most certainly be in the world of glory. It seems to me that in the words of the text Jesus calls us to remember that the present is what concerns us, the future is in the hand of God. With regard to the life we should live below, admonition, reproof and exhortation is needful; but with regard to our home beyond, these things have no place. That home is secured in Christ.

4th. What is the strait gate? I suppose that all Bible readers are aware that the word strait here means difficult; hard to enter. The walk of the christian is contrasted with that of the world under the figures of a strait gate and a wide gate. For a believer to walk in this narrow way requires self-denial, the endurance of loss, shame, reproach, and many other things that are hard for the flesh to endure. More than this, it requires a constant crucifying of the flesh in our own selves. This

gate is too strait to let in Pharisaical pride on the one hand, or worldly wickedness on the other; and we are prone to be seeking to carry one or the other along with us. If we are preserved from falsehood, or theft, or drunkenness, or any of the multitude of vices that men run after, on the one hand, we are so prone to boast of our goodness on the other. And this strait gate will not allow either of these things to enter. There are many hindrances both to our outward and inward conformity to the will of God. The path is that which the Master trod, the gate is that which he entered. His life was one of wrestling and striving, and so must ours be if we are followers of him. The world, the flesh and the devil stand in our way at all times. The world allures and the devil tempts us, and the flesh is ever ready to yield a swift assent. The character addressed is one who desires the better way, who is inquiring after it, who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, but who is little aware of the conflict, the warfare, before him. Such a one is exhorted to carefulness and watchfulness and earnest endeavor, because the way is difficult. It is not a floating with the tide, but a battling against it. It is not a gliding down a gentle descent, but climbing down a rough, precipitous mountain. It is not a holiday excursion, but the weary march and frequent battles of a soldier's life. In these very words, "the straight gate," all this is implied, and much more than I can put into words. This is not the gate to eternal joys; for through Jesus' blood and righteousness, through his sufferings and death, these portals are swung open wide, and nothing shall hinder the blood bought hosts when they shall march within them. But to be Christlike down here requires a warfare which is long and weary. Read 2 Peter, first chapter, beginning at the fifth verse and on to the eleventh, which reads, "For so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." This is not the heaven above, but the privileges and joys of the kingdom of Jesus on earth. It is difficult to be loving, and yet faithful to the truth; to be meek, and yet firm; mild, yet decided; patient, yet valiant for truth. Truly the gate is a strait one.

5th. "Strive to enter" this gate. A similar expression is, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth to life eternal." The language implies watchfulness, effort, endeavor. It also implies that

first of all, there is a desire in the heart to enter there. If this desire be in the heart, there will also be an inquiry, How shall I enter there? Jesus gives the response in various ways. He says, "strive," "watch," "watch and pray," "watch unto prayer," "knock," "seek," "ask," and similar expressions, all implying the same general truth. One cannot run after the world and enter the strait gate at the same time. The desire for wealth brings a temptation to be hard, grasping, and unmindful of the rights of others. If we would follow the Redeemer, all this must be fought against. The love of place and power brings a temptation to trample upon others. This cannot go hand in hand with the religion of Jesus, which is defined by James as follows: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." There may be a tendency in us to pride in looks or ways. Envy or jealousy may lift their serpent forms within us. These also must be denied. O! is there not need of watching and striving? Riotous living and drunkenness must be left behind. If we enter the strait gate and walk the narrow way, it is safe to say that we shall not be frequenters of bar-rooms, nor shall we consort with the vile crowd of heaven-defying, blaspheming and foul-tongued men who resort to such places. There are temptations in all these directions, and hence a constant warfare against all manner of wickedness, within and without. Now the command is, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Do not enter the broad gate. Do not walk with the world, but separate yourselves from the practices of the world. And this is not easy, but often hard. If the grace and love of God dwell in our hearts, we shall be impelled to depart from iniquity, and to seek peace and ensue it.

6th. Jesus adds a word of caution and warning. He says, "For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter therein, and shall not be able." Some seek to enter there upon the ground of their own merit. These shall not be able. Some rely upon their parentage, saying, "Abraham is our father." These shall not be able. Some rely upon church forms and ceremonies. These shall not be able. Some rely upon human learning. These, also, shall not be able. None of these can know the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and can have no conception of what it is to enter that door. These all seek, in one sense, to enter what they suppose to be the door of the kingdom; but they are not able to enter. And sometimes those who have known the Lord become so blinded as to seek to enter this gate in some of the ways named above; but even they are not able. But if we are relying upon the merit of Jesus, then to us the word of the Savior comes with special power. Then every promise of grace and strength is ours, and Jesus himself is our guide and helper. I think it is in this sense that we are exhorted "to give all diligence to make our

calling and election sure." It is in this sense that Paul beseeches us that "we receive not the grace of God in vain." And it is also in this sense that he exhorts us "to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling."

May these reflections be of profit to us all, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life.

F. A. CHICK.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Aug. 2, 1886.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—It is written in the Scriptures concerning Israel, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever," &c.—Jer. xxxii. 38, 39. In reading your letter, expressing some of the Lord's dealings with your soul, I felt that you gave abundant evidence of being numbered among the number of those who are loved, and chosen, and taught of the Lord. Israel is a peculiar people (1 Peter ii. 9), and among all the nations of the earth there is none like unto them. In this day there are many who counterfeit their worship, language and clothing; who "say they are Jews, and are not."—Rev. ii. 9. To make a profession of religion is fashionable and popular, and all are ready to call themselves christians. There are those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. They prosper in their ways, make great strides in religious attainments, their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish. They talk a great deal about working for Jesus, saving souls, and having stars in their crown. And while to the carnal gaze they appear righteous unto men, yet they are utterly destitute of the grace of God. They have never tasted the sweet love of God, and all their religion is but as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. They deny the power of true godliness. All the power they acknowledge is creature power, or a partnership power; God doing his part, and the sinner his part. Thus they have coined, to suit their religion, the words, "co-workers with God;" whereas all things that pertain unto life and godliness are the gift of God, and experienced by the elect of God according to his divine power.—2 Peter i. 3. There are those also who "say they are Jews, and are not," who are ever found reviling the Arminians, ridiculing them, and pouring forth anathemas continually against them. They can discuss points of doctrine, election, predestination and particular atonement. These points of the doctrine of God our Savior they seem to know all about, and woe be to any that are of a contrary mind to them, or that do not come up to their standard. But while they are such experts in letter knowledge, in carnal knowledge, and acknowledgment of the doctrine of God, what have they known by divine teaching? What have they handled and tasted and felt spiritually of the things of Christ? Have they ever seen themselves vile and

full of sin? Have they loathed themselves? Have they ever mourned for their iniquities? Have their hearts ever sighed, and cried, and longed with vehement desire for deliverance from the bondage of corruption? Have they felt hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, longings for mercy, and goings forth of soul after the salvation of God? Did they ever taste the Redeemer's love? Did they ever come unto the blood of sprinkling? Is Jesus the beloved of their soul, the one whom they desire, whose companionship and fellowship they desire above all? Have they ever in any measure known what it is to be able to say, Jesus' flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed?—John vi. Do they ever complain of their desolation, barrenness, unfruitfulness and unprofitableness? Do they ever prove, do they ever speak of their temptations, sore trials, conflicts, the battle to be against them, to be cast down, to be under a cloud, to go mourning without the Sun, and then in some measure tell of the goodness, compassion and tender love of the Lord to their souls, of their hope being revived, of being a little strengthened, encouraged, and feeling some notes of that wonderful melody in their hearts to the Lord, of the song which no man can learn and none sing but the redeemed of the Lord? If these things they are strangers to, if they have not in some measure realized by the divine power the things that pertain unto life and godliness, what advantage have they over those whom they scoff at as Arminians? They, with all their natural, carnal, fleshly views of election, reprobation, predestination, redemption, effectual calling, final preservation of the saints unto eternal glory, and vile affections for the same, are no better in the sight of God than Mohammedans. A man may have what is designated in the world as a sound "Calvinistic" creed, and manifest considerable satisfaction and pleasure therein, and yet be as destitute of the grace of God and as ignorant of divine teaching as Judas Iscariot. I often find great searchings going on, and much inquiry of soul, concerning the ground of my hope in the salvation of the Lord. What true evidences have I wrought in me that I am a subject of the grace of God, that Jehovah delights in me, that I am truly, manifestly a child of God, loved with eternal love, redeemed with the precious blood of Christ? You have written some of your exercises of soul concerning the things of Jesus Christ. Let me tell you some of the things that my soul passes through. I am not always on the top of the mount. I think I might say, in respect of joy and rejoicing in the salvation of the Lord, I am but seldom there; but the most of the time of my journey is spent in the low grounds of tribulation, much fighting, many cares, many discouragements, and certain trials which but few know anything about. As I look over the whole, and view all that I have passed through, and am passing

through (in the mind that I am favored with now), I would not have it any otherwise, not a pang less, not a trial less, not anything less; but all is well. Shall I not receive evil at the hands of my God?—Job ii. 10. How blessed to be able to say with Jesus, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—John xviii. 11. In all distresses, darkness and need, I am made to prove the preciousness of the precious Lord Jesus, and therefore the doctrine of Jehovah's predestination of all things is full of comfort and strong consolation to my tried and oft tempest-tossed soul. My God has given me to find and to suck honey out of this rock (predestination), and oil out of the flinty rock (Deut. xxxii. 13), though many and sore have been the conflicts that I have been engaged in with my carnal mind, in league with the old serpent, the devil, over this point of the doctrine of God our Savior. But I will not speak of these things now, but will try and tell you what I often pass through. I often get into very barren places. I am straitened (not in Christ Jesus; O no; but in myself), and become so barren, lifeless, formal, destitute, that fears arise as to whether there is any meal or oil in all the land. Sometimes I am taunted by the insinuation, If thou art a child of Jehovah, a subject of grace, make these stones bread. Now I am a strange creature. It does seem that no one in the world is like me; for I have been so foolish that I have tried to make bread; and strange as it may appear, all that I ever made, though Pharisees, Hagarites, and all the children of the bond woman today would feast upon it, and count it excellent food, would roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongue, and wax fat and flourish upon it, yet I could not eat a morsel of it to the satisfying of my soul; and if ever I have put any of it into my mouth, it either stuck in my throat and nearly choked me, or it sickened me so miserably that I have had to vomit it up; and a shameful, sad and disconsolate time I have had then. I tell you, dear sister, the children of God, "the very elect," as they are manifested by being made partakers of eternal life, are known by their eating and drinking. They all eat the same spiritual meat, and all drink the same spiritual drink.—1 Cor. x. 3, 4. They only are spiritual, have spiritual life, spiritual hearing, sight and understanding, and spiritual appetite for the things of Jesus Christ. When I have been brought very low I have tried to make bread. I have worked hard. I have tried to read the Bible, all the precious promises that I could put my eyes on. Hymn books I have looked into, to find some precious verse. Many I found, but not a crumb of bread in anything for me. Sermons, magazines and books I have read. I have read a chapter of the Scriptures in the morning, and have fallen upon my knees and tried to pray. I have done the same at night. I have asked the blessing of the Lord upon

my food at meal times, and have asked for a grateful heart for the mercies that daily I receive. I have gone into the company of the saints, and have talked upon religious subjects. I have gone into a pulpit and tried to preach Christ Jesus, and him crucified. I might go on with a long catalogue of things, but not all put together could satisfy. It was not the true bread, and could not create one emotion of praise in my heart; could not give me one contrite sigh; all, all could not banish and roll back the dark clouds, nor cause to shine forth upon me one smile from the lovely face of our loving Immanuel. Everything that my hands had wrought, though in my folly I had esteemed them gods, were not the God of Israel; but all was turned into corruption. I saw its deformity, its ugliness, and smelled its stench; for sin, iniquity, pervaded the whole, and all my righteousness I felt and knew was filthy rags, and an abomination and a loathing. I remember former days, in months past, times of sunlight and sweet fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ; times when the Beloved brought me into his house of wine, feasted me at his table, his left hand being under my head, and his right hand embracing me; and his banner over me was love. I could then rejoice in his mercy, triumph in his grace and love, and I found peace and joy in the salvation of the Lord God of Israel. But it is not so with me now. I have mourned for my Beloved, and when altogether weaned from all fleshly workings, to bring relief and satisfy my longing soul, I have then acknowledged, and have realized the truth of the doctrine contained in the words, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."—2 Peter i. 3. I have found to my dismay and discomfort, and have been brought at the feet of my Lord in humble acknowledgment, that he, and he alone, is the source, and by his divine power alone are the things that pertain unto life and godliness experienced by the saints of God. Satan has accused me, harassed me, and cast me into prison, and no power had I to deliver my own soul. It were folly therefore to go about professing to save souls; of which children of the bond woman speak so much, and glory in. But when in my sore necessities, and compassed with many misgivings, doubts and fears, the remembrance of former happy seasons, wherein I felt I did taste that the Lord was gracious, has given comfort, and I have been raised up a little, a little revived; for I have then thought there was a something I cannot find now, and all my toilings, workings, sighings, cryings, groanings, praying, do not bring me into the possession of it. Surely it was of the Lord; I did not make it. It was not of any creature production. It surely was according to his divine power; and that peace, that joy, com-

fort and delight in Jesus, and sweet praises that filled my heart, were all most surely the gift of God to me, even to me; for I cannot bring forth such things now, do what I will. And, or ever I am aware, my heart burns within me, and I feel a little singing going on within, which would find expression in language something like this,

"His love in time past forbids me to think He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink; Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review, Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

"Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." Yes, thou hast been my help. Yes, dear sister, I have found that the doctrine of Jesus separates between the precious and the vile; and when I have been put into the sieve, and my religion has been sifted, I have been astonished at the amount of trash, carnal, natural religion that I am continually accumulating. And when the nations of the earth, all the religions, are sifted by the truth, only the true Israelite, the Jew inwardly, will be found to be wheat, and the rest are mere chaff. Here is the sieve. The things that pertain unto life and godliness, can I produce them, maintain them? Is it in my power? All the doctrine in the religious world says, Yes, the sinner can do, and must do his part. And all their doctrine consists in what God wishes us to do, what we ought to do, and can do, and must do, in order to salvation, to life, and to realize the things that pertain unto life and godliness. As this is all the religion that natural men possess, when weighed in the balances it is found wanting, and is lighter than vanity. And all those whose religion is in the power of man, in the will of man, the will of the flesh, free agency, as they call it, are declared by the doctrine of Christ to be destitute of the grace of God. All such religion is but dung and dross. And when a dear child of God is searched by the Lord his God, how much that he thought was pure, and was of God, he finds is altogether of the flesh, and therefore unprofitable, disgusting and vile to his view. If there be anything that has arisen, or can be brought forth by us, then it is worthless, and will perish in its own corruption; for "All things [not some things] that pertain unto life and godliness" are the gift of God, and are realized in us according to his divine power.

My pen has run on to a greater length than I intended when I commenced writing. I will not therefore speak in particular, in this letter, of the "all things that pertain unto life and godliness," and how they are given, and operated in us, in their seasons, by the divine power of Jehovah, our God. This would be a precious theme to write upon if the Holy Spirit would enable me. Let me hear from you again, of your welfare in the kingdom of God. May the dear Lord continue to instruct you and favor you with tokens of his eternal love, is the desire of your brother, I hope, in Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

STATE ROAD, N. C., Aug. 22, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—ESTEEMED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I again take up my pen to give to your readers a few more of the many incidents of the Lord's dealings with me in this time life, and in so doing I wish to comply with the many precious letters which I have lately received from many dear brethren and sisters. In the closing lines of my last published letter I spoke of a glorious visitation of the Holy Spirit, and of those heavenly songs which were employed by the Holy Spirit in my soul, and of my desire to depart and be with Jesus. This joy lasted all that day, and passed away from me while I slept. When I arose in the morning I felt as though the old man of the flesh was in the door. But, dear brethren, I remember a time of very great joy shortly after this. I was, as I thought, summoned unto death, and the blessed Jesus comforted me in a revelation of his glorious appearing unto me. This heavenly visitation was so glorious that death was made sweet to me, and I thought how sweetly I could march and sing with Jesus through the valley and shadow of death. My soul was made to cry, Welcome death, come and land me into everlasting joy and peace, where all pains will forever be at an end, and sorrow and sighing shall never come. I fully thought that I was dying, yet my soul was so filled with joy that I did most joyfully bid this world farewell, for it seemed as if I was already in the bosom of rest, which is Jesus. Thus I passed through the night, and on arising in the morning I found that my soul was yet resting very happily in Jesus, and I was not able to describe my joy, for lack of language. Neither as yet can I find words sufficient to half describe the fullness of that which my soul did undergo during the previous night. But I had gained strength enough, as I found in the morning, to arise from the bed which I was on; and when I had eaten a very small quantity, I set out for my father's old house, which was about two or three miles distant. As my health improved and strength gained, my happy feelings vanished, until my mind was filled with the thoughts of sin and folly. Soon did troubles roll like the troubled ocean, and my soul travailed in the midst of trial and toil for many days. But the time that had been set for a funeral meeting at my aunt's house was soon at hand, where Elders Caudel and Lawson were to preach her husband's funeral. My desire was to go, for the times were very few that I got to meeting. When the day had come, I went to meeting, to see and hear the brethren preach. But when I got there I found neither of the brethren, and all the people were disappointed. There was a very large audience of people assembled, and there was no minister to preach to them. One after another began to beg me to preach for them. Finally I got the consent of my mind to make the attempt, which was my third attempt. When I arose and began to view that large congrega-

tion, which was composed of nearly every class and order of people, the Spirit of the Lord began to move upon me, and I was blessed with much power and demonstration of the Spirit of God in preaching the gospel, as I believed; for it seemed that there was no end to the love of God in my soul. The glory of the great plan of salvation did greatly heighten my feelings and draw out my desires for the glorious cause of eternal truth. My mind, soul, and all, seemed to be full of light, and the glorious mysteries of godliness rolled up into my mind, and the whole gospel field seemed to be open before me. All fear of a carnal nature fled from my mind, and my strength (spiritual) came upon me (like Samson of old), and I rent the lion (carnal mind) like a kid, for I feared nothing of an earthly origin. I had soared beyond the fear of man, insomuch that I feared none but God. I closed the services, in the full triumphs of faith, feeling that God had preached most powerfully through me. Feeling so greatly encouraged, I sent out some appointments, that my love might be satisfied; for I had a very anxious and loving desire to go forth and speak of the wonder-workings of the eternal, sovereign God. At this meeting some did greatly wonder and say, What meaneth this, that so poor, ignorant, illiterate and foolish a boy as this should be so gifted in speech? for they knew something about my raising. But the larger portion of the congregation were saying to one another, He ought to be taken down from there; for who ever heard such doctrine, that Christ only died to save a part of the human race? Who is he? Raised down here in a dungeon, reared up in darkness, never knowing anything about the preaching of the gospel, and never had enough to eat in his life; and I have heard (they would say) that he never had a bed to lie upon, and always went half naked. Look at him now, with his rags on. Is he not a pretty looking fellow to be setting himself up as though he knew something? And many more such like degrading expressions did they use in ridiculing me. But when I had dismissed the congregation, I went toward home, and as I traveled I was in meditations, for the tempter met me in the way and told me that if I was what I had professed to be, there would not be so much clamor among the people, and there would not be so much malice against me. Many like suggestions were presented to me, and I soon began to almost despair of hope, in great doubts and fears. Finally, when I had arrived at home, those fears gradually abated, but still I would be greatly troubled concerning my preaching, and concluded that I would never try to preach any more. But when I would go to meeting where preaching was, I would weep as I would approach the congregation, seeing the pride, scorn and haughtiness of the people, and that the preacher did not check them in their pride, but only heightened them in their self-conceit, by telling them that salvation was in their

hands, and that all they had to do was to go to work and work it out for themselves. O how I wanted to tell the people that Jesus was their salvation; that it was not of the works of men, but that Jesus had already completed the great work of eternal salvation. And I wanted to tell them that Jesus gave salvation to none but the meek and poor in spirit, and that he gave it to them not because of anything that they had done or ever would do, but in mercy alone. It seemed that I could not hold my tongue from speaking in defense of the truth, and thus correct and warn both preacher and people. Then I could witness with the old prophet, and say, "O that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Yet I would forbear speaking, and leave the place without opening my mouth. But when I would leave those places of worship, and travel toward home, I would be greatly perplexed in my mind and feelings, because I had not warned the people of their erroneous professions, &c. Then down into some deep hollow I would go, and there petition for grace, or that God would forgive me for rebellion against him. I would say, O Lord, I will go and preach, from now on, at thy bidding, and fail not to warn thy people to flee from the wrath to come. Then I would arrive at home and there fight with Satan for a season. Sometimes I was upon mount Zion, in triumphant rejoicing, because of the glorious victory of Jesus over Satan and all the powers of darkness, in my stead. Time passed on, and I would go to meeting and try to preach, and warn the people against false doctrines of men, and return homeward reflecting upon my discourses, seeing the imperfections of my human nature in them, and how broken they were. I would then say within myself, This is the last time that I ever intend to open my mouth, for I surely am mistaken in a call to the ministry; for if God had called me, I surely could preach better than I do; for I imagined that a true minister would not make blunders as I did in preaching. So I concluded many times that God was not with me, or else I would be more perfect in my preaching; for I would think that God was always with his servants in great power from on high in preaching, and enabled them to expound the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven without imperfections. These thoughts were correct to a great extent; for God is always with his ministers; and when the preacher preaches at the Lord's command, then God is with the preacher in great power. But why I did not think this power was on me, was because I did leave down so many gaps in preaching. But these things were out of my sight, for I did not know that they were for my good. Notwithstanding my determinations to stop trying to preach, I would, in spite of all, when I would go to meeting, be compelled to rise to my feet and go right to preaching. Then I

would again resolve not to preach any more. Sometimes while traveling under this heavy burden, my knees would smite together, and I would fall upon my trembling knees, in much humbleness, saying, O Lord, forgive; I will bear it all; I will go at thy command; I will bear the toil, endure the pain, if thou wilt support me by thy word. The time was fast approaching when one of my appointments (which had been of long standing) would be at hand, and to which I must go. But considering the sins which I had committed in rebellion against God, in refusing to preach, and forgetfulness since I tried to preach the last time, I began to think within myself, O Lord, why is it so with me? Is it possible that I am deceived, and have joined myself to thy church, and have taken thy holy name in my defiled and wicked mouth, and have been baptized, and was all the time unfit? Lord, is it possible that I have been deceived all this time? O Lord, what is my certain doom? O! is it destruction, woe and misery? Then my prayer would be, O Lord, deliver me from these dreadful perplexities of mind, and make me thy faithful servant, though I know that I am unworthy of the least of thy favors; and if hell is my lot, thy righteous law approves it well. I was made willing, finally, for the Lord's will to be done with me; for I felt that if it was his will for me to go to hell or heaven, I was perfectly resigned to either, for I wanted his will to be done in all things. While I was plowing, about dark, on the night after the day of my appointment above named (which was Saturday night), which appointment I had failed to fill, a voice of sweet melody broke forth just above my head, and I looked up to see from whence such sweet music came. I imagined that there was much joy in the midst of that heavenly throng, for me, who was nothing but a poor, chastened, sinful youth, trembling beneath. And all of a sudden this vision passed away, and my trance was broken up in great love, for my feelings were beyond description. My soul was full of rejoicing and praises to God; for his mercy endureth forever, and his kindness is unwearied toward poor, rebellious me. Then I thought, I will go and preach thy loving gospel, for O how pleasant it is to obey the Lord, and go and tell the Lord's people of his enduring mercy and unwearied kindness to poor sinners. I seemed to be very willing for awhile to go and tell the people concerning Jesus. I passed through many trials and hardships, which I will not undertake to speak of; suffice it to say that sometimes when I would try to preach all obstacles would be removed from my mind, and I could see the gospel mysteries in great clearness, and would be enabled to speak with great liberty. At other times my mind would be greatly clouded, and my speech so clogged that I could not utter anything, and these conditions of mind would be when least expected by me; for when I would appear before a congregation of people,

and feel that I was going to preach, then it was that I would be disappointed. I would arise with a text in my mind, feeling like I was going to preach, and sometimes before I could quote my text, my mind would be so covered with dark clouds that I would not utter more than a half-dozen words before I would be speechless, and would have to sit down in shamefacedness; while at other times my mind would not be so clouded, but only partially eclipsed, so as to only enable me to touch upon points; and thus when my discourse would be ended, the people would have a multitude of points, and none of them carried out. When this would be the result of my trying to preach, I would resolve to quit trying to preach; but such resolutions have always been overthrown by the Holy Ghost; for there were (and are yet) times with me when I would go to meeting, that my mind would be in a dark dungeon, insomuch that I could not remember one word of Scripture, much less have a glimpse of gospel light. On arising before the people in this doleful frame of mind, I would say to myself, What will I say to this people? I know that I cannot say anything. O how I would dread to rise up before the people, feeling that I could not say one word in a preaching way, and therefore knew (as I thought) that I would have to sit down in shame and confusion. But my prayer was,

"Increase my courage, Lord,
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word."

Then, when I would get up and begin to speak, to my great surprise those dark clouds would be blown away in the twinkling of an eye; and instead of my mind being in a dungeon of darkness, it would be in the valley of lilies, roving among the flowers of the Canaan garden, and viewing the productions of the gospel field, in the midst of the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then I could not help but preach. O how happy I would feel. O, my dear preaching brethren, have you ever found anything as delightful as preaching the gospel? I can answer myself, that there is nothing so delightful to me as preaching the gospel, when the Holy Ghost is in me. O what a pleasant service is preaching, when the Spirit preaches through us. Yea, it is such a happy state of feeling that I have often thought that if it was the Lord's will, I would like to die (when my time comes) while preaching in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost. I will just say that without the Holy Ghost, trying to preach is the hardest labor I ever did; but to have the Holy Ghost in and upon me, when trying to preach, is the easiest and most pleasant labor I ever performed in my life.

Now, dear reader, I will try to tell you of a time when temptations began to roll in upon my mind without mercy (as it seemed), for they did beset me very heavily round about, upon every side, even when I would go to meeting. I did work very hard to get rid of those temptations, but I could not, for they followed me

whithersoever I went. This made me cry unto God, saying, O Lord, deliver me, or else I perish. And so he did deliver me; for one night, while bowed down upon my knees, a still, small voice whispered most sweetly to my understanding, "I was tempted, and did overcome; therefore I am come to succor you." It seemed, at the end of the words spoken, that my soul was filled with the sweetest and most melodious music I ever heard, and this blessed season was attended with a long season of much peace, in great love, as it seemed to me. But after the Lord had made me to see much peace, in this gracious deliverance from that great and sore temptation, and had established me so lovely in his most holy and divine faith of the gospel, and had given me so much consolation, and so strong and blessed an evidence, of my being delivered from the bondage of carnal fear into the love of Jesus Christ, finally I passed into a long winter of cold, grum feelings, attended with considerable trouble, at times, though at some of those times of severest toil and trouble I would call to mind God's great deliverances, in delivering me from so many storms of temptations, tribulations, trials and turmoils; and when those sweet remembrances would come into my mind, it would be like the small rain upon the parched growth of earth, in the time of great drouth, to my poor, thirsting soul. During those long, wintry seasons, I greatly desired to meet with the people of God, and hear them tell of their troubles, trials and deliverances, and to hear the servants of God preach, and try to preach myself, and thus feast together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that I might get rid of my dull burdens or lifeless state. But I could not go at this time, for my father was so poor that he could not furnish me with clothing fit to wear to meeting, and my former clothing was worn so badly that it was not fit to wear in public. This was a very great trouble to me, to think that I was so poor that I could not go into company with the clothing I then had, and I could not get any more, unless in some providential way which was out of my sight then. When the people, brethren and sisters, would pass by, going to meeting, I would watch them with tears as they passed. Then I would betake myself to the woods, in mourning the balance of the day; for I thought I surely was the most forlorn and desolate of all creatures, and consequently I felt to be a creature of dreadful circumstances. While wandering around in the woods one day, laboring, heavily weighted under these circumstances, I thought I would fall upon my knees and pray unto the God of mercy; but I could not find a place to suit me; for when I would approach a place where I thought I would bow, I would think that it was not solemn enough for me. O that I could find a place where I could prostrate myself in the deepest solemnity!

My sheet is now full. I subscribe myself yours, &c.,

WM. R. WELBORN.

GHENT, Ky., Sept. 27, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Our Lord said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."—John x. 9. While attending the Salem Association, in Boone County, Kentucky, recently, Elder P. Sawin, of Indiana, asked me to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some thoughts upon the last clause of that verse, "And shall go in and out, and find pasture." The parable of which this text is a part was spoken by our Lord to the unbelieving Jews. It presents, in its teachings to the inquiring saint, the Shepherd, the sheep and the sheepfold. The psalmist says, "The Lord is my Shepherd: I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."—Psa. xxiii. 1, 2. Our Lord says, "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Again he says, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." When David said, "The Lord is my Shepherd: I shall not want," he had a view of him who said, "I am the good Shepherd." He beheld him in his omnipotence; for he says, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." This wonderful attribute of our God is declared by him when he says, "I have power to lay it [my life] down, and power to take it again." None could lay down their lives and take them again but that eternal and omnipotent God who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. This wonderful, and to finite minds, incomprehensible attribute of our Lord shines forth in all his teaching when on earth. When the dear saints are enabled by faith to behold him to whom was given all power both in heaven and in earth, they can in holy triumph, with David, say, "The Lord is my Shepherd;" and when they, by the same power, are enabled to behold his matchless goodness and mercy towards the children of men, they can say, "I shall not want." Then what wonderful stores of riches and grace are treasured up in our Shepherd; for he of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. How superlatively glorious are those gifts to the redeemed! When they by the Spirit's power are brought into the sweet enjoyment of them, they are made to realize that he is the good Shepherd, and to say with the psalmist, "The Lord is my Shepherd: I shall not want." They cannot want when in the sweet enjoyment of that glorious assurance that he, their glorious Lord, is made unto them redemption. They then can say with the psalmist, "He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."—Psalm xcv. 7. But he says to them, "I lay down my life for the sheep." The penalty of the law that they had violated was death, and when he suffered that penalty, surely he was made unto them redemption. Then how wonderfully appropriate is his language, "I am the door: by me if any man

enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." But, brother Sawin, you will please remember that our Lord, from the first to the end of the fifth verse of this chapter, was talking about his own wonderful work, which he came to earth to accomplish. He says, "He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." The door here named is the door of prophecy. He could not reign in his own glorious kingdom without being in it, and he could not enter into it in any other way than that foretold by the prophets. Isaiah says, "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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. * * * He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." The prophet here has foretold his humiliation and suffering, by which he entered into that glorious kingdom. And when he had suffered, and risen from the grave, he said to two of his mourning disciples, "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. 26, 27. Then he entered into that sheepfold in complete accord with that which had been foretold of him by the prophets, and having thus entered by that door fixed in eternal and infinite wisdom, he is the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. He having entered by his own precious blood into the sheepfold, his church, can appropriately say, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." None can be saved but by the precious blood of Christ. "He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." Then he, having entered by the door of prophecy into the sheepfold, became the door to it, and none can enter into it but by him. None can enter into that sheepfold (the church) but by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. I am now talking about the church of the true and living God in its organized form. He set it up "in the days of those kings" (the Cæsars). He built it upon the rock, and none can enter it but those whom he redeemed when he offered himself a ransom for many. They (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." Their Lord hath said to them, "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; I will lead them in paths 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."—Isa. xlii. 16. All the ransomed of the Lord, by reason of their relation to the first Adam, are blind to all spiritual things. "Eyes have they, and see not." But our Lord said, by the mouth of the prophet, "I will bring the blind by a way they know not." But the bride says, "He brought me into his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." His banqueting house is his church in its organized form on earth. Into that church he leads his redeemed, and he declares the contrast between that church and all the worldly organizations when he says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." That church is spiritual, and none can truly enter it but those who are made spiritual in that new and spiritual birth. Being redeemed by the precious blood of our glorious Lord, and born of God, they enter into the sheepfold (the church) by the door, which is Christ; and having thus entered they have secured to them all the right, yea, and all the glorious blessings which belong to that church, and to each of its members. The apostle says to the elders at Ephesus, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." He uses the words, "flock," and "church," and applies them to the same organized body; and he says to those elders, "Feed the church." Our Lord said to Peter, "Feed my sheep," "Feed my lambs." Our Lord said in this parable, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Having entered in by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and by being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, he is fitted and prepared to be fed upon the riches of redeeming grace. Yes, he can then lie down in green pastures, beside still waters. Then he can go in and out, and find pasture. He can go into the church in her organized form, and behold the unity, harmony and sweet fellowship that pervade this heavenly family; and having ears to hear he can hear those elders proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ; not talking about themselves, but about that wonderful name in which is embodied all the infinitely glorious perfections of our God. To look upon these perfections, even through a glass darkly, fills the dear saints with a joy that is inexpressible and full of glory. Then surely they find pasture there, and, with David, they cry out, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." Yes, "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints." But these sweet and heavenly pastures are not confined alone to the congregations of the saints. Our Lord said, "He shall go in and out, and find pasture." Do you suppose, dear saint, that they have ever had a richer feast than those two disciples who

were journeying from Jerusalem to Emmaus, and heard that more than wonderful sermon that fell from the lips of their risen Lord when he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, which made them say one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way?" Surely they found pasture; the richest, sweetest, most luxuriant pasture upon which any of the saints had ever fed. But the loving-kindness of our Lord has ever been manifested to his people, and that, too, often when they least expected or looked for it. Even far back in the patriarchal age the Lord made himself known to Jacob at Bethel, and caused him to cry out, "The Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." And in the prophetic age, when Isaiah, lifted above the vanities, pollutions and corruptions of a sin-cursed world, cried out, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Now, dear saints, let us come home, and hold sweet converse with each other. How often has each one of you been led into green pastures, beside the still waters of that love which binds the whole redeemed family together in sweet and heavenly union. How often, when in social converse with each other, have you been fed by hearing from the lips of some dear brother or sister the glory of your exalted Lord proclaimed, which filled your hearts with joy and rejoicing, and made you say with Jacob, "The Lord is in this place." When hearing these heavenly truths, tears of joy and rejoicing have coursed down your cheeks, and caused you to cry out in the language of the psalmist, "O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him, all ye people!" Yes, you desire that all shall praise him as you are enabled to do when you are drinking at the never-failing fountain of redeeming love, and are thus led into green pastures. Yes, you sometimes, when reading the christian experiences of some of the dear saints, or when led by the writings of some dear brother or sister published in the SIGNS, giving unto the Lord the glory due unto his holy name, are lifted above sublunary things, and are fed bountifully from the pastures of God's regenerating grace. Thus in the congregation of the Lord you find pasture in witnessing the order of God's house, and in hearing the everlasting gospel preached by the faithful ministering servants of our God, who are determined not to know anything among the dear saints save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. When outside of this congregation you sometimes are mourning the absence of your Lord, and, like the bride, you, amidst the cares and darkness of earth, are made mournfully to say, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways. I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not." Ah, dear saint, how often it has been with you, when in the congregation

of the Lord, when in that great and glorious city, the church of the true and living God, that you have been groping in darkness and thick gloom, and mourning the absence of your glorious Lord. Often in the streets and broad ways of Zion, witnessing the order of God's house, you have been made to cry out, "I sought him, but I found him not." Yes, in this gloom and thick darkness the watchmen that go about the city have found you. Your cry unto them has been, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" Although they may have been gazing upon his beauty with the purest delight, yet they could not dispel the darkness of that night that overshadowed you; but the bride says, "It was but a little that I passed from them [the watchmen,] but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go." How wonderfully precious to the saints is the presence of their Lord when emerging from those conflicts in which they have been down deep in the pit of humility, with scarcely a ray of light from the great Luminary of the gospel heavens to cheer them in their conflicts with sin and Satan. But when he appears, with healing in his wings, all that darkness disappears, and with the bride you are ready to say, "I held him, and would not let him go." Surely you then have found pasture, and witnessed with joy the fulfillment of this promise of our Lord, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Being filled with that righteousness, you surely have found pasture, yea, never failing pastures of redeeming love and regenerating grace, to sustain you in life, in death, in the dark caverns of the tomb, and bring you, on the glorious morning of the resurrection, together with all the redeemed family, in holy and heavenly triumph, into the unfading and never failing inheritance of the saints in glory, there throughout a never ending eternity, in the sweet melodies of the skies, to give honor, glory, power, might, majesty and dominion to that wonderful name which hath done all things well.

Brother Sawin will please accept these poor, feeble thoughts, if they are published, as a token of my unfeigned christian love and fellowship for him, and for the whole household of faith, and the brethren editors will please dispose of this as they may deem best, and, believe me, affectionately yours,

H. COX.

SMITH'S STATION, Ala., Sept. 20, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—I see in the last issue of the SIGNS an exposition of a portion of the fifth chapter of Revelation. As I have been somewhat exercised upon that subject I will offer a few thoughts. Not that I wish any controversy, and I may be wrong in my conclusions (if so, I wish to be set right); but I simply wish to state the peculiar burden and anxiety I have had in reference to that Scripture, and its having been impressed upon my

mind; and having preached it, I have never felt to retract. There may not be a lack of harmony in our views.

"And I saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." John was commanded to write what had been, and what then was, and what would be hereafter; and if I have any understanding in the revelation, it reaches from eternity to eternity, and I believe the whole plan of salvation is herein revealed. And when John said, "I saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne a book," he carries us back before the highest hills were formed, or the dust of the earth was fashioned into man. Christ is represented as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Jesus also said, "Before Abraham was, I am." "Abraham saw my day, and was glad." I will also refer to God's interrogation to Job, where the same idea is presented. Jesus also said, "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." We gather from that the idea of Jesus occupying a throne in glory before the world was, and I believe that this is set forth in this Scripture. He also held in his right hand a book. A book sets forth a covenant, or rather represents a covenant. It is written in the volume of the book, "I come to do thy will, O God." This book, I understand, represents the covenant of redemption; and that which was written within is secret. As there is an eternal and a time side, I understand the outside to be the time side, and the inside to be the eternal side. We must also remember that none were able to take the book nor look thereon. At the time it was to be taken and opened, there was none found in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, that was able or worthy to look thereon, nor to loose the seven seals thereof. When there was no eye to pity, his own arm brought salvation. We believe, according to the word of the Lord, that there was a covenant which was ordered in all things and sure, called the everlasting covenant. We believe in a covenant God, a covenant Savior and a covenant gospel. And we, if we are the children of God, are a covenant children; and if indeed we are not covenant children, I cannot see how we can have hope. Jesus commanded joy to his apostles because their names were written in heaven, and not so much because devils were subject to them. So the same truth is yet a source of joy when known. Paul spoke of God's children being chosen in Christ before the world began. Jesus also testified that power was given him over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. Again, we read that all Christ's members were written in the book, when as yet there were none of them. This purpose of God in his eternal Spirit, by which Christ offered himself without spot to God, was done upon a covenant and counsel principle, but was written within, and

sealed with seven seals. I understand the seven seals to represent the perfections of God; some call them attributes. And this covenant was thus sealed, and the types and symbols and the law may represent the writing on the back side; for we read of the old and new covenant; and the new covenant we understand to be the first. It was an eternal covenant, and can never be old; but the time covenant may wax or become old, and vanish away. We must also remember that the seals were loosed, and not violently broken. And there was none found worthy nor able, neither in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth; for it required one like the Lamb, between heaven and earth, suspended on the tree of the cross, and made like unto his brethren; for it behooved him to suffer, and to die, and to rise again on the third day, that repentance and remission of sins might be preached in his name, beginning at Jerusalem. Thus in coming and taking the book out of his right hand only, represents his two-fold ability and responsibility; that he had promised to do this when help was laid upon one that was mighty: He therefore proved that he was worthy and able; for he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; and by his divine power he was fully able to meet the demand, and to cope with and overcome the arch-fiend, and to rise as conqueror over death, hell and the grave. He is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and he prevailed to loose the seven seals thereof. The children were partakers of flesh and blood, and he likewise took part of the same. He could not have been worthy unless he had taken part of the same, in a law sense; for the angels were not under the law that Adam was, hence that nature could not have paid the debt, and hence he could not have made satisfaction; but by the seed of Abraham he became fit or worthy, as I understand it. And I believe that all that are saved are saved in harmony with the perfections of God. He, like a lion, comes forth from his lair, and meets his foes, in the hour and article of his death. When all hell was jubilant over his death, he, like Samson, goes down into the Gaza of hell, leads captivity captive, and carries the gates of hell so far and high as to be impossible for them ever to be carried back. Hence he says that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his little flock. Prior to this crowning act, the old dispensation was one of interrogation, and the strong angel proclaimed, "Who is worthy and able to open the book, and to loose the seals?" Surely Moses was not, nor Elijah, nor any of the prophets; for none could be found. But at the expiration of the legal day, the gospel day opens with the voice of the Elder. The voice of the gospel is one voice; it is the voice of joy and glad tidings to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Governor, who shall rule God's people, Israel. The Elder saith, "Weep not." It is not a voice of

condemnation and hellfire, as some would have it, but of love, peace and salvation. This is what dries the tears, when they shall be wiped from their faces, and the rebuke of his people taken away. The strong angel may make us weep when we hear his voice, saying, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and the query, "Who is worthy and able?" but the voice, "Weep not, for the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed," makes us rejoice and leap for joy. Herewith we are able to say, "I have found a ransom." Jesus hath prevailed, and revealed the secret hid in ages past, saying, "I am he that was, and is, and is to come." "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and am alive forevermore, Amen, and have the keys of death and of hell." This is the mystery which was kept secret from the foundation of the world, but is now manifest to the heirs of promise.

I have but touched upon the subject. It seems that it is all embodied, by way of description, in this fifth chapter of Revelation. And I think that all the Scriptures are sealed until revealed by the Spirit, and we are altogether dependent upon the Lord of light and glory for a true knowledge of his word. All the carnal reason combined can never find out God's secrets. He has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

OZARK, Ala., Aug. 19, 1886.

FOR many days I have been in a state of despondency, and been made to wonder if the Lord has ever commenced a work with me. I have tried to examine myself, and I find nothing but sin and pollution. When I think of the past I recall the many happy seasons and many acts of kindness and appreciation of the dear saints; and this evening I received a soul-refreshing letter from sister Cordie A. Yeoman. I have also been blessed of late to receive many precious letters, giving me encouragement. Sisters Kate Bartley, Mary Parker, L. E. Sellers, Elders Lively, Redd, Riggs, and many others, have all written comforting communications to me. How can God's people write to such a poor dust as I am? I cannot at times have a ray of light. It seems that the Lord is clean gone, and has not been gracious. Surely the unregenerate, or those who have never made any pretensions, cannot feel more barren and indifferent than I do. Then what am I, that I should write or talk about the goodness and mercy of God? No later than last Sunday I tried to preach at one of the churches which I serve, and I felt like I was in a new world. I almost lost sight of earth. But I feel now that I could move a mountain, or change myself to an insect, as easy as I could soften my poor, hard, depraved heart. The great query with me is this, Am I embraced in the covenant of grace, or have I caught at the shadow and missed the substance? I know that I cannot have the walk a christian

ought to have. I have a desire every day 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? A poor sinner, who feels the need of Jesus. I am nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. "I am a worm, and no man." How is it that God's dear saints can write such sweet communications to me, and tell me exactly how I feel? It surely must be the Lord directing them. Beloved christian, when you think of me you think of a poor orphan who was reared in obscure poverty, and one of the vilest of the vile. Dear brother Welborn, you have described my feelings in your writings. I was deprived of hearing preaching, and was a total stranger to Primitive Baptists until after I professed a hope in Jesus. And here I wish to say that when Jesus was revealed to me as my Savior, salvation by grace, eternal, absolute predestination of all things, the atonement, all were shown to me. God's children are all absolute predestinarians, when they can understand it. I cannot see how brethren can believe in the Godhead, and deny any part of predestination. I believe God made me for a purpose, and he is controlling me, and his care has been over me all my life. If I am a child of God all the demons combined can have no effect upon my eternal life. It was in Christ in eternity; and not only my life, but the life of every heir of promise was in Christ. Christ is the life of his people. And before one for whom Christ atoned can be eternally lost, that life will have to be taken out of Christ. For it is Christ in you, and you in him. Then if the devil can take the life of one out of Christ, he can take the life of all who are in Christ; and if his power so much exceeds Christ's as that, he can take Christ to the bottomless pit. Hence we conclude that the elect are safe, though they be in heathen lands. All whose life is hid in Christ are saved now. What a sure dwelling place for the poor, weary pilgrim. The Lord has been our dwelling place in all generations. Many times we feel forsaken by all on earth, but in Jesus we find a sweet refuge and dwelling place.

I have been quite feeble for some days, but I feel that the Lord is controlling my afflictions. I do not have any pains but what the Lord sends upon me for my good. God controls the raven and sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our head. There has not been a leaf that could shake without God's purpose. God works beyond the sight of finite creatures. Can I set bounds for God, and then impeach him with injustice if he transcends those bounds? "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 am I, or what is man? I may devise my way, but the Lord directs all my steps. I may trust in my own strength, but "cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Then I can

say, I am a stranger to myself. The hardest one I find to fellowship is myself. I am often surprised at my own walk.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

Christians, do you have such feelings, or am I alone? I often feel that I am the worst of all.

Dear brethren and sisters, I do appreciate your precious communications in the SIGNS, and to poor me. I hope you will still continue to write to me, and not forget me in your prayers. I feel impressed to write on the different gifts, and if it continues I may in the future write something about it. The Baptists here are in peace. We are having additions occasionally.

Yours in gospel bonds,
LEE HANCKS.

CAPP'S FORD, Tenn., April 18, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERS IN THE LORD:—According to my promise, the time to send in my remittance is at hand. Now, brethren, as I have to write to you, I will try to tell you some of God's dealings with my poor soul. I will begin by saying that I was born July 10, 1850, according to the record of my parents. I always, from my boyhood, thought that some day in the future I would get religion. I was certain I could get it whenever I would try. I went on with such an idea as that for a long time; and I was certain at that time that when I did get religion I would know it certainly. The idea of doubts and fears I could not believe. I verily believed that I would be the happiest person in the world; yet I thought there would be time enough to do this when I should get older, so I put it off, thinking I would attend to it some time in the future. When I was in my seventh year, one day my mother and I had some talk about religion. I was unconcerned about it, thinking I would attend to that some day before long. I went out to my work, and was going to cut down a tree, for some purpose which I do not now recollect; but I shall never forget the place. I sat down to rest, and began to reflect on the subject of religion, and right then and there I was made to see and feel that I was a lost, undone, ruined sinner. I then tried to pray, but it seemed to do me no good, but rather made me feel worse, if possible. So I began to try to put it off by thinking of something else; but it would still haunt my mind, so that I could not be satisfied at any time nor place. I would think many times that I would go off by myself, and I would pray with all my power, and do all I could, as I had always been taught that there was a work that I could and must do before the Lord would do anything for me. Then I would get so fearful of the devil that he would appear to be near me, so that I was afraid to try. This made my case awful beyond description. I did not know what to do. I now saw it was different from what I

had once thought. The thought of trying to pray in the presence of others seemed more than I could endure. I tried to put these feelings off by seeking some worldly amusement; but then I would think that if I put this thing off God would withdraw his Spirit from me, and then there would be no chance for me. I was also taught that if any one was often preached to, who would not yield, that God would withdraw his Spirit from them; so I was afraid to listen to the preacher, for fear that God would get angry with me, and withdraw his Spirit forever from me. How long I was in this situation I could not tell exactly, but more than a year I suppose. My ups and downs during that time space will not admit to speak of. There was a protracted meeting going to be held near where I lived. I thought I would try to spend the whole time in seeking the Lord, and that if I could find him in a week it would be a week well spent. So I went to the mourners' bench to be prayed for, but it only seemed to make my case worse. I thought no one was interested in my case, and that God was angry with me. I really thought I was going to die before long, and that to hell I would have to go. I saw no chance of escape. I thought God would not notice me at all, yet I was determined to never do as I had done, even though I went to hell. I thought I would quit the mourners' bench and go into the woods by myself, but not thinking that I would find any relief, for I thought my case was a hopeless one; but I thought I could do as well there as anywhere else. I went where a tree had been torn up, got down on my knees and began to try to pray. How long I was there I cannot tell; but while I was there I thought I saw Jesus and a host of little ones around him. While I was looking at him my burden went, I know not where. I there and then began to study what it meant. I did not feel like staying there any longer. I did not feel like praying, nor like shouting. I did not know what to think of it; but the thought finally came to me that it was religion. I then got up and viewed myself, but thought I saw no mark of any change that was perceptible to the eye. The thought then came to me that the devil was trying to deceive me, and get me to quit praying. Then my feelings were awful again. I knelt down again to try to pray, and soon felt perfectly easy again. I then started to go to the house where meeting was going on, and my case appeared to me in this way, that I was like an old, dirty garment washed perfectly clean. I also thought I should never suffer again. But O how sadly I was disappointed! for when I went to the house and saw the mourners going up to be prayed for, the thought came to me, Are you not going to be prayed for? Then doubts and fears began to arise.

Now, brethren, I shall close this for the present, but the half has not been told. I want to say to you that I think more of the SIGNS OF THE

TIMES than any paper I ever saw. I hope you may have great success in your undertakings.

P. N. MOYERS.

BATAVIA, N. Y., Sept. 29, 1886.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—There are times, undoubtedly, in the experience of all the children of God when the goodness and mercy of God are so manifest that they exclaim with the psalmist, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men." Even in the things of this life it is wonderful how his creatures are blessed with fruitful seasons and bountiful harvests. Timely rains and favorable circumstances all alike seem to conspire to clothe the earth with beauty, and bring forth plentiful supplies for all the creatures of God. But man, above all other creatures, seems the most ungrateful; complaining alike when there is any scarcity, or when there is an over-production. The sin does not seem to be so much that the complaints are really made, but more because there is a disposition in the heart to find fault and question the dealings of the all-wise Creator. Is it not strange that among all the millions that inhabit this earth there is not one who will give true praise to God for his benefits? Justice would require that such ingratitude should be rewarded with being deprived of the blessings of God's providence. But here is shown the mercy of God and his long-suffering. The summer and winter, rain and sunshine, seed-time and harvest, still continue from year to year; and through the merciful care of God, blessings upon blessings are still continued to an ungrateful world, and not one among them all to give their Creator and Provider true thanks and praise. But is it so in the spiritual kingdom of our God? In Isaiah lxiii. we read, "I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed upon us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindness." God in his great goodness and mercy chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. This people, who are created in righteousness and true holiness, will show forth the praises of him who has redeemed them and saved them with an everlasting salvation. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. This people, who do walk in good works, will show forth the praises of their God and Savior. Great and marvelous things have been done by their Savior for them, and that they know right well; having been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Jesus Christ.—Col. i. 13. They not only have reason for praise, but they do call upon their hearts and

all that is within them to praise and magnify his holy name. I believe it is true that this holy nation will always love their Savior and walk in good works; not the works which the people of this world may call good, but in spiritual works, which none but the spiritually taught can know or understand. Although, in our experience as christians, there seems to be a constant mixture of good and evil, yet I truly believe the two streams of good and evil can never mix, but are as distinct and separate as light and darkness. But amid all this warfare of the old and new man, it is a comfort to know that "Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed; that henceforth we should not serve sin."—Rom. vi. 6. And we, if children of God, stand complete in Jesus Christ. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you."—Rom. viii. 9. This being true, we can rejoice in God more and more as we see our deliverance, and praise him as his wonderful salvation is revealed to us in its beauty and perfection. When the Lord comforts us with the assurance of our salvation, so that we may know that we have eternal life, there is nothing in all the world that can compare with the joy we receive. Our precious Savior has promised eternal life to his people, and when we have this life we are saved with an everlasting salvation; and sometimes, amid all this dreadful warfare which we experience in this life, our Savior gives us this assurance. Then we can rejoice with the people of God, and praise him for our salvation.

Yours in hope of life,
B. F. HAMILTON.

LEESBURG, Va., Oct. 21, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have received so much comfort this night from reading this letter, I have concluded to send it to you for publication, if in your judgment you think best to do so.

E. V. WHITE.

POOLESVILLE, Md., Feb. 18, 1886.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have wanted to write you for a long time, but have postponed it from time to time, and now feel that I must do so, and thank you for so kindly sending for the paper for us, and the hymn book, which I prize so highly. I can never express to you, dear brother, what a comfort the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is to us; indeed I foresee that it will become almost a necessity, situated as we are, in a land of churches and preaching, yet cut off, as it were, from it all, no comfort being there for us. I feel as if I never care to hear any more of it. I have not heard one of them since my baptism. Our meetings are so few and far apart, I almost count the days, and am much disappointed if we are not permitted to meet; but I try to be reconciled, knowing that one rules who cannot err, and that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord. But ah! that is just

what troubles me, as well as comforts me. Do I love the Lord? Have I a right to a place among his people? These are my stumbling-blocks. I often wonder what made you all receive me so willingly. It could not have been from any evidence you had, for I feel as if I had told you so little; and in that little, perhaps, I deceived both you and myself. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." That is most comforting to me, because I can realize that at least, for I do love the brethren; and if they should turn me off, as they would have a perfect right to do, one so weak and unworthy, who can never be any credit to them, where else could I go? No other preaching ever went to my heart, except what I have heard from our own people. Although I have listened to perhaps hundreds, and honestly tried to believe what they said, I have often felt that I would give anything if I could only feel as they did, and be as happy as they seemed; but something always kept me back. I could not believe in it, and knew that all that noise and outside show would never satisfy me; and then I would feel so hard-hearted, and would wonder what was the matter with me. I can truly tell you that the day of my baptism, although a trying one in some respects, was the very happiest one of my life. I had no doubts nor fears then. I am thankful that it was so, that it was really thanksgiving with me. The fears came soon enough, but not with quite such intensity until after I had first partaken of the Lord's supper, when I came home and read this, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."—I Cor. xi. 29. That fearful sentence startled me. I knew my weakness and unworthiness, and I thought, That surely applies to me. I try not to repine too much. If it is the Father's will, in his own good time he will give me the assurance I long for. Until then I have many, very many things to be thankful for, and will wait and trust him still. But I should not worry you with my troubles, only you have been so good to me in the past, I know you will still have patience. Hoping to see you soon, I am, I trust,

Your sister,

MOLLIE GOTT.

MONROE STATION, Ark., Oct. 15, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I wish you would say to your patrons through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that this country is destitute of Old School Baptists, and there is a good opening for a minister of that order here. Land is cheap, and the people are anxious for emigration to this part. I am extremely anxious for an Old Baptist preacher to come in here. I do not belong to anything, but I do love the doctrine as advocated through the SIGNS. Grace is all my hope.

I am, respectfully,

B. A. BEASLEY.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers of the several churches composing the Salisbury Association, assembled in annual session, address to the churches represented the following letter.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE FAITH:—Although we have professed to know the Lord so as to love and fear him, and confide in his faithfulness and truth, yet we know but parts of his ways. His providential dealings with us are often dark and perplexing, and his purposes entirely hidden. So if we travel at all, we have to walk much of the time in darkness. If his people could see him in every event that concerns them, they would, no doubt, be satisfied that all these events were controlled in the interest and for the benefit of his cause and their best good. But while afflictions betide, and darkening clouds indicate approaching storms, all gracious designs and purposes are hidden, and the end to be accomplished is out of sight. So the prophet complains, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior."

—Isaiah xlv. 15. He is none the less Israel's God when the fact is hidden from them; but in regard to his relationship to them he sees fit to withhold himself from their sight, and their faith is thus subjected to trial. So the old patriarch laments, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." If he could always be seen, and his purposes understood, no event that might take place would be any trial. The faith of the Lord's people is characterized as being so precious that the trial and proof of it becomes precious; yea, more precious than the trial and proof of gold. Its praise is not to men, but to God. Its existence in the heart and life of men evinces a knowledge of God, such as only comes by experience and divine teaching. Many great and important promises have been made to men quite generally in the face of nature, and when it seemed scarcely possible that they could be fulfilled. And then the arrangements of providence would seem to be set against the promise, to cut off on every hand, and with repeated strokes, every prospect, and any and every event tending in the direction of the fulfillment of the promise. This may be seen by referring to the promise made to Abraham in regard to an heir. Ishmael was rejected and cast out; and afterwards, when Isaac was born as the child of promise, the command comes for him to be sacrificed. So Jacob, after having the promise renewed and confirmed repeatedly, was at one time threatened with utter destruction by his brother Esau. At another time he was compelled by famine to abandon the land promised to him, and seek refuge in a strange country. We may remember, also, how David, after having been anointed by the inspired prophet, was hunted like a partridge upon the mountains,

until there seemed to be no hope for his escape. At another time he is saying, "One day I shall fall by the hand of Saul." It was the peculiar character of the faith of holy men of old that they still loved and obeyed the Lord, however dark his providence, and without murmuring or repining, quietly waited his will. If such has been his almost uniform course in his providential dealings with men in regard to temporal things, it has been especially so in the dispensations of his grace in a new and better covenant.

In the first place, the law, with its holy and righteous requirements, stands directly in the way of the justification of the sinner. Its demands come home continually to the conscience, bringing a sense of condemnation and wrath. As soon as the voice from heaven had declared that Jesus was the beloved Son, in whom the Father was well pleased, immediately he is driven into the wilderness to encounter Satan with temptations and accusations that he is not the Son of God. Christ prayed for Peter, not that he should not be tried, but that his faith should not fail. There are many great and precious promises, but they are not promises of exemption from tribulations, from fire, and from flood, but only of divine support. "The billows shall not overflow thee." "The flame shall not kindle upon thee." "I will be with thee," &c. Paul was a praying man, and he says he thought he had the Spirit of God; yet he prayed that the thorn in his flesh might depart from him; but instead of its being removed, he was assured that he should be sustained. "My grace is sufficient for thee." The Lord claims that the plants of his planting are evergreens, and that through all seasons of winter and dearth, their leaves shall be green, and that they shall not cease from blooming and yielding fruit. Although he declares that he keeps his vineyard, and waters it every moment, nevertheless he suffers tribulation and persecution for the word's sake, so that those who have no root in themselves will ere long fall away, and those who are approved be made manifest. So he will prove the genuineness of his own work, and that his people are possessed of a principle that will endure temptation. When they have been tried, they come forth as gold. The temptations and trials that they endure become a testimony both to them and of them, that they are the people of God. In times of trial, the faithfulness of God to his people is proved, in the support it offers them in their time of need. Having faith, or being believers, does not imply that we are walking in the sunshine, and enjoying fair sailing; but rather it is as the anchor that sustains the vessel through storms and tempests; and its presence is most needed and felt in dark and trying times. Though the way be dark, and all before us looks gloomy, we still travel patiently on. Those who have seen the King in his beauty will still love him and follow him, though for the time his

face may seem to be hidden. When he is out of sight his promises are also out of sight, and then we learn what it is to walk by faith. "Dost thou still maintain thine integrity?" suggests the tempter. But where else shall we go? God is true, and his word is true, whatever becomes of us. While the Lord protects his people, and they need his protecting care, their faith needs no nursing. It will sustain itself, and sustain them, too. Trials and discouragements are the footprints of those who have gone before; and we need not think that some strange thing has happened unto us. If we can see him in the storm it at once becomes a calm. His voice, saying, "It is I," will calm the mind and hush the tumult in the most trying events. The truth shines brighter when darkness prevails around, and is upon the path of the just a shining light. That pillar that directed the course of Israel in the wilderness, while it was a pillar of cloud in the day time from the heat, was the shining of a flaming fire by night. Its light did not penetrate the darkness that enveloped the Egyptians.

May the Lord abundantly bless the provision of his house, so that his hungry may be satisfied with the goodness thereof. He has said, "Blessed are they which do hunger." You have much for which to be thankful. You are united in love and confidence, and you are characterized by fellowship in the Spirit and much real enjoyment. We have no control over ministerial gifts, which the Father hath put in his own power; but he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself. Let us be prompt and faithful in attendance upon appointments, and so encourage ministers to visit among us. It is no time for members to be slack or neglectful. Let them hold up each other's hands, and endeavor to cheer their drooping spirits. In the very hour when the powers of darkness apparently triumphed, Jesus said, "Be of good cheer." There is no night so dark but we may say, "The morning cometh." No good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Little Creek, Sussex Co., Del., to the churches and messengers of her correspondence, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—We thus address you because of that hope which is Christ. We trust that the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, and also yours, which can make us of one heart and one mind, which is the ground of fellowship. Hence we trust that our correspondence is in the Spirit, and we desire a continuance of such brotherly love and correspondence. The Master of assemblies, the Giver of all good, has continued this blessing to us, of meeting again, and a few of your messengers have met with us, in the fullness

of the blessing of the gospel, which is good evidence that the God of love has sent them. Those blessings which are in Christ Jesus are being manifested to us, as it has pleased him who is the Blessing. It becomes us as unworthy recipients of them to walk humbly before him, and to love mercy.

Love, peace and harmony have prevailed during the entire session, which is a sweet assurance that the God of love has presided over even our deliberations. We trust it is in our hearts to pray for a continuance of this correspondence in love.

We have appointed to meet again, if the Lord will, with our sister church in Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1887, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and correspondence again.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

MEMORIALS.

(From the Salisbury Association.)

WHEREAS, Our beloved brother and recently ordained Elder, JOHN W. TIMMONS, has, during the past year, been removed from the field of his labors and usefulness by death, we feel called upon to place on record an expression of our sorrow and sense of bereavement. We did hope that his call to the ministry, and his endowment with such promising gifts, was a gracious boon of the Head of the church to the destitute branches of this association, and that we should have long enjoyed his loving labors among the churches. He who has ever supplied his churches still abides faithful, and he knoweth our needs. But while we wait upon him in faith and hope, we would nevertheless acknowledge that we feel sorely stricken and afflicted. And though we believe our dear brother has departed to be with Christ, which is far better, yet we feel to sorrow for his bereaved family, for the churches now deprived of his faithful labors, and for ourselves as an association; having suffered a breach that is not likely soon to be healed. May the great Giver be mindful of us.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

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

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1886.

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

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.

BROTHER W. L. BEEBE:—I wish to submit to you for your consideration a question or two. If you have any light on the subject, please reply through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We read in Matthew iii. 11 that John baptized with water unto repentance for the remission of sins. We also learn from reading the Scriptures that Jesus came without sin unto salvation—that he had no sins of his own to repent of; then why was he baptized of John in Jordan unto repentance for the remission of sins? Was it only for example or pattern for his people to follow? Was it not more than an example for them to follow?

Yours, to serve,

C. MARRS.

FAYETTEVILLE, W. Va., July 19, 1886.

REPLY.

IN the revelation of salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ there is nothing which can be understood by natural reason. The visible organization of the church is not the pure spiritual body of Christ, for corruption and dissensions were discovered even in the apostolic age in the very churches organized under the inspired direction of those who were guided by the Holy Ghost. The literal fact that John baptized by divine authority is accepted by those who are satisfied of the truth of the records written by the evangelists, even though they receive that testimony only as history. Yet even at that time the most learned and zealous class of religionists confessed that they could not tell whence that baptism came, whether it was from heaven or of men.—Matt. xxi. 23-27. Literally the work of John was declared by Gabriel to Zacharias when his birth was announced, with the promise, "And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."—Luke i. 14-17. This work was fulfilled by the preaching and baptism of John. Neither the truth preached nor the ordinance administered by that favored servant of God could make ready any others except that people who were "prepared for the Lord." Hence, when many others came to his baptism he denounced them with their claim of merit on the ground of their natural relation to Abraham. If immersion had been all the preparation required, then John might have received them without requiring "fruits meet for repentance." On the contrary, being "filled with the Holy Ghost," John saw that they were not

the prepared people whom it was his privilege to make ready. Their trust in their natural birth gave evidence that they were destitute of that preparation which was required before John's baptism could make them ready for the Lord. How clearly does this record expose the presumptuous folly of all those who profess to have ability to prepare sinners for the reception of the salvation of the Lord! The hope of divine favor by reason of pious natural parentage is also here cut off, since none can bring a higher claim on this ground than those who were Abraham's children naturally. As that plea was rejected, and the evidence of repentance was required of those who had trusted in it, clearly no other natural parentage can authorize a hope of acceptance in the sight of the holy God.

The repentance unto which John baptized the "people prepared for the Lord," was not that grief on account of conscious sin which is often mistaken for repentance by the religious world; that repentance which Jesus gives to his Israel is wrought by godly sorrow.—See 2 Cor. vii. 10. This scriptural repentance is a turning away from that in which the penitent has formerly lived. Hence, those Jews whose trust had been in the legal covenant were not manifest as subjects of this repentance while they yet boasted in their natural relation to Abraham. Evidently the natural mind could not discern the peculiar qualification of those who were prepared for the Lord, else those eminent Jews would have known that they were not the people whom John was sent from God to make ready. On the other hand, if their natural mind could see in themselves this repentance, the saints would have no further warfare in themselves.

While John was by inspiration enabled to discover and reprove the vain confidence of those legalists who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others, he was not yet able to understand the wonderful mystery to which brother Marrs calls attention. He could comprehend the necessity of his work in giving expression to the repentance of his natural brethren the Jews, whose hopeless condemnation under the law forbade their trust in that covenant of works; but he needed a deeper lesson to enable him to see the propriety of the Lord himself receiving baptism at his hands. Jesus explained only that "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It was indeed a very impressive example, which has by the Spirit been brought home to the experience of many of his doubting and lingering disciples in all the ages since he made Jordan glorious by bowing beneath its waters; but it was more than an example. It was the expression of the whole gospel of divine grace, in which the great Captain of our salvation 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.—Heb. ii. 14, 15. Neither in this ordinance nor in any other action or word of our Lord would we dare to limit his purpose merely to a ceremonial example. Only the blessed Comforter, the Spirit who searches even the deep things of God, can know the fathomless depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, as contained in every word and deed of our Lord. As he was made under the law of Moses to redeem them that were under that law, so he was made a curse for us. "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. As being holy and sinless in himself, Christ Jesus was and is above all law, and can neither sin nor suffer; but in his unity with the church of his redeemed people "he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."—Isa. liii. 12. As he was so identified with his people that their sins were justly laid on him, in that relation he must go down into death and be cut off in their transgressions. So he went down into the depth of all the condemnation which rested upon them for whom he died. This was expressed in the figure of baptism in Jordan; and it was then and there assigned by the Lord as his reason for requiring John to baptize him, that "Thus it becometh us."

In taking upon him the form of a servant, Jesus recognized the authority of Moses even as vested in the Scribes and Pharisees; and while denouncing their hypocrisy, he taught obedience to their commandments.—Matthew xxiii. 3. By fulfilling every jot and tittle of that law of a carnal commandment, which was given by Moses, Jesus blotted "out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."—Col. ii. 14. To accomplish this work it was needful that he should be made under the law; and it is in this relation to his body, the church, that we understand there was propriety in his being baptized in declaration of his death under the law, and his resurrection by the glory of the Father to that eternal newness of life in which he leads captivity captive, and is glorified with the right hand of Omnipotence in all the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. There is no other being in whom that law is fulfilled in all its infinite perfection; therefore the name of Jesus is exalted above "every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." As he made himself of no reputation in coming under the law, it was needful that he should declare his death to that law by the divinely authorized ordinance of baptism before he began to preach the gospel of salvation by grace. The repentance unto which he was baptized was the turning away from the legal dispensation, with all its rites, to the gospel kingdom, in which

he was about to bring to light that life and immortality which had been hid from ages under the darkness of the night of just condemnation, since sin had entered into the world. In this repentance the Lord Jesus had no sins to confess but the inconceivable burden of the iniquities of his people, which were laid on him by divine justice. In himself he was without sin;

"For he who could for sin atone
Must have no blemish of his own."

It is not said of Jesus that he was baptized "unto the remission of sins." His own explanation of it to John was that "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It did indeed testify that he turned away from that legal bondage and left its weak and beggarly elements which could not give life. This was the most wonderful display of the superiority of the gospel dispensation; that he who alone was faultless in the sight of the law, yet resigned all claims to justification on that ground, that he might lead the way in the path of the just, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The righteousness which shines in the Lord Jesus is infinitely superior to the best obedience which could be rendered to the law, since they who are justified in Jesus are forever secure from condemnation, being no longer under the law of sin and death.

The covenant of works which was given to Israel was binding upon all who were born under its provisions; and no Jew could deliver himself from its requirements by any service rendered. It demanded perfect and perpetual obedience; so that he who had fulfilled its every injunction through a lifetime, was doomed to death in his first failure to meet all its demands. Hence it is called the ministration of death and of condemnation.—2 Cor. iii. 7, 9. In his baptism Jesus turned away from all that gloomy system to the light and liberty of the gospel as embodied in himself. It was by this ordinance that he was made ready to preach the gospel to the poor. Having rendered to the law that perfect honor which was its due, he was now ready to enter upon the work of establishing his own everlasting kingdom by taking out of the way that heavy yoke of legal bondage. In the act of baptism he thus proclaimed the end of the law for righteousness, and the revelation of perfect justification in himself as the fullness of gospel grace.

It is a very limited view of the subject which would see in any word or act of Jesus nothing deeper than the mere ceremony which is visible to the natural eye. The observance of this ordinance by our Lord was the first step in the manifestation of his kingdom. Nothing in the law of Moses required that he should be baptized; but as John was sent directly from God to administer this ordinance, so every proper subject of it was by the Spirit prepared to receive it. In the case of the sinless Redeemer this was evident from the

direct approval expressed on the occasion when the Spirit of God in bodily shape like a dove descended and lighted upon him, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The law of Moses derived all its authority from that God who gave it. By the same divine direction John was sent to mark the end of that legal dispensation. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."—Luke xvi. 16. The higher glory of our Lord Jesus in his gospel kingdom exceeds the glory of Moses in the law as the day exceeds the night in the light of nature. "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. 5, 6. All this was expressed in the baptism of our Lord by his servant John; for without divine power there was no provision for the abrogation of that Sinai covenant; and while it remained there was no room for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. Even the perfect obedience of Jesus did not cancel the requirements of the holy law until he poured out his soul unto death, and in his precious blood the sword of infinite justice was "bathed in heaven." Then in this terrible baptism he fulfilled all that was expressed in the sacred ordinance, when he was baptized in Jordan. When the waters closed over him there was the symbol of his death and burial, not merely in the new tomb of Joseph, but in that more dreadful burial where all the waves and all the billows of almighty vengeance covered him in the awful depth of death. Then the sword of justice was satisfied, and the law could ask nothing more. But this significant ordinance tells of more than all this; for if this were all, then indeed would the gloom of despair rest upon all the earth and heaven. As the burial beneath the wave tells of death to the law, so the rising body of our dying Lord proclaims the resurrection of all the members of his redeemed body; not to that old life of legal bondage, in which they were dead with him when he died for all, but in him they are risen to newness of life. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Rom. vi. 4. Under the legal and prophetic dispensations there was only the promise of that life which in the gospel day is clearly revealed in the resurrection of our Lord by the glory of the Father. In his baptism that life is manifested in a figure which declares it to be everlasting life, in contrast with that mortality which was under sentence of death. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death

hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."—Rom. vi. 9, 10. This is the glorious truth by which the subjects of his redemption are forever secured against falling under condemnation. They live in Christ Jesus by the power of that same endless life in which their Redeemer was raised by the glory of the Father; and as he has redeemed them from their bondage under the law, they can never again transgress its injunctions. Thus in Christ they are risen above all which could condemn them. This was testified in the baptism of our Lord Jesus in Jordan, when the waters of that river of judgment closed over his body, and gave way before his triumphant power as he rose from that liquid tomb. There in a figure divinely approved, our Deliverer asserted his power to lay down his life and to take it again.—John x. 18. In the privilege of following his example, he has given to us the same approval in the answer of a good conscience toward God. So, in every step in which we follow him our Lord has fixed the great reward of his divine pleasure, which is unknown even to the subjects of his redeeming grace so long as they walk in disobedience to his commandment and fail to follow him.

In his baptism the Lord Jesus turned away from all the attractions and allurements of earth, and became obedient unto death; so he led the way for all who love him. In no other way can any man be his disciple; and in no other way does he accept the claim of any who profess to love him. The test as Jesus has declared it is, "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."—John xiv. 21.

THANKS!

WE are in receipt of a handsome present from sister Matilda Monasmit, of Omio, Kansas, a twenty dollar bill, for which she will please accept our sincere thanks. It is not alone for the intrinsic value of this gift that we prize it; but we feel especially grateful that we have been enabled to so conduct the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as to receive such an indorsement from its subscribers.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

W. B. MCADAMS having changed his residence from Sallis, Mississippi, to Blanco, Blanco Co., Texas, desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place, in care of James W. Hanes.

DEAR BRETHERN BEEBE:—Please change my paper from Smith's Station, Alabama, to Montgomery, Montgomery Co., Alabama. Also, publish the change of address in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

W. LIVELY.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At his old residence in Wicomico County, August 21, 1886, **Mr. Elisha Hollaway**, one of the prominent citizens of said county, aged about seventy-five years. He and his devoted companion had spent a long and happy life together, being very much devoted to each other. Mr. Hollaway was not a member of the visible church, but was, we believe, of the invisible. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by free and sovereign grace. I have been acquainted with him for a number of years, and my belief in his having a knowledge of the truth has been firm all the time. He delighted much in going to meeting and helping bear the burdens incident to the church. I have had some pleasant talks with him on the subject of his hope. He did not deny that he had a hope, but, like many others, was fearful to make it public. When I went to see him he seemed ready to talk as much as his strength would allow. He told how good the Lord had been to him, for he had done so much for him, he said. And when I began to express my sympathy for him he said it was all right, being very much resigned. He told his companion and family that he had had a hope for twenty years, but it had never appeared so clear to him as it did then. His whole family was much devoted to him, and did all that was in their power for his recovery, but to no avail. The Lord had no further place for him to fill on earth. His sickness was about five weeks. His disease was of the stomach and bowels. He raised a family of eight children, all highly respected (five sons and three daughters), two daughters being members of the Old School Baptist Church, as is his heart-stricken companion also. Thus he leaves in sorrow his lonely companion, eight children and several grandchildren, but not without hope; for it was a great comfort to them that he left the evidence behind that he did.

I was called for to attend his funeral, which I did, and the language that he had used to me brought to mind the words, Psalm cxxvi. 3, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." His remains were then laid in the old burying ground on the farm where he had lived so long, to peacefully rest until the summons shall come from on high to awake his sleeping dust. We want to assure our dear sister and the family that they have our deepest sympathy. May God by his grace enable us all to depart with the same blessed hope that he had.

T. M. FOULSON.

DIED—At his residence in Chautauqua County, Kansas, the 13th day of April, 1886, **Elder Morris F. Hedges**, in his seventy-second year.

Brother Hedges was born March 1, 1815, and died April 13, 1886, making him seventy-one years, one month and one day old. He commenced preaching in 1838, in the Wabash Valley, in Indiana, being only twenty-three years of age. In 1864 he emigrated with his family to Labette County, Kansas, and joined the Little Hope Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists in Montgomery County, Kansas; was the moderator of the church, and went into the constitution of Elk River Association of Predestinarian Baptists in 1872, and was elected moderator of the association and served for about eleven years, until too feeble to attend. In Labette County he lost his wife, and then moved to Chautauqua County and married Sarah Clark, who survives him. Brother Hedges was an able defender of the truth for forty-eight years. He was a very orderly walking man, always filled his seat when able, and was a great stay to the Baptists in this country. He has left a great many brethren, sisters and friends to mourn their loss; but we should not mourn as those that have no hope. He finished his work; henceforth there is a crown laid up for him in glory. May the Lord bless old sister Hedges in her bereaved condition, and give her grace to bear her trouble with christian fortitude.

The writer delivered a funeral discourse on the third Sunday in August, 1886, to a large and attentive congregation of friends and relatives.

H. BURGE.

DIED—On the morning of Sept. 21, 1886, of apoplexy, **Mr. Robert A. Stubelfield**, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. Mr. Stubelfield went out on the farm as usual (though he had had some unusual symptoms for several days previous), with his son, to saw some timber; and when they were just about through their morning's labor suddenly he threw up his hand and exclaimed, "O!" and fell over, dead. Had he lived two days longer he would have been sixty-eight years old; but God ordained it otherwise. Although cousin "Aleck" never professed a hope by joining the church, yet he was a firm believer in salvation by grace, through the crucified Redeemer. The Bible and some old volumes of the SIGNS constituted his religious reading. I not being at home at the time of his death, Elder Hull made some remarks on the occasion to a large collection of people. He certainly led a very exemplary life. He was a loving husband, a kind and indulgent father, an obliging neighbor, and a highly respected citizen. He leaves an estimable wife, four children, a large circle of relatives, and the community generally, to mourn their loss. Truly a great man has fallen—great in all things that are worth living for in this life. May God in his mercy sustain cousin Julia in this dark hour of her life, by giving her reconciling grace to say, "Thy will be done," and comfort and protect his children in this world of sin and sorrow, and in the end save them and us for Jesus' sake.

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

CHESTER, Ky., Oct. 13, 1886.

ONCE more are we called to mourn another of our loved ones. Our eldest daughter, **Lucy**, wife of Dr. W. P. Stoddard, died from consumption, at her home in Manassas, Prince William Co., Va., at five o'clock, on the morning of Oct. 14, 1886, aged thirty-six years. Her little girl of nine years, her husband, father, mother, brothers and sisters, are left to grieve, because we shall see her face no more. She had made no profession of religion, and was exceedingly sensitive and backward in regard to expressing her own feelings, to a remarkable degree; but from a conversation with a dear friend, and the quiet, calm resignation which took possession of her about a week prior to her death, gives us hope that this suffering life is exchanged for a better one. This third stroke, at times, seems more than we can bear; for she was lovely in all the relations of life, and we are willing to trust her in the hands of the Lord, who is so good and merciful, knowing that he doeth all things well. Her remains were brought to her old home at Deerwood, where a large concourse of relatives and friends were gathered. A prayer and some brief remarks were made by Elder Alexander, when she was laid away in the family burying-ground. Brethren, pray for us, that we may be reconciled to God's will, and that he may teach us to feel that this affliction is part of "all things" that work together for good.

J. W. & MARTHA CHAPMAN.

NEAR DUMFRIES, Va.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Feeling so sensibly my weakness and inability to write for publication, I cannot say, like some, that it becomes my duty to write, for I do not know what is my duty in this case; yet I feel inclined to send you a short account of the death of my dear wife, **Eliza West**, for the benefit of her relatives and friends in other states. She was the daughter of John and Kissiah Brown. She was born August 19, 1813, and died August 1, 1886, and consequently was seventy-three years old, lacking nineteen days. She died on my seventy-seventh birthday. We were married January 5, 1831, and lived together over thirty-five years. She joined the Old School Baptist Church at Roaring River, I think, in August, 1838, and was a very regular attendant at the meetings as long as she was able to attend. She was very weakly in her old age, and for the last four or five years was a great sufferer, and was totally blind for nearly three years. She was sound in the faith of salvation by grace, and though not a great talker, was ever ready to defend the doctrine. She believed that God is a Sovereign, the Ruler of all things, and that he declared the end from the beginning. She often quoted

the words, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." A few days before she died she asked me to pray for her, that she might be resigned to the Lord's will, to wait his time without murmuring. She was sensible to the last, and seemed to go without a struggle.

STEPHEN WEST.

It is my sorrowful duty to record the death of **Mrs. Amanda Crampton**, wife of Deacon Thomas Crampton, of Mill Creek Church. A more affectionate, devoted and happy companion no man was ever blessed with. They were married in the city of Baltimore, Md., March 3, 1880. They were separated by her death, October 6, 1886. Her maiden name was Amanda Garrett. She was born December 20, 1816, and baptized (if I am not mistaken) by Elder Joseph H. Jones. A short time before she died it was my privilege to be with her and hear her talk. I never felt the power of words more than I did those that she spoke on that occasion, nor ever witnessed a more sublime triumph of divine grace. As she neared her end it seemed only necessary for a change of the mortal to fit her for heaven, all the powers of the natural having been made subordinate to the power of the spiritual. It was not in her to find fault with anything, but rather to praise God for all she was and all she had. That visit has never grown old nor lacked interest to me.

Our dear brother Crampton has buried two wives and four children. All his family ties are broken; not one survives. He said the last was the hardest to bear. He who has removed can support. May he find all his needs supplied in Christ.

I spoke on the occasion, from 2 Samuel xxiii. 2, and I believe the Lord was with us. Bless his holy name.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., Oct. 21, 1886.

PLEASE give notice of the death of my dear companion, **Mary J. Thompson**, who died at six o'clock on the morning of September 6, 1886. She was born in Morgan Co., Illinois, Dec. 25, 1830, being, at the time of her death, fifty-five years, eight months and eleven days old. Her maiden name was Mary J. Cole. She was the daughter of Robert and Rhoda Cole. On October 3, 1850, we were united in marriage, and lived happily together until death severed the happy union. The fruits of our union were twelve children, nine of whom are living, three having died in infancy. She was a noble wife, a kind and affectionate mother, and a good neighbor. No one knew her but to love her; for she was kind to all. While the bereavement falls heavily upon me, I feel to try to be reconciled to my great loss, feeling very sure that she is at rest.

She professed a hope in Christ in the year 1854, and joined the church of Christ in the same year. She was baptized by Elder John Barnett, in the fellowship of Union Church, Greene Co., Illinois, where she lived in full fellowship with her brethren until death. Her seat was never vacant, unless by providential hindrance. She delighted in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which we have taken for over twenty years. She was a firm believer in the doctrine it advocated.

She leaves four sisters and three brothers, myself and nine children (six boys and three girls), and many relatives and friends, with the church, to mourn our loss; but we do not mourn as those who have no hope, for we are sure our loss is her eternal gain.

Elder Surgen preached a very comforting discourse on the occasion of her funeral; also comforting exhortations by Elders Taylor and Gammon; after which we laid her by her three little babes who had gone before.

Her disease was congestion of the stomach, from which she had been a great sufferer, at times, for many years. Her last sickness was short, only four days. She was in her right mind until the last. She told us not to grieve for her, for we knew what she had suffered. But O how we do miss her, and her kind words and good counsel. May it be our happy lot to meet where parting is no more.

As ever, your bereaved friend,

DAVID THOMPSON.

ROODHOUSE, Illinois, Oct. 4, 1886.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

At the request of the brethren and sisters of the church of Otego living at Brookdale, Susquehanna Co., Pa., to be constituted into a separate branch of the church of Christ, at our yearly meeting at Osborn Hollow, Oct. 13th and 14th, the church unanimously granted them the privilege, to wit: Henry H. Roe, Wm. M. Bailey, Warren J. Luce, Solomon P. Allen, Davis D. Turrell, Libbie Turrell, Anna Chalker, Harriet Adams, Juliet Travis, Lydia Roe, Anna Roe and Laura M. Bailey.

After praise, and prayer by Elder S. H. Durand, Elder B. Bundy was chosen Moderator, and George M. French Clerk.

Names of churches and messengers enrolled as follows:

- Asylum & Vaughan Hill—Elder S. H. Durand.
- Chemung—Elder M. Vail and David Mullock.
- Canton & Columbia—Elder M. Vail.
- Burdett—Elder M. Vail.
- Caroline—Ira Hoose.
- Otego—Elder B. Bundy, J. Bundy, A. Squire, C. Reynolds, T. Jenkins, G. M. French.
- Abington—Deacon Albert Russell, Stephen Akerly.
- May's Mills—Deacon J. May.
- From Hopewell, N. J., A. S. Cook.
- Motion by Elder S. H. Durand, and seconded by C. Reynolds, that the wish of the brethren and sisters making the request to be organized into a church, be granted, which was unanimously done.
- Agreed that the church be known as the church of BROOKDALE.
- Resolved, that these minutes be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.
- Elder M. Vail gave them the right hand of fellowship.
- The Moderator then declared them to be a Regular Old School or Primitive Baptist Church.

B. BUNDY, Mod.

G. M. FRENCH, Clerk.

ORDINATIONS.

ACCORDING to a call from Sharon Church of Primitive Baptists on Lever Creek, in Guthrie County, Iowa, for the purpose of ordaining brother F. A. COLEMAN to the office of deacon, brethren met as follows: Elder E. W. Moore, Elder Preston Doty, Elder John Cline, and deacons Thos. Clark and O. Osburn.

The presbytery organized by choosing Elder E. W. Moore Moderator, and Elder John Cline Clerk.

Proceeded to business by inviting brethren and sisters of our faith and order to seats in council.

Prayer by Elder Preston Doty, and laying on of hands by the presbytery.

A charge was delivered by Elder E. W. Moore.

The right hand of fellowship was extended by the Moderator and brethren and sisters present.

Adjourned in order.

E. W. MOORE, Mod.

JOHN CLINE, Clerk.

I would also add, if you think it would not be out of place to publish, that at the same time and place one brother came home to his friends and told us what great things the Lord had done for him, and on the following day was buried in baptism by the writer. Also, at the same place, a month before, one young brother was received by experience and baptism, this latter making the third one this year. May the good Lord be praised for all his mercies. He has not forsaken us, and is adding to the church of such as shall be saved.

Yours in gospel bonds,

JOHN CLINE.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Lexington, N. Y., have appointed their yearly meeting to be held on the second Saturday and Sunday in November, 1886. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends.

WM. P. KIRK, Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

B A Beasley 2.50, Henrietta Wadley 2.50, J W Adkin 2.50, Jas E Moore 2.50, J L Paris 2, W P Thompson 2, Cordelia Foree 2.75, Myra B Niven 2.50, W L Hastings 2.50, R T Hastings 2, J W Bobo 2, Mrs Kate Bartley 2, Wm L Nance 10.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

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For the especial purpose of rendering more regular and faithful service to my own church, of which my father was and I am a member and pastor, I expect, with the permission of providence, to transfer my residence, about the first of September, from Wilson to my native place, Williamston, N. C., and to take charge of the WILLIAMSTON ACADEMY, opening the Fall Session, Monday, September 13th, 1886.

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SILAS H. DURAND,
P. G. LESTER.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

As will be seen by reference to a letter received from Elder Hassell, on page 233, we have met with an unexpected delay in the completion of the Church History, caused by the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Index as soon as anticipated. We now have the History all in type except the Index, and the binder at work on the printed sheets, and as soon as the manuscript for the Index is received we will rush them through the press and mail the books at the earliest possible day.

We still have left of the first edition of the Plain Cloth binding @ \$2 00, 222 copies.
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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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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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DEVOTED TO THE
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We have discontinued the publishing of the subscription receipts, and have adopted the following method, which if strictly observed will give perfect satisfaction;

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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.

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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. 54. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1886. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SMITH'S STATION, Ala., July 20, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having had some exercise of mind lately upon the sixteenth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, I submit some thoughts to you, and if you deem them sound and calculated to comfort or strengthen any of the Lord's people whom the SIGNS may reach, publish them; if not, cast this aside, and all will be well. Knowing I have no other motive than the glory of God and the good of his dear people, I do not hesitate to offer my mite in a way of correspondence, knowing the brethren are willing to cast the mantle of charity over my faults, and to exercise the spirit of forbearance towards me in my weakness.

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."—Isa. xxviii. 16. The depth of God's words is never fathomed, and his ways are past finding out. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" Paul could well say, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" Who can understand him? In the sense of the text we can well wonder with Job, and use his own language in reply. Notwithstanding the awful grandeur of divine wisdom, we are led to consider it with the strength and ability God giveth us.

We have this text of Scripture in the present tense, yet we know it was done in eternity, before the world began; and yet we know in the process of divine wisdom, or rather its action, things are spoken of as finished from the foundation of the world. Here is wonderful sublimity in the very essence of divine things. But as we are in this present evil world, with finite minds, we speak of its bearings upon us, who are called of God to consider and ponder these things in our hearts. When we read such texts they strike us as Ezekiel's river: we go in ankle deep, then to the knees, then to the hips and armpits, and then we lose bottom, and the power and strength of the stream bears us on its bosom. Yet, like the river John saw, it is as clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. Such is the nature and effect of gospel truth. The simplicity and mystery of the gospel is apparent; we acknowledge both, and are dependent on God for a revelation of such mysteries as occur in his word. Paul

may plant and Apollos may water, but God alone can give the increase. We also notice that this is assured as the saying of the Lord God of earth and heaven. Our minds are carried back to view the ancient Zion of God, "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." When God created the world and all things that in it are, the massive base of the ancient temple on one of the seven mountains, to wit, Mt. Moriah, was in a sense laid. We need go no farther than that. The wisdom of digging deep and founding the building on the rock is the evidence of wisdom, and of security to the building. We here behold the wisdom of God in thus building. According to infinite wisdom this structure must bear evidence of the Architect. We also reason that if God would have his ancient city, Zion, which was a type of spiritual Zion, built on a rock foundation, so must spiritual Zion be the same. As a natural rock should be the base for temporal Zion, so must a spiritual rock be the base of spiritual Zion. The great question is, What is this foundation? We answer, according to the divine testimony, Christ is the Rock, the Stone. When was the foundation laid? Paul said, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid." He declares that to be Christ. When was it laid? Before the world began, in eternity, in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Christ is represented as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am." John said of Jesus, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." "Now, O Father, glorify me with the glory I had with thee before the world was." "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Paul could say, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." "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." "As many as were ordained to eternal life." Jesus also said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you." "Predestinated according to the purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." "Whom he did

foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." With line upon line, that reaches back and points us to the infinite mind of God in eternity, before the world was, yea, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, that eternal record God gave of his Son. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." The book held in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, the sealed record, none but Christ could unloose as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Loosing the same, he said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." There are some who know not his covenant, because it is still hid from them. They can see the constitution of the states, and the constitution of societies, but they know not the grand constitution of heaven, and deny it, and also deny his Son Jesus Christ upon the same principle. Hence they are unable to "Behold;" for they have eyes, but they see not. But to those who fear God's name is the revelation of this covenant made. "To you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Zechariah says that seven eyes shall be upon one stone. This is the stone, the glorious stone, the salvation stone. Peter could truly say, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." "A stone of stumbling and rock of offense." God also himself has laid this Stone. Zechariah says, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, 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." The atonement, the sacrifice, and all that which led thereto, was of God. The prophet said, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him." "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 hands." We can truly say that no human mind contrived nor devised the salvation of God's people. Its origin was in heaven; it sprang forth, born of God himself. No human hand helped to lay it, neither did the Almighty call for poor, puny, rebellious man to help lay it; for he was sufficient in and of

himself to do so. And he did it. He began to lay it, he was able to lay it, yea, he did lay it, and we rejoice to know it. We also have a faint type in the feast of the king, wherein he gave the royal wine to his subjects, which none of his subjects helped to plant, culture nor make: hence it was royal. So is this, the royal foundation which God lays in Zion. Well may the psalmist say, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" But God has laid it, and whatsoever he doeth, that shall stand. The prophet said, "He shutteth, and no man openeth; he openeth and no man shutteth." Then what a glorious foundation, immovable, indestructible, and firmer than the everlasting hills. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Truly doth the poet say,

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said;

You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

"A stone." This Stone, spoken of in different places, is Jesus, our Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. He is not as other rocks, our enemies themselves being judges. The stone of stumbling over which the high looking, proud Jews stumbled, and over which now the high headed, proud Arminian and self-righteous stumble, being disobedient, they see not. The high mind for man-power and free will makes them stumble, blinded by the god of this world, and they behold not the beauty of the stone. He is also a rock of offense. How offensive he appears to the self-righteous Pharisees, who claim Abraham for their father, and say they are Moses' disciples. Jesus is in the way of all Arminian works and devices, and they have tried to remove him by teaching their own ways and using his name as a pretext, and they, like the dragon, send out a flood to destroy him. The kings of the earth took counsel against the Lord and his Anointed, saying, Let us cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. The base and height of it are equal; for so says John. The length and breadth and height of it are equal. He is equal to all their efforts to displace and remove him. He cannot be moved. He is immutable. This Stone changes not. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." Time works no change. "I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." See the

huge rock; it remains the same, though centuries pass. "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; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered."

"A tried stone." When there was no eye to pity, when there was no arm to save, the square of justice was laid upon him. He knew the sufferings he was to undergo, yet he was willing to be made an offering for sin.

"He saw us ruined in the fall,
Yet loved us notwithstanding all."

There was none able in heaven but him; none on earth worthy. When tried, he was found worthy and able to suffer and to pay the debt, to abolish death, and to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel. He was tried and found able to reconcile heaven and earth. He was able to fill the demands of the law. He was willing to do his Father's will. As it is written in the volume of the book, "I come to do thy will, O God." He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Being tried, he was found equal to all that could be demanded by the situation of his people and by the order of heaven. In him we may see ten thousand beauties.

"A precious corner stone." Peter says, "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious." We cannot help but mention the onyx, the sapphire, the chalcedony, the amethyst, the topaz. Yea, all these precious stones have a beauty and a value; but of these, and all others, shall no mention be made by way of comparison. He is the diamond, heaven's rich diamond, more valuable far than all the riches or costly pearls of great price. He is the chief among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. All the grand royal colors blend in him; yea, he is "clear as crystal." How precious is he! "His mouth is most sweet." Truly could David say, "My meditation of him shall be sweet." When we discover all these ten thousand times ten thousand beauties in him, shall we not say, Praise him, all ye lands; laud him, all ye people? He is the only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords. "Precious." Precious in the hour of the new birth, when we behold him as the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Precious when he said, "Thy sins are all forgiven thee." Precious when he said, "Follow me." Precious when we see him in prayer, in obedience, in the order of his house, in baptism, in communion. Precious in his humility and servitude, having the form of a servant, and being obedient unto death, despising the shame. Wherefore 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 and every tongue should confess that he

is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Precious in the trials and afflictions of this life. He says,

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismay'd!

I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid."

Precious in the last hour and article of death.

"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."

He has left a long, lasting perfume in the tomb, never to be absorbed until the last one of the redeemed shall pass through the portals of death's iron gate. Precious on the throne. Every eye shall see him. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth can be compared to thee.

"Corner stone." By it the whole building shall be squared and tried in the line. He gives character and order to all his people. Our righteousness is as filthy rags. The Lord our righteousness is his relation to us. And fitted in the building, we are to walk as he walked, circumspect, walk as wise men, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. If we gather not with him, we scatter abroad. "He that is not with me is against me." "Whosoever keepeth these sayings of mine," is in line with the Corner. He is also called the "Chief corner stone." The whole building rests on him. He is the nail driven by the Master of assemblies, on which the burden hung. He is the Chief corner stone; also, "A sure Foundation." This grand base of our faith is the foundation on which the prophets and apostles are built; and we are built on the same, if we are of the building of God, fitly framed, members one of another, members in particular, and which groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord.

As my article is somewhat lengthy, I will add but few more thoughts, and close.

Daniel said, "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; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms;" of this kingdom there shall be no end. Then it must be an eternal kingdom; for if not, it would have one end. Then it carries us back to the foundation of the world, in eternity. Jesus said, "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He has never let out this building to any set of work mongers; therefore he will continue to build until it is finished. He is building to-day, and will continue to do so until the last stone shall be brought; and the cap-stone shall be placed upon the top, with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. He is the spiritual Rock that follows spiritual Israel, which supplies the spiritual camp. So is he the Rock out of which God made Jacob suck honey and oil. He is also the Bread of heaven. He is the Rock in which the conies find a house, because they are a feeble folk. He is the cleft Rock, which was broken for

us, in which cleft we hide our defenseless heads.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side that flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Save from wrath and make me pure."

He is "the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land," which is a shade by day, a covert from the wind, a refuge indeed from the storm.

"Jesus, refuge of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is high."

Time would fail me to tell of the wonders in him, our life, our light, our joy. May the God of all grace bless us in the knowledge of him who hath called us from darkness to light. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord, is my humble desire for all his children.

Yours to serve in hope,

W. LIVELY.

GHEAT, Kentucky.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother T. Q. Dalton, of Boonville, Miss., asking for my views of the parable of the marriage supper, recorded in the twenty-second chapter of Matthew, for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Brother Dalton inquires, "Was the guest who did not have on the wedding garment compelled to come to the marriage supper? Who was he, and what is represented by the marriage supper?" It would, perhaps, be appropriate to reverse the order of these inquiries. Then the first inquiry is, "What is represented by the marriage supper?" This parable was spoken by our Lord to the unbelieving Jews; to that people who had the law and the prophets, yet did not comprehend the great truths declared by the prophets and prefigured by the law. They did not understand our Lord when he was talking to them about this marriage supper. When he appeared on earth they did not believe him, because they were blind and did not see the kingdom of heaven, the gospel heavens, which he had come to earth to set up as a home for his chosen, his redeemed people. He unfolds to the admiring gaze of his saints the beauties of that kingdom, under the figure of the marriage supper. He says, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come." Here is presented the wonderful mystery, God manifest in the flesh. The prophet presents him as a Son given, and as the everlasting Father. That everlasting Father is the King spoken of in this parable, and the Son for whom that supper was prepared is none other than the glorious Son of God. But his people, being joint heirs with him to all things which pertained to that gospel kingdom, had a right to everything that pertained to that marriage supper. But the carnally-minded Israelite, being blinded by the god of this world, could not see

the beauties of that banqueting house, nor taste its rich luxuries, nor drink at its fountain of living waters. They were bidden by the wonderful things declared by the prophets, and by the things prefigured by the temple service during that long dispensation that preceded the marriage supper; "but they made light of it." In that they gave evidence of their carnality. The apostle says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God." This truth, which is experienced by the dear saints every day, is here made plain. Our Lord says, "The remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth, and sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." This was literally fulfilled by the destruction of Jerusalem, the fearful calamities that befell the Jews, and their being led away into captivity. Because of their fearful unbelief, the Jews were utterly rejected any right, any privilege, that pertained to this gospel feast.

But the oxen and the fatlings must be slain before the marriage supper is made ready. All the offerings and sacrifices under the law must be made before the servants are sent forth to tell them which are bidden to come. The last lambs fixed in eternal wisdom to be slain for the morning and evening sacrifice must shed their blood before that marriage supper was ready, before it could be said, "All things are ready: come unto the marriage." But the King said to his servants, "The wedding is ready; but they which were bidden [the Jews] were not worthy." "He came unto his own [the Jews,] and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God: even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 11-13. Here is presented those who were called to the marriage feast. They believed God, and it was counted to them for righteousness. They must have the wedding garment, they must be clad in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, or they could not partake of the gospel feast, and gaze upon the superlative glories of his kingdom.

But brother Dalton inquires, "Who was the guest that did not have on the wedding garment?" It will be remembered that our Lord after his baptism called his twelve disciples. To them he unfolded the transcendent glories of the gospel heavens. But of that number there was a Judas Iscariot. Of him our Lord said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Then surely he did not have on the wedding garment. He was a devil, and therefore unfit for the society of the other disciples, and was cast out. "Take him away, and cast him into outer darkness." Judas did not have on the wedding garment. He worshiped his money-bag, and did not worship his glorious Lord. When Mary had anointed the feet of Jesus, Judas made it clearly manifest that

he did not have on the wedding garment. He said, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief."—John xii. 5, 6. And is it not true that Judas was a representative man, and represented all that vast herd who are going forth proclaiming the necessity and power of money in the salvation of poor, lost, ruined and undone sinners? The *Christian Watchman* of December 28, 1848, said, "At a meeting of the Young Men's Foreign Missionary Society, one of the speakers said, 'By the report of last year it seems that \$62,000 had been spent, and the result of this amount was the conversion of 3,523 souls. Thus 3,523 souls were converted by the payment of \$17.09½ each.'" This quotation is made to show that there was in 1848, and still is, a people on earth who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, who, like Judas, love money more than they do our glorious Lord. They are they who come in our solemn feasts without being clad in that robe of spotless righteousness which was secured to all the redeemed by the finished work of our dear Redeemer. They go to those feasts without the righteousness of the saints, not knowing that our glorious Lord hath said, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Not knowing that he hath said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." They, like Simon the sorcerer, believe that the gift of the Holy Ghost can be purchased with money. But they should remember the fearful and pointed reproof administered by Peter to that man who trusted in money to purchase the wonderful and matchless gifts of the Spirit. That disciple said to Simon, "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." This judgment pronounced by Peter on that sorcerer applies to all in every age and every clime who have confided in money to secure the salvation of any of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam from the fearful consequences of sin. They give evidence that their faith does not rest in the finished work of our glorious Lord, but in the things of earth. Therefore they give evidence that they are not clad in the wedding garment, the righteousness of the saints, but are, like Simon the sorcerer, "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." This is a fearful thought indeed when we look out upon the so-called religious world of this day, in which greater evidence is given of the love of money than of the love of God.

But brother Dalton inquires, "Was the guest who did not have on the wedding garment compelled to be at the marriage supper?" This inquiry

involves the doctrine of the predestination of all things. I do not use the words, "absolute predestination," for the reason that if God predestinates a thing it is sure to come to pass; hence the word "absolute" in that direction is a surplusage. Peter said on the day of Pentecost, when speaking of the crucifixion of our Lord, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Remember that when he was delivered on that dark and doleful night by Judas to the multitude, it was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Judas was one of the disciples, and heard the wonderful teachings of our Lord with his ears. Peter, when quoting from the Psalms, says, "He [Judas] was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry." The psalmist, prophesying of Judas, said, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." And the prophet Zechariah said, "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver."—Zech. i. 12. It is also written, "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."—Matt. xxvii. 9, 10. Thus the prophets, more than five hundred years before the betrayal of our Lord, foretold the exact number of pieces of silver that would be paid to Judas for betraying the innocent Son of God, and the purpose to which that money would be applied. Judas was acting according to his own volition in betraying our Lord and in receiving the thirty pieces of silver therefor; yet he was carrying out the purpose of God in everything connected with that, the most wicked transaction, yea, the highest crime known in the great vocabulary of crime, the betrayal of the innocent Son of God into the hands of an infuriated and Satanic mob. Judas was chosen for the place he filled during the ministry of our Lord, and heard his wonderful teachings in regard to the setting up of the gospel kingdom; and at the end of that ministry, when his hour had come that he should suffer, Judas disclosed the fact that he was without the wedding garment. "Then said the King to his servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and take him away.' Surely his presence with our Lord and his disciples during his ministry was according to his own will; therefore he was guilty of the awful crime of the betrayal of the innocent. Our Lord said, 'The Son of man indeed goeth as it is written of him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born.'—Mark xiv. 21. Judas came to the marriage supper, but he did not partake of it. He came of his own will;

not constrained by the love of God shed abroad in his heart; but by the love of earthly gain. He did not partake of that marriage feast, for the reason that none can partake of the superlative joys and glories of the feast but those who are born again, and thus are clad with the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. That, and that alone, will fit them for the sweet society of those who are brought in from the highways to the sweet feast. The bride says, "He brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Ah, brother Dalton, the poor Gentiles who were wandering in the highways of idolatry were brought from that idolatry to that marriage feast. In that idolatry they were poor indeed, had spiritually nothing; nothing, nothing. Then O how sweet, how rich, to them was that feast; but not more so than to all the dear saints when they are enabled to say with the old prophet, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

Then Judas was present with our Lord in all his ministry, and heard his more than wonderful teachings, and saw the manifestation of that power which alone belongs to the great God of the vast universe. He heard and saw these things of his own will, and by his natural powers; yet it was all by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. These are fearful truths to the poor, self-reliant Arminian. He manifests his confidence in his own natural ability to change the will and purposes of Jehovah, and says that if God does not give him a chance to reach the climes of endless day and unsullied bliss, by his own works, in following out a system devised by the carnal mind, he is unjust. But the apostle administers to all such this withering rebuke, "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

Brother Dalton will find on page 613 of the second volume of the book of Editorials of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, that upon the subject freely commented upon in this communication, which will be more interesting and instructive to him than my feeble thoughts.

H. COX.

RIMER, Ohio, Sept. 1, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to talk a little to the household of faith through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by your permission, on the subject of obedience to the law of Christ. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi. 33. A kingdom is the dominion of a king, under the supreme authority and control of him who has the sovereign right to rule and govern his kingdom. The kingdom of God is composed of subjects, of which the kingdom of men is a figure. And where a king has a right to reign, the subjects must belong to him, either

by relationship, purchase or subjugation. Any one of these is all that is required to secure an earthly kingdom. But God reigns in his kingdom with a triple right, being related to his subjects both fleshly and spiritually, and has purchased them by his own blood, and subjugated them by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. In ancient days cities and kingdoms were inclosed by high stone walls and bulwarks, to prevent invasions. But God's kingdom is a strong city, for which "salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Then, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following." What shall we tell? We must tell that this kingdom cannot be invaded, because of its walls and bulwarks. For, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And how can an enemy invade that which he cannot see? The only way to be an inhabitant of this kingdom is to be born there. Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And the subjects were chosen in that Way before the foundation of the world, in order to be there. It is impossible to find this kingdom by searching, in the sense that the world searches; for the world by wisdom knows not God. And how can they search that which they know nothing about? The seeking referred to in the text is not to find the kingdom, but obedience to its laws, required at the hands of those who are already children of the kingdom. The eternal kingdom is composed of none but natives born in that dominion, sons of the King, by the one mother, New Jerusalem. They are made to differ from all other people, by virtue of a second birth, in which they have received the life and nature of their King, which is known by their heartfelt desire to obey their Lord in seeking first his kingdom and his righteousness. And all those who have this as a secondary matter are like those that cry, "Long live the king," in the streets, and plot conspiracy in the closet. Remember, I said, "secondary matter" in the heart. The kingdom born children never can hold obedience to their Lord and Master as a secondary matter in their hearts; but how to perform they often find not. Feeling a timidity to engage in such a sacred duty as being baptized, partaking of the Lord's Supper, or preaching the gospel, they suffer the torments of a wounded conscience, rather than wound his cause. This, dear children, is an evidence that obedience is required at your hands; so let your acts of obedience be first, as well as your desires, and not deny your Lord from the standpoint of unworthiness. "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?"—1 Peter iv. 17, 18. The "sinner and the ungodly"

spoken of here are disobedient children, instead of unbelievers, as the world has it. Where shall they appear? They "must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."—2 Cor. v. 10. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. x. 31. We cannot escape his displeasure, as those do who are not children. As the children of Israel found that when they did as other nations did, they were broken up and dispersed, many times, because of disobedience, so likewise churches meet the same fearful judgment by the toleration of fellowship, as the heathen do. Fellowship is the unity by which the many members are manifestly one in Christ, who are not independent of each other, as aliens advocate. The children of the kingdom seek to be joined together in one by this bond of love, as the interest of one is the common interest of all that are members of the same body. Therefore churches that tolerate members who will not commune with her, nor with her sister churches that are in fellowship with her, violate the command of Christ, who "took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it."—Matthew xxvi. 27. Also Mark says, "They all drank of it."—Mark xiv. 23. None were exempt. But discord says, Drink ye, as many as can fellowship each other, no matter how much the inquiry arises in the breast of those that drink, Is it I? The question may arise, Where is the remedy? The Savior has given rules suitable for all cases, under all circumstances or conditions of the church. He says, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."—Matt. xviii. 15-17. In order to show more plainly the points most commonly controverted, we will give space for an honest interrogator.

"Has an offender, when brought before the church, a right to defend himself, or does the church hear the witnesses only?"

An offender has the same right to speak as any other brother, until condemned by the church, which cannot judge before hearing.

"A brother, when condemned by the church, shall he be unto the church as a heathen man and a publican, or unto thee, and not unto the church?"

Unto the church; for otherwise the church would be made up of both christians and publicans, which could not be the church of Christ, which is his body, in which discord cannot be tolerated.

"A brother trespassed against me,

and I thought it was his duty to come to me and make acknowledgment."

The Savior said, "Go and tell him his fault."

"If I should go to him, and he would not hear me, then it might make a big trouble. Is it not better for me to bear it, and keep it all to myself, after counseling with some faithful brethren who are of the same opinion? And to keep from doing a wrong myself, I will not commune."

In withholding from communion, you publish that there is a trouble, and thus disturb the whole church; for each member will think you are offended at them.

"I will say that I feel too unworthy to commune."

The church will regard this as a qualification to communion, together with a discernment of the Lord's body, which is the church. To see and believe that the church you belong to is the true church of Christ, is to discern the Lord's body; and no person can see that without esteeming its members as better than themselves, which causes a feeling of unworthiness. The act of refusing to commune is to outwardly deny or disown the body of Christ, the church. This statement may seem hard, but it is nevertheless true; "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."—Matt. xii. 34. To dis-fellowship an offender is to disown him, or his conduct at least; and the church shares the same fate as an offender if you refuse to commune with her by having aught against but one of her members.

"Is it lawful to commune with the church, having aught against one of her members?"

No; but you are commanded to "agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him."

—Matt. v. 25. No time is to be lost in this case; and to put such a thing off is to set up your own judgment as superior to your Lord's.

"If a member has not communed for many years, and the church has tolerated them all that time, would it be right now to do anything with them, as it might cause trouble?"

Yes; for a wrong never gets right by its long standing. Neither is it right to wait for an aged person to die, to get rid of a difficulty. There can no trouble come out of a lawful attempt to correct a difficulty, unless it is through those who love to have it so; and if this state of affairs exists, the sooner it comes the better it will be for the church; for it can only disperse that which is already divided; but Christ's body is not divided.

"I am taught that churches are independent of each other: then how can we labor with a member of another church?"

They are as independent of each other as the fingers of your hand are independent of each other. You should proceed to labor with that brother as you would with a member of the church where your membership is; remembering, however, if thou judgest another man's servant, to his own master he standeth or falleth.—Rom. xiv. 4.

"There is a brother in another church who has aught against me, though I never did him any harm. I do not see why he does not come to me and tell me my faults."

The Savior says, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother has aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."—Matt. v. 23, 24.

"I thought that had reference to the ministers."

It does, together with the whole household of faith; for they all have gifts to offer. And if a minister should offer his gift after he had knowledge that a brother had aught against him, anywhere in the brotherhood, without first endeavoring to reconcile such brother, he thinks more of the gift than he does of the Giver.

"But I thought we should only withhold our gifts at the altar where the offended brother's membership is; for as the ministers come under the same rule, I fear there would not be much preaching if it was otherwise."

There is but one altar, and that is where Jesus is; and as for preaching, we better not have any than to have preachers stand side by side in our pulpits, professing to preach the gospel of peace, with enmity at heart toward each other, which necessarily would be the case in the above.

"Did not the apostles, and even Christ, have enemies? and did they stop preaching?"

They had enemies, but not of the above named sort. A brother cannot declare nonfellowship with another without first laboring with him, short of setting the Savior's command at naught.

Dear brethren, there is no other way than to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and peace, harmony and prosperity shall be added. I have written in love of the cause, I hope.

URIAH TRUMBO.

DAYTON, W. T., March 30, 1836.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As my mind has been running for some time, I will try in my feeble way to tell of some of the Lord's dealings with my poor soul, as I hope and trust. In the first place I will state that my parents were Old School Baptists. They did not believe in Sunday Schools, but they taught me morality and set before me good examples. I sometimes had very serious thoughts in regard to heaven, even at an early period. I thought if I was good, and did what was right, I would go to heaven when I died, and that was all I cared for. I did not think I was a very bad boy, and therefore I thought I could get to heaven easy enough. I went on in this way until I was nearly eighteen years old, as near as I can remember. One of my little brothers had died, and a day or so after the funeral I was in the field plowing, when suddenly I felt myself to be a terrible sinner in the sight of God. I thought my sins were too great for him to save me. I had been told that he was a

just God, and now I felt his justice in condemning me. O how miserable I felt! I thought hell was my portion. My distress was so great that I could not refrain from tears; but not once did I think of asking God to save me from my sins, for I could see no justice in it. I went on in this condition for some time. I then lived in Marion County, Oregon, in what was known as the Waldo Hills. Elder John Stipp had a regular appointment at our school house, and I would go to hear him preach. The old Elder would talk so good, of how the good Shepherd cared for the sheep, and how the sheep would follow him, and the people all seemed to enjoy the meeting. But I would say, Such things are too good for me, as I have sinned too greatly for God to think of saving me. When I was twenty-two years of age I went out into the world to do for myself, and the wickedness of the world had great influence over me. I had concluded that as I was going to hell, it did not matter much what I did; so I learned to play cards, and to dance, and had a good time with the boys, as we called it. I forgot the parting advice of my father. I got along so very well in the world that I thought I was enjoying myself. I continued in this way for three years. I would attend every public gathering I could hear of, until finally my old burden of sin returned, when I resolved that I would do better and begin a new life, if God would only forgive me what I had done. I prayed and promised, but alas! the more I tried, the worse I grew. I would attend the meetings of the popular religionists of the day, and would ask them what I must do to be saved. They would tell me to pray with a sincere heart, and join the church, and then I would be saved if I held out faithful. But this did not satisfy my hungry soul. I had heard the Old Baptists tell of a people that were to be saved without this fixing up of themselves to suit the approval of God. Such Scriptures as, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works," and, "Not of works lest any man should boast," bothered me. And when I would hear the Baptists tell of a whole and complete Savior, I would drink it in as a sweet portion; yet I would think that surely I must do something, as so many would say to me, "Ask, and you shall receive. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." But then I would read, "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." Then I would think, I am only a natural man, and what is the use of my trying to understand spiritual things? This would worry me somewhat. I had heard the Baptists preach of the *wills* and *shalls* of the great Jehovah, and had also read of them, until I finally came to believe that God had a people that he intended to save; that if it was his purpose to save any one, they would be saved. I would argue from this

standpoint with the religionists of the day, and sometimes would get into deep water and become swamped, as I was not very well versed in Scripture testimony. I was not satisfied, and would go and hear the Old Baptists preach, and their preaching would seem to suit my case. I loved to hear them tell of their experience, of what the Lord had done for their souls. I could go with them till they would tell of a change from darkness to light, of a light that had shone around them, or had been revealed to their understanding; but I lacked that evidence. As yet I could only cry, with my mouth in the dust, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I could not think of approaching a just and holy God and asking him to forgive my sins. I could see no justice in his saving such a guilty sinner as I was. I knew him to be a just God, who could not lie. In this condition I struggled on for some time. In the fall of 1880 I became acquainted with my wife, and was to be married in December of that year; and as I had a desire to be married by an Old School Baptist, I wrote a note to Elder John Stipp, to have him solemnize the marriage. He came at the appointed time. In the following June the Siloam Association was held at Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, and as my folks were going to attend the meeting they prevailed upon my wife and me to go with them. O what a precious meeting it was. I shall never forget it. Three persons joined the church at that time, two of them being received for baptism. I could hardly resist the strong desire I felt to go forward. But I thought I could only tell that I was a sinner of the deepest dye, as I had experienced no change of heart. But I could not hide my tears. After the meeting old mother Stipp came to me while at her house, and wanted to know why I stood back. This distressed me greatly, for I thought I had deceived her, and that I had been trying to make the saints believe I was one of God's dear children. When we all started for home she tried to get me to promise to return at their church meeting time, as I lived only twelve miles away. But I could not promise. I thought it would not be right, as I feared it would be deceiving, and I would not do that knowingly. I thought they were too good a people for me. I continued on in the world, but O how I did long for a hope, if only a small spark. I would be in agony night after night, and groaned day after day. I tried to pray, but my prayers seemed to rise no higher than my head, and to fall to the ground as worse than nothing. In this situation I went to a protracted meeting held by the Seventh-day Adventists. They were having a great time, and raised a great excitement over prophecy and revelation. They had it figured up on canvas, so that everybody could see the end of the world to a year or so. As I was interested, I attended for several nights. One day I asked the minister what I should do to be saved. He told me a whole lot of stuff what I

should do. I asked him questions, so much so that he thought I was going to join his church; but at the end I told him that I did not like his plan of salvation, as it left too much work for the creature to do; that if I was saved it would not be by any good deeds of my own. One night, not long after that, I was lying on my bed, being asleep. I dreamed that I heard a great commotion of the elements, as though we were going to have a great storm. I thought I jumped out of my bed and went to the door; that the clouds were shining brightly, and that I saw an angel coming in a cloud. I thought as it came near me I asked the angel who it was (for I thought the world was surely coming to an end); and the angel answered, "I am the angel of mercy." I trembled with fear. Then I asked him if I was saved. His answer was, "If you have received Jesus Christ, you are." Then I awoke. It was all a dream, but it gave peace to my troubled soul, as I believed in my heart that I had already received Christ as the only true Savior of poor, lost sinners, of whom I am one of the greatest. I clung to this little hope with all my might, as the evidence I had longed for. But soon I began to doubt, as it was only a dream. I began to think I was deceiving myself. The Old Baptists were the people I loved, yet I dared not go to their meetings, for fear I would offer myself to the church, and thus deceive them. I remained away. In November of the year 1883 I moved to Washington Territory, near Dayton, Columbia County, and there I heard of a few Old Baptists who held their meetings some ten miles away. O how I did wish to see them and hear their preaching. But then doubts would come into my mind again, and I would try to drive the matter from me. My father was stopping with me that summer and winter. He and I had some business in the neighborhood of Elder Newkirk's place, and we stopped over night with him, and had a very pleasant time. I asked some questions of the Elder on religious subjects, and in answering I noticed that my father was in tears, and wondered at it. The thought immediately came into my mind that I was again deceiving, and it disturbed me. In the spring of 1885 my wife had some peculiar feelings. I did not know what was the matter with her, and grew uneasy, and asked her what the matter was. She said she thought she was going crazy. Then I grew alarmed and went for a doctor; but the doctor did not seem to think much was the matter. He left some medicine and went away. But, dear brethren and sisters, he could not cure the sin-sick heart. I did not know of her trouble then, but afterwards she told me of it. I asked her why she had not told me sooner. She replied that she did not know how I felt, and was afraid to say anything of the true nature of her feelings. One day she asked me if I could not go to hear the Old Baptists preach. I told her that they held their meetings on the third

Sunday of each month, some ten miles from where we lived. She said she wished to hear them, as she had heard them preach but once, and that was at the association before mentioned, at Scio. I could not refuse to take her, and I think I was glad for an excuse to go on my own account. I told her we would go to the next meeting, in July of the year 1885. When we drove up to the place of the meeting the people were singing, and O how sweetly it sounded. And O how blessed was the gospel that was preached, and what glad tidings to my poor soul. It had been four long years since I had the pleasure of such a glorious feast. It was the day for them to attend to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and O what a blessed time they seemed to have, obeying the command of the heavenly Master. I thought I never had beheld so lovely an assemblage. All was harmony. I thought if I could only be one of that number I would be very happy. O how hungry I was. I could not keep the tears from flowing. When they were through, Elder Newkirk said it was a little out of the order of business, but he thought it not out of place, to open the doors for the reception of members; and that while the brethren sang a hymn, if any one wished to cast in their lot with them they would have the privilege. They began to sing the hymn, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" &c., and before they had sung the first verse through, I turned to my wife and asked her if she would go with me. She said she would, and we went forward. I told them I was a sinner, and that I wanted a home among them. I do not remember all that I did tell them, in a broken manner. It is enough to say that we were received for baptism, and were baptized at the August meeting. It is less than a year since that time, and I feel like the same weak, trembling sinner I was then. But I have had some seasons of peace to my troubled soul, and at times everything has seemed dark, and my duty a burden. May the Lord help me to perform it in an acceptable manner, is my constant prayer.

Now, dear brethren, if you see anything in this that would mar the cause of Christ, cast it away, and all will be right with me. May the dear brethren and sisters continue to write those glad tidings of joy to the meek and lowly ones in Christ Jesus; and may you, dear brethren Beebe, be supported spiritually and temporally, to publish the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for many years to come. May God bless you all, is the prayer of your unworthy brother, if one at all,
JOHN B. MARTIN.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, Oct. 23, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, No. 14, page 163, there is the following:

"Will Elder John Stipp, of Oregon, give his views on Rev. ii. 4, 5, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and oblige a friend?"
W. E. MOTHERSHEAD.

BEST, Ala., June 12, 1886."

The passage of Scripture upon which my views are called for reads

thus: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." There are but few subjects of grace who have not learned by painful experience what it is to leave their first love; and truly happy art thou, dear friend Mothershead, if thou hast not left thy first love; unless thou art but a newly begotten babe in Christ, and "desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Peter ii. 2. I now am old, lacking only a few weeks of being eighty years of age; but I can look back with mournful pleasure to the time of my first love, the day of my espousal, and the gladness of my heart. "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."—Jer. ii. 2. Then "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."—Song ii. 3, 4. Then I could in truth say, I know that I love the brethren. Then I could sing with the poet,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
To my believing ears;
It soothes my sorrows, heals my wounds,
And drives away my fears."

But I never could speak with the assurance with which I have heard many others speak, saying, "I know that I love the Lord." I could only hope. Then I would sometimes hear old professors say, "Such a brother preached me almost to death! O how I did wish he would stop; I do not like long preaching." This filled me with amazement. I could not understand it possible for a lover of Jesus to become weary in hearing the good tidings of salvation proclaimed by the Lord's servants, when his fruit was so sweet to my taste. It appeared to me then that I could sit from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, and from the going down of the sun to the rising of the same, and never tire. And my trouble then was for fear the preacher would stop. How eagerly did I then grasp every word of the heavenly message, as it dropped from the lips of the Lord's servants, and it appeared to me that I never could get my fill of the heavenly manna. O how it delighted me when Old Baptists would visit me. Often have I sat till break of day talking with some good Baptist brother of the things concerning the kingdom of God. Nothing on earth delighted me so well. But alas! Where am I now? Ah, I have left my first love. I am now surrounded with thick darkness on every hand, without (seemingly) a ray of light to shine upon the road that leads me to the Lamb. The words of good old John Newton suit my case,

"Then to his saints I often spoke
Of what his love had done;
But now my heart is almost broke,
For all my joys are gone."

Now when the evening shade prevails,
My soul in darkness mourns;
And when the morn the light reveals,
No light to me returns.

My prayers are now a chatt'ring noise,
For Jesus hides his face;
I read, the promise meets my eyes,
But will not reach my case."

I remember with grief from whence I have fallen; but to repent and do the first works I cannot. I am as helpless, as regards that matter, as a newly born babe. I could as easily make a world as renew those pleasing feelings that I once enjoyed. It may be caused in part by the absence of my hearing.

But to return to the text. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." The chapter commences thus: "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." The "Alpha and Omega" explains this mystery to his servant John in the previous chapter and twentieth verse, saying, "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." Thus by the number seven (which in Scripture language signifies a full, finished, complete and perfect number) is set forth all the true christian churches that ever have been, are now, or ever will be, of all nations upon the face of the whole earth. "And the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches." These seven stars represent all of Christ's chosen, called, qualified and true gospel ministers, from the apostles down to the end of time. And I rejoice greatly that the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, he that liveth and was dead, and is alive for ever more, amen, and has the keys of hell and of death, ever holdeth them in his right hand. For where would they go were it not for this? But though they err, and leave their first love, him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give them repentance unto salvation. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." The first works are these which he did in the time of his first love. "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted."—Rev. ii. 1-3. The same writer, the beloved apostle John, saith in his first general epistle, fourth chapter,

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world." And Paul, no doubt having reference to the same class, who say they are apostles, and are not, saith, "Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them who desire occasion; that wherein they glory they may be found even as we. For such are *false apostles*, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."—2 Cor. xi. 11-15. Now Christ demands of them no hard task to perform. He did not command them to be circumcised and keep the law. He only commanded them to do the same works they had (in their first love and earlier profession of his name) been doing. "Repent, and do the first works." He did not say, Repent and get your first love; for this he was unable to do. He alone who first planted his love in his heart was able to renew that love; but he was able to do the first works. "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience," &c. And another apostle saith, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister," &c.—Heb. vi. 10. But there was the angel of another church, that was the reverse of the angel of the church of Ephesus, which I will here give a passing notice. "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass: I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Nevertheless I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and eat things sacrificed unto idols. * * * But unto you I say, [*i. e.*, the angel, messenger, elder, or pastor of the church] and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have, hold fast till I come."—Rev. ii. 18-25. The Galatian church also left their first love, as it is written, "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you

at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them."—Gal. iv. 13-17.

The foregoing, brethren Beebe, is at your disposal.

Affectionately your brother, I hope, in Christ,

JOHN STIPP.

GRANBY, Mo., Sept. 15, 1885.

VERY DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—For the first time in my life I attempt to write for publication. I have been reading some communications written by different brethren for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and there are some pieces consoling to my poor soul. I have had a desire for some time to write my experience for publication. It is of twenty years length. I was born in Wayne County, Ky., Dec. 27, 1817. There was but little chance there for education, the Webster spelling-book and the New Testament being my school-books. In September before I was twenty years old, I hope I was compelled to join the school of Christ. I was at a meeting where the minister was warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come. There were mourners at the altar, weeping and crying for mercy. I was standing by and looking on, but did not know I was a sinner in the sight of God. I thought if I were they I would get up from there; but suddenly I was among them, crying for mercy too. From that time I desired the prayers of the righteous, and would go to meeting every opportunity. While the minister was praying or preaching, I was weeping and crying, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." When at home I would go to the silent grove, and there implore God's mercy. I was one of the most tender-hearted creatures on earth. My mind was so affected that the brethren, both private members and ministers, advised me to go to the church and tell them what I hoped the Lord had done for me. Being easily persuaded, I consented. I was received, and baptized by Elder Bainer, and lived with them ten years. Being a good singer, I took an active part in the services; and when the teachers would take up the sinner's case, dead in trespasses and sins, I could witness with them until they led them to where they viewed themselves as lost, feeling that they must sink down to hell, without the intervening grace of God. There they would always leave me, on what I called the half-way ground. I would think that God did not operate on all alike. Thus I lived for ten years. At length William Cooper paid our church a visit, and preached on Saturday. As before, I was ready to conclude that God did not operate

on every one alike. I went to meeting on Sunday, and brother Cooper preached again. He had a different appearance to me from what he had ever had before. He was trembling like a leaf. He commenced telling his feelings, and said that when he arose that morning he was in Egyptian darkness, and took up his book and sat down to read, but it was a sealed book. It was announced that breakfast was ready. He sat at the table and ate, and again took up his book, but still it was a sealed book. Expecting to be called on to preach, he searched on until it was announced that it was time for meeting. He was still in darkness, without one ray of light on any subject. He thought he would catch his horse and go home, but as he opened the stable door these words struck him with a trembling, "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." Then he took up the sinner's case, dead in trespasses and in sins, and showed the convicting power which gave him a discovery of his condition, and leads him on in deep trouble. I could travel with him thus far. Then he took up their case again, presenting them in greater distress, and yet knowing nothing about redeeming grace. This was as far as I had ever been led. He took up their case the third time, in still greater trouble, viewing the justice of God in sending them to hell, but still crying for mercy, saying, "Lord, save, or I perish." He told how they would call on their teachers to pray to God to save them from hell, and also of their deliverance. I could bear witness to the first and second degree, but no farther. Then I thought, What shall I do? I will again ask God to forgive me my trespasses against his holy law. I believed I had trampled his mercies under my feet; that I had deceived the church, and had been baptized before I was born again. I thought, What shall I do? O God, take me, lead me by thy Holy Spirit into the right way. When I would go to the secret grove to try to implore the mercy of God, that he would show me my condition, and deliver me from torment, it seemed that my prayer was not heard, but would fall to the ground. I would return without relief, still crying, "Lord, save, or I perish." I was trying to keep these things secret; I did not want any one to see me or know anything about my condition. I never even told my companion. I desired to see two of my brethren who had moved some twenty-five miles away. I thought that on the morrow I would go and see them. My wife said, "Let us go to father's to-night, and you can go down in the morning." I consented. She still knew nothing of my mind. When we arrived, her mother said, "What is the matter with John?" My wife replied, "I do not know. He has not told me anything." I lay

down to conceal my trouble. I do not think I slept, for I did not expect to see the light of another day. I thought I must die. I recollect hearing the fowls crow for day, and was trying to plead with God to spare me to see the light of another day. There I saw my condition, that I must launch into hell. It looked to me that all were saved but me. It is just as clear and plain to me now as then. When I got this discovery, these words came to me, "Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee a crown of life." I sprang from my bed, with this resolution, I will go and tell the church what the Lord has done for me. The first thing I knew I was sitting by the bedside with one shoe on my foot and the other in my hand. The thought struck me that some one would see me. This was just at daylight. Off through the orchard I went, and it seemed there was just room between the trees for me to run, for they seemed bowed over my head, and the elements were of a bright gold color. I cheered up, and went to the house, caught my horse, and started. All the way the elements retained this bright color, and the timber was bowed over my head. When I arrived, the brethren were not at home, so I returned, considering my condition. I had belonged to the Baptist Church for ten years, and knew nothing of regenerating grace. When I was baptized I had no thought of following Jesus in the likeness of his death, burial and resurrection; but after, as I hope, I was born again, I desired to follow him. I went to meeting fifty times, more or less, before I consented to follow Jesus, as he had commanded. I would think, Perhaps I am yet deceived, and would leave without telling the good news, with a guilty conscience toward God. My desire was that Jesus would go down with me into the liquid grave; and I believe he was with me; for when I arose, it was with a clear conscience, and I have never had that guilty conscience since. May the God of all grace bless and save us, is my prayer.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
JOHN S. WALKER.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Nov. 2, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In the SIGNS for November 15th, which came to hand to-night, and which I have just been perusing with special pleasure and profit, I notice a short letter from sister Mollie Gott, forwarded to you by Elder White, which I have also much enjoyed reading. One thing in it has called up a portion of my own early experience, and I feel like speaking of it especially for our sister's comfort, and I trust for that of others also. She speaks of the Lord's supper, and of reading the Bible after she had returned home from the meeting where she had partaken of it for the first time, and of then reading the words, "Whoso eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." She says that these words caused her

great trouble. I do not know whether these words are still troubling our dear young sister, or whether she has become satisfied concerning them; but I wish to say that they were once a hindrance and stumbling-block to me, and to tell how they have ceased to be such, but rather a comfort and blessing.

These words were a source of trouble to me because I did not understand them aright. When I saw their true meaning I found joy in them. Satan seeks to mar the peace and hinder the obedience of the people of God in all sorts of ways, and one of them is to pervert the word of God. All the Scriptures are for the comfort of the people of God, that they may have hope. God so intends them. If any child of God is troubled by any word of God, it is because the enemy is striving to overthrow their faith.

I was bothered by these words before I became a member of the church, and before I became a member my mind was satisfied about them. I read the words, and thought of them as though they had read, "Whoso eateth and drinketh, *being unworthy*, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself," &c. How then could I dare eat the supper? Was not I unworthy of any and every spiritual privilege? I knew that all who were members of the church were expected to be present at the supper, and if I were a member the same would be expected of me. I could not be an orderly member and stay away from the supper; how then could I ask a home among the people of God when I dare not go to the Lord's table with them, lest I should eat and drink damnation to myself? This hindrance was in my way for some time, and it seemed insurmountable. After a time the thought came, How dare any one partake of the supper? for all are unworthy, and all christians confess themselves so. I saw others partake of the bread and wine who had often bemoaned their own unworthiness in my hearing. I thought, If they feel unworthy, how dare they sit down at this table? This also greatly perplexed me. I could not see through it. At length my mind was led to more carefully read the connection of these words. I there found that the apostle charged upon the church at Corinth that they had turned this ordinance into a heathen feast, and one was hungry and another drunken. They were looking upon it as being largely intended, at least, for the gratification of their carnal appetites after the manner of a heathen feast. And he told them that in this they were not really eating the Lord's supper. They did not discern the body and blood of Jesus in it. They had lost sight of the cleansing blood and the spiritual provisions of grace, and only saw what was earthly and sensual. Now he says, Whoso eats and drinks in this unworthy way, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. It does not say (and we have reason to be glad it does not), Whoso eateth and drinketh, *being un-*

worthy (for who would then dare ever to eat or drink at that table?), but Whoso eats and drinks "*unworthily*," or in this riotous, carnal manner. And O what a relief this view of the language brought me! Every stumbling block was at once removed.

Afterwards little by little I was led to see more. I was led to see what I still rejoice in, that the more any one felt of his own unworthiness the better prepared he was to eat the bread and drink the wine in a worthy or becoming manner. The more one feels of his own sinfulness and nothingness, the more he would realize of the fullness of grace and goodness in Christ. And this is discerning the Lord's body. So now I can say to the halting, fearful ones, If you feel most sinful and unworthy in yourself, you also realize how great the salvation of Jesus is, and this is the best possible qualification you can have for coming to the Lord's table. Feeling thus you are in no danger of eating and drinking unworthily, and so of incurring this condemnation, but are well prepared to discern the Lord's body and to eat and drink in his honor. If, on the contrary, you should come, saying, I am worthy, this would be to eat and drink unworthily, and so incur the condemnation pronounced in the text.

May God bless this to the comfort of all.

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

CONEHATTA, Newton Co., Miss.

DEAR BROTHER HANCKS:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Mark x. 21, and oblige your unworthy brother, if one at all? I hope I have been comforted by your letters in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I wonder why you do not write more often.

GEORGE W. PACE.
R E P L Y .

DEAR BROTHER:—I do not know that I have any views upon the Scripture to which you call my attention, but perhaps some of the dear brethren may give you a satisfactory view. I will quote the Scripture and make a few remarks. "Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

Some say that this young man was an unregenerate person, or one of the non-elect. I am under the impression that he was a child of God, but had been taught that by keeping the law he could inherit eternal life. It seems that he was an inquirer after truth. My opinion is, there are many of the children of God that do not understand their own experience. It was a long time after I obtained a hope, before I could claim my little experience. The first time was when I heard the Primitive Baptists preach. I still thought I must do something else, or that something else must be done. This young man had obeyed the law from his youth (his youth in Christ), as it is with every heaven-born child who lives as near to the honor and glory of God as he knows

how. The young christian is represented as a lamb. The lamb cannot subsist upon as strong food as the old sheep. Paul says, "When I was a child I thought as a child, I understood as a child, I spake as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." As we grow in grace we lose confidence in the flesh and become more fully established in the sovereignty of God and the fundamental principles of doctrine. One reason why I think he was a child of God is, because he came running to Jesus. We always go to Jesus from a sense of necessity. Like as Joseph's brethren went to him, because they had no food in their own land. Another reason is, because Jesus loved him. He never loved the non-elect. "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated." He loves his people with an everlasting love, and we love him because he first loved us. Hence we conclude that this young man loved Jesus, because Jesus first loved him. Jesus said, "One thing thou lackest." This individual beautifully represents one who has a hope in Jesus, but has not gone into the visible church or kingdom of Christ, from a deep felt sense of unworthiness, or has some obstacle in the way. Every one who is thus traveling yet lacks one thing. Some who have a hope say they would come, but they are connected with some institution, and cannot forsake that. Some would come, but they have an Arminian immersion, and think that is a sufficient baptism. Some would come, but they have a relative or near friend who is an Arminian, and they cannot leave them. You see all these characters have so many weights, and such great possessions (worldly cares), that they lack one thing. Paul told the saints to lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset them, and run with patience the race that is set before them, &c. Paul also tells them to work out their own salvation (common salvation) with fear and trembling. But they cannot do so as long as they are so wealthy. I have heard some say that they would join the church, but they felt too little. I tell all such that they are not little enough. They yet lack one thing; that is, "sell whatsoever thou hast." As much as to say, Lay aside all your weights, worldly cares, institutions of men, leave all your so-called baptisms behind. Do not come with your masonry, or anything of the kind. Do not try to bring a Sunday School with you. Sell everything you have and give to the poor. Give to the poor and afflicted, tempest-tossed children of God. "Behold, I leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." They are represented as a "little flock." They are so poor that they can do nothing of themselves; but Jesus is all in all. Now to all God's children I would say, Sell all you have, and come home to your friends, and tell them of the wonderful dealings of the Lord with you.

"And thou shalt have treasure in heaven." This heaven, we under-

stand, is the church. The kingdom of God is in the hearts of his people. The kingdom of heaven is within you. And this "treasure" is the salvation or deliverance which the child of God receives in obedience. We are blessed in obedience, and have many blessed privileges and refreshing seasons while in obedience. Also, in this heaven the members are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, and receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, "Abba, Father."

"And come, take up the cross, and follow me." After you have given yourself to the church, thus finding ease of mind in discharge of duty, next take up the cross and follow Jesus into the liquid grave, or be baptized. "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." Paul exhorts his brethren to be followers of God as dear children. After we have followed Jesus in baptism, our duty does not stop there; for there are duties for all the children of God to perform; and they learn by experience that in the world they have much tribulation, but in Jesus is peace. It is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom: Then, dear brother Pace, every duty you have to perform is a cross to the flesh; but let us put off the old man, and follow Jesus in all his footsteps. As we do not see Jesus participating with the world, we should not. Peter said to Jesus, "We have left all and followed thee," or sold all. Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

I have written the above after doing my day's labor. I have time to write only at night. I am glad, dear brother, to learn that you have been comforted from my feeble letters. I feel so unworthy I do not like to write even as much as I feel impressed. The above are some of my feeble views on the subject. May the Lord protect us, and keep us in the path of duty.

Yours in gospel bonds,
LEE HANCKS.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., Sept. 24, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having been often requested by the beloved brotherhood to contribute my feeble mite in the way of correspondence to the columns of your paper, after much hesitation I once more venture to do so, leaving it to your better judgment to use or destroy as you deem proper. Through your paper we often hear of many afflicted pilgrims scattered over our land, yet rejoicing in the Lord of life and glory. To them I would extend my heartfelt sympathy, and also unite with them in crowning Jesus Lord of all. For what a Friend we have in Jesus! I

myself have drank deeply of affliction's cup, in various ways, and for the last six and a half years have felt it most keenly, not having been able to walk a step alone during that time, nor to use my left hand at all. Surely in such a condition one's utter helplessness, and destitution, and entire dependence on almighty God, are sensibly felt. But though earth with all its treasures recede and fail, yet how soul-cheering and life-inspiring to even more truly realize, when in these deep waters, that God in Christ Jesus is our all-sufficient Friend, in need and indeed. The poor sinner has to be brought very low to receive and realize most graciously what a Friend Jesus is; for his promise is in time of need, and not in fullness of self-importance; but when self is abased, it is Christ's opportunity to be exalted, and to become all in all. Some would be glad to know the inward life of the afflicted pilgrim, although very few would be willing to travel the thorny maze and know it for themselves. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." Though the cup be bitter, it contains some sweets that probably are less sensibly realized by many who do not partake of this cup. There is that sweet peace of God which passeth all understanding. These little ones can often say,

"Boast not, ye sons of earth,
Nor look with scornful eyes;
Above your highest mirth,
My saddest hours I prize;
For though my cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all."

The love of God. The heart is often full to overflowing, but words fail to express it. The weary tabernacles are plainly seen, but the emotions of the inner life are only known to God. Our God is love, faithfulness and truth, whose wisdom is perfect, and his power supreme. He is the same unchangeable God. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their strength in time of trouble." Look to the Lord alone, and not to self or earth. I can only direct you to Jesus. Every mercy and blessing comes through him, and his manifold promises are faithful, true and precious to his needy ones. Man must be abased, and God alone exalted.

"Look to the Lord, his word, his throne;
Look to his strength, and not thine own;
There wait, and look, and look again;
Thou shalt not wait nor look in vain."

Praise ye the Lord, for he is worthy to be exalted by us, and by all mankind.

Beloved ones, scattered far and near, I feel that I have not said anything edifying to you; but may we all be taught of the Lord, and truly rejoice in him, in spirit and not in mere form; for our God is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him as do so in spirit and truth.

An humble pilgrim, trusting that my anchor is secured in the Rock of Ages, and not in the dark tumultuous waters and quicksands of time.

MRS. S. N. BIGGS.

GENEVA COUNTY, Ala., Oct. 16, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR EDITORS:—I have been a reader of

your paper since 1871, and do not feel like I can dispense with it as long as I am blessed with means to pay for it. It has wafted me many sweet messages of love, reproof and instructious, fresh from the pens of gifted ones, yet as bright stars in the gospel heaven, in the hand of the omnipotent One, as it has seemed good in his sight; and each one should use their gift in a God-honoring manner, with the ability given, remembering that they have no spiritual knowledge but what has been given them. Therefore the strong should bear with the weak, and not be ready to cast them out and off because they may not be able at all times to comprehend the great truth by them set forth. Neither should the weak envy the strong, nor rise up and say, "These things are not so," simply because they may not be able to understand them. The ability to explain and put the right construction upon the divine word, and to be able to receive it as truth, is a gift of God. We cannot by mental study reach forth and grasp the knowledge of these things, neither can we impart it to others. Seeing these things are so, why be impatient with some poor, ignorant one, whose eyes have never been enlightened to understand? Every one should write and speak in meekness and love, remembering that God alone is the dispenser and disposer of all things; and he will not fail to enlighten each and every one in all things necessary for them to know. Is it not enough if we have been down in the deep, where the billows have rolled over us, and we have been made to exclaim, "Salvation is of the Lord?" Is not that enough, even if they are never able to say more, to entitle them to the love and fellowship of the more gifted ones? The Lord has as much use in its place for the one talent as for the ten. Therefore, my friends, whether you have one or ten, in love contribute them to the columns of the SIGNS, for the benefit of its readers; for you know not how many hungry, tempted and tried ones it fills with a feast of fat things. There is many a one that is not able to write and set forth the truth in order; but when it is proclaimed and set forth by some gifted one, they have the witness in themselves that it is true. There is a needs be for God's dear children to write and speak often to each other. We learn that John, although he baptized Christ, and had infallible proof that he was the Christ, yet we hear him from the prison inquiring, "Art thou the Christ, or do we look for another?" So it is with the tempted and tried ones; if they are favored to know the truth, they want to hear it again and again, that they may be sure that it is the truth. It seems to me there never has been a time of greater necessity for each and every one of God's dear children to stand firm for the truth. While darkness and delusion seem to be sweeping over this great broad earth, the great revivalists and Babel builders are busy, compassing sea and land to make proselytes to their fabulous god;

and how easy for their deluded subjects to be captivated and carried off in the tide, to help swell the hue and cry for more money and material; yes, they say, "Help, every one of you, big, little, old and young. Nothing is wanting but the requisite help to insure every one a passport through the pearly gates. Yes, be up and doing; for the more we can be instrumental in helping to save, the brighter we will shine and the more stars will be added to our crowns." Is the living God in all this tumult? No. He is cast into the back-ground, as an impotent God, not able to execute his will. But you, dear child of God, have not so learned him. How different are the lessons you have learned. Very well do you know that you have no might nor strength of your own, and that there is but the one true and living God that executes his will, without the help of man.

I must close my rambling thoughts; and when you read, may you be able to cast the mantle of charity over these imperfect lines; and may he who walks amidst the seven golden candlesticks, and holds the seven stars in his right hand, wield you by the might of his power, and enable you to bring from his storehouse things both old and new, to feed his hungry poor. Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished. Yes, "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. Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone: that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself."—Isaiah xlv. 23, 24.

N. A. MEEKS.

WATERLOO, Iowa, Oct. 25, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Many of the dear brethren and sisters have written to me of late, asking what has occasioned my long continued silence. I will here answer them all (with your permission). The first and greatest reason is, I have had nothing to write. Doubts and fears have hovered around me till my path has been obscured by them. I often fear I have never known the Savior's love shed abroad in my heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. I often fear that what I have heretofore written has been a detriment to the cause of religion; and I would here ask all who may read this, if they ever have such thoughts. Does it ever seem to you that you are past all tender feelings on religious things? Are you ever so dead to every feeling sense of your acceptance with the Father? My silence has not been for anything with which I have been displeased with the brethren, or with your paper, but for the above named reason, together with an increase in business affairs and sickness in the family. Asking an interest in your prayers, I close, and give way to those who have light and liberty to occupy space.
SARAH A. BLAKE.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

To the churches composing the Juniata Association of Regular Baptists, greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—Notwithstanding the winds of adversity, God in his providence has seen fit to permit us to assemble again 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 this prophecy, and keepeth them. John must have been perfectly happy amidst the surging waves of the sea, where he could commune with his God. He understood the way of salvation when he esteemed Christ as the faithful witness, the first begotten of 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 in 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 hosannahs to the Lamb of God, who was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty. And 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 them only, will he give power over the nations. But to them that believe not is reserved 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, who 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.
MARCUS STARR, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Regular Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., October 1st, 2d and 3d, 1886, to the associations with whom she corresponds, sends this letter of greeting.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—We have had another profitable and pleasant meeting, for which we desire to thank the Father of all our mercies for thus permitting us to assemble in his great and holy name, and of hearing from distant parts of Zion by the coming of your ministers and messengers, who have brought cheering words, which have comforted our souls and stirred up our minds by way of remembrance of the many things pertaining to the kingdom of Jesus; and especially have your ministers given the certain sound of the trumpet. All our corresponding associations have remembered us in love, in sending messengers to us, which we have gladly received, and we sincerely hope that you will continue to favor us by sending your ministers and messengers to meet with us.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the Springfield Church, Huntingdon Co., Pa., to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1887, at 11 o'clock a. m.

THOMAS ROSE, Mod.

MARCUS STARR, Clerk.

The First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, now in session with Big Walnut Creek Church, near Winchester, Jefferson Co., Kansas, Sept. 24th, 25th and 26th, 1886, to the associations with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the tender mercies of our God, we are blessed once more in meeting in an associate capacity, to hear of each other's welfare. We have heard from all of our churches. They report peace and fellowship among themselves. Your messengers have been received with great joy, and we are truly glad to hear from you once more, and of your steadfastness in the doctrine of God our Savior. We desire a continuance of your correspondence.

Our next session is appointed to be held with our sister church, Pleasant Grove, at Pardee, Atchison County, Kansas, to commence on Friday (at 10 o'clock) before the last Saturday in September, 1887, and continue three days, where we again hope to meet with your messengers of love.

Now may the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with you and guide you into all truth. Amen.

W. F. JONES, Mod.

T. J. HOUSE, Clerk.

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.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1886.

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

ZELCHARIAH XIV. 6, 7.

"AND it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."

By request of our esteemed brother, F. K. Cooper, of Washington County, Pennsylvania, we submit such thoughts as we have on this portion of the prophetic testimony of Jesus; and in this, as in every expression of our sentiments on the subject of salvation, we wish ever to be found in harmony with the inspired Scriptures. No views, however ably presented, can be correct unless sustained by that infallible standard; and every sentiment which rests upon the firm foundation of the written word of the Lord must with that word endure forever.

"And it shall come to pass." This positive assertion of a future event could never have been used by any other authority but that of our God, who declares the end from the beginning. Without the immutable purpose of infinite wisdom and power there would be no certainty of anything in the future; therefore the denial of the absolute and supreme predestination of God, including all the events in time and the fulfillment of his eternal purpose, involves the rejection of all prophetic revelation. Indeed it is only in the positive certainty of the determinate counsel of the will of God that the final salvation of the redeemed saints is assured in Christ Jesus. In every declaration of prophecy, from the sentence of the law given to Adam in the garden of Eden to the close of the inspired record, the infallible assurance of divine truth is recorded, as in this text, in the strongest form of absolute predestination. Nowhere has God spoken of his purpose as dependent upon contingencies or affected by the will or action of any creature or being outside of himself. The pride of carnal reason has applied to the sovereignty of God the contradictory term of "permissive decrees," but no authority can be found in the Scriptures for any such limitation of the infinite will of God. His word is spirit and life, and his power is sufficient for the accomplishment of all that he has declared shall come to pass, whether it be the disobedience of Adam, by which sin entered into the world, or the righteousness of Jesus Christ, in which his saints are justified. God is holy, just and good in all his works; not less in the condemnation of the guilty than in the justification of the saints through the righteousness of their perfect Redeemer. In all the counsel of his will nothing is uncertain; therefore he

can with truth declare, "It shall come to pass."

"*In that day.*" To an attentive reader, even with a natural mind, there must be manifest in the letter of the Scriptures definite certainty in the record, including not only the actual performance of all that God declares, but the very exact moment when each event shall come to pass. The land of Canaan was given to Abraham by the unalterable truth of God four hundred years before his descendants were brought into possession of it. And they were just as certainly appointed to suffer Egyptian bondage as they were assured of that goodly heritage. The reason given to Abram for the delay was that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full.—Gen. xv. 16. Carnal reason cannot understand how this wickedness was included in the divine purpose; but God has left it on record to confound the wisdom of man and to show his absolute sovereignty over the wickedness of the vilest sinners. Then his people may well rest in the assurance of his word, knowing that no power of iniquity can move beyond the limit set by the hand of their almighty Redeemer, who "hath determined the times before appointed." It was not possible that the great event declared in this prophecy should come to pass before that day which was specified, nor yet could it be postponed beyond that day. Such a day never was before that time, nor can it ever again be in the same sense; yet in the experience of the saints that day is still revealed to each of them individually.

"*The light shall not be clear nor dark.*" "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached." The preaching of John did not proclaim the gospel kingdom as set up in its visible organization. He declared only that it was at hand. In this he was indeed "a burning and a shining light" as compared with all the prophets by whom God had before spoken unto the fathers. As the messenger whom our Lord sent before his face, John was a highly favored servant, and well might he rejoice in the glorious announcement given him to proclaim; yet he did not enter into the organized church of Christ in gospel light and liberty, since he was slain in the prison by Herod before our Lord was crucified. Until Jesus nailed to his cross the handwriting of ordinances, the law and the night of Judaism still obscured the light of the testimony of salvation by the blood of the everlasting covenant in Christ. There was no living light in that old legal covenant. It could only show sin as exceeding sinful, and make manifest the perfect justice of the divine sentence under which the whole world was already condemned. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."—Gal. iii. 19. In the interval between the preaching of John the Baptist and

the establishment of the gospel dispensation by the Holy Ghost filling the apostles on the day of Pentecost, there was a period which was neither the clear shining of the light of gospel liberty, nor yet the darkness of the legal night, with its bondage and shadows. There was, indeed, light which was superior to the reflected moonbeams of the Mosaic dispensation; yet even the most favored disciples could not by that light see clearly the eternal power and Godhead of the Lord Jesus. This was shown by the request of Philip.—John xiv. 8. The faith of the Son of God had led the disciples to forsake all and follow Jesus; yet they could not see him as the only manifestation of God until he was made known to them in his glory by the Spirit of truth, after his resurrection. It was light that made manifest to them the great grace which was in the Lord Jesus; yet they did not understand his triumphant power over sin and death in that day.

The particular time referred to is described in the preceding context as the day when the feet of the Lord shall stand upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and that mount shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley. As that mount stood between the Gentiles and the entrance into the literal city of Jerusalem in the type, so the truth and justice of God forbade any sinner to hope in the salvation of God. No created arm had power to cleave that mountain as described in the text, nor could any other but the power of God so cleave the mount of divine perfection which bars against the sinner the entrance of the true Jerusalem (the possession, habitation, or vision of peace). Here is the strong consolation of the gospel as contained in this portion of prophetic testimony. The feet of our redeeming Lord did stand upon the mount of Olives which was before Jerusalem, and that mount was cleft by his power so that a very great valley was formed, protected on either hand by the perfections of God; and in this way of truth and justice the ransomed of the Lord enter the gates of the holy city where the presence of God is their everlasting light and joy. The very truth and justice which cut off the sinner from all hope of entering into this holy habitation, under the feet of our Redeemer afford assurance and protection to the trembling sinner who hears the voice of Jesus speaking peace through his own most precious blood.

"*But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord.*" The repetition of this positive form of assurance presents the certainty with which it is settled in the eternal purpose of that God who moved the prophet to record this wonderful truth. The term "one day" does not signify any measure of natural time, since Peter says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a

thousand years as one day."—2 Peter iii. 8. The important assertion here presented is that this day is "known to the Lord." This includes the comforting truth that nothing contrary to his eternal purpose of love and grace can be developed in that day. Here the faith of the Son of God finds a sweet and consoling rest for all those whose trust is in the name of the Lord. Since even the hour and the power of darkness is included in the knowledge and supreme decree of our God, it is clear that the assertion of Paul included all the saints when he says, "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. Darkness may overshadow the day as the legal night is shrouded in gloom when the moon of Jewish types is turned into blood; but though the sun of revealed truth be darkened by the clouds which are the pavilion of our God, and the dreadful tempests attending him strike terror to our natural reason, by faith all who are led by the Spirit of God are enabled to rest in the sweet knowledge that "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Nothing can come to pass without the knowledge and purpose of God; therefore they who are kept by his power have nothing to fear. Even this day of indefinable gloom is "known to the Lord." In the revelation of his gracious purpose of love and mercy this day is just as essential as any other incident in the great system of divine providence whereby Christ Jesus is exalted with the right hand or power of God as a "Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins." This is a point of truth which the saints cannot afford to forget. Our most bitter trials are given by the same love which God commends to us in the gift of his Son to die for us. It is this truth which enables the saints to glory in tribulations. How sweet to feel and know that all our times are in his hand, and every day of trial is "known to the Lord."

"*Not day nor night.*" As the legal night terminated with the preaching of John in the wilderness of Judea, the good tidings which he proclaimed were not included in the night of Judaism; and from his time until the resurrection of Jesus there was neither day nor night in the manifestation of the revelation of salvation. This is the only sense in which we can understand this expression. Certainly there can be no time when the knowledge of God is at all limited or obscured. It must be in regard to the exhibition of this knowledge to his people that this prophetic declaration is recorded. Literally this was the case in the time to which we have understood it to apply; and in the experience of the subjects of grace such a day is found. The light of legal requirements is shrouded in the darkness of hopeless condemnation, and the day is not yet revealed in them in "the light of the knowledge

of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Dark as is this season, it is appropriately designated as a day; for it manifests what was never seen in any other light; that is, the justice of divine condemnation in cutting off all hope from the conscious sinner, who feels that this darkness is his everlasting portion. Then the glad tidings of salvation by grace is too great and joyful for the poor sinner to claim as coming to him. This is experimentally a day which is "not day nor night."

"*But it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light.*" The repetition of the assertion that "It shall come to pass" would appear to natural reason to be unnecessary. So the wise and prudent of the world are made to expose their own folly in criticizing the divine record. But to the tried saints for whose benefit all Scripture is given, this emphatic repetition of the sure and certain fulfillment of this predestinated purpose of God is full of the marrow and fatness of comfort and consolation. When the tempter suggests that this bewildering gloom which hides the Sun from their sight is but the beginning of the night of utter despair which is just ready to swallow them up, then they know the need of the strong consolation which God has given in these assuring expressions. In nature, with the evening time comes darkness; so it is very consistent with reason to expect that, even the dim light now seen will be withdrawn at evening time; but in the case of this day of which the prophet is speaking, the order of nature is reversed, and the light shall be manifest at evening time. This wonderful display of divine power was fulfilled in the day of the preaching of John. Instead of sinking into the darkness of night, that day was swallowed up in the infinite light of the Sun of righteousness; so that while John was "a burning and a shining light," yet his light could add nothing to the divine radiance of the true Light which illumined the gospel heaven. Hence Jesus says, "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth; but I receive not testimony from man." "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."—John v. 36, 37. As the light of natural day can receive no aid from artificial lamps, so the light which emanates from the throne of God and the Lamb is not increased by any efforts of his creatures. The saints ever find the light of their Savior's countenance when it is with them "at evening time." So long as they are enjoying light and prosperity they do not feel their need of him; but when darkness overshadows them and they cannot see their way, then it is that they need

the light. In this evening time of their experience, they sweetly realize the value of this precious provision of grace by which light is given at evening time. When thick clouds darken the way of the bewildered pilgrims, and they feel that they are just losing all the light by which they have been guided, it is evening time with them. Reason says the night has come upon them and they are lost in the darkness; but they are now just where the glorious Sun of righteousness shall certainly shine upon them, making the darkness itself to glow with heavenly radiance as they see in his light that the darkness was but the shadow of the blessings in reserve for them. All the rich stores of exceeding great and precious promises which God has given them in the Scriptures are confined to the afflicted and poor people; and he hears the prayer of the destitute. Then to every saint it is indeed true that "At evening time it shall be light."

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

WE have now received the Index from brother Hassell to the letter L, and as near as we can judge from what we have received, it will make about seventy pages of the book. He is making out more of a concordance than an index, to the book. We are informed by him that it will contain about twenty-five thousand references, and to complete this work it will take about two months. None can regret the delay necessary in getting this work up more than we do, but we are satisfied that when the subscribers receive the book they will feel richly repaid for waiting.

The book will make nearly twice and a half the amount anticipated in the prospectus, making a book that usually sells for at least five dollars, bound in cloth; and as it is sold for two dollars, we do not think the subscribers should complain at the extra time it has taken to get the work out.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

W H James 2, Thos M James 2, A G Holloway 2.50, B J Holloway 2.50, J W Coley 2.50, Nancy Braman 2, Clara Beauchamp 2.50, Henry Bachman 2, Miles F West 2.50, D A McKee 2.50, P M Robinson 2.50, Eld J D Hubbell 2.50.

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE BETTER BINDINGS.

Levi Harrod 50c, S K Crowley 50c, Daniel Black 3, Capt W E Buck 50c.—Total \$32.50.

MARRIAGES.

At the residence of the bride's father, Nov. 10, 1886, by Elder W. L. Beebe, Mr. John H. Van Gelder and Miss Georgie, daughter of John L. Finch, Esq., all of Warwick, N. Y.

ON Sept. 21, 1886, by Elder William J. Purington, at the residence of the bride's brother-in-law, Mr. Samuel C. Smith, of Westover, Md., and Miss Lizzie R. Drake, of Hopewell, N. J.

ON Sept. 23, 1886, by the same, at the residence of the bride, Mr. William Shute, of Newark, and Mrs. Amelia B. Liverton, of Lambertville, both of N. J.

BY Elder J. L. Staton, Oct. 6, 1886, at the residence of the bride's mother, in Wicomico Co., Md., Martin E. Hastings, of Salisbury, Md., and Mary C. Phillips.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request I write the obituary of **James Harvey Nance**, who died on Thursday, about four o'clock p. m., Oct. 7, 1886. Deceased was born in Rutherford Co., Tenn., on the 11th of July, 1809; was the son of Byrd Nance, who was captain of a company in the war of 1812, and who died on his return home, some time in the early part of 1815, after which deceased was carried with the rest of the family from Rutherford County, to Murray County, Tenn., by his uncle, Robert Mack, who was a lawyer by profession, and was at that time Circuit Judge. After deceased had grown up to manhood, he moved from Murray to Wayne County, Tenn., and at the age of about twenty-six he was married to Miss Ann M. Brown, in the year 1833. In the year 1837, in the month of October, he moved to Tippah County, Miss., six and one-half miles north-east of Ripley, where he died, having lived there forty-nine years. Before settling here, he attended the land sales in Pontotoc County, Miss., where he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land, upon which he began to improve. Being possessed with a knowledge of farming successfully, he, with the assistance of a good companion, soon began to rise in the world. The Lord certainly blessed him in almost every undertaking; and I will here say that a more worthy man than J. Harvey Nance was never known in our midst. As a citizen he could not be excelled; as a neighbor he was good in every respect. He was a noble husband and a kind parent, having done as much toward starting his children out in life as any one in our county. He and his companion raised eight children, six of whom are now living. Two boys died in Camp Douglas Prison, in 1862. The other six were all present to see their good old father breathe his last.

Deceased joined the Old School Baptist Church at Pleasant Hill (old Pine Hill), in 1837, together with sister Ann M. Nance, she joining by letter, and he by experience, she having been a member since seventeen years old. Elder J. B. Haddleston had charge of Pleasant Hill Church at that time; but since then, to the present time, the church has been necessitated to call different ones to attend them; but during all the changes which the church has undergone, Old Uncle Harve (as he was familiarly called) was never known to be complaining, but was ever ready to assist the church in everything needed, and did more for the ministering brethren than any member, perhaps, of our order in all our association. While brother Nance was a strong believer in the doctrine held by Old Predestinarian Baptists, he never denied any one the privilege of believing different from him, and would never show a contentious spirit either with his brethren or those of other denominations. We cannot speak to the memory of brother Nance in too high praise, but will, in few words, just say that while we cannot claim perfection in time, we must say that the example which he set as a farmer, as a citizen, as a husband, as a father and as a christian, is worthy of the esteem and praise of all who knew him, together with his bereaved companion and children, who feel the heavy stroke more sensibly than any others.

While the dear old husband, father, grandfather, uncle and friend, will be much missed, we hope that he is now sleeping in a peaceful quietude, having been released from all pain, to which he had been subject for forty years. In his last illness he lay a sufferer eighteen days, without eating anything scarcely. His disease was complicated. He had all the medical aid it was thought he required; and after all being done that could be, he passed away, with no dread of the future, but often remarked during his illness that he desired to go to his long home, where troubles, pains and afflictions would never reach him.

On Friday, at two o'clock p. m., the writer spoke to the memory of the deceased, from 1 Cor. xv. 49, to a large number of relatives and friends, after which his remains were laid away in the family cemetery.

May the Lord bless the bereaved wife, together with the six children, with the spirit of reconciliation, is the prayer of

T. L. MORTON.

SISTER Skinner, one of our little band in Washington City, departed this life the last of August. As I have not seen any notice of her death in the SIGNS, I feel impressed to offer a small tribute to her memory. Her disease was cancer, with which she had been troubled for nearly fifteen years. I was told by my niece, of Georgetown, that she could be heard groaning by those on the street, in her last days. I called to see her last New Year's. She had just recovered from one of her severe spells, and remarked, "When I recover from those spells, I am humbled in the dust." Her words made a deep impression upon my heart, which time cannot erase. This dear sister was baptized by Elder Wm. J. Parington, several years later than myself. I was told by our lamented sister Towles that her husband told her if she left his house for that purpose, she should not return. Her answer was, "If you close your doors upon me, the Lord will open another." When the time came for her to be buried under the wave, her husband told his son to get a carriage and take his mother to the water. Truly this circumstance shows that our God can turn the heart of man to work for his loved ones. She was meek and humble in her walk, and her seat was never vacant in meeting as long as her health lasted. So I was told by sister Burriss. She was wholly uneducated, not knowing a letter of the alphabet; but she knew and loved the truth; which proves that the knowledge of words and of books is not the power of the knowledge of salvation. She possessed none of the silk and purple of this world, but her walk and conversation proved that she was all glorious within, of wrought gold.

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
Of the seed royal, a dignified race."

When I left sister Skinner on New Year's, I called to see several other members, having been absent on a visit to my son's for more than twelve months. A few days after my visit to a few of the little band, I heard a lady say that she would call on an aristocrat when one moved into her neighborhood. I remarked that I had been calling on the aristocrats, for I had been visiting the children of a King—the King of kings and Lord of lords. I have not heard anything concerning this dear sister's last moments on earth, but I feel convinced, from her walk in this life, that she has gone home to rest in the bosom of her Savior, whom she loved and served while here. Sister Skinner left two sons and a grandson, whom she raised to be her chief support for several years previous to her death. If it be the will of our God, they will be brought to follow in her footsteps. I wish them well.

Your sister in hope,

RUTH ADAMSON.

ROCKVILLE, Md., Nov. 3, 1886.

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, Sept. 25, 1886, **Mrs. Ellenor Paul**, aged eighty years. In her youthful days it is evident that she did experience the heavenly birth, and united with the Congregationalists. I am informed that she was a fine woman, very agreeable with all that she associated with. One of the members of our church told me, who lived near her, that she was with us in belief. She was willing to die, and to be taken to her eternal rest.

ALSO,

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Oct. 13, 1886, **Miss Ellen G. Grover**, daughter of Charles H. and Jennie M. Grover, aged eighteen years, one month and thirteen days. She was sick for months, and suffered much, but was patient and quiet as a lamb through it all. Her father and mother did all within their means to have her restored to health, but that could not be done. Death did its work, and we have good reason to hope that she is forever at rest. She had her mind until the last, and said to her mother, "I must die; but God, who is about to take me, I love." In her death her father and mother feel that their loss is great. May God enable them to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be his name. She has left father, mother, her intended, one sister, one brother, and many relatives and friends, to mourn, but not without hope. A very large number of people were at her funeral, and it was a solemn meeting.

I preached both the above funerals, and they make up about five hundred and fifty that I have attended in all.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DIED—In Smyrna, Del., on Wednesday morning, Oct. 13, **Mrs. Rebecca Wells**, in the ninetyeth year of her age. Sister Wells was in two senses the oldest member by many years in the Bryn Zion Church. She was baptized by Elder Samuel Trott, Aug. 1, 1831; consequently her standing as a member of that church was over fifty-five years. Ever since my first acquaintance there, her character has been that of a mother in Israel. Few women have been more extensively known or more generally beloved. She lived much more in the church than in the world, and was ever solicitous for the peace and prosperity of the church. She has come to her grave in a good old age, having filled an important place, to these many years. Many daughters have lost a tender and devoted mother, ever ready to cheer the desponding, to strengthen the weak, to admonish the diffident and confirm the wavering. Many sons have been encouraged and cheered in their labors, and their hands have been upheld by her loving and consoling words from her lips, and prompt and faithful ministrations to their necessities. Although heart and flesh failed latterly, and she endured much bodily suffering, yet she did not cease from yielding fruit, even at this great age. A life wholly consecrated to the cause of Christ and his truth in the world, and a steadfast, consistent adherence thereto, in the face of opposition and discouragement, are not without their rewards even in this life. A well spent life: a peaceful and triumphant death. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things."

E. RITTENHOUSE.

Elder James B. Burch died in Oelwein, Fayette Co., Iowa, Sept. 24, 1886. His disease was cancer. Over a year he had been a patient sufferer from the indescribable tortures accompanying that most dreadful malady. Elder Burch was born in Surrey County, N. C., Oct. 17, 1801. He moved to Indiana with his parents in 1820, and was married Feb. 13, 1822, to Sarah H. Walden. In 1843 he moved from Indiana to Illinois, and from there came to Iowa, in 1853, and settled on the present site of Oelwein, near his son, L. M. Burch, who came here the previous year. He afterward moved to Brewer County, then to Floyd County, and then back to Fayette County, where he has since lived. In 1855 his wife died. He was married again in June, 1856, to Mrs. Mary Chance, who survives him. He had thirteen children (all by the first marriage), eleven of whom live to mourn his death. Early in life he professed a hope in Christ, commencing to preach at the age of twenty years. The writer had very little acquaintance with him, having only met him twice (never heard him preach), therefore can say little concerning the man. He was esteemed where he was known, and doubtless possessed much worth.

The funeral was largely attended, and many relatives and friends followed him to his last peaceful resting place. Elder Thomas Blake officiated.

"I know it seems vain, when friends depart,
To breathe kind words to the broken heart;
I know that the joys of life seem marr'd,
When we follow our friends to the old church-yard."

SARAH A. BLAKE.

WATERLOO, Iowa.

By request of sister Ella Nicoll, I send you the notice of the death of her mother, **Mrs. Mary H. Boulden**, relict of the late Charles Boulden, and daughter of the late Theodore Thomas. She died at her son's residence, in Elkton, Cecil Co., Md., at a late hour on Friday night, July 2, of heart disease. Although she had been in failing health for some time, she was as well as usual an hour before her demise, and her death was unexpected and a sudden and severe blow to her family. Our dear aunt was possessed of many lovely qualities, and was greatly beloved by her family and friends, and admired by all who knew her. She was not a visible member of the church, but by her fondness

for attending service and her interest in listening to the preaching of the word, we trust that she has passed from this world of sorrow to that inheritance which fadeth not away. She was born Jan. 30, 1815, and died July 2, 1886, in her seventy-second year, leaving six children, nine grandchildren and one sister, beside many other relatives, to mourn her departure.

H. A. BOULDEN.

Lucretia Phillips Drake, wife of Deacon E. H. Drake, left this transitory life May 23, 1886. She was born March 1, 1845, being forty-one years of age at the time of her death. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Second Hopewell Church, by Elder P. Hartwell, Aug. 7, 1869. She was a discreet and intelligent person, very dutiful in church and family, and the loss is much felt by the church, friends, husband and children, one of whom is an infant.

It is not death to leave this burdened, care-worn life, and dwell with Christ above, where all is happy, blissful love. It is a change from rough and rugged materiality to blessed, spiritual immortality.

JAMES H. HILL, Church Clerk.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Nov. 8, 1886.

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THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

As will be seen by reference to a letter received from Elder Hassell, on page 233, we have met with an unexpected delay in the completion of the Church History, caused by the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Index as soon as anticipated. We now have the History all in type except the Index, and the binder at work on the printed sheets, and as soon as the manuscript for the Index is received we will rush them through the press and mail the books at the earliest possible day.

We still have left of the first edition of the Plain Cloth binding @ \$2 00, 222 copies.
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From the above it will be observed that the first edition is nearly exhausted, and those wishing to procure a book will have to order very soon or they will be too late. 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE, IS PUBLISHED

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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 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.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

"SEE, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount."—Heb. viii. 5.

The writer of this epistle to the Hebrews quotes this language from the command of God to Moses. Not once only, but several times, did God repeat this command to Moses while making this revelation; thus showing that this was a matter of the utmost importance. And in Numbers, and again in Acts, it is said that Moses did make these things according to the fashion shown to him. Whatever man might think about it, it is clear that in the view of the God of heaven these things, that might have seemed trivial to men, were of the utmost importance. Some one, seeing the care displayed by the workmen in the erection of the tabernacle, might have questioned, Why be so particular? Of what possible harm can it be to have a few more or less posts, or bars, or curtains, or whether they be larger or smaller, or whether the building itself be of precisely such a size and shape? To such querying it would have been amply sufficient to answer, Our God has given us no discretion, absolutely none, in the matter. He himself is the Architect of this building, and whatever of wisdom it displays is his and his alone. I say that this would have been a sufficient reply, even if no beauty, or excellency, or fitness of design could have been seen in the structure. But when the inquirer should be given eyes to see, then every part of the buildings, from curtains to loops and tacks, would speak forth a more than human wisdom. They would be seen, all of them, to be indispensable parts of a plan that was all divine. There was not a thread finely wrought in the curtains but what declared the glory of the God of Israel. We may not be able to read the language of the tabernacle in any of its parts, but that is the fault of our ignorance and not of the record. It is declared in Psalm xxix. 9, that every whit of his temple doth show forth his glory (see marginal reading). And surely, if there be any praise or any glory in it, that praise and glory must be his, since he fashioned it, and all of it speaks of divine things. In a double sense it declared his glory; first, because it was built according to his pattern; and second, because all its parts were typical of a better tabernacle, a more enduring tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Now this more enduring tabernacle is the church of God visibly estab-

lished on earth, in which God manifests his presence and his glory.

Now then, the thought in my mind when I began this letter was, to present the truth, first, that in this church it is equally binding upon us to see that we do all things according to the pattern shown us; and second, that every whit of this spiritual building does utter the praise of God. His glorious wisdom, power and love are shown in all its order. I cannot pretend here to speak of all the various branches of truth that naturally open to our view in connection with this theme. It is not in my mind at this time to speak of the holy place, of the holy of holies, of the mercy seat, the cherubim, the altars of incense and of burnt offering, which all strikingly exhibited the wisdom of God in fittingly pointing out the real or spiritual things. This would all be pleasant, and might be profitable; but I had in mind to speak especially of the outward organization of the church, and of the glory of God manifested therein. It is cheerfully and joyfully admitted that the chief thing, the all important thing, is that we have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and be personally in communion with him; but still it is also important that we follow the pattern given us for the outward organization of the church. There has arisen among men in these days (and we are not safe from the inroads of such ideas) a sentiment that the outward form of the church matters very little. "This," they say, "is a mere matter of convenience. Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregational or Baptist forms of government may each be best in various localities and for various temperaments." They say, "If the heart is right it does not matter what church you belong to," &c. A man might have reasoned in the same way when the tabernacle was being built. It could then have been said as well as now, "The chief things are honesty, truth, the love of God, a heart to worship and serve him," and why be so particular as regards the ritual? To all this it would then have been sufficient to answer, Hath not God said, "See that thou make ALL things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount?" And so now, while we freely admit that the grace of God in the soul is the all important thing as regards our acceptance with God, yet it does not follow that we may be careless of the other things. If God has given us a pattern at all it must be because he thought it needful. May God put far from our hearts the thought that any of his commandments are unimportant.

But it is also said that in the New Testament we have no fixed pattern laid down for the order and fashion of the visible church. At most, it is said, only the outlines are given, and it is left to the church to fill in the details according to her judgment of what is needful under various circumstances. This is certainly a platform broad enough for Rome herself to stand upon. And besides, we should, according to this idea, find it impossible to say, "Every whit of it doth show forth the glory of God," since a good part of the building would be always declaring the wisdom of the church, or of some apostle of a new arrangement in the church. And we should never know which part of the temple we should praise God for, and which would declare the wisdom of man.

But thanks be unto God, we are not left to our own devices in the church. In mount Zion a pattern has been given, as well as in Mt. Sinai. And it is an equally solemn word that we should do all things according to the pattern, as it was in the olden time. I have it in view to show what this pattern is, and how this order shows forth the wisdom of God. The second chapter of Acts contains as much a description of the first gospel church as the book of Leviticus does of the building of the sanctuary and of the law given to Israel. This chapter contains the account of the first church organized after the ascension of the Savior, and in all that follows, both in the Acts and the epistles, we see no variation from the order then established. What was that order? Let us see. First, Peter preached a gospel sermon. Second, Under it many were pricked in the heart and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Third, Peter responded, Repent (turn from the former things), and be baptized, &c. Fourth, Then they that gladly received his word were baptized and added to the disciples. Fifth, These then continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayers. How plain and simple was the whole procedure! What a lack of form and ceremony! Here were no diverse orders of clergy. No distinction is drawn between "clergy and laity." They are all of them simply disciples and brethren. One is sent to preach, many receive his word gladly, and they are baptized and continue steadfastly in the truth, and faithfully fulfill their obligations to the cause of God and to each other. This is the order of this church. Has any other been substi-

tuted since? If so, where and when? In the organization of this church upon the day of Pentecost, another thing appears prominently in view. They were not subject to any other church, neither were they made rulers over other churches. They transacted their own business, they received members and maintained the public worship of God in fellowship with all saints, but under the rule of none, and claiming to rule over none. If there is anything clear in the New Testament, it is that there existed no organized union between the various churches, by which some were subordinate, but they all stood in each other's view as brethren of one family. And as the churches at Jerusalem, Rome, Corinth, Ephesus and elsewhere were equal, it followed that no man or men could be lords over God's heritage. Even the elders and bishops were forbidden to be anything more than ensamples to the flock.

Another thing in connection with this church at Jerusalem, as well as in the churches named in the New Testament; and that is, they were strictly local assemblies, organized to be the executive of the kingdom of heaven, and to attend to its affairs in their respective localities. The church of the New Testament was most emphatically, not a vast national body having a king or pope for its head, having many subordinate branches, with various orders of titled officers, but a plain simple company of brethren and sisters, here and there banded together to help each other, and to seek the glory of God. And this is that church which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. Has this order been changed by any word of the Lord since he first appointed it? If so, again, we have the right to ask when and where? Let us see that we do all things according to the pattern.

Now then, secondly, let us consider how every part of this tabernacle thus planned and built up shows forth the wisdom and love of God. There are two things that seem to me to glorify God in a special way in this house of the Lord. First, The idea of brotherly love is maintained in this way. Here is the equality of the children of a family. No one is above another, by reason of any office that he holds. They all stand as the children of a common Father, and no room is left for the seeking of place or power. Here are no priests above others; for all are priests. Here are no prelates, proud and haughty; for all are kings. Every man and woman has an equal voice in all church affairs, and none

can dictate to his brother. Now this idea of equal brotherhood cannot exist in a national church like the churches of England and Scotland, nor in a vast hierarchy like Rome. The very order of these churches strikes a death blow at all brotherly love. Their very order appeals to every selfish passion. Every man's ambition is appealed to, that he may become a greater man than he is in the church. Their very order is a constant incitement to the practice of Simony, that is, the endeavor to purchase spiritual privileges and a higher standing by unhallowed means. The Baptist church is the only church that I know whose order puts no premium upon the seeking of place and power. This church of our Lord has no emoluments to offer, and can furnish nothing to the demands of ambition. The people of God are prone to these things by nature, and God in organizing his church has displayed his divine wisdom in so appointing her order that there can be no incitement to, or gratification of, worldly ambition or pride. The only emulation that there is any room for in the church of God is to love one another, and to good works. There can be no scramble, no wire-pulling for election to high offices in the Baptist church. Her very order gives no room for it. These things can be, and have been, in all other churches, not because their members are any worse than Baptists are by nature, but because their order is worldly, and continually appeals to the same base passions that run riot in the world at large.

The second thing in which the order that God has thus established in his church glorifies him is, that it forever shuts out all power on the part of the church to persecute others. As said before, the human nature of the children of God is no better than that of other men. Like the disciples of old, often would they, if left to themselves, call down fire from God to consume their adversaries. Or, like Peter, they would use the sword in their defense. But the God of love has first put a different spirit in them, and then has so arranged the order of his church that it is beyond their power to persecute others. To persecute requires the use of the secular arm of authority, and this Baptist churches by their very constitution can never wield. As shown before, they are local and independent bodies, each one owing and acknowledging no submission to any authority on earth. In this order it can be seen at a glance that every element is wanting that could give them, as churches, secular power or authority. In the church of Christ spiritual power or authority exists, but secular power and authority can have no place. God has seen to it that the unholy alliance of church and state cannot take place here. And as this marriage cannot take place, so their offspring, persecution, place hunting, and all their kindred evils, can have no birth.

If, then, at any time a body of people are found who may have once

borne the marks of the church of Christ (that is, each church united to others in equal brotherly love, and in all things separate from every secular power), which now has introduced subordination in any degree to another power, either ecclesiastical or secular, and which courts an alliance with any earthly government, thus violating her vows to her Lord and Husband, and putting another power in authority other than the power of Christ, that moment that body ceases to be the church of Christ. Many of her members may be the children of God, and embraced in the atonement of the Lamb, but as an organization they have ceased to bear the marks of the church of Christ, and he no longer will confess them as his.

The steps by which other churches have progressed toward the persecution of those whom they were pleased to call heretics, have been long and very easy to trace. First, the growth among themselves of an undue reverence for some one man, or some one church, is seen. Ambitious men soon take advantage of this, and begin to claim a superiority which many are only too ready to grant. Soon a supervision over others is assumed. Either by outward force or secret diplomacy these claims are advanced, until at last we have a centralized government to which all must be subject. This creates offices and emoluments, and soon a body of clergy arises who have a personal and selfish interest in maintaining this order of things. Now then comes the laying down of dogmas and formulas for the faith and government of this vast body, which all must submit to. New schemes arise with which to feed the ambition of leading men. In order to carry on these varied schemes and silence opposition, it begins to dawn upon their minds that it would be a good thing to be backed up by the secular authority. And thus the beginning of the end is reached. The marriage of church and state looms up in the near future. Rapidly the result is consummated, and the fruit is, persecution, shame and spiritual death.

Now that the once despised church has become great, and holds the powers of earth in her hands, and can dispense its honors and emoluments, we soon see all classes of men flocking to her doors. And she, in order that she may increase her power and influence, inquires not too closely into their character and standing, but welcomes them all. And soon everybody in the state must belong to the church. And this church, which was intended to be composed of saints whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, is composed instead of gamblers, cheats, politicians, Atheists, Deists, infidels, and the unthinking rabble. Here and there one may sigh and cry at the desolations of Zion, but amid the general clamor their voice is not heeded or heard. But if indeed this voice becomes too pointed and disturbs the general drift of things, the secular arm is invoked, as was the case with the Master before, and if need be the prison and a

fearful death is held out before the worshipers of God. And this is persecution. To-day, in Europe, there are some countries in which no man can hold any high office unless he, at least once, has partaken of the Lord's Supper. Is not this to put a premium upon hypocrisy and fraud? Thus government offices and officers are under the control of the church, and the state is made subservient to church interests. And the church in turn looks not to God, but to the temporal power, for support. In Great Britain, where the power of the church in state matters is probably curtailed more than in any other country in Europe, every man, no matter what is his faith, is taxed for the support of the state church. Our Baptist brethren there not only support their own pastor and church expenses, but must help support the Episcopal establishment by their side.

Now, as wealth and honor flow in upon this church, spirituality of feeling dies out, and rituals of all kinds take the place of real devotion. The public find themselves entertained with fine music, with sensual worship and multiplied forms, and are pleased to find that the church is satisfied if these things are attended to. Mint, rue and cummin are tithed, but the weightier matters of the law are neglected. This is an easy religion, and the people are more than pleased. What now is the difference between such a church and the world? The church is a corpse rotting above ground; the world is a corpse that is regarded as being dead, at least.

Now this is not because this church as individually considered, is any worse than any other people, but her very organization as a vast body leads irresistibly to it. Good men and good women, as individuals, are in her ranks, but they are only drifting in the current of things. But the church of God, such as she was organized to be on the day of Pentecost, can never travel this road. She can never unite with the general state government, or control it, or be controlled by it, because she has no earthly head, either pope, synod or council, through which such relations can be maintained. And as she can never have any such intercourse with the powers of any earthly government, it follows that she never can use the secular authority, and can never persecute. Her powers must ever remain spiritual.

And now I ask, in conclusion, Does not this temple of God utter his praise in loudest tones? And if this temple thus does show forth his praise, is it not of vast importance that it be built in all things after the pattern shown us? O, brethren, let us guard this outward independence of the churches very jealously, since such divine wisdom is displayed in the plan!

I have written much more lengthily than usual, but the subject seemed to demand it. While I feel like always contending for the necessity of a heartfelt christian experience, yet I do not want to forget that beauty of

the order of God's house which is more outward.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Nov. 12, 1886.

GHEENT, Ky., Oct. 12, 1886.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES dated Oct. 15, 1886, came to hand yesterday evening, containing a criticism by Elder E. Rittenhouse, of Delaware, on my views of what is taught in the parable of the good seed and the tares, published in the SIGNS of Sept. 15, 1886. I was strongly impressed, on the first reading of that criticism, not to reply to it in any form, for two reasons. The first is, I am averse to controversy among brethren, for the reason that often fellowship is destroyed and a coldness created between those who should be contending for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The other reason is, that Elder Rittenhouse, at almost the very commencement of his criticism, uses this language, "The points to which I propose to invite brother Cox's attention are not doctrinal points at all, as the general drift of the letter and all its main points are in perfect accord with sound doctrine." Surely my heart should pulsate with the purest emotions of gratitude to the great Giver of all good, for the ability to write that which an able minister of the everlasting gospel, like Elder Rittenhouse, would call sound doctrine. 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. This certainly presents to my mind folks, sons and daughters of men." If Elder Rittenhouse is correct, those folks, sons and daughters of men, are good, yea, perfectly good; for they are the good seed, sown by the Son of man. He is God; his work is perfect. I know from daily sad experience that I am not one of those sinless sons; for in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. I know that the tares are there growing, and will grow till time will be no more with me on earth. The apostle has told, in the seventh chapter of Romans, so fully my experience for the last fifty-four years, that Elder Rittenhouse will please pardon me for quoting it. "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 [the tares] that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Verily that inward man is the good seed, sown by the Son of man in regeneration. He is talking now, and says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He makes this mournful lamentation because he daily

witnesses the corruptions (represented by the tares) in the body of this death. If Elder Rittenhouse knows nothing of the things here declared by the apostle, he certainly belongs to those good "folks, sons and daughters of men," and does very wrong in calling Old School or Primitive Baptists brethren, especially such as I am. But he says, "These tares are described by brother Cox to be a fearful array of sin and iniquity." I certainly have fallen far short of describing them as clearly and forcibly as the apostle has done in the seventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans; and he describes them as existing in the same man, the apostle Paul, who was chosen, called, and sent forth to preach the everlasting gospel. Under that great commission he says, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Surely there was no good thing in the tares sown by the wicked one. He and all his works were wicked; while the Son of man who sowed the good seed, is now, and has been from all eternity, glorious in holiness. Here is presented in few words the contrast between him who sowed the good seed, and him that sowed the tares. The first is glorious in holiness, and his seed delight in the law of God after the inward man. But of the latter the apostle says, "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." Here is presented the two, the good seed and the tares, mentioned by the apostle, under the figure of the old man and the new man. The old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness. I object to this new man being called "folks, sons and daughters of men;" for they are born of God, born from above, born of an incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever. It is like its divine Author, which liveth and abideth forever; for it is that spiritual life which was treasured up in Christ ere time began. Now, dear saint, your daily experience is, that "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." This presents the warfare in which all the dear saints are engaged, and which will continue till the harvest of death. Then the tares will be consumed. But Elder Rittenhouse says, "The field was the world; not the hearts of men." What world does he mean? Does he mean the world of inanimate nature? Or does he mean the world of which the apostle speaks, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them?" If that is the world to which he refers, then we agree; for he is working in all the inhabitants of that world, to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Surely he is working in their hearts. Not in the stony heart, which belongs to the old man; but he says by the

mouth of the prophet, "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."—Jer. xxxi. 33. Then God is in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to them their iniquities. O no; for he hath given to them a heart of flesh, in which he hath written his law. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever," they have the good seed sown in them by the Son of man. But Elder Rittenhouse says, "This exposition has the devil sowing first, and then ordering that they shall both be allowed to grow together to the end of the man's life." I do not charge him with intentionally misrepresenting my views, but nowhere in that commentary did I say that the devil ordered that they shall be allowed to grow together; but I did say, "Thus you behold the wisdom, mercy and loving-kindness of our Lord, when he said, Let both grow together till the harvest." The rule, I believe, is to apply the remedy after the disease has made itself manifest. So Christ, as the Redeemer of his people, appeared upon the earth after sin was manifested. He was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was, as a full and complete Savior. Yes, he came to seek and to save that which was lost. It was his people, who by their relationship with the first Adam were lost; but in their glorious union with Christ, were saved from all iniquity. In that wonderfully great display of his power, wisdom, goodness and mercy, it was fixed in eternal wisdom that they should not only be redeemed from the curse of a violated law, but that they should also have in regeneration the good seed of spiritual, eternal and immortal life sown in them. I use the word immortal, because it is right to use it in this connection. Every regenerated son and daughter of the Lord Almighty has the seed of immortality sown in them, and on the glorious morning of the resurrection will they germinate and come forth in never-fading beauty and glory. For this mortal must put on immortality. Then why, brother Rittenhouse, do you object to the Son of man sowing in the hearts of his redeemed the good seed of spiritual, eternal and immortal life, which will grow in them in time (they shall grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus), and will be fully manifested amidst the superlative glories of eternity? It is this soul cheering thought that lifts the poor, mourning saint above the sorrows and gloom of earth, and enables him to gaze with rapture upon the finished work of the Son of man, who hath sown in his heart that good seed without which the tares would have grown in all their fearful and obnoxious power, till you would have been carried down, down forever. I regret that Elder Rittenhouse uses the words, "folks, sons and daughters

of men," as applicable to the good seed sown by the Son of man, and the tares sown by the enemy. It reminds me of a little book I read more than forty years ago, written by Elder Daniel Parker. My recollection is that its title was, "The third dose." My recollection farther is that Elder Parker quoted this text, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children."—Gen. iii. 16. This language was addressed by God to our mother Eve, after the transgression. If my recollection is not greatly deficient, Elder Parker's exposition of that text was, that the word multiply meant many additions. And when the Lord said, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrows and thy conception," he greatly added to her conceptions, and the fruit of these additional conceptions was the children of the Devil, or wicked one, which were added by reason of transgression; that all who fell in Adam were saved in Christ; that the children of the Devil, by reason of their relationship with him, must forever remain with him and share his eternal overthrow. When I read that book, it seemed to me that Elder Parker's theory embraced an attack upon the doctrine of election, or made the choice in Adam, rather than in Christ. I prefer to be chosen in Christ; for he is of God made unto his chosen people wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. In Adam they were lost; in Christ they were redeemed; yea, sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, and had grace given them in Christ Jesus (not in Adam) before the world began. See 2 Tim. i. 9. I have read the writings of Elder Rittenhouse for many years, published in the SIGNS, with great pleasure, and I hope with profit, and now I am unwilling to even entertain the thought that he believes the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty were chosen in Adam, or elect in Adam, or that their redemption, sanctification and final glorification is the result of their having been created in Adam. But I have no doubt that brother Rittenhouse desires to give to our glorious Lord all the glory; yea, he rejoices in the exaltation of Jesus 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. Yea, no doubt he sweetly sings,

"Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

Elder Rittenhouse says, "There is nothing said in this article about breaking up the fallow ground or destroying the tares." I do not find the subject of breaking up the fallow ground mentioned but twice in the Scriptures, Jeremiah iv. 3, and Hosea x. 12. I confess that I am too feeble minded to discover any analogy between those two quotations and the subject that I was attempting in my feeble way to discuss. But if Elder Rittenhouse means, when using those words, that man naturally has the

ability to break up or polish this old stony heart and destroy the tares (sin and corruption) that dwell therein, or that this old stony heart is worked over and polished, and thus made good and altogether holy, I know nothing about it, and for that reason I said nothing about it.

But brother Rittenhouse says, "I have looked over the article to find the harvest of fruit that this good seed produced, but have failed to discover it particularly brought out." Well, brother Rittenhouse, in love I wrote that article, and you say, "All its main points are in perfect accord with sound doctrine." For many long years I have found nothing in me of which to boast. But in that article I did, in my feeble way, try to tell some of the wondrous things done by our glorious Lord for his people, in sowing the good seed, of which John speaks when he 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."—1 John iii. 9. That good seed sown by the Son of man remaineth in him. Being like its divine Author, it cannot sin. To that man, that new man, who is created in righteousness and true holiness, Paul says, "But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."—Rom. vi. 22. That man is made free from sin, because he is created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Yet while he lives on earth he is engaged in a warfare, which makes him cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then he breaks forth in glorious triumph, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind [that spiritual mind that he has, by reason of that new, spiritual and heavenly birth] I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh [in which all the seed sown by the wicked one dwells] the law of sin." In that flesh he serves the law of sin. But the apostle says, "Life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours."—1 Cor. iii. 22. The saints are blessed in death as well as life. Death, which is the wages of sin, reaches no farther in the saints than the destruction of these mortal bodies, and that is the end with them of all their conflicts with sin and sorrow. Hence the evil one hath no more power over them, and in the glorious morning of the resurrection their bodies will come forth changed by the Son of man, from corruptible to incorruptible, just like that good seed that was sown in them in time. Then you, brother Rittenhouse, and all the dear saints, will drink from that fountain of eternal joy forevermore.

H. COX.

BLANCO, Texas, Nov. 5, 1886.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Will you be so kind as to insert, at your earliest convenience, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the following notice of a personal allusion to me, by brother E.

Rittenhouse, in the October number of the *Gospel Messenger*? As I wish to be concise, I will copy no more of brother Rittenhouse's criticism than is necessary in order to be understood; and I wish him and all concerned, to be assured that I hold him in very great esteem, as I have, almost ever since my connection with the Baptists, been familiar with his writings, which I have considered safe, sound and instructive, and to whose counsel in the present case I would readily conform if I did not believe that gospel truth and a sense of duty suggests a different course. Brother Rittenhouse first alludes to communications in the SIGNS of a controversial character, with which he is much worried; that he had hoped such would cease, and that the Baptists would speak such things only as tend to edify; in reference to which I will observe that although it is very painful to have to differ with good brethren, yet as long as the variety of human character and intellect remain as they are, it is mere illusion to expect perfect agreement or oneness among brethren, unless it be supposed that it can be attained by compromising our principles, violating our conscience, blaspheming and dishonoring the name of God, imperiling our own and the interests of the brethren, and thus acting unfaithful in matters of the utmost importance. And when brother Rittenhouse says he had hoped that the brethren would speak such things only as tend to edify, we may reasonably infer that certain portions of Scripture teaching tend to that end, and therefore we must believe and teach those portions, and reject and suppress other portions. This seems to set limits to the efficacy of revelation, and is at variance with the injunction of the apostle, who tells us to speak those things which become sound doctrine. As to what brother Rittenhouse says about some writers, anticipating a conflict and strife on that subject of predestination, and showing a disposition to welcome the strife, enjoying controversy, and taking extravagant positions, in order to give prominence and notoriety to such writers, I will say that it is indeed a very heavy bill of indictment; and if charged against me personally, and I am found guilty, and justly censurable, I should be so held by the brethren. Reasoning from his premises, the brother may have been correct in his conclusions as to my rigid or controversial style of writing; but by way of extenuation, I will say that I have been blessed with but little knowledge of worldly literature, never wrote anything for the press until the year 1882; but I try to speak and write as though I fully believed what I speak and write; and with the ability that God has given me, in plainness of speech I try to declare God's counsel, so far as made known; and to expose all its counterfeits. I do glory in the doctrine of predestination, which is the point from whence is drawn all those imminent acts of God which unitedly and harmoniously conduce to the success of his government over his

creatures, and so wonderfully terminate in his own glory and the salvation of his covenant people. In a word, if what I have written will not bear the closest scrutiny, tested by the divine testimony, it should be discarded, and the author exposed. As my mind, even from early life, has been impressed with a sense of human freedom and the rights of conscience, I think I can and do exercise that noble virtue, christian-forbearance, to as great an extent as my limited powers will allow. But I do not desire to compromise my principles, and thus dishonor God by deception or dissimulation, and thereby secure a temporary, though dishonorable, truce with the enemies of gospel truth, either secret or openly avowed.

As to what brother Rittenhouse says, by way of exception to what is contained in my article published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of August 1, 1886, I wish to invite the special attention of the reader to that article. He quotes as follows: "Thus he loved Jacob and hated Esau before they were born, or had done either good or evil; which demonstrates beyond doubt that the cause of this difference was not in the children themselves, but must be ascribed to the sovereign will of God."—Romans ix. 11-13. Now, brethren, and brother Rittenhouse in particular, does not enlightened reason sustain the position, as the act of God passed upon these children before they were born? Unless we can suppose a change in the eternal mind, this act of God had its rise in eternity. It could not therefore be conditioned upon the acts of these children in time. And if, as brother Rittenhouse says, it is two nations, and not individuals, that are meant here, then we see there is a want of coincidence in this view of the subject and the whole tenor of the apostle's teaching; and yet the principle of sovereign discrimination is not removed; for what is the difference, in principle, in taking a whole nation into favor, preserving and making them happy, and rejecting, punishing and rendering other nations miserable (according to brother Rittenhouse), or in taking (according to the apostle) individual persons as representing the elect and non-elect, as Jacob and Esau? And farther, upon brother Rittenhouse's premises, is it reasonable to suppose that the apostle ever would have suggested the objection contained in the words, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" as this objection is founded upon the supposed partiality of God in his different treatment of the two innocent children? And if he has mercy on some, and hardens others, and makes his sovereign will his rule, without regard to the after conduct of his creatures, whether good or bad, directs their course in time, and determines their destiny in eternity, then comes the next objection, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" That is, if these premises be true, none can resist his will; therefore he (God) should not find fault with them, nor blame their conduct.

Now, brother Rittenhouse, and brethren, I wish you to take into sincere and prayerful consideration those objections, and upon what they are founded, and the answers returned, in connection with the whole tenor of the apostle's teaching, his logical deductions, his masterly and closely concatenated argumentation, from the beginning to the close, and as illustrating his teaching in the following words, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" After taking this survey of the subject, decide for yourselves who is farthest from the Scripture account. Is it not more in accord with the independence and immutability of God to believe, as his word declares, that his determinations with regard to men and things were eternal, rather than to suppose that the acts of his creatures in time form a basis for the acts of the eternal God?

Brother Rittenhouse says that I make passages say just the opposite of what they do say. At this heavy charge I am astonished, as the passages alluded to are Scripture quotations, in an abbreviated or modified form, as follows: "God has mercy on some, and hardens others; prepared some for glory, and fitted others to destruction; appointed some to wrath, and others to obtain salvation.—Romans ix. 15-23; xi. 7; 1 Thess. v. 9." The above is the quotation, without comment. See SIGNS OF THE TIMES of August 1, 1886, page 170. Brethren, please read the whole article, and then decide for yourselves, and see whether I have resorted to artifice or misconstruction, or have justly incurred the censure implied in brother Rittenhouse's criticism. He has not, by Scripture testimony, attacked nor undertaken to expose a single position I have taken. I ask, with sincere emotions of the deepest solicitude, how can the doctrine of absolute and universal predestination be wrong, if it is fully sustained by the concurrent testimony of both reason and revelation? I have never written, nor do I now write, on this subject to invite controversy, as God knows, but because I fully believe the honor of God and the happiness of man are alike involved in the belief of and conformity to it. The subject, as to its benefits, is inexhaustible; but I must desist, and recommend to the brotherhood everywhere to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. Let us cast off the shackles imposed by tradition, education or otherwise, and have the manliness and moral courage to believe and contend for all that is written in the Scriptures. May the Lord help us so to do.

Your brother in gospel bonds,
JAMES WAGNER.

NEWARK, Del., Nov. 12, 1886.

DEAR BROTHER JENKINS:—I have thought of you many times since last

spring; and as we did not meet, as expected, at the Salisbury Association, I have not only been thinking of you, but have thought of trying to write to you; wondering often if I could write anything to interest you at all in your desolate hours; for I reckon you have them. You know very well my weakness in expression, and perhaps more so in writing than in speaking; yet I feel persuaded that sometimes you get the idea intended, and enjoy it, although poorly expressed. I have for several weeks been in poor health, seemingly just able to get to the appointments as they come, by keeping as quiet as possible all the rest of the time. I have visited very little since the yearly meetings commenced in the summer, six of which I attended, at one of them for two days being entirely alone. Perhaps the responsibility seeming so great, I went beyond my strength; but I am taking medicine, and hope in a few days to be stronger.

I have been thinking much of late about some little expressions in the Scriptures. What a fullness there sometimes seems to be just in one word; and its fullness seems to consist in the peculiarity of the word connected with the subject of salvation, which is so much talked about, and yet so little known. The circumstances surrounding the subjects of the salvation are always in some way a real necessity brought about, and the child of God is brought under that necessity, when he uses one of these little words, with all its meaning. The name of the Lord Jesus is never learned, heard or known, only by and through these necessities. I have sometimes in my mind contrasted the volunteer, the one who makes up his mind that it is best to serve the Lord, and would serve him because he thinks it is best, with the one that serves him because of necessity, or because there is no one else for him to serve. "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." If we were left to make up our minds as to his service, even to preaching the word, allowing that we might conclude to do so, there would not be much necessity about it. Hence we could stop as easy as we began.

But the little word which was in my mind when I began writing is "must." "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12. The characters that used this language knew its full meaning. It was not optional with them. There was a real necessity for something, and that something was nowhere else to be found. There was no room for a thought as to whether it would be best or worst. They were *lost*, and *must* be saved. With these characters there are no ifs and buts and maybes about it. Something *must* be done. The volunteer, after awhile, if it is not what he expected, better for him, will retire, it may be in disgust. His life does not depend upon it. A minister of my knowledge has quit preaching, and is selling phosphates very cheerfully. He says it

pays him better. The apostle said, "Necessity is laid upon me." Those of old who were called, loved him more than these. You will understand me to say that no one can, of their volition, enter this field of service. If they wish to, they cannot, seeing they do not know his name, and hence cannot call upon him. The true child of God may sometimes conclude that he or she will do so and so, for the sake of personal applause, or gain in some way; but he or she ceases immediately to serve God, and for the time are serving themselves and their own selfish ends. Such generally, if not always, get the same kind of reward—are rewarded according to their folly.

I am not writing these things that the nominal professor may profit by them, for I do not think they will see them. If they should see them, it would only be as they see their own service, according to their own standpoint of right and wrong. Neither do I believe that you need to profit by anything of this character; but because it is in my mind as I write, and I write as my mind directs. We read of one who was made to choose to suffer affliction with the people of God. I think that many since then have been compelled to make the same choice. It has not been optional with them; for if left to our own choice, we would prefer to starve. Needy, helpless, lost sinners, *must* be saved; for Jesus came to seek and to save such, and salvation could come to none others.

The ideas that I have in my mind, and have intended to present, are in accordance with truth; but they have been poorly expressed, and do not seem to have any reference to you, nor, so far as I know, to your ministry; for I have no idea that you are necessitated to go as I do, because you must, with nothing in your mind worth saying, and then try to preach for the brethren, who think you must, and you think so too. With me this is common. If it is ever so with you, you know something of the reason why such things should be in my mind. We have from time to time such a sense of our helpless, lost condition, that we must be saved; and from time to time we learn again and again that our salvation is in no other name.

Now let me say a few words directly to you and for you. We missed you at the association. The preachers were scarce, and none of them could preach like you do, any more than you can preach like they do. We have got accustomed to seeing and hearing you at associations.

My bodily weakness begins to tell on me now. I have written hurriedly to a finish, for fear the finish would not come if laid aside. Make the best of this you can, and receive it as a token of brotherly love.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

BRISTOL, Tenn., Aug. 23, 1835.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—By your permission I will write a few lines for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. For some time I have felt impressed to do so, but cannot so well tell what

is the cause of the impression. I hope it is through love to the cause and to the brethren and sisters. I do not think it is the prompting of the flesh, for the flesh says, You can hardly make yourself understood, and you should be the very last one to undertake to write upon any subject. But so it is, I feel it to be my duty to write. I lack about two months of being eighty years old, and am as nearly dead to the world, and the world to me, as is common with persons. The subject upon my mind seems to be the most important one I have to attend to, which is to call the attention of the brethren and sisters to the destitution of the poor saints. Perhaps, brethren, there has been more need of my own mind being called to the subject, than that of the rest of my brethren. With me it has been through neglect, and somewhat through excuse. I have known of cases where I thought help was needed, but have thought that the brethren would attend to it; besides I was poor, and not of much note in any way. But that was indirectly shutting up my bowels of compassion, and saying to the needy, Be ye fed, and be ye clothed. When we know of a brother or sister being in a helpless condition, we should make ourselves more acquainted with their situation; and if they are destitute of the necessary things of this life, and we are what the world calls poor, we should do like the poor widow, divide our last cake of bread and cruise of oil, if necessary, with them. That poor widow did not suffer thereby. There are plenty of us whom the Lord has blessed with the stewardship of the goods of this world to keep the poor saints from begging from the world; and instead of dying poorer, we would die richer, by administering to the poor saints. Brethren, if the poor saints have to depend upon the charity of the world, you know what the world has for them. The non-professing world has very little use for them, and the professing world hardly has anything better for them than extermination. The world loves its own. But we profess to be not of the world, and for that reason the world hates us. This being the case, let us try to cultivate brotherly love, and love one another with unfeigned love. I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES nearly fifty years. I am very forgetful, but I do not recollect ever seeing an article specially on the destitution of the saints. It seems to me that we have neglected to stir up one another's mind on the subject. We are so constituted that we sometimes need our mind stirred up, even to consider our duties. Brethren, it almost seems like presumption in me to write about stirring up any one's mind; but I still hope I love the cause, and hope it is through love that I now write. I have been almost shipwrecked in faith, but I think I could yet feel that I loved the Lord and his cause, and the brethren and sisters. Had it not been for that, I do not know but that my faith would have entirely failed. But I feel to thank the Lord

that my days have not all been spent in Egyptian darkness. I think I have known the time when I have felt that the Spirit bore witness with my spirit that I was born of God. Still I am so situated that I hardly ever hear any preaching, except what I get through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I prize it as a medium appointed of God for his children to have correspondence and communion, and I hope the brethren and sisters will continue to write for it. They do not know all the good they are doing for his people who are situated as I am. I look upon it as a great advantage to the church. We thus have a quick and cheap correspondence, and may learn of the condition of the saints, and if they are in need of anything we have a safe and sure way to administer to their necessities, so that distance is hardly in the way. Where there is christian faith, there is no lack of christian love, for they are inseparably connected. But where there is no faith, there is no christian love.

Brethren, I have written the dictates of my mind, and have discharged what I feel to be my duty, and am willing to leave it to the better judgments of the editors. If this is published in the SIGNS, I hope that brother Gold will copy it, as I desire that the attention of the brethren shall be called to the matter; and if some brother will write upon the same subject, I will be glad. Brethren, farewell for the present. May the grace and love of God dwell in the hearts of all the Israel of God, is my prayer.

SAMUEL B. MATTOX.

[The above letter should have been published long ago, but was overlooked.—Ed.]

ACON, Texas, Nov. 8, 1836.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—I believe some one should make known the destitute condition of the drouth sufferers of northwest Texas; and as I have seen nothing in any of our papers in regard to it, I feel impressed to do so, as best I can. I make no appeal for myself nor brethren in my section, for we can get through without help. But our brethren west of here (many of them) will suffer unless they get help. Some efforts have been made to aid those who are most destitute in the drouth-stricken section, but it was nothing more than speculation, and sank them deeper in debt. I was at the Brazos River Association last August, in Young County, where I met with brethren from other counties, and I there learned of the entire failure of all kinds of crops in the west and northwest. But we had hope that the state of Texas would sustain her own people, and that no one would suffer for bread or clothing. But our hope in the great state of Texas, so far, is blasted. Just what Texas will do to relieve her suffering people, remains to be seen. However we still have some hope that when the Legislature meets, something will be done. But what will many poor people do in the meantime? For the information of

any of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, who may wish to learn more about the condition of the brethren out west, I refer them to Elders D. W. Russell, Eliasville, Young County, Texas; John Morgan, Eastland City, Texas; E. Caudel, Alexandria, Texas; and B. L. Throneberry, Springtown, Parker Co., Texas. By writing to the above named brethren, any one who may desire to know will get a true statement of the condition of our brethren in these different localities.

Dear brethren Beebe, if you publish this imperfect letter in our dear family paper, I will feel thankful indeed.

Yours in hope,

W. L. ROGERS.

P. S.—Dear brethren, I am so hard run, owing to the drouth, that I am unable at this time to remit my dues for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and would rather have you discontinue my paper than for you to suffer any inconvenience on my account. Therefore if you discontinue it, I will feel thankful for your kindness in the past; but if you can continue it without suffering much, I will also feel thankful, for I do love to read it. I know your expenses are heavy, and I would not have you lose anything if I could help it.

W. L. R.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The messengers composing the Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, to the associations and churches with which she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—

We have once more the blessed privilege of gathering together in the house of God, and of hearing the gospel truth, as proclaimed with no uncertain sound, by our able ministers of the grace of God. We have enjoyed your fellowship in love and in the spirit of meekness, and it seems like each esteems others better than themselves. What a comfort it is to sit under the droppings of the sanctuary, and drink in the great love wherewith God has loved us, who gave his Son unto us poor sinners. And we must ever remember, as long as we live in this body of sin, that we are sinners; and that is the reason that we should always be willing to forgive one another our faults. It will not be long before we shall leave this body of sin, and

"Mount and soar away
To that bright world of endless day,
And sing with rapture and surprise
His loving-kindness in the skies."

But in the resurrection this sinful body, the adopted son, will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

Brethren, we desire a continuation of your correspondence, and may continued love abound among us.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the Hope Primitive Baptist Church, at Miami, in Saline County, Missouri, to begin on Friday before the first Saturday in October, 1837, and to continue three days, when and where we hope again to meet and greet your messengers and receive your sweet messages of love and peace.

R. M. THOMAS, Mod.
J. W. MAGEE, Clerk.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas, in session with the Big Walnut Creek Church, near Winchester, Jefferson Co., Kansas, September 24th, 25th and 26th, 1886.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD, and in the hope of a better life beyond this vale of tears:—It has once more become our duty to write unto you, and we feel that it is also a happy privilege to inform you of our welfare and of our standing in Zion. We are a little few in this western country, much persecuted, not only by the world, but also by some who claim to be Old School Baptists, but who deny the power of God, and will not endure sound doctrine, such as the absolute predestination of all things, election, eternal union or relationship of the saints, final perseverance of the saints, &c. Most of the old soldiers of the cross have passed away, but two remaining with us who were in the constitution of this association, namely, Elder W. F. Jones and his wife, whom we esteem highly for the truth's sake. The others have been removed by death and otherwise. From this cause it has been reported that this association is not contending for the same doctrine and faith which was once delivered to the saints. But, dear brethren, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits. The apostle Paul says, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good." This Circular Letter will contain some of the points of doctrine which we are contending for to-day; and after you have read it you can judge whether we have gone astray, and if so tell us wherein. We believe in the absolute predestination of all things, and not simply in what are called good things. The Scriptures teach that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and all things therein were created for a certain purpose. The apostle Paul tells us, "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."—Col. ii. 16. And in Prov. xvi. 4, we find these words, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." In Isaiah xlv. 7, we read, "I form the light and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." And John says, "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. We think it unnecessary to present more Scripture upon this subject at present, but let us consider the subject. In the first place, What are the Scriptures for? Without doubt they are among the all things mentioned in the above Scripture, and are a visible thing to the natural man, in outward appearance; yet they are invisible, because they are spiritually discerned. The apostle Paul settles this; for he says, "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 [not the man of the world] may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. It is no wonder to us that natural men cannot understand this doctrine; but for those who profess to know God, and who say that they believe in Jesus Christ, the Creator of all things, to say that all wicked and evil things are performed contrary to his determinate counsel, is a mystery to us. Either they do not believe his word, or else they willfully reject it. We have presented Scripture to show that the God of heaven and earth has not only created the good, but also the evil, and has made all things for himself, both good and bad: and there is a time for both to be made manifest. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal."—Eccl. iii. 1-3. There was a time for the God of heaven and earth to create all things, and a time for these works to be made manifest unto his people; for whatsoever God has made or done, is all for the good of his people, and all was planned and determined in the mind of God before time began. "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. 10, 11. The apostle Paul says, addressing the brethren, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. We learn these things in our daily experience, and are made to say with the apostle, "We know that all things work together [not apart] for good to them that love God." For, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."—Isaiah liv. 13. But those who have never been taught these things by experience do not know them, and therefore cannot bear testimony to what the apostle has said as being truth. They cannot believe the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, because they are ignorant of our God and his righteousness, and are going about to establish their own righteousness. "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth."—2 Tim. iii. 8. And if they did this in the green tree, what will they do in the dry tree? "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 apostle Peter was a

witness that Jesus was crucified according to God's predestination, and that, too, by wicked hands; for he says, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."—Acts ii. 23, 24. This doctrine the world cannot receive, nor can they understand it, because it is spiritually discerned. But these are God's doings, and they are marvelous in our eyes. And he saith, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Men of this world think quite differently from our God, and say that he would be unjust if he did create evil and predestinate the same to be carried out according to his own will and purpose. But our God is declared by inspired men to be just, and the justifier of his people; for justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; and whatsoever he doeth is right and good, whether it be to make good or create evil, to kill or to make alive, to wound or to heal, to give or to take away. Then if our God has created all things, visible and invisible, thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, and that, too, for himself and for his pleasure, what is man that he should say, "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? What if God, willing to shew his wrath and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"—Rom. ix. 20-24. And, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. And his works are the working of all things for the good of his people and for his own glory. But some say that this doctrine would make God the author of sin. The Scriptures teach that sin is a transgression of the law; and we ask, What law hath he transgressed? He is our Lawgiver; and what our God doeth might be sin for us to do; because he hath said, "Thou shalt not kill." "Thou shalt not avenge." But he saith, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay;" and, "I kill, and I make alive." We believe that God created the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and he knew that Adam and Eve would eat thereof and die. If not, why did he cause it to grow in the garden? And if it was not according to his purpose, why did he not remove it? But it was according to his will and purpose, that he might be honored and glorified in the salvation of his people from their sins, and that not by the deeds of the law, but according to his mercy and grace, which was given them in Christ

Jesus before the world began. We believe our God to be the sovereign and supreme Ruler of all things; for the Scriptures teach that he is the Author of all power, and by him all things consist. "The powers that be are ordained of God."—Rom. xiii. 1. And our God has the right to raise up powers, as he did in the case of Pharaoh, and of Herod, and of Nebuchadnezzar, that he might show his power in them, and that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. All have ended in his glory and the good of his people. When the powers of the earth were gathered together against Jesus, against Daniel, and against Jacob (which is Israel), they always meant evil; but God has always overruled them for the good of his blessed people; and they have always ended in the destruction of their enemies, and made known unto God's chosen people their final preservation in him unto glory. Also God's wonderful love is made known unto them in these wonderful trials which he causes them to pass through for his name's sake. Dear brethren, to admit that God would be just in raising up these powers to accomplish these wicked acts of persecution, and then say he would be unjust to create them for that purpose, is more than we can harmonize with the Scriptures. But we believe that the God of heaven and earth has power over all flesh. He can shut the lions' mouths, and preserve his servants, or open them to destroy their enemies. He did cause the locusts, lice and frogs to come upon Pharaoh, to punish the Egyptians; yet he suffered them not to cross the line of Goshen, where the children of Israel were. And when he desired to preserve seed in the days of Noah, he caused all manner of beasts to come unto Noah for salvation, of the clean beasts by sevens, and of the unclean by two, the male and female. Noah did not go out after them, to warn them of the flood; but God warned them, and caused such to enter into the ark as he would have to be saved. Even so it is to-day in the salvation of his people. All such as he will have to be saved, he causes to enter into the spiritual ark; for he has declared by the prophet Jeremiah that he will put his law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and he will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto him a people.—Jer. xxxi. 33. And after they once enter into the ark, will he not save them whom he hath loved with an everlasting love, given himself for them, and redeemed them from all iniquity, and hath presented them unto himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing? Yes, surely he will; because he hath promised never to forsake his chosen people. But when they disobey, he hath promised them the rod; yet his loving-kindness he will not utterly take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Jesus saith, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life [not offer it,] and they shall never perish;

neither shall any pluck them out of my hand."—John x. 28. And these promises are, like all his promises, based upon his predestination, wisdom and love. So, dear brethren, let us see that we love the brethren, as Christ hath loved us. Having forgiven us all trespasses, and spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? Then, brethren, honor your heavenly King and Father, for he is worthy of all honor, power and glory, in heaven and on earth. He is full of love and mercy. And the apostle Paul says, in his epistle to the brethren (Romans viii. 35-39), "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And his love for us did not begin when we began to love God and keep his commandments; but the Scripture saith that while we were yet enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and if reconciled by his death we shall be saved by his life. Then, brethren, we love him because he first loved us; and so let us manifest our love for him, by keeping his commandments; for if we live after the flesh we shall die; but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live. God was displeased with national Israel because of their disobedience, and many he suffered not to enter into the land of Canaan, but caused their carcasses to fall in the wilderness. The wilderness was typical of the world to-day, and the land of Canaan was typical of the church. These things were written for our learning. Let us hold fast the form of sound words, which is sound doctrine; for the apostle Paul said to Timothy that the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine; and we believe the time is come. "But after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." But, beloved, ye have not so learned Christ. Then go not after their ways. But if you have been entangled in this Babylonish net, and ensnared by the devil, the Scripture saith unto you, "Come out from among them." Be not partakers of their sins, that ye receive not of their plagues. Then he has promised to receive you; but not until you come out from them. Then, brethren, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, ever looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of your faith. The faith is the same to-day that it ever was.

Finally, brethren, farewell. Grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

W. F. JONES, Mod.
T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.

The Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, in session with the church called Unity, Platte Co., Mo., October 1st, 2d and 3d, 1886, to the churches composing her body, and to all with whom she corresponds, sends love, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost; and may the peace of our God and the love of Jesus Christ be multiplied unto you.

BELOVED OF GOD:—When we attempt to write a Circular Letter unto you, and have a view of our fallen, sinful and polluted nature, and then view the perfection, power, love, mercy and goodness of God towards us, poor defiled sinners of Adam's race, and have a view of that love, that everlasting love, and relationship, or vital union, that exists between Christ and his bride, the church, the Lamb's wife, we are made to exclaim with the apostle Paul to the Roman saints, "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. O what a glorious and exalted view the apostle to the Gentiles had of the perfections of God, of his grace, mercy, power and love towards poor, lost and helpless sinners, in making known to them the riches of his grace; for the depth of the riches of the love of God towards his chosen, his elect people, is unfathomable; that fountain of love is inexhaustible. John, when on the isle of Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, had a glorious view of that rich fountain of love and grace, when he was shewed that "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."—Rev. xxii. 1. Yes, the water of that river was pure and clear; not polluted with any of the filth and corruption of the old enemy of souls; for the fountain whence it proceeded was pure and undefiled. O that fountain of love and that water of life that could cleanse us, poor, lost and helpless sinners, who had sold ourselves for naught, who were ten thousand talents in debt, and had nothing to pay with. What a deplorable state we were in, when divine justice demanded that the whole should be paid, which required the life; for it is written, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But we see Jesus, the great Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who is their near kinsman, the Husband of the bride, who alone had the right to redeem from under the curse of God's just and holy law. For when there was no eye to pity, nor arm to save, his own everlasting arm brought salvation down to poor, lost and helpless sinners. He paid the debt, he magnified the law, he suffered in their law room and stead, and thereby redeemed them to God by his own pre-

cious blood, from amongst every nation, kindred, tongue and people. Then, beloved brethren, we are made to exclaim with the apostle John, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1. Yes, beloved brethren, behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, poor, hell-deserving sinners, who had violated God's holy and just law; and the manner of that love which God hath bestowed upon us when we were without hope and without God in the world. Then think that God should ever have a mind of mercy towards us, who had sinned against God with high hands and outstretched arms; yea, and rolled sin under our tongues as sweet morsels. O think that God in his love and mercy should send his only begotten Son, from the shining courts of eternal glory, down to these low grounds of sin and sorrow, to suffer, bleed and die for us. Yes, see him sweating, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground. Think what a ponderous load the precious Lamb of God bore for us, which caused him to sweat those great drops of blood. Yes, it was because of the sins of all his people, yes, the whole elect family of God, which were laid upon him. Then view him on the tree of the cross, and hear him cry, "It is finished." O, dear brethren, what a wonderful meaning there is in these words, "It is finished." If his work was finished, there was nothing left unfinished of the redemption of his people. So then we conclude all that was necessary for the salvation of the whole elect family of God was accomplished in the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, our great High Priest. Then, dear brethren, let us view this great love that has been bestowed upon us, the happy recipients of his love and mercy. "For greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." And again, "We love him, because he first loved us."

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Savior's praises speak."

O, dear brethren, let us love one another with a pure heart fervently, as dear children of God, with unfeigned love; love indeed and in truth. For we all have received alike of the heavenly and holy calling, and all have been made to rejoice in his love; yes, with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. "We are members of his [Christ's] body, of his flesh, and of his bones." What a glorious relationship! And not only so, but are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, to "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." O wondrous love!

"What wondrous love was this,
That caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse,
For our poor souls."

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought

also to love one another." "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." And again, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." And again, "We love him, because he first loved us. 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? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also." Read the fourth chapter of First John. Then, dear brethren, let us examine ourselves, whether we love one another indeed and in truth, with that unfeigned love. Let us cast out the beam that is in our own eye, before we undertake to pluck the mote out of our brother's eye, that we may see the more clearly to take the mote out of our brother's eye. For we fear that we often look over the beam (our own sins and transgressions), and think that we can see faults in our brethren that need correcting, when if we could only be made to see our own sins and transgressions, we could freely forgive our brother's offenses, and go to him, and take him by the hand, and ask his forgiveness, instead of wanting him to make satisfaction to us. Then, may we be enabled by the Spirit of Almighty God to examine ourselves, and to watch over one another for good, and not for evil. "For ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus."—Gal. iii. 26. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6. Then, if we are sons of God, we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, to an "inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." "Wherein ye greatly rejoice; though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

"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.

R. M. THOMAS, Mod.
J. W. MAGEE, Clerk.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1886.

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

CLOSE OF VOLUME FIFTY-FOUR.

THE approaching close of the current year reminds us again of the fleeting character of all temporal things. As each succeeding month is lost in the past, the most stubborn infidel is compelled to confess the vanity of all earthly joys and attainments. Indeed, all history is but a record of the disappointed expectations of those who have hoped for permanent satisfaction in the accomplishment of their imagined schemes for securing honors and pleasures which might survive the corroding touch of time. As was testified by Job nearly four thousand years ago, so it is still proved by the afflicted and poor people of God in their experience in the world, that "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope."—Job vii. 6. When looking at the things which are seen by natural reason there is nothing to cheer and comfort the strangers and pilgrims who sojourn in this enemies' land; "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."—Heb. xiii. 14. But even this strong illustration fails to express the extreme destitution of these strangers. While literally surrounded by enemies, an earthly pilgrim may find relief in hiding from them; but these afflicted ones cannot thus escape the persecuting enmity of their tormenting foes; for they are subject to the vanity of the body of this death while they remain in the world; and even when there is no mortal near they feel the bitterness of the indwelling enmity in the house of their tabernacle, in whose members the law of sin still works; and by its motions they are continually reminded of their own weakness and poverty. This perpetual trial is needful for them. It keeps them in the condition where they must be in order to receive the blessing pronounced by our Lord upon the poor and mourning ones.

In their poverty, when the whole nation of Israel had forsaken the legal worship of God, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another," as recorded by Malachi; and it is still one of the most precious privileges of the same people to hold sweet conversation together in regard to the subject in which they feel most deeply concerned. When they can meet face to face to talk of their hope and their fears, and to tell of the mercy of God as manifested in their personal experience, it is often so delightful a season that they forget earthly things, and wish that their joys might be unending. This wish cannot be realized in this world, because of time and distance by which in their natural locations they are

separated; but the love of God has given the example in the primitive church of speaking to each other by written communications which are still heard by the saints, although the hands which wrote have been remanded to the dust, and ages of our time have rolled away since the writers departed to be forever with the Lord. Thus saints to-day sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. The one faith of the Son of God identifies all the children of the kingdom in all places and in every age of the world; and the dear subjects of redeeming grace who are now enduring the buffetings of the adversary in their earthly sojourn, are cheered from time to time by the revelation of that heavenly fellowship which embraces not only all the saints in all times, but in its divine fullness it is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.—1 John i. 3. That those who have received that true and living faith which is the foundation of this precious fellowship might have a medium of correspondence, and speak to each other in their varied experience in joy and in sorrow, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was first issued fifty-four years ago, when the arrogant spirit of antichrist had closed every religious periodical against the doctrine of the gospel, and the slandered and persecuted saints were denied the privilege of speaking in defense of the truth. Without money even to buy material for printing, and without organized support, in the year 1832 the prospectus of this publication was issued, and the late senior editor undertook the apparently hopeless task of furnishing the needed medium of correspondence for the scattered lovers of sound doctrine and apostolic practice. Through the weary years of almost half a century the paper was conducted under the management of the original editor, and those who have read its pages from the beginning have not accused it of departing from the sound principles to which it was first pledged. While thousands of patrons have indorsed the doctrine maintained by the paper from its first issue to the present time, the corroborative evidence of enemies of the truth has also been abundantly manifested in the falsehood and opposition which has been unsparingly hurled against it. As in the apostle's case, the enmity of the persecutors was overruled rather to the furtherance of the gospel (Phil. i. 12), so in this case the malice of enemies served to publish the fact that such a paper was in existence, and the very object in view was attained through that opposition. But while the open enmity of those who opposed the truth was thus signally defeated by its own violence, more insidious efforts to turn the publication from its original object have been repeatedly made, sometimes assuming the pretense of extreme anxiety to promote the usefulness of the paper. The arm of the Lord has been very clearly revealed many times in saving from these devices the little

periodical whose existence was the result of presumptuous assaults of the enemies of Bible truth when they threatened to stifle the feeble few who still dared to "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." Many thousands of the tried and afflicted saints have found comfort, and been cheered through reading the articles of whose writers they could never have known anything but for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In this way the original purpose of the founder of the periodical has been accomplished, and he enjoyed for many years the satisfaction of witnessing its success before he fell asleep. Since the editorial control has devolved on the present editors we have had great reason for thankfulness to God for the spirit of forbearance which has been exercised toward us by our patrons. While we have not designedly shunned to declare all the counsel of God with such ability as God has given, we are painfully conscious of the weakness with which the mighty truth has been presented in what we have written. Yet it has pleased the Lord to move many valiant soldiers of the cross to stand with us in contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. And while they have our sincere love and fellowship in their able defense of the gospel, our thanks are to the Lord who gave them both the ability and the will to stand against an idolatrous world, and to maintain the doctrine of salvation alone by the sovereign grace of God as it is revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ. May it be the pleasure of God still to strengthen his chosen ones to stand fast in the liberty and contend earnestly for the doctrine of the gospel; and may the love of God shed abroad by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the saints be abundantly displayed in their mutual love to each other. Then the correspondence will be but the expression of that joyous unity of the Spirit which characterizes those who are led by the Spirit of God.

In the year now closing many and very marked changes have been developed in the world. Not only have the ordinary mutations affected the nations and destroyed their firmly established systems, but even in our own land the convulsions of nature have given the admonition that there is nothing earthly but is awaiting its dissolution at the command of our God. These things are not to be regarded with terror by the saints; for though the earth be removed and the mountains be cast into the sea, their foundation remains unshaken in the eternal, immutable election of God that cannot lie. Amid these awful displays of the desolating vengeance of our God the flesh and heart of the saints may indeed fail, but God is still the strength of their heart and their portion forever. Instead of being affrighted or discouraged by these things, when seen by faith as the working of the mighty power of God, they are the occasion for rejoicing as

indicating that "now is our salvation [that is, our deliverance from the trials of this world] nearer than when we believed."

"A few more days, or months, or years,
In this dark desert to complain;
A few more sighs, a few more tears,
And we shall bid adieu to pain."

It is impossible for the natural man even in the saints to know that this world is not our rest; hence doubts and fears arise. But when by faith we can look at the things which eye hath not seen, there is no fear of these evils which reason can see. Then we can rest under the protecting shadow of the Almighty as our refuge and fortress.

But while the commotion which shakes the natural world brings to the trusting saints only the exhibition of the majesty and power of God, it is more difficult for them to understand why there must be discord and strife even in the visibly organized church. The inspired apostle declares that "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."—1 Cor. xi. 19. Yet when these elements of discord appear we are apt to forget that they are evidences of the fact that the church is now identical in experience, as well as in doctrine, with the church in the apostolic age. Where there is only the spirit of the world in a professed church, there is no occasion for self-denial or bearing any cross. The world loves its own. This is seen in the popularity and prosperity of false religion, whether Pagan, Atheistic or counterfeit christianity. In those who are led by the Spirit of God there is perpetual conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, which is denominated by Paul a daily death.—1 Cor. xv. 31. That the closing year has been no exception in this experience of the saints is attested by the correspondence from all portions of our country which has been published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is still true that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In their fellowship of this tribulation many have written but to express the experience of all; for while circumstances vary, the essential trials and joys of all the redeemed people are the same. Even when isolated from all society, this persecution still finds the dear saints, for their own evil heart and carnal mind is their most cruel persecutor. In this war there is no discharge, and no final victory can be attained until God shall give it in our release from mortality. All that we can do is to comfort one another with the words of consolation whereby the victory which is in Christ Jesus is assured to all whose trust is in him. In talking, whether with tongue or pen, of this glorious victory, we comfort them who are troubled; and it is always "by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Cor. i. 4. Within the past year very many of the afflicted and poor people of God have felt their heart burn within them as they have read the letters of some unknown, yet well

known, companion in tribulation, as published in these columns, and love has at once gone out to the writer, though it may be thousands of miles distant. The kindly interchange of views upon the many points of truth embraced in the doctrine of God our Savior has resulted in mutual profit to the writers and readers, while each has felt to esteem others more worthy, more gifted and better than self. In this has been developed that growth in grace which is inseparable from an enlarged knowledge of the glorious revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

While to them who are taught of God, the Scriptures and their every day experience concur in testifying that Jesus is the only way of salvation, to such as know not God there is no consistency in this heavenly record. Having no experimental knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the carnal mind cannot see the beauty of that gospel truth in which the blood of Jesus is the fountain that cleanseth us from all sin. But the joy of believing this precious truth is an infallible evidence that the believer is led by that Spirit whom the world cannot receive, neither knoweth him. By this test the gospel in its proclamation finds its own witnesses in all the world. Even the casual reader has sometimes found the key to his own experience in some tremblingly written record of the gracious dealings of God with the writer as a hopeless sinner. This is at once a proof of the power of divine grace both in the writer and the reader. That those who have obtained like precious faith with the apostles and primitive saints might be able to correspond and become acquainted with each other in this way, this paper was originally issued. Its continuance through more than half a century in the midst of enemies and adversity is evidence of the appreciation it has received from the lovers of truth; for they alone have contributed to its support. Worldly religion has many publications by which to proclaim the doctrines and commandments of men; and the world gives liberal patronage to their support. We do not covet their prosperity, nor can we depart from sound doctrine in pursuit of their favor. With the people of God we would choose to suffer affliction rather than revel in the pleasures of sin and the approval of the world. The answer of a good conscience toward God is that recompense of reward which is above all price. May the power of divine grace ever keep us, with all the saints, in the way of truth, and enable us by the faith of the Son of God to count it all joy when called to encounter fiery trials in the pathway of obedience to his commandments.

Of the adherence of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to the fundamental truth of the gospel, as set forth in the original prospectus, and repeatedly reiterated during the past fifty-four years, we are willing that our patrons should judge. During the latter years

of the original editor, little, if any, effort was made by professed Old School Baptists to oppose those principles of truth; but recently some who have formerly professed to be sound in the faith have denied some important and essential points in the doctrine. When the SIGNS OF THE TIMES can afford to sacrifice or ignore one of those principles, it will be time to discontinue the publication. Our fathers stood firmly upon those solid apostolic points of divine truth, and we should not lightly esteem what they held sacred, even though we fail to see its importance; much less can we consent to yield one word of that truth which bears the broad seal of divine inspiration as written in the sacred Scriptures. The infinity of God in all his perfections, including his sovereignty over all beings and worlds, is essential as the ground of our hope of salvation. His immutability is inseparable from his predestination, and we cannot afford to sacrifice either or any of his absolute and adorable attributes. Therefore the kind advice of those who have recommended that course is respectfully declined; and as the Lord shall enable us we propose to continue to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints; and even though we should be left to defeat in this warfare, the truth will still triumph.

While thanking our patrons for their liberal support in the past, we earnestly solicit their aid in continuing the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, not as a personal favor to the editors, but as contributing to the comfort of the scattered saints and to the vindication of the doctrine of the gospel as the truth is in Jesus. To all who can unite in the proclamation of this truth as it has been done through our columns in the past, we appeal for their continued assistance, both by their efforts to extend our circulation and by their contributions to the enriching of our pages with gospel truth. In their correspondence brethren will confer a favor on us by avoiding all reference to local or personal discord, as no good can result from publishing to the world such painful matters. The gospel of our salvation is a sufficient theme for all the tongues and pens of saints in all ages. In this theme all can unite harmoniously, and thus we shall be walking in love and in obedience to the apostolic exhortation, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."—Rom. xiv. 19.

For terms, our patrons will please see advertisement on page 286.

ELDER GEORGE Y. STIPP, of Alvin, Ill., departed this life October 23, but we have not learned the particulars of his death. A suitable obituary will doubtless be prepared by some one of his friends.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Rumney departed this life, and was gathered into the dear heavenly garner, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. George Finch, Verona, Grundy Co., Ill., Sept. 4, 1884, aged eighty-one years. At the request of her step-daughter, Mrs. Hester Rumney, I send the following account of her life. She was born in England. I have heard her say the Lord called her by grace when young. She united with a Congregational Church, and was with them many years. She was a great friend of my mother, and to us four children. After she was married to father, who was a Baptist, they attended a baptizing. The preacher's text was "And yet there is room." Through that sermon she was led to see clearly that believer's immersion was the only Bible baptism, and she followed her dear Savior, whom she loved, in the ordinance of his own appointment, in the river Midway, Upnor, Kent, fifty years before her death. She came to America with her husband and four children in 1849, lived in New York state three years, where my father died. She then came to Illinois with her children, with whom she lived, and was kindly cared for by them. She used to meet with the Ebenezer Church, and loved the doctrine of free and sovereign grace, an exalted Savior and a humbled sinner, while she generally enjoyed a sweet peace and rest on the precious promises.

ALSO,

Hattie Gilbert, of Highland, Grundy Co., Ill., died July 31, 1886, aged fourteen years. Her father, sister and grandmother are members of the Old School Baptist Church, and Hattie, with all the family, was a constant attendant. Her father has given me the following account of her last days:

"Dear brother Bradbeer:—In writing the obituary of our dear daughter just departed, our mourning is mixed with joy, that she had a hope of pardon through Jesus, who was made manifest to her as her Savior, although so young. She had evidently been concerned about her soul's welfare for two years or more. She would have the Bible, reading and talking of the things pertaining to salvation. She read hymns, and articles from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, with great interest, asking her grandmother what these things meant. She was often absorbed in deep thought. Once she told her mother that she had prayed often, and did not repeat the little verse-prayers she had learned in childhood, but that she talked with the Lord and asked him for his guidance, protection, and what she wanted. She would listen with great attention while you were preaching, and would ask for further explanation at home. This was from time to time when she was well. Her sickness was internal abscess. She was confined to her bed but three days. Soon after she was taken sick, she said she was going to die; that the Lord had picked her out to break the circle. I said that I hoped the Lord would spare her. She replied, 'No; I am going to die. Don't cry, mother, for I am not afraid to die, only I am not good enough. I am afraid the Lord will not take me to himself.' Once, after praying for her, at her request, I told her to pray for herself. After a few moments of calm thought she broke forth in one of the most earnest, fervent prayers that I ever heard in all my life. It was full of praise and adoration, of his majesty, justice and goodness. 'O how good God is. I never thought he was so good before. I can see Jesus as I never saw him before. O that I may be at the feet of Jesus.' Speaking to her sister Jenny, she said, 'I am going home to glory, and you will meet me there.' Sister Fellingham told her to look to Jesus as her only Savior. She stretched up her hands, with a smile, and exclaimed, 'Lift me up! Lift me up to my heavenly home!' Then she quietly fell asleep in Jesus."

She's gone to the home of all the blest,
In heavenly mansions there to rest;
To bask in the rays of Jesus' light,
With all the redeemed hosts above.
She's gone from trials here below,
No pain or trouble to know;
To dwell on that celestial shore,
Where death shall never enter more.

ALSO,

OUR dear brother, Charles Knibbs, closed

his earthly pilgrimage Sept. 23, 1886, aged sixty-five years. He came from England when he was nine years old; united with a Congregational Church at Two Rivers, Michigan, in 1857; was baptized in the fellowship of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, Verona, Grundy Co., Ill., where he was a beloved and useful member for eighteen years, acting as sexton and church clerk, and generally leading the singing. In conversation he would often express views and experience in hymns, of which he knew a great number. He was a humble dependent on the salvation wrought out by the Head and Surety of the church. He left his home with other brethren and attended the Sandy Creek Association, and was taken sick on his way home. He had to be left at brother Gilbert's, seven miles from his house, where he lay eleven days. His conversation was on the blessed truth he had heard, and the great enjoyment he felt at the association. He spoke of it as soon as I visited him, quoting the hymn,

"On Sion, his most holy mount,
God did a feast prepare,
And Israel's sons and Gentile lands
Shall in the banquet share."

Almost his last words to me were, "We are pilgrims here, going to that city that hath foundations." He left a sorrowing widow and one son at home, and two settled in Nebraska and Kansas.

His funeral was largely attended, when I tried to preach from—xi. 10.

SAMUEL BRADBEER.

DIED—At her residence in Ellensburg, W. T., Aug. 17, our dear mother, in the sixty-seventh year of her age. She was the widow of the late Elder A. T. Beebe, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES six years ago. Our dear father and mother were born, raised and married in New York, and united with the Old School Baptist Church in their youth, and remained steadfast members until the angel of death summoned them home. They crossed the plains with their family in 1867, encountering all the perils of that long and wearisome journey; yet the God in whom they trusted watched over them, as he ever does his beloved. They united by letter with the Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists here in Oregon, of which our father was an able minister. But they have gone home to God, and left a shining track for us, their bereaved ones, to follow in. They died as they had lived, in the full triumph of redeeming love. Jesus in all his glory appeared to their dying eyes lighting them across the dark river of death. O my soul, dost thou dare to murmur at God, or desire their return?

On his breast is laid their head;
From their eyes no tears are shed;
Heavenly winds around them blow;
Care and toil they ne'er can know.

May our tortured hearts be still;
Learn to know our Master's will;
Learn to bow and kiss the rod,
When we are chastised by God.

Kind hands have laid them to rest, while many relatives, children and grandchildren, are left to mourn the loss, which is their eternal gain. Our precious mother had been broken in health and spirits since the death of her companion, yet ever tried to bear up for our sakes, who loved her so well. Yet she rejoiced to go home, often praying God to take her, if it were his will. Dear children of our father and mother, lift up your drooping heads, for the morning cometh, when God's redeemed will be united, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

L. C. HECKARD.

CHADWELL, Oregon.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—Please publish the obituary of brother M. J. Keys, of Quantico Church, Prince William Co., Va. The deceased was seventy-four years of age, and was baptized by the late Elder R. C. Leachman, in 1858. He was a dear lover of the truth, devoted to our people, and manifested in many ways that he had been with Jesus. Among my earliest recollections are his visits to my home, and how pleasant it seemed for him, and my mother and others, to meet there and converse together of the

heavenly kingdom. His death deprives us of another one of those aged members that we have regarded so long with peculiar love and esteem. Brother Keys had been in failing health for nearly a year preceding his death, in July last. He gradually lost his strength, until he was unable to sit up, and lingered several weeks in this condition. I visited him just before his death, and found him strong in the faith, calmly awaiting his discharge. He desired me to inform the brethren that he had died as he had lived, in an unwavering belief of the doctrine that we love. Precious indeed in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Brother Keys was married in 1837. He leaves ten children and his widow to mourn their loss. We have every assurance that it is his eternal gain. We are reminded of the fact that the Lord is calling his children from time to time to their eternal home, and that the hour of our departure cannot be far distant, when we shall be done forever with the things of time, and enter the eternal gates of the blessed.

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Nov., 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—God has seen fit in his wisdom to take my babe, **Edith Akerly**. She died Nov. 3, 1886, aged four years, four months and twenty-four days. I feel my loss is her gain, for she left evidence behind that she had been taught of God to love his ministers and people, although so young; which proves the power of God. I miss her sweet face, and the flesh can hardly endure it; but I can say that the Lord has been my strength, a present help. Elders Bundy, Vail, Bogardus and Campbell were all the Old Baptists preachers she ever saw. She talked of them when sick, and wanted me to tell all I had ever seen, and wished that she could see them too. I cannot tell you how she would cry to have them come here to see her when they came to preach. A New School Baptist preacher came here once, but she said she was afraid of him, and went and hid. She never was taught the difference by mortal man. Elders Bogardus and Vail attended her funeral, and ministered great comfort to me. I can say that the Lord doth all things well. He has wounded with one hand, and poured on oil with the other, till I feel there has been a sweetness mixed with the gall; and I have a great desire to leave myself, with all else, in his dear hands, knowing he is too wise to err and too good to prove unkind.

Your unworthy sister,

HELEN M. AKERLY.

JUSTUS, Pa.

DIED—At her residence in Fayette County, Pa., on the evening of October 30, 1886, **Mrs. Elizabeth Crable**, in her eightieth year. Sister Crable had been twice married, both husbands being members of the Old School Baptist Church at Red Stone, and both preceded her to the grave. She joined the church at Red Stone in November, 1842, and lived a consistent and worthy member until death. She had been failing for several months previous to her death, but was able to go about until a few weeks, when she was attacked with dropsy, which caused her to suffer a great deal. I visited her several times during her fatal sickness, and was led to believe that her mind was resting upon the things of the world to come. She invariably requested me to pray with her, which I tried to do. I think that she was established in the doctrine, and was supported by the grace of God until her spirit fled from earth. She was a kind mother and friend, and was kindly cared for in her declining years. She leaves several children, and grandchildren, besides many relations and friends, with the church, to mourn.

The funeral took place on Monday, Nov. 1, and the writer tried to speak on the occasion to an attentive audience, using for a text 2 Cor. v. 1-4.

Yours in love,

J. BEEMAN.

TIPPECANOE, Pa., Nov. 14, 1886.

DIED—In Wilmington, Del., Nov. 11, **Charles Doland**, over eighty years old. This was a colored brother, who had been a faithful and devoted member of the church in

Wilmington for over fifty years. Not only through the first general division, but through all the trials and discouragements that this church has passed through during half a century, this old brother was always in his place and on the right side. At different times parties and factions have risen up, to have the ascendancy for a time, but the old man never could be swerved. He was retiring and diffident in his manners, but well read in the Scriptures, and sound and clear in his views, both of the doctrine and order of the gospel. His life and straightforward course was a testimonial of what grace will do, and calculated to shame many around, who with superior natural advantages were yet unstable as water, while he was firm and abiding as a rock. He died as he lived, in the confidence of all the brethren, and respected by all who knew him.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

ON Saturday before the first Sunday in November, being the 6th, 1886, at the request of brethren and sisters whose names will appear below, the following brethren met at Greer school-house, situated in Christian County, Ill., to wit, Elders Wm. J. Wheeler, E. T. Sanders, A. J. Sanders, S. A. D. Sanders, and Deacon T. E. M. Sanders, all of Horse Creek Church, Sangamon Co., Ill., and Deacon P. Stout, of Salem, Sugar Creek Church, Sangamon Co., Ill., to constitute those whose names appear below, into a Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church.

The presbytery organized by choosing Elder Wm. J. Wheeler Moderator, and Deacon P. Stout Clerk.

Articles of faith read and approved.

The petitioners presented their letters: Mary A. Jones, Wm. M. Blakely, Lodema Blakely his wife, Rebecca Russel, Samantha Melugin, Susan Jones, six in number, all of whom manifested a desire to be constituted into a church of Christ.

The council being satisfied with their Articles of Faith and letters of dismission, proceeded to constitute them into a church of Christ, by the six members and the council coming forward and bowing in humble reverence to the God of heaven.

Prayer by Elder S. A. D. Sanders.

The Moderator declared them a church of Christ.

The Moderator then extended the hand of fellowship, which was followed by the council, and then by the congregation.

Charge by Elder E. T. Sanders.

WM. J. WHEELER, Mod.

P. STOUT, Clerk.

The church set in order for business.

Chose Elder Wm. J. Wheeler Moderator *pro tem*; and P. Stout Clerk *pro tem*.

Motioned and seconded, that the church should be known as CLEAR CREEK CHURCH OF REGULAR PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS. Motion carried.

Days of meeting to be on Saturday before the first Sunday in the month.

Chose Elder Wm. J. Wheeler Moderator and pastor.

HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

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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THE CHURCH HISTORY

BY

ELDERS C. B. & S. HASSELL

As will be seen by reference to a letter received from Elder Hassell, on page 233, we have met with an unexpected delay in the completion of the Church History, caused by the inability of Elder Hassell to complete the Index as soon as anticipated. We now have the History all in type except the Index, and the binder at work on the printed sheets, and as soon as the manuscript for the Index is received we will rush them through the press and mail the books at the earliest possible day.

We still have left of the first edition of the Plain Cloth binding @ \$2 00, 222 copies.
Leather " @ 2 50, 152 "
Imit. Morocco " @ 4 00, 43 "
Best Morocco " @ 5 00, 14 "

From the above it will be observed that the first edition is nearly exhausted, and those wishing to procure a book will have to order very soon or they will be too late. 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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, 1886, 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.

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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INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBSCRIBERS.

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.

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.

RULES FOR ORDERING.

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.

Imitation Morocco, Elegant style, single copy, \$1 75; per dozen, \$18 00.

Blue, Gilt Edged, single copy, \$1 18 per dozen, \$12 00.

Blue Plain, single copy, \$1 00; per dozen, \$9 00.

At the above prices we shall require cash to accompany the orders.

OUR LARGE TYPE EDITION.

We still have a full assortment of our large type edition of Hymn Book, which we will mail to any address at the following prices:

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- Blue, Gilt Edge..... 2 00
- Imitation Morocco, Full Gilt..... 2 50
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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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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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Lord, let a helpless sinner cry
 O blessed path of sorrow
 Cheer up, poor soul, and be not faint
 Still out of the deepest abyss
 Sometime, when all life's lessons have been learned
 Jesus heals the broken-hearted
 Lord, if a child could ever fall
 Does rayless night press like a pall
 O! when shall my mind cease to roam
 O thou eternal one, whose presence bright
 I need not care

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