

The Gospel messenger
Williamston, N.C. [s.n.]

Find this Book Online: <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/dul1.ark:/13960/t3kw81v3z>

Digitized by
INTERNET ARCHIVE

Original from
DUKE UNIVERSITY



Public Domain

We have determined this work to be in the public domain, meaning that it is not subject to copyright. Users are free to copy, use, and redistribute the work in part or in whole. It is possible that current copyright holders, heirs or the estate of the authors of individual portions of the work, such as illustrations or photographs, assert copyrights over these portions. Depending on the nature of subsequent use that is made, additional rights may need to be obtained independently of anything we can address.

Generated through HathiTrust on 2026-02-22 23:49 GMT

Duke University Libraries



D01838661X

Generated through HathiTrust on 2026-02-22 23:49 GMT
<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/dul1.ark:/13960/t3kw81v3z> / Public Domain

COL. GEORGE WASHINGTON FLOWERS
MEMORIAL COLLECTION



DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
DURHAM, N. C.

PRESENTED BY
W. W. FLOWERS



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

<https://archive.org/details/gospelmessenger09hass>

2/10/33
Flowers Col.

X
Per
G 676M
V. 9

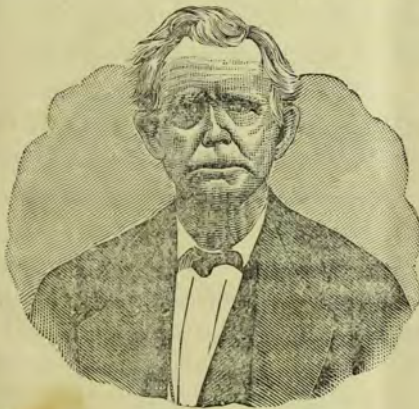
THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 1. BUTLER, GA., JANUARY, 1887. Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER HENRY M. HIGGINBOTHAM.



Having been repeatedly solicited by Eld. W. M. Mitchell and other precious brethren, to write a short biographical sketch of my life, and being assured that the time of my departure draws nigh, I will, in a brief way, comply with their requests, hoping

it may prove a blessing to some of the household of faith, even after I am called to lay this earthly armor by. My grandfather was born and grew up to manhood in Ireland; moved to the State of Virginia, North America, where he was married to my grandmother. A short time after his marriage, he was called to serve his country as a soldier in the Revolutionary war of 1776. During the war he was furloughed home to wait on his wife, who had given birth to my father, John Higginbotham, about two or three weeks prior to his leaving the army. On his arrival at his own humble home, as he was entering his door, he was shot down by a Tory, which sad occurrence forced my grandmother, notwithstanding

her weakness, to go off into the neighborhood and get some negroes and bury her husband. Consequently she was left a poor widow, to struggle with hardships and trials, in raising up my father to manhood. My father, from his childhood, was peculiarly gifted in instrumental music. Such was his efficiency that when he grew up to manhood he became a *professor*, and made the teaching of instrumental music the leading vocation of life.

From Virginia he moved to Morgan county, Ga., where he formed the acquaintance and married my mother, Bershaba McCowen. I was born August 23, 1806. Eleven months after my birth my father died, leaving me a poor orphan, and my mother a widow with but little means; so my opportunity for obtaining an education was quite limited. My mother, after she married her second husband (John Myhand) united with the Baptist Church, and was truly a devoted Christian. She did all she could to bring me up in the path of right, but notwithstanding the good teaching and moral persuasions of my dear mother, I, like the rest of the human family, grew up in the love and practice of sin; delighting in a variety of vanities, such as horse-racing and other wicked follies. During this wild career of my life, in my twenty-third year, I was married to Miss Jane Beard, a truly moral lady, but not a member of the church at the time of our union; but sad to say, her moral rectitude, at that time, had no influence in checking my riotous disposition. On one occasion I went to the town of Madison, and got into a difficulty, and came very nigh getting killed. After having returned home, not being satisfied with my wicked action in the matter, I determined to go again to Madison. My wife believing I would be killed, stood and watched me until I was out of sight, believing that she would never see me again alive. As soon as I was out of her view, she went into the peach orchard, fell down on her knees and

prayed that God Almighty would convert me from the error of my way, making me a Christian and a preacher of the gospel, and that she would be happy. Though she said nothing to me of her earnest entreaties for my reformation until after I commenced preaching. About this time, by some cause, I became convinced of the necessity of a reformation in my life, and resolved to lead a different course. It occurred to my mind that it was an easy matter to become a Christian, consequently I took myself to praying three times a day, pursuing this course for some time, until I felt to be much better, and far better than many of my associates. I reckon I got to be as good a pharisee as anybody, which I enjoyed for a considerable season, until at length I fell from my self-righteousness and became an infidel, searching various authors to confirm my infidelity. Thus I continued until one Sabbath morning at Old Sugar Creek Meeting-house, Morgan county, Ga., when me and an old comrade went out to make arrangements for a horse race. We were in a perfect glee, anticipating a joyful time in our sinful amusement, when all of a sudden, by an unknown power, it appeared to me that God was going to kill me for my wickedness. I was so astounded I did not know what to do. I made some excuse to my comrade and went to the spring, and while sitting in deep meditation, believing that the Lord was going to kill me, I thought I would try once more to pray, and retired to a black-jack thicket, where I fell upon my knees, but whether I uttered a word I can't tell. I felt that I was going to die, and being so forcibly convinced of my unworthiness to pray for myself, I resolved to go to the house and ask the good people to pray for me, a poor sinner, hoping the Lord would hear them in my behalf. I accordingly went, and when I arrived at the door the minister was giving an opportunity to any one desiring an interest in the prayers of the church. The aisle was crowded with people, but I pushed my way to

228271

the preacher, giving him my hand, asking him if he could pray for a poor, hell-deserving sinner? He said he thought he could. At this moment I cannot describe my great agony. My physical strength all gave way and I was wholly prostrated. The minister prayed fervently for me, but I got no relief. As soon as I sufficiently gained my physical strength I left the house, got on my horse and rode home. When I arrived home I found company, but they were indeed no company to me, as I was too deeply distressed in soul to enjoy the company of the best of friends. I don't think I closed my eyes for sleep during the night. The very breathing of my heart was to God for mercy. I could not see how he could in justice save me. This sore trouble continued with me about three weeks in succession, when I had the privilege again to attend meeting; I again went forward and begged an interest in the prayers of the Lord's people, but got no relief. Here I gave up all hope of ever being saved. I had done all that I could do, and was truly at my wit's end. On my way home, in conversation with a young Baptist cousin of mine, he said to me, "Cousin Henry, you have no confidence in yourself." I replied, "I have none so far as my righteousness is concerned;" feeling I was gone without a remedy. A few moments passed away, when a beautiful light, like a brilliant star, appeared to me and I was made to believe in Jesus as my advocate; realizing that his righteousness was mine, and he was my Saviour. All my troubles were gone, and I was a new creature. I could now see how God could be just and save me through his Son. This blessedness continued with me through the night; I slept sweetly, but on awaking doubts and fears infested my serene feelings. I was in darkness, and realizing my great need of being like Jesus, (it being about day dawn) I arose and went to an old stable, (being forcibly reminded that Jesus at his nativity was laid in a manger) fell on my knees,

praying him to make me like himself. I arose off my knees and viewed the rising of the sun. It was the most sublime sight I ever beheld; all creation looked lovely and beautiful, and I was so happy and so humble I wanted to shake hands with my worst enemy—freely forgiving him. During this ecstasy of joy unspeakable I had a view of Jesus and John, his harbinger, going down into the river Jordan. In my vision I saw John baptize my Saviour, and oh, how I craved to be like Him. From that moment I became impressed to follow His example, by being baptized in His name. About three weeks subsequent to the time alluded to, I went to Old Sugar Creek Church and related a portion of what is above written, and was received and baptized into the fellowship of the church; I found rest to my soul. From the day I was baptized I become impressed with the weight of the gospel ministry. I would occasionally engage with the brethren in singing and prayer, but fought my impressions to the work of the ministry for fourteen years, and moved to Columbus, Ga., thinking I could get rid of my impressions, but to my grief they followed me wherever I went. I finally moved back from Columbus with an increased weight to preach Jesus. I had held my church letter for many years, consequently had had no church enjoyment. Myself and wife finally united with the church at Mt. Olive, Lee county, Ala., and some of the members at once became impressed with a feeling sense of my duty, saying that they believed the Lord had sent them another preacher. The church was so exercised concerning my duty that she sent a committee of brethren to see me, to ascertain if I was not impressed to preach, and on being closely interrogated by the dear old deacon relative to my religious exercises, I told him a falsehood—that I had no such impressions—but promised I would attend the next meeting, which was their communion season. When I arrived at the meeting, oh, how badly

228271

I felt! It appeared that all eyes were upon me. During feet washing, while washing a beloved brother's feet, it occurred to me, as though some one had spoken it, that you have said "that you will die before you will preach;" you will be a corpse in three weeks. Oh! how I pleaded for mercy, claiming as an excuse my ignorance and unworthiness. But the Lord said to me, open thy mouth and I will fill it. I arose and commenced talking from the text: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." After I got through speaking, the church liberated me to exercise my gift, which I did in great fear and trembling. The church, in about a year after liberating me to preach, called my ordination and had me set apart to all the functions of the gospel ministry, by the laying on of the hands of Elders W. M. Mitchell and Josephus Barrow. From the time of my ordination up to about three years ago, I have labored in the service of churches, serving from three to four each year. I have baptized a great many and have, with all the ability that the Lord has given me, tried to build up and strengthen the brotherhood. But my work in the vineyard of my Master on earth is now about done. I am now about 80 years of age, and at the time of this writing very feeble; am suffering with shortness of breath. "I am 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 have been married three times. My first marriage was to Jane P. Beard, February 1, 1828, by whom I had ten children, six are yet alive; my second marriage was to Elizabeth Dison, 1868; my third and last marriage was to Mary A. Lasseter, October 10, 1872.

Affectionately,

H. M. HIGGINBOTHAM.

Lutherville, Ga., May 14, 1886.

[Written by A. B. Whatley.]

OBITUARY OF ELDER H. M. HIGGINBOTHAM.

Whereas, the Church at Providence, Meriwether county, Ga., deeply feels the loss, by death, of Elder H. M. HIGGINBOTHAM, who died at his home in Lutherville, Ga., July 3d, 1886, in his 80th year, and 34th year of his faithful, devoted and useful ministry, we deem it proper as a church, to say, as a tribute of respect to his memory, that he has been our faithful pastor for thirteen years, and wherein it has pleased the hand of our heavenly Father to take from our midst our brother and aged father in Israel, we, in deep submission, give God the honor for that gift which in him was proven by his able teachings, walks and worthy examples, which was the highest characteristics of God's love, and one of God's true and purest gifts that can be bestowed upon poor, frail man. Yet in his meek, humble and energetic defense for the doctrine and word of God, and plan of salvation for poor, mortal man, was ever untiring and unflinching to the last, and may we as a church, and members of the same, give this as our token of love for our departed brother and aged pastor. Again, may his bold and zealous efforts as a pastor, live in memory to those who love the truth. As a Moderator few excelled him in disciplinary powers. Though his voice is forever hushed, and his presence forever sealed from our view, yet his teachings and admonition liveth as an example and ensample of character for a servant of the most high God. Although his warfare is over, his race run, and the work given him finished, yet may we be able to say, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

JOHN G. PHILIPS,
ALBERT M. KEITH,
HARDIE J. LASSETER, } Committee.

Adopted in Conference, August 7th, 1886.

A. M. KEITH, Clerk.

A. B. WHATLEY, Moderator.

The name of Elder H. M. Higginbotham will ever fill a pleasant place in the memory of the church at Providence, and indeed with all lovers of the precious truths of the Gospel who knew him. He was a man of unblemished character; strictly honest in all his dealings with his fellow man. As a citizen, or good neighbor, he had no superiors; as a Christian, he lived without a blot on his religious profession, and as a minister of the Gospel, he was sound, faithful and uncompromising. It can truly be said of him that he was an able Gospel minister; strictly apostolic in all his preaching and practice, opposing, with all the powers of his might, the new isms of the day. From the day he united with the church until the day of his death, he stood firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone. He was a strong believer and defender of the doctrine of predestination, God's electing love, effectual calling and the final perseverance of the saints in grace. He ignored all auxiliary institutions gotten up by man to aid God in the salvation of poor sinners, or to add to the progress of the church; claiming that God's plan of saving sinners was a perfect plan, and that "Jesus," who is the Saviour of his people, is mighty and able to save, and that his Spirit, grace and perfect law of

liberty, which he has given his Zion for her prosperity and happiness, is sufficient and will prevail in her preservation, so that the gates of hell shall never prevail against her. And to presume to add to the work of his Spirit, grace and his precious rule, is high presumption, and a mark of the beast. A volume might be written concerning the faith, hope, walk and able teachings of Elder Higginbotham, how that he served churches in Alabama and Georgia, but suffice it to say that he was faithful to his blessed Master unto death, and as we believe is now realizing in spirit immortality, while his body is sweetly sleeping in Jesus. He leaves a precious wife, a devoted mother in Israel, and a number of children and grandchildren to mourn his loss.

A. B. WHATLEY.

Hogansville, Ga., Aug. 18th, 1886.

And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.—Gal., vi, 9.

Some reflections are in my mind concerning the above words, that have seemed pleasant and profitable to me, and I feel a desire to pen them down for the readers of the MESSENGER. We are all desirous of seeing some fruits of our labor, whatever the work may be in which we are engaged. And if no fruit appears we are apt to become discouraged. It is so with those who labor in the vineyard of the Lord. Whatever place we may fill—whatever service we may be rendering—we all like to see some result. If no result appears we soon begin to question and feel anxious, and to doubt our usefulness, and the utility of what we are doing. This is true of every servant of the Lord, but I think it is specially true of those who are called to give their whole life to the work of the ministry; to reprove and exhort and rebuke, and to feed the flock of God. We want to see fruit. And we have a right to expect fruit. But we may expect it too soon, or in ways that would not glorify God, or be good for us, and so we are disappointed. Then comes seasons of depression, when we are ready to faint and give up all, and conclude that our ministry is of no use; that we have mistaken our field of labor; or that we were never called to this work. Now, to us all, ministers and members, the language of

the verse quoted at the head of this letter, comes as a word of kindly promise of warning and admonition, all in one. It says: "Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due time we shall reap if we faint not." What a striking figure the apostle uses in the word "reap" in the text! Suppose one who knew nothing of the process of the germination and growth of plants from the seed, should be told that a certain seed would produce, if cast into the ground, bread for the use of man. He casts the seed into the ground, but days pass and he reaps no fruit. He becomes discouraged and faint in his mind. He ceases to expect fruit; he ceases to watch for it; and when the fruit appears, it does not gladden his heart and he does not reap it, because he has quit expecting fruit, and does not know there is any. This is the thought of the text. On the other hand, here is one who has long patience; he expects fruit; he ceases not to watch for it, though it be long delayed; he is not weary in well doing; he does not become faint, he sows the seed and trusts the Lord to give the harvest when the proper season shall come. He reaps the fruit, for he has continued to sow; he is in the field where the fruit ripens and when it ripens. The words are encouraging and true, and have been fulfilled again and again. How many times has our doubting and our unbelief been rebuked when we were beginning to be weary in well doing, and were getting ready, as it were, to fall out of the ranks. How often, at such times, our God has shown us a little fruit of our labor, and we have been strengthened and helped to still hold on our way. This, I think, is the general meaning of the text. And it is thus seen to be in full harmony with such expressions as these: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand," etc., and "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days thou shall find it again."

I feel like standing as a witness to the truth of these

promises, and I had it in mind to narrate an incident in my own life, in order to show how our Father above fulfills his own words and does not let them return to him void. And when he gives us to see his promises fulfilled, how it rejoices our hearts! How good it is to think that all his word is fulfilled; both that which he gives us to see, and that which we cannot trace. By now and then showing us a promise fulfilled, he would lead us to believe that all are or shall be fulfilled. If he permits us to reap once where we have sown the seed, he means us to understand the harvest shall never fail, whether our eyes behold it or not. Thus was my mind led to believe by the instance which I will now narrate:

I had been in the habit of visiting, once or twice a year, and preaching in Frederick county, Md., at a place about twenty-five miles from my home, where a few Old School Baptist friends live. I had gone from time to time, hoping that there were some who loved the truth, and who took pleasure in hearing it. I also hoped that I might, at some future time, see some good results from these visits. One year ago, in November, I visited and preached two evenings in this place. But everything seemed discouraging to me. Even those for whom I had a good hope, seemed very cold and farther away than I ever knew them to be. I could not feel that the spirit of the Lord was with us. I came home with the question in my mind, of what use have all my visits there been? I felt as though they had been of no use. I was heartsick and discouraged. I thought that I had been sowing in vain. The Lord had not given me one soul for my hire; I had better cease going there. I was greatly troubled. But now for the result: About this time I received a letter from a lady in that county whose name was not familiar to me; so unfamiliar was it that it required considerable thought before I could locate the writer in my mind. She said

that she had fallen into deep trouble of mind a few days before; that she felt herself to be such a sinner, and knew not where to turn nor what to do. She said that while she had always respected religion, and had been accustomed to saying her prayers, she had never known her sins until a few days previous. Those around her (she was at the time teaching, and was boarding in the family of a Methodist minister) did not understand her, though they seemed anxious to do her good. "And now," she said, "I heard you preach some years ago, and my mind is led to you. Can you tell me anything to comfort me? Is there any hope that God will forgive such a sinner as I?" To this letter, so full of bitterness and sorrow, I could only reply by presenting Jesus as the Saviour of the very chief of sinners. In a few days another letter came, thanking me for my kindness, but still expressing the utmost despair. While I knew that it was not in me to give her peace where the Lord had given her trouble, yet I felt to reply at once and tell her a portion of my own experience. About three days later I received a reply, asking me to join her in praising God for his great work in her behalf. The God of Salvation had appeared to her gloriously one night upon her bed, and she knew him for her Saviour. I did rejoice over her with great gladness of heart. After this she began in her letters to inquire about doctrine, and what Primitive Baptists believed, honestly telling me when things were clear to her mind, and when they did not so appear. My confidence in and fellowship for her grew continually. At last I wrote to her that it was so, and asked her to come and visit me, and go with me to Black Rock and get acquainted with the brethren there. She came on the first of February, under circumstances of peculiar trial. Her faith and love were tested more than is usual. She herself is very frail and weak, hardly ever seeing a well day; the snow lay drifted all over the country, in places from six to ten feet in depth; she

had five miles to go to reach the cars and forty miles on them to my place, and then eight miles to drive with me to Black Rock, with the snow so deep that we were three hours going eight miles. She was a total stranger to the whole church, and had seen me but twice, and could hardly call herself acquainted with me. Yet she came, spite of all these discouragements; and in the midst of the cold, and ice, and snow, went down into the watery grave and arose to newness of life. After she returned to her home she wrote: "I have made the journey that seemed so hard; I have done what I felt was my duty to do; I have returned to my home, and not a hair of my head is hurt." "I will glory in the Lord who has strengthened me." Again she wrote: "How I love that people that received me so kindly and loved me so freely." I have not tried to tell of the precious conversations, of the contents of her many letters, because time and space would fail. She is still rejoicing in the Lord and praising his name.

And did not I feel rebuked at the Lord's goodness to me for all my unbelief and fainting by the way? Here was fruit where I had said "there is no fruit." I felt to say let me not be weary in well doing again, for the reaping time will come, if not to me personally, then to some one else. I felt humbled and yet exalted. I saw more clearly than ever that I was nothing, but Jesus was all and is all. I was abased in myself, but I was exalted in Jesus.

I have told this instance of the Lord's power and goodness, hoping to encourage some dear brother who is disheartened and weary. It is true "we shall reap in DUE season." Oh, for more of a spirit of humble reliance upon God, so that we may toil with the patience of the ox and the boldness of a lion!

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life eternal.

FARRIS A. CHICK.

THE BLESSED OF THE LORD.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.—Ps. 1.

Leaving it for the reader to form his own conclusions as to what should be considered walking in the counsel of the ungodly and standing in the way of sinners, &c., my impression is to dwell briefly upon the principles upon which men are hindered from such wrong conduct, and influenced to pursue that which is lawful and right. Both observation and revelation discover to him who observes, that whether religious or irreligious, the natural depraved mind and will of man is bent to evil doing; and without restraint none of the fallen race would ever develop any other character or pursue any other than a perverse conduct. However, in speaking of the depravity of our race, I do not mean to teach, nor do the Scriptures teach, that men are naturally depraved, or destitute of a rational judgment; they may, and many do possess, broad comprehension of temporal things; but the Scriptures do teach that whatever may be the physical or intellectual capacity of men, the whole race has fallen into a spiritual depravity, so that none do nor can comprehend the things of the Spirit of God; nor can they perform any obedience to God in the Spirit without a spiritual qualification, which consists in a calling of the Spirit from a state of death in sin and in being made partakers of the Spirit and of the divine nature. Such are blessings which must precede men's turning from a wrong conduct and obeying God in the Spirit; for without these, mere temporal blessings, however bountifully bestowed, most generally make men more haughty and vain, as observation and inspiration have shown, hence the teaching of the Psalmist, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly," &c. Such teaching honors God and his grace as being the source of the

obedience of his people; while it may be seen that to teach that the holy and immutable God is induced to bestow the blessings of life and salvation upon corrupt and depraved mortals by their fleshly works, (for their works must be fleshly while they remain in the flesh,) is simply a contradiction of the Scriptures, a reproach of the Almighty, and tends only to encourage the boasting of men, instead of excluding it. Why should such things as these be alleged against the doctrine of reigning grace? Does the fact that God's grace and gift of the Spirit being the origin of the obedience of the saints lessen the importance of that obedience? Contrariwise, it seems clear to my mind that God's gift of his Spirit fully insures the obedience of the saints and all that follows upon it. After all of their cavil, the quarrel between Predestinarians and Arminians is not as to whether obedience to God is necessary and indispensable in order to salvation, for we as fully affirm the importance of that obedience as they. But the difference lies here: We look to God's predestination and election, together with the gift of his Spirit, as the things in principle which has produced all the obedience we can boast of, and that because we read as follows: "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son." Now I do not fail to insist, even in the presence of Arminians, that we need not depend upon God's predestination, except as that principle has transformed and conformed us to the image of Jesus. I mean, and the Scriptures mean, we must be practically conformed to the image of Jesus, and such practical obedience which is outward, must be from pure inward motives, and as the Bible ascribes these to God's predestination, I cannot accept their teaching that that predestination is dependant for its existence upon the will of depraved mortals. There, reader, is the difference; they will honor their free will outward obedience to the letter of the law as the pro-

curing cause of God's predestination, and this Predestinarians cannot allow; not because they prize obedience less than Arminians do, but because they understand that it requires a pure principle of predestination to produce it, and therefore they can't consent that such a purpose depends for its existence upon the rottenness and depravity of men. But it is affirmed that God has blessed all men with sufficient means of grace. In raising my objection, I shall not, as some have taken upon themselves to do, ignore all means of salvation, but simply say that "means of grace" is a senseless expression; for if what they call means of grace is free and unmerited favor, that is grace itself, and so every intelligent man will determine. Besides it is difficult to conceive of a sufficient means to obtain an end when such means fail to obtain it. What a deception it is to talk of means of grace, and of men living in the use of the means of grace! How could a thing be regarded as a free gift, when men must obtain it by the use of means? It is as if one should say to another, I will freely give you the article you want, provided you will buy and pay for it. Their system is a contradiction within itself, as may be seen. They don't believe in meritorious works, they say, and yet without such works as they insist upon, men are lost, notwithstanding Christ has died for them, as they teach. But how works of men, which give efficacy to the blood of Christ, (if there were any such works,) could be regarded as meritorious, is a thing which they have not yet explained. The sense of men in common is that unmeritorious works are wholly unprofitable and manifestly superfluous. Hence it may be seen that they have adopted a system of doctrine that is contradictory in itself as aforesaid. Nevertheless there are many of them within the scope of my acquaintance whose life and general deportment is much better than their doctrine, and who no doubt love the Lord and serve him

according to the light they have. I am glad to believe this, and labor not as an enemy to such, but to show them that God is entitled to the honor of their better life and that they ought to be abundantly satisfied at being the recipients of the benefits arising. For to be sure it is we, and not the Lord that is benefited by the best life we can live.

The Psalmist gives not only the negative, but also the positive character of the man that is blessed of the Lord and by it we may try ourselves. "*But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*" Perhaps the reader may be ready to say if a delight in the law of the Lord is the best evidence of a gracious state it leaves me still fearful. For I suppose, yea, the Scriptures show, that God's people while in the body are subject to temptation and trial, losses, crosses and vexation of spirit, and such is the weakness and depravity of the fleshly mind, (which none of us are yet without,) that we may frequently find ourselves murmuring against God in deploring his providences, and if we suffer it not to break out we feel in our very nature rebellion against God, or against his government or law, and so we are ready to conclude that surely we do not delight in the law of the Lord; for then we may think we should be more prompt in obedience, and feel less of the spirit of rebellion. However, the apostle was certainly speaking to God's people who had been specially blessed of him where he 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. I say we know that in that place the apostle spoke to the saints, and as well we know that he did not speak to such Pharisees, ancient or modern, as imagine they have attained to perfection and sin not at all. For that declaration "ye cannot do the things that ye would," necessarily implies that they did things they ought not

to do, one of which was to adopt the doctrine of circumcision as a condition of salvation, the very principle by which many of the Lord's people are to-day bewitched, for we should have as much confidence in circumcision as in any other work of the flesh. Why not? Of himself the apostle says, "What I would I do not, but what I hate do I."—Rom. vii, 15. We see then that with his high calling of God as a saint, as a minister, and as an inspired apostle, Paul had not advanced so far in a divine life as some modern Pharisees profess to have advanced; he had not reached perfection in the flesh, and these things ought to be observed; not to encourage such as love the ways of sin to pursue it, but to strengthen the feeble flock of God, who though they abhor sin, have learned by their experience that the world, the flesh, and the devil, are enemies above their strength. We may see from the above that if the fact that we fail to obey at all times as we would, and if the further consideration that we are sometimes in transgression, I say if such is evidence that we are not the blessed of the Lord, then the same testimony stands against Paul by his own confession, and against the saints of Galatia according to his declaration of their character and warfare. No, reader, the fact that you sometimes make mistakes and crooked steps, does not evidence that you do not delight in the law of the Lord, but the fact that you deplore your misgivings and short comings, loathing yourself and hating your own life, because of its impurities, such experience, I say, evidences that you do delight in his law and that you are certainly blessed of him. For if we have no delight in the law of the Lord how then should we deplore our transgressions of it? In our experience and warfare we learn in our measure as Paul did, that "the law is spiritual" and that we are "carnal sold under sin."

The Psalmist gives us a likeness of the man who is blessed of the Lord, from which we may profit: "And

(2)

he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." This language should be regarded as figurative; as we understand that a tree planted by rivers of water receives daily supplies of moisture, whereby it retains its freshness and matures its fruit. A tree planted on the high and dry ridge in time of drouth, its leaves may wither, and will; it may drop its fruit before maturity, as we have seen. But the man who is blessed is not like a tree planted in the dry place, but is like the tree planted by the rivers of water. The teaching is, therefore, that as the tree by the rivers of water receives daily supplies of moisture, so God's people shall receive daily supplies of his grace, and thus we hope and expect to persevere, and not by living loose, as some foolishly allege that we may, if our doctrine is true. But the Psalmist says: "*And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*" Here we may stumble again, even to falling, but for the support we receive from the Lord and his word. How often is it the case with us that it seems that nothing we do or can do prospers? We are incident to, and many have experienced, severe bodily afflictions, which may be coupled with mental distress seemingly beyond endurance; we may be, as many have been, bereaved of companions, or children, or of both. Our worldly estates may be swept away by war and bloodshed, or by defrauders, or tempest of some kind. Now when such is the case with us, our weakness is to conclude that we shall at last be consumed by the providence of God, and for a time—and sometimes for a long time—we are wholly unable to see how such distress let upon us are evidences of God's love and blessings to us. It seems that the Psalmist himself had such experience. In lxxiii Psalm he says: "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." What was his evidence for it? "For all the day long

have I been plagued and chastened every morning." Ah, reader, has the enemy ever gotten so much the advantage of you as to make you believe it was vain that you had endeavored to serve God? Have you looked abroad at the world and beheld its pomp and glee, and have you sometimes concluded that it had been better for you to have floated along the same current? If so, no doubt, you have entered into the feeling of the Psalmist, where he says in the same connection: "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me." Of all the darkness and distress that we experience, there is nothing more heart-rending to me than to conclude that all of my endeavors to serve God in the ministry, and otherwise, have been in vain. I may truly say with the Psalmist, "It is too painful for me." But we must be brought to remember that the Lord has not promised us worldly ease and temporal prosperity; our Saviour himself did not enjoy it, but said: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Who of us is poorer? It is said of him, "He learned obedience by the things he suffered," and we may expect to learn likewise. I believe I have learned by the teaching of the Spirit, in my experience, that we are brought to spiritual prosperity by temporal adversity. Twice I have given up the last shelter I had for myself or family, to creditors, caused partly by my own imprudence, but mostly by the fraudulent conduct of others; nor do I to-day possess any of this world's goods, and yet I must say I have lacked nothing that God has promised—food and raiment, with chastisement for disobedience and transgression. The Psalmist also gives us a likeness of the ungodly: "*The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*" The wind driveth the chaff adrift because it has no weight in itself. The wheat would be driven likewise, but for the weight of it. So of the ungodly

pharisees and hypocrites, though they may be very religious outwardly, nevertheless, having no weight or establishment in gospel principles, they are driven adrift, as we have seen, by any wind of doctrine, even as by the wind of the husbandman's fan the literal chaff is driven. If such characters shall be formally connected with Christ's kingdom on earth, a slight tempest of persecution will drive them adrift. They can't endure a mere scourge of tongues, or to have their temporal interests driven back for Christ's sake. "*Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*" It may be possible that some formally connected with the church, or the congregation of the righteous, may glory in predestination and election, because they imagine that just because they declare such principles, they may then live as they choose, in a gratification of their covetousness and lust. But such will ultimately develop their character as Judas did, and a faithful exercise of discipline will cut them off. They shall not stand in the judgment. "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." JOHN ROWE.

EXPERIENCE.

Dear Brother:—As you are an aged brother, I desire to give you a sketch of my life, believing you will be honest with me. The cross is very heavy for me to talk to any one, especially one who is above me in knowledge. When I was quite young I felt sorrowful at times, but these feelings would wear off, and come again. I thought that if I would pray three times a day that the Lord would change me in a month, but the month ended and I was still unchanged. I thought I had to work myself into the favor of the Lord, and if I would pray six months longer, that he might change me in that

time; the six months passed off, and I saw that my prayers were nothing; all that I could say was Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. I was in trouble about eleven months. I thought mine was a hopeless case; but at a time unexpected, my sorrow was turned into joy; I felt like I loved everybody and that I would never see any more trouble; but the next day I feared that I was deceived, and I desired my burden back. I thought that if I was ever changed I would know it. I sometimes had joy, at other times sorrow, but still felt like I was a sinner. It passed on this way for three years and I was still nothing but a sinner. I always went up to be prayed for, thinking if anybody needed prayers it was me. I went up one night to be prayed for, and thought that if the Lord did not save me I was lost. It seemed like I was sitting on the ground, and was lifted about two feet above the ground and carried through a beautiful green pasture, and sank down by a deep ditch. I thought I had to cross it, but it looked so deep and black that I feared to cross it; and I heard a voice say, "fear not; see this place is fixed for all that come this way." I then arose and saw that it was a beautiful stream of water, and on my left a broad, open way in which a great number went who did not cross there. I looked before me, and I thought I could see the angels that had come to meet me, and I crossed over. I never want to be any happier than I was at that time. I thought that I would never doubt again.

I now joined the Methodist (I was about fourteen years old). I had rest about three weeks, and my fear returned. At the age of twenty I left the Methodist and joined the Missionary Baptist, because my connections were all there. I did not think it mattered what denomination anybody belonged to, if they were Christians. My mind was now pressed to write my trials down; I did not think any one had troubles like me. I desired to talk to some one, but the cross was too heavy.

Time passed on; one day I was distressed very much; it seemed that some one asked me if I loved the Lord, and then some one seemed to say that Christ was not the Son of God. I now thought that I knew I was no Christian. I here passed through a very sore struggle; I here learned that Satan was stronger than I, and that the Lord was stronger than all, and that the Lord had loved me and would fight my battles for me. Up to the year 1866 I feared that if I was deceived that I would be lost; but now I felt that if the Lord sent me to hell I was willing to go, but at the same time I felt like I desired to serve him. I felt like I was willing to suffer anything for his sake. These words came to me, "No good thing will I withhold from thee." I was now entirely delivered from the fears of hell; but my mind was still impressed to write or talk to some one. I now desired to know the truth. I could not be a Methodist, for I did not believe in falling from grace, and I desired to know where the true church was. I could not understand the doctrine of election. I heard it said that the Primitive Baptists preached that the Lord loved a part and hated a part. The new school says that the Lord looked through time, and saved them that would do good, but the Scriptures teach us that there is none good. I felt that if the Lord would show me the truth I would believe it; and I searched the Scriptures. I saw that the Lord would save his people and that they were saved by grace. But why did he save one sinner and leave one? I felt that I was as great a sinner as anybody. Why did he save me and leave some not saved? I tried not to think about it; but it was a heavy burden on my mind. I desired to know the truth, and tried to learn it, but could not. I sometimes thought it did not matter whether I knew it or not, for I was nothing but a poor ignorant woman; but I desired it above all things. I could not learn it, neither could man teach it to me. I begged the Lord day and

night to show me where the true church was; I desired to dream of two preachers of the right denomination. I went to sleep one night and dreamed that I saw two Primitive Baptist preachers in a field; I went on a little farther and came to a congregation of Methodists, and they were worshipping something under curtains—they called it a child; these two Baptists were there, and they went around and lifted the curtain up; it was a deformed child, and had a head and wings like a bird, and had a voice like a bird and like a child; it would cry out to the Baptist, most emphatically, to “go off, to go off! we won’t have you.” But they brought it out from under the curtains. I was now satisfied that the Primitive Baptist was the true church. I went to sleep one night studying still why did the Lord save one sinner and leave one not saved. I dreamed that I had a wheel, and it was broke. I picked it up and carried it to a shop to have it mended, and carried all the money that I had with me. When it was mended I looked at my money, and it was two of the filthiest rags I ever saw; I then looked at the man and told him that I had nothing to pay with; he looked at me and smiled, and said that he mended it for nothing. I could see that a person in a state of nature thought that their prayers were something; but how was it with those that was not saved. I went to sleep again, and dreamed that I saw a great number of men and women building a covenant; they were very busy nailing on planks and daubing it with mortar, but it began to shake, and it all fell to the ground. I was wondering in my dream what would become of those people; I then looked up and saw the covenant that the Lord had set up from the beginning; I saw it was a complete building, firm and unshaken, and I thought that every piece was dressed and fitted to its right place; and if these people were saved that they were embraced in that covenant. I now awoke, and I never studied any more about those that

were not saved. I could see that the Lord had created all things, and that he had a right to do as he pleased with all he had created. I saw that salvation was of the Lord, and saw that he had a purpose in everything that he had created, and that he suffers evil to accomplish good. I was still with the Missionary Baptist, but I was persuaded both night and day to come out and declare that salvation was of the Lord, but I thought I could not be baptized again. At last I come to the conclusion I would live out of the church.

I had, up to this time, never been in a Primitive Baptist meeting-house, and the first time I was ever at one of their meetings was in 1866. Elder J. H. Williams was the pastor at Ebenezer at that time. He took for his text: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure." It was not like the preaching I had been used to hearing; I had always been used to hearing work out your soul's salvation, and I had tried that and failed. The Baptist preaching was food to me, and it strengthened me. I now desired to be with them, but Satan came along and told me not be baptized any more, for you will be lost anyhow, for you have said that you was willing to go to hell if the Lord wanted you to; so that is the place for you; so you stay where you are. I desired the fear of hell back. The Baptist preached what I believed as far as I could understand it, but it was a great cross for me to leave my folks, and especially my brother (Rev. A. B. Norris). My husband joined the Baptist and I went with him.

I fear I shall weary you, but bear with me a little. I still had no rest; I felt as though I had laid down in sorrow; I could not as much as ask the Lord to have mercy on me. I thought one day I would go and ask my brother to pray for me; I heard a voice say "come to me, I can cleanse you from all iniquity." I

thought I knew the voice, and these words came to me: "Take my yoke upon you, and you shall find rest to your soul." I was still impressed to write, but I said I could not, and these words came to me: "open your mouth and I will fill it, for it is of the Lord." The words came faster than I could have written them down, but I would not. I finally said that I wished the Lord would take it off of my mind and never let it return again, but I could not get rid of it. As time passed on I wrote a part of my experience, and kept it by me for some time. I thought I could not let anybody see it. I dreamed one night that I had two rolls of money; I thought I had to take it to Brother Gresham's and leave it; I thought I had to leave my garment too, but I would not; I thought I threw the money under the bed and started home, and my light went out and left me in the dark. I came to a sea and had to go through it. I thought I would trust myself in the hands of the Lord, and I stepped in, and when I had crossed over, there was a light shining, and a beautiful stream of water and a steep hill. I thought I went up the hill singing the song that was given to Moses ages ago. I come to the conclusion that I would not write, for I have but a poor education. I said that I would not—could not. I desired the Lord would take it off of my mind. About this time I dreamed that I was standing under a nice cluster of grapes, eating them; I thought I had to quit eating them and eat what was strewn under my feet. I imagine that I have been eating to my sorrow. There has been one trouble after another ever since. I sometimes go to meeting to hear one word of comfort, but it seems like it is all for some one else. Will the Lord cast off forever? Will he be gracious no more? Yes, I believe he will be gracious and heal all of my backsliding. As I have said before that when I was with the Missionaries I was made to see that salvation was of the Lord from first to last. I remarked to some one of them

one day that I did not believe that the creature had anything to do with his eternal salvation, and that I believed that Satan lead them about at his will; but that the Lord was stronger than Satan, and would cast him out of them, and that all that Christ died for would be saved. They said that if I didn't mind that Satan would have me right where he wanted me; they said that Satan would make people believe lies that they might be lost. I told them that if what I believed was of Satan, my experience was too. They said that I would set the creature free. I told them I could not, but Christ did set them free. I believe that the Holy Spirit leads them and teaches them the truth, and the truth makes them free. I don't believe that Satan and all the world can frustrate the purpose of God.

On Saturday before the third Sunday in July last (1885) Brother T. J. Head said there was a rest to the people of God. I believe there is to the obedient ones; but I am one of the disobedient ones, if one at all; therefore, I have been beaten with many stripes. Last year I felt like all the afflictions we had were sent for disobedience; I felt like I justly deserved it. I then felt like if the Lord would take it off, I would be willing to do anything that he required of me if it killed me. I was studying about it one night, and I didn't know what to do, and some one whispered "follow me." I believed I-desire to follow Christ if I know how, but I had rather do nothing than something that he don't require of me. I believe that all of the afflictions that the Lord's people have are for their good; yet we often desire him to take us out of the world; but Christ did not pray for us to be taken out of the world, but to be kept from the evils of the world. In the world we have tribulations, but in Christ we have peace, and I have never had any true happiness only in Christ; but whenever I am brought low at his feet, I find rest to my soul. Christ teaches us that we are weak and he is strong, we

are poor and he is rich—for all things belong to him. It is a great thing to have such a king to reign over us and guide us. None only the Lord's children have the spirit of Christ to teach them, and that they are kept by his power; if we are killed to the love of sin, we are his; and if we love the brethren we are his. There is two spirits in the Lord's children; when we are led by the spirit of Christ we love our enemies; but the flesh is not subject to the law of Christ, for if we follow after the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption. There is, therefore, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. It has been my experience all through life that all of the afflictions that I have had were all for the best, though I could not see it at the time; I could afterwards. I don't know how much more I have got to suffer, but if I have got to suffer all through my life I will then say it was for the best.

When you and Brother T. J. Head were here you all sung a song, the last verse was:

“Now Satan threatens to prevail
And make my soul a prey.”

It called my mind back to a part of my experience in 1866; it was the poorest day that I ever saw, and the richest one too. There was an argument with me and some one, and I said that I was as vile as the vilest of sinners. It seemed that something said to me, you are not as mean as the Muralites (murderers) and them that make lies; but I felt like I was as guilty before God as any one, but I felt like I desired a servant's place. I knew that I had never committed any out-breaking crime; I felt that the only reason that I had not, was because I had been kept from it by His power and love. I scarcely had food and raiment, but I felt like I was willing for the Lord to take even what I had from me and send the sharpest afflictions upon me; yea, anything that he saw fit, if it would make and keep me

humble. I felt like I desired to serve him in this world if he banished me from him in eternity, and these words came to me, "no good thing will I withhold from thee, and that nothing should ever come on me, only what would be for my good." I had grace and comfort, it was a feast to me for two or three years. I have already stated that I had never heard much preaching up to this time (1866), but the "do and live system." I cannot see any use in preaching to dead people; the preaching cannot open their eyes, nor unstop their deaf ears; neither can it give them an understanding heart, for it takes the power of God to give life. Then it is the living child that needs food. I believe that the Lord's children are taught by him, and that they shall know him, from the least to the greatest. Much of my time has been spent in darkness the last eight or ten years. Though the night be long and wearisome, we can't make the light shine; we have to wait his time; he will arise with healing on his wings.

I want to ask you a question: Why is it that when we look back over our past life, and see that the Lord has delivered us out of all our troubles, why can't we trust him when we see a new one coming? Why do we have so many fears and doubts? I sometimes think I have more fears and doubts than any one else; the most of my time there is a fearful looking for something, but there has been times when I did not fear anything; the time has been when I would not have feared what a thousand men could do; but the most of my time I fear everything. It is unbelief, or it is disobedience. I do wish I could live without so many fears. Brother Head, I look upon you as a teacher in the Lord; I did not start to write for publication, but for information and advice, for I believe that you will be honest with me; I do not want to be deceived nor deceive anyone; I don't want to think that the Lord has required anything of me that he has not.

JULIA MCGRAW.

Chalybeate Springs, Ga.

Dear Brother Respass:—I will offer for publication the following poem, if you approve it. It is selected, and I do not know who is the author :

Let me go where saints are going
 To the mansions of the blest,
 Let me go where my Redeemer
 Has prepared his people's rest.
 I would gain the realms of brightness
 Where they dwell forevermore ;
 I would join the friends that wait me
 Over on the other shore.

CHORUS.—Let me go, 'tis Jesus calls me ;
 Let me gain the realms of day,
 Bear me over angel pinions,
 Longs my soul to be away.

Let me go where none are weary,
 Where is raised no wail of woe ;
 Let me go and bathe my spirit
 In the raptures angels know ;
 Let me go, for bliss eternal
 Turns my soul away—away ;
 And the victor's song triumphant
 Thrills my heart; I cannot stay.

CHORUS.—Let me go, &c.

Let me go; why should I tarry?
 What has earth to bind me here?
 What, but cares, and toils and sorrow?
 What, but death, and pain and fear?
 Let me go; for hopes most cherished
 Blasted often round me lie;
 Oh! I've gathered brightest flowers,
 But to see them fade and die.

CHORUS.—Let me go, &c.

Let me go where tears and sighing
 Are forevermore unknown,
 Where the joyous songs of glory
 Call me to a happier home.
 Let me go! I'd cease this dying;
 I would gain life's fairer plains;
 Let me join the myriad harpers,
 Let me chant their rapturous strains.

CHORUS.—Let me go, &c.

I hope to send you something else in a day or two.
 Yours to serve, E. R.

BLANCO, TEXAS, November 15, 1886.

Brethren Mitchell and Respass:—I wish to respond to a request of many brethren in Tennessee, by addressing them through the GOSPEL MESSENGER:

Dear Brethren:—Under the direction of Divine Providence, myself, family, and friends who accompanied us, arrived here safe in due time, and are all enjoying good health, and my own much improved. I believe this to be a very healthy portion of the State, and though mountainous and rough, is blessed with good water and plenty of fire-wood, for a new country thickly settled by (as far as I know) comparatively good social, moral and energetic citizens. In a word, we are pleased with our location, though our circumstances, in many particulars, might be much improved. So much for secular affairs. As to religious matters, there are nine or ten Baptists here, besides those who recently arrived, and have met and had preaching since our arrival four times, and attended each time with every appearance of Christian union, love and fellowship, and have set next (the third) Sunday and Saturday before, in this month, (November) to constitute ourselves into a church. Within the last two weeks, Brother and Elder McAdams, from Mississippi, came to this place, bought land, and was at our last meeting, and preached, and the brethren, as far as heard from, and myself, were much pleased with the preaching. He and daughter, Mr. Kenady and myself, went home with my daughter and husband, Frank Jones. The conversation being on religious subjects, which was kept up till late in the evening, took a very happy turn, in which Brother McAdams, Mr. Kenady, my daughter and self freely participated, to our mutual comfort and edification; at least such were my feelings. Indeed, I was so much pleased that my mind recurred to the many pleasant seasons, happy and edifying interviews I have had with you, ever since my connection with you, which I enjoyed so much, and by

which we have been mutually comforted together. I can but feel sad when I reflect that circumstances seem to forbid a renewal or repetition of those happy seasons, mutually realized while engaged with you in the public service of our adorable Sovereign, as well as in our private interviews. Language will not express the feelings of a grateful heart for the many tokens of your respect, confidence and acts of kindness, shown me while connected with you; the crowning instance of which was the interest and concern you manifested for my welfare at our—the Elk River—Association just before I left the country. You may be assured that the poor old sinner, whose heart seemed to be hard as adamant, was so softened, humbled and overcome when he learned what you had so kindly and liberally done to relieve him of the incumbrance that was oppressing him, he shed tears of gratitude, and the first impulse of my heart was to obey your behest and remain among you. Though I have in much weakness, and under many infirmities, labored to honor my Sovereign and deserve your confidence, I really feel that my endeavors have been weak and few, and to whatever extent they have conduced to your welfare in comforting or establishing you in the faith of God's elect, to him alone the praise is due. I want you all to know that I as much appreciate, and feel as grateful for your proffered benefaction and kindness as though I had remained among you and enjoyed their benefits; but it seemed to my wife and self that the state of our affairs rendered it necessary for us to leave for Texas, and though many miles separate us, I hope we are no less one in heart and mind, joying and beholding each other's order and steadfastness of our faith in Christ; and may our blessed Lord enable us all to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. To avoid being entangled with the yoke of bondage, we must abide in the doctrine of God, and not of men, and

his doctrine is drawn from his word contained in the Old and New Testament Scriptures—are an infallible rule for faith and practice to every believer personally. How necessary and important, then, that each and every Baptist should, under the divine blessing, have the manhood and moral courage to believe, teach and contend for all that God has revealed, as far as understood, recognize the variety of gifts conferred on the church, discard all educational training or traditional teachings not in accord with revelations, and go on to learn and know more and more of the glorious character and wonderful works of a triune God, cast off the shackles of men under whatever pretext sought to be imposed, take no man's *ipse dixit* for gospel truth, however much he may be esteemed as a teacher, or a person of prominence or notoriety in our ranks; for herein is our great danger of being entangled with the yoke of bondage. Brethren, let us live in the exercise of the God-given rights of conscience and liberty or freedom of will, as directed by his word and spirit in all our religious concerns; exercise Christian forbearance toward brethren who may honestly differ with us, and never say to such brethren, "your teaching is hurtful," unless it clashes with the oracles of God. In conclusion, my brethren, if we are embraced with those given Christ in covenant relation, of whom it is said he will raise it up at the last day, we may have strong consolation in believing that when the trials and conflicts of life are over, and our cup of suffering full, that God, the Holy Ghost, will shine away all our doubts and fears, and we receive the full end of our faith, even the complete salvation of our souls, and enter into the joys of our common Lord, bask in his smiles forever and ever. Till then may we all realize the sweetness of his love, rise to a greater conformity to his image, enjoy closer communion with him, and experience an increasing sense of his never-failing faithfulness.

Your much obliged and affectionate brother in gospel bonds.

JAMES WAGNER.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, Wm. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

INTRODUCTORY TO NINTH VOLUME.

As the year 1887 begins to dawn upon us, we are reminded that a few words as Introductory to Ninth Volume of the GOSPEL MESSENGER will be expected by its numerous friends and readers. And in the first place, suffer us to express our fervant desire and prayer that grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, may abound to all the household of faith everywhere. In dropping a few words as Introductory to the coming volume of the MESSENGER, it might seem needless to remind the reader that much of the future developments of the comig year is to us all unknown; and were it not that the "pure mind" even of the Christian needs to be "stirred up by way of remembrance" of things which he already knows, we might be saved from even calling attention to this undeniable truth. It is not for us to know the times and the seasons which our Heavenly Father hath put in his own power to bring to pass. It is true that there are some things, even in the future, that we may look for and expect to take place with unalterable certainty, but the times and seasons of joy or of sorrow, of temptations, losses, crosses, pestilence, disease aad death are all wisely hid from us. But though hid from us, they are not hid from Him who has "declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose" of our God, whether it pertains to life or death, things present or things future; all are alike to him, and all are in his hands. His work is before him, and "his eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

(3)

To poor, short-sighted, weak-minded and finite mortals, such as we are, many things come upon us unawares, by accident, or by chance as we call it; and it really is so to us, because it is something we could not possibly foresee or foreknow—something befalling us in a way, a time or manner not thought of or expected, and we thereby learn the truth of God's word that the "Race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill, but time and *chance happeneth* to them all."—Ecc., ix., 11. But dear Christians, nothing can ever befall you by chance or unawares to our God. In his government, whether of the wicked world or of the godly in Christ Jesus, nothing comes by chance or accident. Nothing has ever come in the past, nor will ever come in the future, but what has been foreseen, foreknown and fully provided for in the eternal counsel and purposes of "Him in whose hand is our life, our breath and all our ways."—Dan., v., 23. "In Him we live and move and have our being."—Acts xvii., 28. He hath set the bounds of our habitation here in the world, and our days are determined by his wise counsel and unalterable purpose, with such exact certainty as to be written in the Scriptures that "The number of his months is with thee," and as an "hireling man shall accomplish his day."—Job xiv., 5.

Should it be the good pleasure of God for us to send forth the ninth volume of the MESSENGER to subscribers, we promise them with regard to our editorial work, to spare no pains, so far as ability is given us of the Lord, to make it useful, edifying and instructive to all Christian people who may read it or hear it read. And we doubt not but we shall be favored with instructive and comforting letters on various subjects from brethren, sisters and friends from almost every part of the United States and Canada. The Eighth Volume of the MES-

SENGER, which closed December, 1886, contains 632 pages of good reading matter, besides the 48 pages of the cover; also, 194 letters, written by 163 different correspondents, besides 134 obituary notices and 62 editorials. Many other useful articles, obituaries and biographical sketches have been received of equal merit with any of those which have been published, but as only so much and no more can be published in each number, some, of necessity, have to remain over for a long time before space is found for them. And in spite of the best efforts to the contrary, a few good articles will get mislaid and perhaps never be published at all. We hope, therefore, that our dear brethren, sisters and friends who have so kindly assisted in the past to extend the circulation and usefulness of the MESSENGER, will still give it their aid and influence, and that all will bear with our short-comings and pray for us, that the service in which we are engaged may be blessed of the Lord, and acceptable to his people.

It is now nearly six years since we first became editorially connected with the MESSENGER. It was then a Magazine of only 32 pages, which was all that was promised or expected at the price. One dollar a year in advance was the terms, and yet it remains the same, though the number of pages have nearly doubled, and the expenses every way have vastly increased. It is true there has been a large increase in the circulation and remittances for the past five years, but the money thus received has been mostly absorbed by increasing the number of pages of reading, without increasing the price of subscription. Subscribers and readers, therefore, have had the full benefit of an increased amount of reading matter, without any corresponding pecuniary remuneration to Elder Respass, the senior editor and proprietor. But if all to whom the MESSENGER is regularly sent would kindly comply with the published terms, all would be well in this respect. We hope to be

favoured with brief articles by our brethren and sisters of various localities on the doctrine and order of the gospel, the experience, joys, sorrows or comforts of Christians, or any matter of general interest respecting individuals, churches or Associations. Finally, brethren, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, *always* abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."—1 Cor., xv., 58.—M.

ESTHER.—SECOND CHAPTER.

ESTHER'S FEAST.

And the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces and gave gifts according to the state of the king.

Esther's feast was a Jewish, or spiritual feast, and was, therefore, different from Vashti's, which was fleshly. Vashti's was provided by herself to her own honor and the dishonor of the king. Esther's was provided by the king, glorified him and gave release or rest to the provinces of his empire. Vashti could not have feasted with Esther, nor could Esther have feasted with Vashti, any more than the self-righteous pharisee praying in the temple could have rejoiced with the penitent publican. The penitent woman who so humbly and affectionately washed Jesus' feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed them, had a feast that angered and disgusted the hard-hearted pharisee who beheld her. Some of the same sort of Jews in prophetic days made feasts of swine's flesh—unclean meat or false doctrine. Feasting upon that sort of meat increases self-righteousness, so that they said then as now, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou."—Isa., lxv., 5. Even the mere letter of the truth, if feasted upon without the spirit, is a fleshly feast, and increases self-importance and hardens the heart. If one rejoices in the doctrine

of grace because he thinks it licenses him to the least sin, it is a feast to the flesh, and will harden the heart and blind the eyes. It will tend to substitute the letter for the spirit, and gender a worship that is mere formalism or ritualism; it will tithe mint, anise and cummin and kill out love, mercy and judgment. It will boast of its strict conformity to the letter, and glory in that instead of God, and be a feast in honor of the flesh instead of Christ. Love will die out. In Esther's feast there was a release or rest to the provinces of the king's empire. The poor and oppressed rested from their burdens. So Jesus taught in person, saying, Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest. The Jews were the poor in the king's provinces as penitent sinners are the poor now. They had been rich, but it was when they were in a very different condition or country than then. But they had been led away as captives from their olive yards and vineyards to find the rest or release they could not find in their own land, surrounded by their own wealth. They never dreamed of finding it in that way, or that they were giving up all for it when they were led weeping as captives to a strange land. Nor did we, when we were allured and brought into the wilderness—the place of destitution and poverty—to receive all we sought in the valley of Acher (sorrow). To the poor, burdened Jews, it was a feast, a day of joy and rest. To the poor naturally, it was probably a day of natural release, but to the Jews it had a twofold significance. Our worldly trials are closely allied with our spiritual trials; because it is natural for us to think that worldly adversity is a sign that God does not care for us, and thus we are doubly burdened. Some months ago, as vile as we are, we were burdened in this way for a length of time. We grew very miserable, until one morning before day on our bed, we had been wondering what would become of us and our children

if things went on as they had been going on for the last few years. We were frail in body, getting old, and our property, which was once valuable, like the property generally in the South was daily depreciating; that we had never been trained to any pursuit or profession to make a living, and were now too old and feeble to learn one. So we were tossed in a tempest in the midst of the sea. We felt at times ready to murmur and say our lot was hard; and then to say, we cannot be a Christian else it would not be thus with us; or if thus, we would take it joyfully; and though we had been devoted, at least outwardly, to the church and the cause of Christ, yet we were coming to nothing even there; for our love seemed to have died, though our diligence was ever so much; we were hard hearted and distrustful, and filled with evil surmisings; that we loved none and no one loved us; and that everything we put our hand to withered at our touch; that our mind was doubly burdened; that we were sawn asunder with conflicting desires and given up to vain and filthy thoughts until our misery was great upon us. And what will become of us in the future? for we have done our best, and have grown worse and failed, and what will the end be? It suddenly occurred to us, what does Christ say about it? and do we believe in him at all? And we were, after a pause, ready to say, yes, we believe in him, and if so, believe his word; and he teaches us that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof; to-morrow will provide for the things of to-morrow. Is that true? And if so, why do you trouble yourself about to-morrow? seeing that by taking such thoughts you can't alter it; and we had rest; we were released from the burden and had a feast for several days. Thus we looked up. We dread death, and it is a monster, but the dread will be made less by fiery trials; as the things of the world are less loved by us, so the loss of them will be less cared for; and as they grow less to us, so the things of God

will grow greater to us, and thus our spiritual desires will swallow up, in a great measure, our worldly cares. As little by little we learn that our treasure is not here, but in that country to which we are journeying, so we will more and more look up and lay up treasures there; for our heart will be there; and as our heart is there, so much is it dead to the world; and as it is deadened (mortified) to the world, so we rest from our burdens. And if Christ is made our ALL—and he must be all or nothing—we have all things in Him, though we have little or nothing in the world but afflictions, trials and sorrows, yet in them we have Christ and can sometimes rejoice in tribulations. Then we have rest, even in the midst of the furnace. It is a Sabbath day, a rest to our souls. But if our hearts are filled with surfeiting and banqueting, with love of the world, and pride and vanity, with much store laid up for many days, then the summons to death will be to death indeed; but to him who is poor and needy, tried, tempted and weary, a captive wandering to and fro, and desolate, the summons will be, we hope, one to lay down the burden of sin, and to eternal rest. There will be nothing to leave but sin and sorrow. When God gives us such thoughts, he gives us a feast; but we cannot provide it ourselves. They feast him who has nothing but his hope ahead; but to him who has his good things, who has built new barns in which to store his goodness and riches, it is anything but a feast. Thus the poor feast upon what is laid up in and by Christ; upon the doctrine of grace, whilst the rich are sent empty away. That which feasts the poor, famishes the rich; that which the poor love, the rich hate. Thus the prodigal son feasted whilst the self-righteous home son raged; the hungry penitent had a joy that the self-righteous and thrifty home son despised. And thus it ever is.

Christ teaches us how to make a feast. And he, of course, teaches us the way he did. He says when you

make a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen nor thy rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. He came to save his enemies. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, for they cannot recompense thee. No works in that feast; no meeting on the half-way ground; no pay for what they eat, nor expectation to pay. Then he said unto them, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many, saying, come, for all things are ready; and they all, with one consent, made excuse. They were all well-to-do people—they had property. One had bought a piece of ground, and that kept him away; another five yoke of oxen, and that him, and another was well off enough to marry, and that kept him. They were not poor enough for the feast. How is that teaching with the doctrine now taught the world? The fact is that those who feast upon Christ must be poor and helpless; and that none would ever be of his own natural will. Many things we might say here, but space forbids. That was the pharisees. Then the servant was sent out into the lanes and streets, where the poor and the outcast live, and carried in the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind of the Jews, we suppose, and yet there was room. But the house must be filled; and the servant was sent out into the highways and hedges to compel them to come. There is where we were found, if we have ever been brought in. It was by compulsion. Now this was a poor, helpless set at that feast. Not one man there who could have got there himself, and not one able to pay a cent for what he got. If these well-to-do people had have gone, it would have been, in their own esteem, a great condescension, and the feast would have been to their own great goodness and humility in eating with such a crowd of poor, despised beings. Christ teaches us that such men will not go—that they cannot; that only such go to Him as have nothing;

neither righteousness, wisdom or ability. To such as these the gospel is made a feast by the grace of God. The lame take the prey.—R.

THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION.

Jesus said to Martha, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live." Martha was a firm believer in the doctrine of the resurrection, and declared her confidence that her brother Lazarus, should rise again at the last day; but had not thought of being so early an eye-witness of the power of God to raise the dead. Jesus also said, "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die; believest thou this?" Martha answered according to the strength of her faith, and the weakness of her understanding, saying, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Son of God that should come into the world." We gather from these scriptures the comforting assurance that all believers in Christ receive the gift of eternal life through him; and that, although they are subjects of corporeal death and mortal corruption, their life in Christ is not thereby affected. Paul 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." Blessed assurance! Our only hope of final deliverance from the corruption of death is in the power of the resurrection; and we believe that the same which dies will rise again, as in the case of Lazarus. It was to this end that the apostle's faith and hope aspired, to this end he desired above all things to attain. See Philippians.

Jesus told his disciples plainly that Lazarus was dead, and said, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the end that ye might believe." That event afforded opportunity for him to show to them his power to raise the dead, and even one who had been dead four

days; and this was a choice occasion to make them eye-witnesses for the sake of all believers throughout subsequent ages. Now if we believe that Jesus did raise up the dead body of Lazarus after four days, and present it in original health and physical soundness, we can and do also believe that he has power to raise us up also, no matter how long we may lie mouldering in dust. If he be co-equal with the Father, and if all things were made by him, all of which is accepted, why should it appear "incredible that he should raise the dead?" There is no power greater than creative power, and he who did create us can control what he has created.—H.

ELDER J. H. PURIFOY.

Our dear Brother Purifoy seems called of God to do the work, for a while at least, of an Evangelist. He is a very gifted brother, of an irreproachable life and worthy the love of the brotherhood everywhere. He writes us, "When I see and receive appeals from brethren in destitute places for help like the Macedonian cry, I am stirred up with the strongest desire to go to them. But alas! I cannot, being unable at times to go at my own charges; and who will help some one to go to them? Voluntary contributions from brethren and churches enabled the apostles, especially Paul, to go to destitute regions; and why does not the same spirit prevail now as it did then? Has the spirit of modern Missionism, spreading Armenian principles based upon a humanized gospel, driven the people of God out of their duty? I still feel that I must give up all to go everywhere there is an open door to preach the gospel that Paul preached, depending upon the Lord alone to sustain me, and leave it with him to open the hearts of his people to aid me in going into destitute regions, if his will." We are satisfied that Elder Purifoy is not

actuated by any worldly motive in this work, for he has given up a lucrative medical practice to the work he feels the Lord has called him to. And his labors are greatly blessed where he goes. We never saw a more wonderful stirring up of our church at Butler than when he was with us. In his travels he will act as agent for the GOSPEL MESSENGER. Now we trust that no brother will have an evil surmise about this as if we were hiring Elder Purifoy to work for the MESSENGER. We are not—we pay him nothing. With him it is a labor of love to introduce and aid the circulation of the MESSENGER, as he does in preaching the gospel. We have assisted him a little, as we have many other ministers with pecuniary aid, in enabling them to go and feed the hungry and clothe the naked. It is our privilege to do it, and we wish we were able to do more of it than we do. It is true that we are not now as able as we used to be, but what we have given, we hold as a treasure laid up in heaven that thieves can't get. We have lost much, but that is safe, thank God. Christians have to give of their poverty.—R.

REFRESHING SEASONS.

The church at Union, Bullock county, Ala., has been greatly revived. On the fifth Sunday in August last, eight members were added to that church by baptism, and on the first Sunday in September five others were baptized. The church at that place had been for many months in a lukewarm condition, and had, perhaps, begun to feel cold, when it pleased the Lord to visit them with the power of his grace, and make known the riches of his love and mercy bestowed on those thirteen souls, which gracious work had been going on all along during that season of gloom. Truly that church may say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."—Ps. cxxvi. There has been also an

unusually large ingathering at Old Union, Crenshaw county, Ala., during the current year; and several other churches in the bounds of Conecuh River and Clay Bank Associations have been more or less refreshed and built up. We hail these tokens as the beginning of better days for Zion.—H.

Correspondents should not suppose that because their letters are not at once published that there is objection to them. Not so; but many are overlooked, and need much correction, which we only have leisure once in a while to do. Besides, we try to have somewhat of a variety in the MESSENGER, and articles of less ability are frequently published, when much abler ones are passed by. Again, many letters are good, but of no general interest; some good, but not instructive, and some sound, but so written that they would be misunderstood. We can't afford to have strife in the MESSENGER about words and things that none clearly understand. Good brethren do not see all things alike, but enough is seen alike for them to love one another and walk together. May God bless all his poor children, for they are too poor and afflicted to hurt each other about matters not understood.—R.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

ALBANY, Mo., Sept. 26, 1886.—*Elder J. R. Respass, Dear Brother in the Lord:*—I have felt that “seasons of refreshing grace from the presence of the Lord,” serve much to revive our drooping spirits, and inspire the poor saints to hope (sometimes) against hope. To remember the way the Lord has led us is good, and often fresh courage imparted by seeing face to face, as when Paul met the brethren, (Acts, xxviii., 15). Those that are “partakers of like precious faith” with “all saints,” rejoice and thank God for the association of their kindred in Christ, and especially when the Lord's presence is wonderfully felt, and his power displayed, and the image of Jesus is

seen to illuminate the countenance of the saints. I have been led to thus speak experimentally. Our (Siloam) Associational meeting, held the 4th, 5th and 6th of this month, was to many a "feast of fat things." Elders I. Guyman, R. A. Oliphant and J. M. Ward preached on Sunday to a large and attentive congregation, and on Monday Elder Oliphant preached and held the people spell-bound, after which there was almost a universal desire among the brethren that Elder Guyman should preach, as many felt that perhaps it would be the last time the Lord would permit him to be with us, owing to his age and many infirmities. The power of his closing exhortation I shall never forget. "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." O, that we could praise the Lord for his love and mercies, for they endure forever. Truly the Lord our God is our only refuge, and underneath are his everlasting arms. To the believer, Jesus is precious, and he who is our high priest endears himself to those for whom he intercedes, by unfolding to them the riches of his grace, and confirming unto them his great and precious promises. In closing, I desire to speak of the precious communications and editorials of the last number of the GOSPEL MESSENGER. Elder Chick's biography, which I have long desired to read, was very instructive. I hope he will continue to write. In his face I thought I saw the image of Jesus. Elder Rittenhouse's article, as usual, was very instructive. We greatly desire to read those "two or three" letters he has in mind; and here let me express to you, dear Brother Respass, a desire that Elder Rittenhouse be engaged to write for the MESSENGER a series of articles on "Home Training" and duties of parents and children, etc. Brother Henderson wields the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and proves all things, and holds fast to that that is good. Dear Elder Mitchell continues to write in that mild, lovely manner characteristic of him. May the Lord raise him up and spare him to the cause of Truth many years yet, that he may "caution the brethren against error," and thus be a "leaven" working that of the good. "Esther" increaseth in interest, and we hope to see the work in pamphlet form and believe it will be read with good results by our children. Truly what hath God

wrought in ordaining his glorious praise in Zion out of the mouths of babes.

In hope of the gospel, your poor brother,
ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

BETHPAGE, TENN., Nov. 11, 1886.—*Editors Messenger & Pathway*:—I have attended three Associations this year, Red River, Round Lick and Stone's River, (our own,) all of which were well attended. The preaching, as a whole, was a unit in doctrine,—salvation by GRACE and GRACE ALONE, *through* our LORD JESUS CHRIST. The business of each was harmonious in every particular. But little net ingathering in any of the three. Some of the churches, however, report quite an increase. At the last regular meeting at Friendship, Sumner county, Stone's River Association, two willing subjects received the ordinance of baptism. One of them from the Missionaries. At the last regular meeting at Sulphur Springs, Ky., six were added by experience and baptism, up till Thursday after the 4th in October, and they still continued from Saturday before. At this meeting Elder John M. Perkins, of Mayfield, Ky., and Elder T. C. Herndon, of Ferguson, Ky., were in attendance. Elder Perkins is one of the ablest ministers of the New Testament. Elder J. W. Bragg, of Alabama, has been on a tour among us recently and did some able preaching, also Elder W. D. Agee, of Smith county, Tennessee, preached at our church last meeting. Elder John Croy and wife, of Muskingum Association, Ohio, have recently located for the year at Fountain Head, Tenn. Brother and sister Croy attended our last meeting at East Station Camp, when Brother Croy preached to the comfort and edification of God's dear children. Strange, but true, that God's ministers, from whatever land, bring the same story of the cross; to some a stumbling block, to others foolishness, *but* to a FEW (those who are called of God) Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. And such we hope we are.

Your brother in hope, J. W. REDDICK.

STATE ROAD, DEL., Oct. 25th, 1886.—*Dear Brother Respass*:—The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association has just closed an annual session, and I propose to

send you a brief report. This Association is at this time composed of eleven churches, all of them located in the peninsula between the Chesapeake Bay and the ocean. It dates back nearly to the first settlement of the country, and has been blessed almost uniformly with a sound ministry. Not only does harmony and prosperity abound now, but there has never been division nor any serious discord. The session commenced October 20th, and continued three days. All the churches were represented by both letters and messengers. But one ordained preacher resides at this time within their bounds. He is serving at six different places, and travels and preaches nearly all the time. Three preachers from neighboring Associations serve a portion of the churches, while others make them an occasional visit, traveling from church to church, preaching every day. At most of them a good congregation will come out to a preaching appointment at any time. But five preachers were in attendance this session, but from them they managed to have ten discourses. The preachers of this section of the country are not fond of strife and debate, but seem to be satisfied with the gospel of Christ in its original simplicity. One would naturally remark, "How these people love one another and enjoy their meetings." They are evidently bound together and endeared one to another in a common experience. There has been one church of twenty members, which was recently organized, received during this session. Within a few years two churches have been organized, and three substantial houses of worship erected in new places. The attendance throughout was large, and very solemn; manifesting much interest. It was a part of the time far beyond the seating capacity of the house. Each of the several churches sends in a freewill offering, to relieve the one where the Association is entertained, of the additional burden of making up for traveling expenses. This is responded to by all of them with commendable liberality and cheerfulness. The annual session is held with each of the several churches in regular rotation. Each church awaits its turn with anxious impatience, anticipating a season of joy and comfort, wherein they may feel to say, "It is good for us to be here." "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

E. RITTENHOUSE.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.—After preaching by Elder S. T. Bently, met in council the following persons, viz: T. J. Head, R. Freeman, E. Futrell, Deacon and Sallie R. Head, with Elders W. C. Cleaveland, S. F. Bently and Deacons G. B. Mathews, James Hammock, of Mt. Carmel Church, Crawford county, and James McFarland, of Bethlehem Church, Upson county, Ga., as Presbytery. Appointed Elder W. C. Cleaveland Moderator pro tem., and T. J. Head, Mouth for the Council. Proceeded to examine the persons wishing to constitute into a church. They being found regularly dismissed, orthodox and orderly, were duly constituted into a church by the name of Mt. Pleasant. Prayer by Elder W. C. Cleaveland, and the charge by Elder S. T. Bently, after which the church went into Conference by appointing T. J. Head Moderator, and Brother Joe Holms Clerk. On motion, the church went into the choice of a preacher, and made choice of Brother T. J. Head, and called on the Elders present, together with the Deacons, to act as presbytery in the ordination of Brother T. J. Head. The presbytery was formed by choosing Eld. S. T. Bently Moderator, and Joe Holms Clerk. After examining into the call and qualifications of T. J. Head, who being found gifted, and orthodox and orderly, was duly set apart to the functions of the gospel ministry by the laying on of hands and prayer by Elder S. T. Bently; charge by Elder W. C. Cleaveland.

S. T. BENTLY, *Moderator.*

JOE HOLMS, *Clerk.*

ORDINATION.—Union Church, Mitchell county, Ga., met in Conference 20th November, 1886, Elder William Hollingsworth Moderator, and took up the reference of ordaining W. H. Godwin to the gospel ministry. Elders Wm. Hollingsworth, John Rowe and Peter T. Everitt being present. Examination of the church and Brother Godwin, by Elder Rowe, and full satisfaction given; then prayer by Elder Hollingsworth after laying on of hands; charge by the writer, Conference closed, benediction by Brother Godwin.

Whigham, Ga.

PETER T. EVERITT, *Moderator.*

WOODSONVILLE, KY., Nov. 30th, 1886.—*Brother Res-
 pect*:—Sister Phillips' letter to Brother Landers, on John
 10th chapter, is more than worth the money, to say
 nothing of your excellent and timely editorial upon the
 subject of church membership. If these words, John
 x, 8, of our Lord, allude to the walk of the children of
 God, then the Scriptures are a puzzle and a contradic-
 tion, so far as I understand them. If the regenerated
 child of God will not follow strangers, but only Jesus,
 how happens that they are found in Babylon? Our Christ
 is not a Babylonian, therefore, Sister Phillips' view
 must be true: All that ever came before me are thieves
 and robbers. There are but two generations; one the
 generation of God, the other the generation of God's
 wrath. These are hard sayings, and the unlearned and
 unstable wrest these Scriptures to their own destruction;
 but our Lord is very plain, (26, 27th verses,) "But ye
 believe not, because ye are not of my sheep," &c. The
 Father never gave them to him, but Jesus chose them
 as he chose Judas, for a purpose, and as Judas fulfilled
 the purpose he was chosen for, so will these. All the
 prophets speak of this day; and of them Jude says
 they despise government and speak evil of dignities.
 And where will we find dignitaries of God, unless it be
 Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Lott? Jude also says they
 have gone in the way of Cain; ran greedily after the
 error of Balaam and perished in the gainsaying of Core
 or Corah. This is a plain description; who can misun-
 derstand it? Peter, speaking of the enemy of God,
 says: Many false prophets are among the people, even
 so false teachers shall be among you, who shall privily
 bring in damnable heresies, &c., and many shall follow
 their pernicious ways and through covetousness shall
 they with feigned words make merchandise of you, &c.
 If any one has eyes to see he surely can see. Paul,
 speaking of this spirit in the last day, styling it the Man
 of Sin, the mystery of iniquity; even began to work in
 his day, as coming with all power and signs, and lying
 wonders; not all power in heaven and earth, but all
 power to accomplish all that God purposed to be done,
 as in case of Judas. Their prototype, Nimrod, built
 the tower of Babel of his own accord and in his own
 way; he was a mighty hunter, before the Lord, not

after, and so are all this class mighty hunters of souls fast, and spit upon the idea of waiting upon God, and thus build mystery Babylon. A. L. WOODSON.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., Sept. 20, 1886.—*Dear Brother Mitchell*:—Having received the October MESSENGER, I was pained to see that you had got so badly hurt. I have been daily thinking of you ever since, and somehow I feel disposed to drop you a few lines, though I do not feel that I can say anything to comfort you. I trust you have the Great Comforter near you, and the blessed power of God's grace to cheer and strengthen you in this hour of new trial. His footsteps are in the great deep, and his ways past finding out, yet all are in great wisdom for the good of his children and for the glory of his holy name. You, my dear brother, have passed through many and sore afflictions and fiery trials of faith, but the God of all grace, whom you serve, has been with you in them all, to comfort and sustain you, and will sustain you to the end. Your conflicts, trials, and afflictions will all soon be over and your rest will then be most glorious. The blessed hope of the child of God is beyond all thought or power of language to express. It centers in Jesus, the glorious Redeemer of sinners. I do feel assured, my dear afflicted brother, that you are one of God's faithful servants, and therefore you are called to suffer tribulation and experience the refining of the furnace so that when our God has tried you, that you may come forth as gold. I remember your precious letters that came to my home many long years ago; they were indeed, to me, messages of peace and love in the Lord. And O, how many changes and trials there have been with me since that day. But I yet live to record the mercy and goodness of the Lord, and still have affliction's needful rod. Can it be possible that I am, indeed, a child of grace? If truly I am, then surely I am less than the least of all. I can but hope in Jesus, he is the Saviour just fitted in every way to my needy case. O for a heart to love and praise Him. I am glad to inform you that the Lord has been pleased in his good providence to send us Elder Sylvester Hassell, to live here among us, so that he can now more fully care for and serve the church here as pastor.

I have long hoped for and greatly desired it, if it was the Lord's will. It has now been brought about, and I trust the good will and purpose of God is in it. It is a great blessing from the Lord to have such a man in our community. He is my step son, and a good man—a son indeed. His labors and toils in getting out the History of the Baptists have been very great, and I do hope, after it is done, he will not then be so heavily taxed day and night. He has great energy and no idle time. Our churches here seem to be in a low and cold condition, but we long to see a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. You will see, my brother, that my eye-sight is not good. One of my eyes is so that I cannot see to read or write at all. I have taxed them too much. You also must have suffered greatly with your eyes. I trust the good Lord will restore you that your labors may be continued to feed the flock of God. You will please excuse my writing this scrawl of a letter. As I cannot step in and see you, I greet you and your family with this token of remembrance. I thank you and Elder Respass for so kindly sending me the MESSENGER. May your labors be abundantly blessed of the Lord. My kindest regards to your dear family. In the fellowship of the gospel your sister in afflictions.

M. M. HASSELL.

Our aged "sister in afflictions" has our thanks for the above timely and comforting letter. It come to us in time of need as a word in due season.—M.

OBITUARIES.

WM. H. PRATHER.

My father, WM. H. PRATHER, was born February 1, 1830, in Wilkes county, Ga., and fell composedly asleep in Jesus at his son's (E. C. Prather's) in Hogansville, Ga., October 13, 1886, age fifty-six years, eight months and twelve days. It was the pleasure of our Heavenly Father to "call him by His grace, and reveal His Son in him," in the year 1848. His own testimony is, that on the day of his deliverance, as he was going to church, that he become so deeply troubled about his soul's salvation that he thought he would die, and turned aside into an old field to die; and fell on the ground, begging the Lord to have mercy on him, a poor, lost sinner. The next moment he was on his feet praising God for His pardoning love. From the day of his deliverance he became a devoted member of the Missionary Baptist Church, and lived and died without a

blot on his moral or religious character. My father was a great sufferer of gastralgia of the chest for two or three months prior to his demise, but bore his illness with great Christian fortitude and patience. At one time he alluded to the afflictions of Job as being very strengthening to his faith. The Psalms of David were sanctified with power to his soul, especially the xxiii Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," etc. After having quoted the above precious words to my dear mother, he said, "It is all right," expressing great reconciliation to the providence of God in his afflictions, being fully persuaded that the Lord would, ere long, give him sweet deliverance from all his suffering, and also take care of mother. At another time he was much exercised spiritually, when he quoted the following beautiful lines :

"What tho' clouds are hovering o'er me,
And I seem to walk alone,
Longing, 'mid my cares and crosses
For the joys that now are flown.

"If I've Jesus, Jesus only,
Then my skies will have a gem;
He's a sun of brightest splendor,
And the Star of Bethlehem."

On Saturday, before he died Wednesday, his longing soul craved REST. He said to my mother: "REST, sweet REST." He desired to depart and be with Jesus. On Monday he was still graciously exercised—desired to express his feelings, but was too feeble to be understood. He was a good father.

REES PRATHER.

Meriwether, Ga., Nov. 25, 1886.

JAMES R. WOODALL.

JAMES R. WOODALL departed this life 9th March, 1886, aged fifty-one years and five months. He had been a member of the Baptist Church about twenty-three years. He joined Union Church, Jackson county, Ala., where he lived an orderly life up to his death. He was the Clerk of his church and one of the deacons. He was the father of five children, three daughters and two sons, all grown and have families, except one little boy eleven years old. His disease was Bright's disease of the kidneys, which he had for three years, but had kept up and able to travel about some until four weeks before his death. His health had got so bad he had left his home and gone to the mountains, to see if it would benefit him any, but as it was God's purpose, it was too late for his recovery. He and his poor old companion, and little boy, moved to the mountains, and had been there just six weeks when his disease came on so fatal that on Wednesday morning he sent for his family physician and children. We all went and our families, and stayed with him until Sunday. When the weather would admit, he was carried home on a frame, by hand. The doctor, the family and forty men accompanied him home, where he lived two weeks. His sufferings were so great that his lamentations could be heard a great way. His sickness and sufferings were a mystery to every one who saw him.

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

His brethren and friends were very attentive to him while in his sufferings, and we do mourn his absence. But we know that

“When he’s been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
He’ll have no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when he first began.”

He was ever ready to assist in anything that was needful at home and abroad. Written by his oldest daughter, MARTHA BULMAN.
Woodville, Ala.

NANNIE GLOVER.

Little NANNIE, a daughter of John J. Glover, deceased, and Sarah M. Glover, was born 20th of September, 1832, and died the 16th of October, 1886, aged four years and twenty-six days. She was taken on the 15th inst. with a serious form of diphtheria, and after several hours of intense suffering, fell into the quiet sleep of death about 9 o’clock A. M., on the 16th, and her little spirit was taken home to Jesus who gave it; for Christ said: “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” To see little Nannie was to love her, for she was truly a bright child, so sweet in her little ways. So has passed from this world of trouble one of the most lovely little girls the writer has ever seen, and we believe her spirit is to-day resting with that of her father, in that Celestial city far above. In giving this brief notice we would say to the bereaved mother, your loss is her eternal gain. It has pleased him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, to separate you for a little while; therefore be resigned to the will of your Heavenly Father, for he will enable you, by his supporting grace, to pass through all the troubles and trials that may await you in this life. He has promised to be with his children in their troubles and trials, and he is not slack concerning his promises. Finally, when time is no more with you, may you meet with those who have gone before

Cornucopia, Ga., 24th Oct., '86.

J. A. ADAMS.

MRS. SARAH GIBSON.

Sister SARAH GIBSON, daughter of James and Mary Ann Wagner, was born 20th August, 1803, and was married to Wm. Gibson 25th August, 1820. She was baptized into the fellowship of Emeaus Church, Troup county, Ga., in 1833, by Elder Bankston. She was a patient sufferer for nearly two years, and was first stricken with paralysis, though not so as to be entirely helpless until about eight months before her death, when she became helpless, but bore her afflictions with unbounded patience—never complaining, or so much as a groan escaping her lips. It was my privilege to visit often during her illness. I can say truly she was a mother in Israel, and was beloved by all who knew her, and was always rejoicing in hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave, and ever trusting in our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, what a comfort to her dear, aged companion and to her dear children and grand children, of whom there are some identified with her in fellowship of Emeaus Church, at Gordon, La. Her eldest son, James, is Deacon of said church, and two sons and their wives

members of the same church. Let us here say to the dear relatives: Rejoice and mourn not, for the dear mother has gone from the evil to come, and we believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Only let us all try to live as she lived, free from stain. Let us look back at her order, and try to imitate the example she always set. And may the Lord grant us all so to live that when we come to die we can all meet the trying hour as she did—that we may fall asleep in Jesus. “Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea, saith the spirit, for they shall rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.”

“O stay thy tears, for they are blest
Whose days are past, whose toil is done;
Here midnight cares disturb our rest,
Here sorrow dims the noonday sun.”

Gordon, La.

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

REID LASSETER,

Infant son of George P. and Dora Hurst, of Meriwether county, Ga., died after a painful illness of two days, from congestion of the brain, on Aug. 31, 1886, aged one month and twenty-four days. How short the time allotted here! Dust to dust is the irrevocable decree gone forth, but we rejoice in the pleasing *hope* that we can go to it, while it cannot come to us, and we also rejoice in that plan of salvation that can reach our infants as also the adult. Jesus says: “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” May the Lord sanctify this sad bereavment to the good of the sorrowing parents who have our prayers and sympathies.

JOHN N. HURST.

October, 1886.

E. H. HALE,

Son of Joseph and Dorathy Hale, was born in Chatham county, N. C., May 28, 1801. His parents died when he was very young, leaving him in the care of an uncle, — Farington. He came to Franklin county, Tenn., sometime between 1820 and '26, and was married to Mary E. Miller, of Rutherford county, the 20th of December, 1827, with whom he lived happily for nearly fifty years. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Union, in 1836, where he lived a consistent and beloved member till Jesus took him home, which was the 21st of October, 1877. He was Deacon of the church for a number of years. His funeral was preached by Elder Frank E. Lacy, at the old homestead. Then his body was laid in the grave to await the resurrection morn, when the trump of God shall sound, and he will come forth a spiritual body. He was confined to his bed with epilepsy for thirty-two days, but bore his suffering with great patience. Father raised eleven children to be grown, and all but one are living yet, and five of them are members of the Primitive Baptist Church. We need not try to tell of his good qualities, for those that knew him can testify to his worth as a citizen. He was an affectionate husband, indulgent father and good neighbor. I never saw more respect paid any one in sickness, which shows how he stood in the church and community.

He is gone, but I have never wished him back in this world of trouble,

but hope to meet him in that world of eternal bliss, to praise my dear Saviour through all eternity. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

If any of our relatives should see this, we would be pleased to hear from you. Grandmother Hale's maiden name was Herndon.

Fosterville, Rutherford county, Tenn.

SUE F. HALE.

MARY E. HALE

Was born March 13, 1810, and died March 25, 1885. She joined the church the same time papa did, and was always in her seat at conference (unless providentially hindered) as long as papa could go; but after his death she seemed to care but little about going, but was glad to have the brethren and sisters visit her, and did all she could to make them feel at home. She was taken sick with malaria and dysentery 12th of January, 1885, and suffered till the 4th of March, when blood poison set in, which resulted in death in twenty-one days. She had no fears of death, saying all she regretted was leaving her children, especially those at home with her. She had everything done for her that her children, neighbors, and two physicians could do. Her work on earth was done, and God had called her home. We sent for Elder B. A. McLane and had her funeral preached before she was buried. No one but the children know what it is to lose a mother; but we sorrow not as those that have no hope, for we believe that our loss is her eternal gain. She has gained that rest that she has so long sought; is done with the cares and sufferings of this world and gone to live in that house not made with hands, eternal and in the heaven. God grant that we may so live that when we are called home, we can say, as mother did, I have nothing to live for; I am ready to go and live with Jesus. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.

SUE F. HALE.

ELIZABETH MORGAN,

The tenth and youngest child of Daniel and Carolina Morgan, was born April 20, 1866, in Anderson county, Texas, and died August 23, 1886, in Bosque county, Texas. Her disease was hemorrhage of the lungs, or consumption. In the year 1880 she united with the M. E. Church, and adorned her profession of religion by a Godly walk and conversation. In all her great suffering she never murmured, nor seemed to think it hard or wrong that she should suffer. She was well aware of her approaching dissolution, but was not at all alarmed. When, in answer to a question her physician told her she was beyond the reach of remedies, she thanked him for telling her, and said: "I wanted to know." At 4 o'clock P. M., on the day above mentioned, she fell asleep in Jesus. On the 24th she was conveyed to the family grave yard, with many kind friends attending, and gently laid in the grave to wait the resurrection morn, when, as we hope, God will bid her body arise

And meet Jesus in the skies.

She leaves a father, mother, three brothers and one sister to mourn her death, but not as those without hope. The father, mother and one brother are members of the Primitive Baptist Church.

Sleep, sister sleep,
For thou art gone to rest,
And while we can but weep,
We know that thou art blessed.

Sleep, sister, sleep,
Until the summons given
That shall bid us cease to weep,
And meet thee up in heaven.

J. J. MORGAN,

MRS. CALLIE W. EARLY.

Died at her home, August 30, 1886, near Patterson, Pierce county, Ga., Mrs. CALLIE W. EARLY, consort of J. M. Early. She was born in Wilcox county, Ga., October 4, 1863. Of her parentage I know nothing, except hearsay, but one thing I do know, she was a remarkable woman; kind to all around, and a pleasant companion. She leaves a husband and child, a little boy under two years, and one preceded her to the grave. She made no public profession of religion, but was ready to attend church whenever an opportunity offered. The writer was a constant nurse at her bedside during her sickness, and saw her breathe her last. At times she sang and prayed, and often spoke of being baptized by the Holy Ghost, and finally said she was baptized by the Holy Ghost. A few hours before she died she sang the beautiful lines:

How pleasant the place where the Saviour appears,
To those who believe in his word;
His presence disperses my sorrow and fears,
And makes me rejoice in my Lord.

I say to relatives and friends, don't grieve for Callie, for I believe she is to-day singing praises around the Throne of God and of the Lamb, while her body rests in the Raulerson Cemetery, on Satilla river, to be resurrected and put on a crown of immortality in a better world than this.

A FRIEND.

CARR HART.

The Primitive Baptist Church called Zion's Rest, at Nanafalia, Ala., passed the following resolutions as a memorial of our beloved brother, Carr Hart, who departed this life at his home, near Hoboken, on the 11th day of March, A. D. 1884. Brother Carr Hart was born September 15, 1805, in South Carolina, moved to Alabama in boyhood, married Nancy Maxey, of Virginia, and was the father of thirteen children, of whom four girls and one son are living. Brother Hart was baptized at Mount Carmel, Covington county, Ala., in 1857, by Elder John Knighton.

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

Resolved, That we sorrow not as others without hope, knowing that our dear brother was faithful to Him who called him, and we pray that we may be reconciled to all His dealings with us, knowing that the Judge of the whole earth doeth right.

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

Resolved, That a copy of the foregoing be sent to the GOSPEL MESSENGER for publication.

ED WILLIAMS, *Moderator*.

JOHN M. CHRISTIAN, *Church Clerk*.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

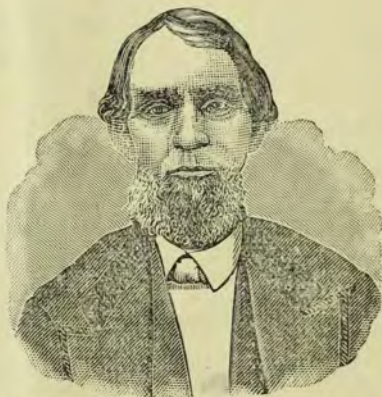
Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 2. BUTLER, GA., FEBRUARY, 1887. Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER JAMES MARTINDALE.

I was born in 1822, and like all of Adam's race, passed my time in vanity and sin. I received a very limited education in the common district schools of Indiana. At times I had some serious reflections about dying, and thought probably I should not live to the age of manhood. But somehow I felt that God was my Saviour. This subject was often on my mind, and then it would pass off for a season. When in my sixteenth year, my youngest brother sickened and died. While he was gasping out his last breath, I was deeply affected, and these words came to my mind:



“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.”

I thought it was then my duty to try to prepare to meet him in heaven; for I thought he had gone to that happy place. I pondered these things in my mind from time to time, but at length these reflections partially

wore off. Some time after this my mother joined the Old Baptists, and my father soon followed her in becoming a member. I generally attended meetings on Sundays, to see and be seen, perhaps, more than to hear preaching. Still the subject of religion occupied my mind a portion of the time. At length I married, and providing for a family engrossed my mind for several years. At times, however, I was much cast down in regard to my future state; but thought that after a while I would reform, and get religion. Afterward my mind became more and more engaged about my soul's eternal welfare, but still I was no better, and again I would try to put the subject off; still, for a great portion of the time it pressed upon me. I thought I was too young, and the subject was better suited to the aged; but, oh, wretched me! I may not live long, and how deplorable my condition! I did not think I could do any good if I were to try, and I felt too vile to think of becoming a Christian; still I thought God was just. One day while hoeing, or re-planting corn in my field, as I was alone and laboring under these impressions, and my mind entirely engaged with the subject of religion, I thought I heard some one call to me, "Oh, James!" I looked around, but could see no one, and wondered what it meant. Can it be Heaven's voice? I felt to rejoice. Is it the voice of the Saviour? Oh, what thoughts to one so vile and polluted as I am! Is it possible Heaven has uttered this voice for poor, unworthy me? My mouth seemed to be filled with praise to God for his loving kindness to a poor sinner. But after a while I began to fear I was deceived, and that it was a delusion of my imagination. But I felt to cry, "O, if I am deceived, Lord undeceive me." Then again I would think myself too bad to become a Christian. But sometimes I do hope the good Lord will bring me to the knowledge of the truth; but it would seem that I must get better first. Thus I passed along for a few years;

instead of getting better, it seemed to me I grew worse and worse; still I was anxiously looking for some great change. I thought if the change came, it would be so sensible that I would know it for a certainty. Brethren, if I may so call you, I have never met with such a change as I was expecting. I was brought to submit the matter to the Lord, with the conviction that surely the God of Heaven would do right; that I am probably so corrupt as to be lost forever, but if so, still God is just; I will trust the whole to him. He has all power in Heaven and on earth, and he will do right. If I am saved, it is by grace alone, for I know there is nothing good in me, and I just feel willing to abide the will of my Heavenly Father; thus I became reconciled. But, dear brethren who may read this, I never met the change I was looking for. Instead of growing good, I was made to see how corrupt, poor and dependent I am upon the Lord for his every blessing and mercy.

Some time after this my wife joined the church, and then I thought I was left alone sure enough. However, in a few months I also went forward and tried to tell the church some of the exercises of my mind. I was received, and on a Sunday baptized by Elder Wilson Thompson.

These are some of my exercises: The Lord leads his people in a way they know not, and in paths they have not known. All the hope I have is in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Lord of lords and King of kings; the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. I once thought if I ever become a Christian I'll be a good one; but O, how far short I come. I cannot even think a good thought that is not polluted with some vain thoughts that rush unbidden into my mind. Under these considerations, I have some times doubted the propriety of having made a profession of religion. None are proper subjects of baptism but believers in Christ, who are born of the spirit. I am certain of the

efficacy of the blood of Christ; am I interested in this blood is the trying question.

After I joined the church, in fact before that event, it seemed to be impressed upon my mind to exercise in some way in the church, but I thought it would never do for me to think of such a thing; it might be I had never known God, and to think of preaching must be all wrong, and I resolved to keep it out of my mind. Some passages of Scripture, however, afforded me some encouragement: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," and "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," etc., then my little hope would revive, and I could feel that as the Lord has led me thus far, he will lead me home.

Thus I wondered on until the summer after I had been in the church three years, when this passage pressed on my mind: "A certain man had a fig tree in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none; then said he to the dresser of the vineyard, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground.'"—Luke, xiii., 6, 9. Now I had been in the church three years, and it seemed to apply to me. The fig tree was fruitless, so also was I—I was inactive. The tree must once have been green, else nothing would have been expected from it. It had had all the appearances of a fruitful tree, but behold it is barren. Cut it down, that it may not hinder the growth of something else. "But let it alone this year also, etc., if it bear no fruit, cut it down." Now this made the fourth year, which answered to my own case. Every part of the parable seemed to fit my case exactly, and I could make nothing else out of it, but I kept these things to myself. At length I asked Brother John A. Thompson for an explanation of the parable, but his answer did not satisfy me. Then I concluded it was only my fancy. O, vain man! full of imaginings, you cannot speak in public. You know

but little about the Scriptures; you are no scholar, and have but a limited knowledge of the use of language. In this way I tried to put it off, and wandered along until the fore part of the winter, when Elder Wilson Thompson, who was at my house, suddenly said to me, "Brother James, when are you going to preach?" "Never, that I know of," was my reply, as nearly as I can recollect. He then asked if I had ever been exercised about it. I replied that I had thought some of it. I then got the book and read the verses before alluded to, and told him their seeming application to me. He told me he had thought of it for some time, and wanted to name it to the church, but I begged him to say nothing to the church about it, for I was not altogether satisfied myself. I thought that in time I should become better reconciled. Dear brethren, whether I am called, I do not know, but I am no better satisfied to-day than I was then. Oh, is there such a place as *stand still*? I do not feel that I can go forward or backward. I am like Israel at the Red Sea; mountains on the right and left, and the sea before, the enemy crowding behind; hemmed in, and no way of escape. But God, in his own good time, divides the waters and grants deliverance. Let us trust the God of Israel, who maketh all things after the counsel of his own will. *He* is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Shall we say, "Oh, if I only knew that Jesus died for me, all would be well?" Such is my case. Could I know this, I should have no more doubts.

Dear brethren, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and he finished the work he came to do. Every one for whom Christ suffered must assuredly be saved. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." "All mine are thine, and thine are mine." And again, "And I will give them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Glory to his great name. "If sons, then heirs—heirs of God, and joint heirs with

our Lord Jesus Christ." Oh, what privileges! Not for any merit in us, but all of his grace; for "by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Let us not trust in a puny arm of flesh, but in the God of Jacob, by whose permission we are living monuments of his mercy to-day. Let all who love the Lord take courage, the victory is certain through a crucified and risen Saviour who has conquered death, and "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." He will come again without sin unto salvation.

O, my Father's children, by and by shall one and all of God's dear ones enter the portals of eternal rest, to bathe in the ocean of his love, and bask in the smiles of the Redeemer. Then shall they sing, "Not unto us, O God, but unto thy name be glory forever and ever."

JAMES MARTINDALE.

Editor Messenger:—The substance of the above article was written by Elder Martindale for the *Signs of the Times*, more than twenty-five years ago. Of later years he had expected to write for the MESSENGER some account of his experience in being brought to a knowledge of salvation through Christ, and of his call to the ministry, but death came to him suddenly, and the article was never written.

For nearly twenty years he had been an ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist Church. At the time of his death (February, 1885,) he was the regular pastor of four churches, and was Moderator of Whitewater Association.

Elder Martindale enjoyed the privilege of being for many years the chosen minister of the church with which, in his youth, he had become a member—the church whose roll bore the names of his father, mother, three sisters, his wife, daughter, daughter-in-law and both his wife's parents.

Lovéd and honored alike by church members and those "without the gates," he was called to his rest at a

ripe old age, and left a name and influence equalled by few of his time.

“He that goeth forth weeping,
Bearing precious seed,
Shall, doubtless, come again
With rejoicing—
Bringing his sheaves with him.”

GEO. W. THOMPSON.

Hagerstown, Ind., Aug. 1, 1886.

THERE IS A SIN UNTO DEATH.

Dear Brother Respass:—I will offer you such understanding as I have upon the sentence “There is a sin unto death.”—1 John, v, 16. I have recently heard considerable about committing an *unpardonable sin*, and as many may now be subject to more or less worry over the fear of death on account of this sin, and as from earliest recollection I have heard and read of trouble and distress on account of the fact that there is believed to be an *unpardonable sin*, I will try to give your readers what light I can upon the subject. If there be some special sin that God, for Christ’s sake, cannot forgive, what is it? Can believers commit it? Various conjectures have been put forth by the wise and learned, and among them I have seen a supposed case; supposing one to have a knowledge of God and malice against him at the same time. As for instance, if Peter had denied his Lord with the same malice with which Saul persecuted him, or if Saul had persecuted him with the same knowledge of him that Peter had, either would have committed the supposed unpardonable sin. But this is gratuitous, and is supposing an impossible case. Those who have the knowledge of God love him, and who have the knowledge of the truth, love it; and it cannot be otherwise. It is, I think, quite generally supposed that what is called a *sin unto death* is the same that the Lord Jesus speaks of as the blasphemy against

the Holy Ghost. I do not understand the two passages as having any connection, but I will give you my understanding of both, for the reason that both have been taken together by others. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come.—Matt. xii, 31, 32. One of the evangelists finishes out this declaration with the expression, "Because they said he had an unclean spirit." This last sentence had led me to suppose that the Redeemer meant to charge home upon them the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost when they attributed his miraculous power to the Prince of devils. I have, however, for some years, believed that the idea that there was some particular sin, or kind of sins, that were unpardonable, is a fallacious one. Such a sin as it has been supposed to be, there is nobody capable of committing. The Lord was merely informing his revilers that while sins, and all manner of sins, could be forgiven unto men through him, that there was no other salvation, and never could be forgiveness in any other way. Sin or blasphemy against the Holy God, or Holy Spirit, could not be forgiven. If our sins are not charged against the Son of man, and borne and cancelled by him, they cannot be forgiven; but all manner of sin and blasphemy laid upon him and charged to him as the sin-bearer of his people, is taken away in its penalties and consequences from them, and they experience the forgiveness of sins. The sins of those whom he represented are all laid upon him, and he bore them in his own body on the tree. On this ground they are *justified*. "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." If our sins were not laid upon him and borne by him, then they remain as sins against a Holy

and Infinite Being, who cannot look upon sin, and there is no other way in which forgiveness can ever come.

The other sentence, "There is a sin unto death," I understand to have reference to church discipline, and as a part of the instructions given by the apostle to the brethren of the churches for their guidance in dealing with transgressions of the law of Christ. "If a 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." This instruction to labor for the restoration and forgiveness of a brother who has transgressed is plain enough, and is in accord with what the Master himself taught, and what was taught by other apostles in their instructions to the churches. The distinction between a sin unto death and other sins not unto death, this apostle does not clearly define; so we have to look elsewhere for fuller instructions. But the death here spoken of is in regard to standing in the church and the fellowship of the brethren. As Israelites of old were cut off from among their people for certain transgressions of the Jewish law, so Israel in gospel times are instructed to cut off from the congregation those who tread under foot the Son of God, and do despite unto the Spirit of Grace. The apostle Paul gives directions in one instance to "Deliver such an one unto Satan," and in another, "Put away from among you that wicked person." The church in her discipline does not have to know whether an individual is a Christian or not, but only whether he or she walks orderly as becometh saints. There are certain crimes that are so at variance with the profession of faith, and with the character and standing that a church of Christ is required to maintain, that no apologies or professed penitence can be accepted. The apostle does not forbid labor in their behalf, but he does not enjoin it. "I do not say that he shall pray for it." I do not understand the apostle as objecting to praying to the Lord in behalf

of any and all offenders. But he speaks in reference to labor in their behalf in the church.

It would seem a pity that the little ones who hope in the divine mercy, should be tempted and worried about something that never has been, and never can be. Their very fear and tenderness of conscience on the subject, is proof, at least in their case, that they have not sinned away the love and favor of God. It was the Redeemer's object in partaking of flesh and blood, to destroy in behalf of his people, death, and him that had the power of death, so as to deliver them at once and forever from the fear of death. Otherwise, if there is reason to fear the death of the transgressor at last, they are all their lifetime subject to bondage.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

State Road, Del., December 14, 1886.

BUTLER, MD., December, 1886.

Dear Brethren:—The GOSPEL MESSENGER has come regularly during the year now drawing to a close, richly laden with the precious gospel, "Glad tidings of great joy." Your editorials, whether signed R, M, or H, are instructive and comforting. I know how comforting it is for the church to learn that misunderstandings between brethren are coming to an amicable settlement, and I congratulate the editors and brethren who have so assiduously labored to that end. It seemed to my mind that some of the brethren in their zeal had forgotten the Saviour's parable, Matt., xiii, 24 to 30, especially the words, "The servants said unto him, will thou that we go and gather them up, but he said nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." O, dear brethren, may we all remember the words of the apostle, 1st Cor., 13th chapter, "Though I speak with tongues of men, and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling

cymbal. * * * * And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," &c., &c. May we always let charity manifest its sterling virtue in our own household, the church; with those who have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, which each and every one of us have, as every Shulamite has, "a company of two armies." The flesh, the enmity of the carnal mind, always ready to present for doctrines the commandments of men, the lusts or law which the apostle says, "I find then a law that when I would do good evil is present with me," (Rom. vii, 21,) forcing us onward into the numerous sins contained in the long catalogue, (Rom. xiii, 9, and Col. iii, 5,) telling us to "mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," and the last, but not least, is "covetousness, which is idolatry." And natural reason, called the "spirit of man, which knoweth the things of man, but the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." And when he calls any of his sheep and leads them out, he puts his law in their inward parts and writes it in their hearts; for he is their God, and they his people.—Jer. xxxi, 33. And then says to the Shulamite for now we see the company of two armies, flesh and Spirit; the one contrary to the other. But before the putting of this law in their inward parts and writing it in their hearts, there was only one army, the flesh and its lusts under the control of Satan, leading them as far as God permitted him, captive at his will. But now the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus making them free from the law of sin, in their members, and they hear his loving call, "Come now let us reason together saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel ye shall be devoured with the sword;

for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”—Isaiah, i, 18, 19, 20.

I am truly glad to see the closing MESSENGERS of volume eight contain such cheering information from the true and tried servants, proving that the willing and obedient eat the good of the land. The letter of Elder D. Bartley of June 16, in the August number, should be heeded, for “none should ever speak or write as we understand,” for our understanding is governed by our carnal mind, which is enmity against God; things that seem to us impossible, are not so with God, for with him all things are possible; and when all come to the conclusion that our “think so” is no better than any other brother’s “think so,” though he may differ from our “think so.” But when one has “a thus saith the Lord,” then may we all bow and say, “the Lord is true, though all men are liars.

In the GOSPEL MESSENGER of 1887 may nothing appear but what hath the thus saith the Lord, and in the meetings of the saints “Let him that hath my word speak my word.” “The word that was with God” in the beginning, and was God, or as the apostle “determined to know nothing, save Jesus Christ and him crucified,” be ye also like minded. “Be not ashamed to own your God, or to defend his cause; maintain the honor of his word; obey and keep his law.” “He hath shewed thee O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”—Micah vi, 8. In doing his commands we have great reward. We then take the beam out of our own eye, and we see clearly it was only a little mote we saw in our brother’s eye, which our darkened sight beheld as a large beam, and carnal reason, actuated by the Prince of darkness, was ready to cry out “thou hypocrite.” But now the beam is out of our eye, and we walk humbly with our God and keep his law. We go to our brother in humility, remember-

ing the thousand talents we owe our Lord, and having nothing to pay it with, and how freely he forgave all. With love in our hearts we speak of the rich mercy of our God, and his great love wherewith he loved us, and of our ungratefulness. "But though we have him oft forgot, his loving kindness changes not." "Whom he loves, he loves unto the end," and the dear brother is converted from the error, and he is saved from the death to us that we were consigning him to when the beam was in our eye. In conclusion, I desire that editors, writers, and readers of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, will in the love of God, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit, "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God," and may all keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. Then indeed it will be a happy New Year to us all. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield."—Ps. lxxxiv, 11. Yours in Christian fellowship,

THOS. H. SCOTT.

WHITER THAN SNOW.

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."—Psa., li., 7.

First, We will notice the "snow." Snow is the whitest natural substance. It covers the earth and hides it from the natural view until the sun shines upon it, and then it gives way. The snow which covers the earth typifies the robe of righteousness which clothes the natural man. Now the pharisee boasts of his righteousness thus: "I fast twice a week, pray three times a day, pay tithes of all that I have, I pay my just debts, I live soberly and uprightly with my fellow-man." This is the most beautiful robe that can clothe the natural man, or earthen vessel. Our morality is commendable as natural citizens and is a beautiful robe. But our righteousness must exceed (be whiter) than that of our

morality and deeds of the law, for by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified, and all the righteousness of the law will never save a sinner. Jesus says, "except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Second, We notice the making "whiter than snow." The Psalmist says, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." A bunch of "hyssop" was used to sprinkle *blood* on the lintels and door-posts of the houses of Israel on the night of their deliverance from Egypt. That blood typifies the cleansing blood of Jesus. The Apostle says: "The blood of Christ cleanseth us from *all* sin." The deeds of the law will not cleanse us from sin; hence this is "whiter," for it cleanseth us from *all* sin. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from *all iniquity*, and purify (to cleanse, or make whiter than snow) unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Notice, our righteousness must be greater, or exceed, that of the pharisees.

As to the outward righteousness we can *not* exceed them, but the righteousness we possess must be of the Lord, and not in man. "For this is the name whereby she shall be called the Lord our *righteousness*." Again, "Your righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Again, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." When an application is made with the hyssop (Holy Spirit) of the blood of Christ, it makes us whiter than snow.

Notice now the *washing*: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us by the 'washing' of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Hence the "washing" is the *washing* of regeneration. And when the sun shines upon the natural snow, it gives way; so when the sun of righteousness shines into the sinner, all his righteous-

ness gives way, as with Saul, while on his way to Damascus.

“The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.”

God is the law-giver, Christ the fulfiller, and the Spirit the applier. He sends his spirit from above to call the objects of his love. When we are born of the Spirit, we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ which exceeds the law righteousness. Then we are whiter than snow. And he gives *snow* like *wool*.—Psa. cxlvii., 16. Snow will pass away very soon, being natural, but wool is a durable substance. When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, our law righteousness gives way. Hence he gives a durable righteousness that will continue. Then we are clothed with righteousness as with a garment. This robe was wrought out by Christ for his people, and is a white robe, yea, whiter than snow. And his people have come up through great tribulations, and hath washed their robes and made them white and clean in the blood of the Lamb. The prophet says, “As for thee also, by the blood of the covenant thou hast sent forth thy *prisoners* out of the pit wherein was no water.” Yes, when we were in the pit, under the law of sin and death, in time of snow, clothed with a garment of self-righteousness until our eyes stood out with fatness, and we had more than heart could wish, hence we possessed a lion-like disposition of pride and self-ability. The lion is the king of beasts. That fleshly principle which controlled us—our natural appetite—desired sin and folly.—2 Sam., xxii., 20. But when it was the will of the Lord to bring us out of the pit, the love of sin and folly was killed in us, and all of our righteousness was a robe of filthy rags. All of our ability was taken away, and we became poor, hungering, thirsting souls. All that lion-like dis-

position was gone; hence we became poor, helpless beggars, and could say, "Lord, save, I perish." I think here the lion was killed. We now desire to honor and glorify God. And I often come in contact with the lion yet, when in time of snow—when I am putting confidence in the flesh, I become self-righteous, and feel that I am something, but when that principle is again subdued, I see that I am nothing, and less than nothing, hence I see a necessity for the flesh to be conquered continually. I think, dear brother, that the Egyptian slain (1 Chron., xi., 23,) is the besetting sin spoken of by Paul to the Hebrews, (see 12th chapter, 1st verse,) and the child of God is admonished to slay the Egyptian, or lay aside every weight, or the *sin* that doth so easily beset him, etc. The Egyptians which followed the Israelites is typical of sin, and the children of Israel looked back and saw *all* the Egyptians drowned in the Red Sea. So when we profess a hope in Jesus, we could look back and see all our *sins* washed away in the blood of Christ by faith.

Dear Brother Mitchell, you requested my views on the foregoing scriptures. I have done the best I could with the light and space afforded. I hope you will make allowance for my imperfection. You said write this for the MESSENGER; if you desire, you can publish it, and I will perhaps write on the other scripture in the future.

Yours, in an humble hope in Jesus.

LEE HANCKS.

Ozark, Dale County, Ala., Dec. 1886.

Believer, the sword of justice is dipped in the oil of mercy for your sake; and it dismembers some parts of your body, that the whole might not be destroyed.

*Elder W. M. Mitchell—Dear Brother in Christ:—*I speak to you thus because I feel assured we are thus related. Dear brother, I have a subject in my mind which, seemingly, I must speak something about, and that is concerning Christ's body. Some think that Jesus was the son of Mary, and came down from Adam, and Christ was the son of God and came down from heaven, thus making Jesus created in Adam. I don't so understand it. I believe God kept a pure blood from David to Mary. It is written that David was a man after God's own heart, therefore, the blood being kept pure from David to Mary, the son of Mary, or the son of God, was called the son of David. The first man Adam was of the earth earthy, the second man Adam was the Lord from heaven. John says in the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God, the same was in the beginning with God, in him was life and the life was the light of men. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.—John i, 14. Now remember John said the word was made flesh and dwelt among us and the word was God. The Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary and Jesus was begotten of God the Father, therefore Jesus was the son of God, the same as Christ was the son of God. Some say then, what part did Jesus take of his mother? I say he took the blood, the natural life, and it was a pure blood, therefore it is said in the Scriptures he, (Jesus,) took upon himself our nature without sin; because he was not possessed with the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law, neither indeed can be. If Jesus had have had this sinful flesh he could not have redeemed us from under the law of sin and death; but God prepared him a body as it pleased him. I don't believe the body of Jesus Christ underwent any change, only he shed his blood, which was his natural

life; it was taken by wicked hands. God said let us, (speaking to the Son,) make man in our image, after our likeness—Gen. i, 20. God was here looking forward to the time when he should be prepared. John, vi, 51, says, 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. This is that bread which came down from heaven. Many therefore of his disciples when they had heard this, said this is a hard saying, who can hear it? Jesus here speaking of his flesh, says again, What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? He teaches here in this chapter plainly that the same flesh that came down from heaven went back to heaven. Don't understand me to believe that the full grown body entered the Virgin Mary, but he was begotten by the Holy Ghost and born of Mary. Now remember Joseph was minded to put her away when he found her to be with child, but the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a vision saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Joseph no doubt thought that she was with child by some man, until he was taught better by the angel of the Lord. Now if Jesus was only the son of Mary, and nothing but flesh, remember then it was the flesh Jesus that the angel said shall save his people from their sins; it was Jesus that turned the water to wine; it was Jesus that raised the dead, healed the sick, cleansed the leper and opened the eyes of the blind. If this be so we could say that the disciples done those things with their own power, that is if Jesus was only flesh as we are. But that he was very God and very man, this shows plainly.

Calhoun Co., Miss.

WM. C. MITCHELL.

These lines were written under the gloomy forebodings of the great drought in Texas:

Let life be dull, let hearts be numb,
Let ears be deaf, let tongues be dumb!
All, all conspire to lift the veil
Of sorrow's cares; and tell woe's tale.

O, sacred "bow," from heaven proclaim
The news that will give joy again;
Refresh our earth with rain and shine
From cloud and sun, and power divine.

O, Father, God! do lend an ear,
That we may hope, and love and fear,
While on thy bounty we may live
In duty's path, and praises give,

To Thee, our God, for all that's done
By Jesus Christ, thy darling son;
And when the toils of life are o'er,
We'll praise our God forevermore,

In strains of everlasting love,
And have no more desire to rove
From thee, Great God; but we shall swell
The anthems of Immanuel.

Sept. 9, 1886.

J. S. COLLINS.

ARLINGTON, TEXAS, NOV. 26, 1886.—*Dear Bro. Respass:*
—The MESSENGER (December number) has reached me laden with precious fruit. Allow me, dear brother, to speak a little in commendation of Sister Phillips to Elder Landers, of Arkansas, and yourself to Elder Lancaster, of Texas. These two pieces, to say nothing of the great and glorious truths over the signatures of other precious ones of the household, are to us invaluable; being full to the brim, heaped up, shaken down and running over. O, how it delights the tried ones of Israel in this far off land, to be able to look back to the old homestead and see the old "regulars" standing with sword in hand, ready for any emergency in which the cause of our King is threatened, or his subjects made bare, and deprived of that nutriment which is so necessary to their health, strength and vigor. I have been of late much bowed down in spirit, saying with the prophet that "The ways of Zion do mourn." But I feel this day to say, "The Lord shall yet comfort Zion."

J. S. COLLINS.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, WM. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

“ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER.”

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.”—Rom., viii, 28, 29, 30.

It would be a blessed thing for all of God's dear children in this world to understand and know what is taught in the above text. While it is probable that some of them have not carefully considered this text, others may have misinterpreted it, and even perverted it. If all things, both good and evil, are meant, it would appear necessary that evil should exist, and in fact, there could be no evil if all things, in the unlimited sense of this phrase, work together for good. Whatever *works good is good*, and where then could evil come in?

But the text defines the phrase “All things,” and that without associating any evil thing with good things. Paul begins here with the foreknowledge of God, and then His predestination, the calling of His chosen people, their justification and glorification. Such are the things that work together for good; for these are good things, and therefore work nothing but good. A chain of God's providence and grace is presented, beginning with His foreknowledge, and every link in this chain is necessary for the salvation of His people. Election is a very important link in the chain, and is presented by the Apostle Peter thus: “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”—1 Pet., i, 2. In this passage several links are brought to view, viz.: Foreknowledge, election,

sanctification, obedience and the application of the atonement for sin. The chain is lengthened in the following verse: "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 Pet., i., 1. Thus we have faith and its proper source, or the means by which it is obtained, i. e., through the righteousness of God. Still another feature is presented by Jude: "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called."—Jude, 1st verse. The preservation of the elect in Christ is thus added to the chain of the "all things that work together for good," and also the calling of the elect. And to all these may be added the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, repentance, faith and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence follows the obedience of faith, the love of God, and the love of the brethren, the service of the Lord, patience, forbearance, and every Christian grace and virtue that is bestowed upon the children of God.

This chain of providence and grace was devised, or rather existed, in the infinite wisdom of God from all eternity. He extended it down to this earth by the hand of the great "Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus," whose advent, life and death, burial and resurrection carried this glorious chain down to the lowest depth to which His chosen had descended, and then carried it back again to heaven, and there the two ends of this chain are linked together, never to be severed.

Such are the things that work together for good to them that love God; the called according to His purpose. And if it were possible to sever one link from this chain, it would then be possible for God to be dethroned, and heaven depopulated. But the chain is too strong; it cannot be broken; it bears the ponderous

weight of the universe, strengthened and sustained by the Almighty God.

The works of the devil do not belong to this chain; neither sin, the act of man; nay, so far from it that these things which work together for good to the people of God, effectually remove it from them as far as the east is from the west.—Psa., ciii., 12. True it is that God makes the wrath of man to praise Him, yet He has never been so dependent upon sin for His praise and glory as to predestinate it, and embrace it in His immutable counsel as necessary to His praise and glory. But His overruling providence and superabounding grace are sufficient to remove and subdue every opposing element, and secure the honor and majesty of His universal kingdom. So we should and do rejoice that all things work together for good to them that love God.—H.

GOSPEL ORDER.

It is a source of joy and comfort to all faithful servants of the Lord to behold the unity, love, gospel order and steadfastness in the faith of all churches of the saints. Though absent in the flesh, they are present in the spirit, joying and beholding their order and faith in Christ. But how sad it is when there is disorder, distress and carnal strife among brethren. Having received a letter from a ministering brother in Arkansas, who seems to be in trouble concerning the validity of his baptism, and some other things, at his request we now offer a few brief remarks:

The church of which the brother speaks, being constituted by a presbytery of one ordained minister and two deacons, afterwards became a disorderly church, and this brother protesting against and opposing what he considered disorderly conduct in most of the male members, eventually applied to an orderly Primitive Baptist Church, and was received on "Confession of

Faith." According to this statement, it seems that the church receiving this brother must have regarded the church from whence he came as having departed from the faith. The validity of this brother's baptism, however, was not questioned, and it appears that it is only in his own mind that there is any difficulty on that point. It is a common custom in this country in constituting churches, to have at least two ordained ministers as a presbytery, but we cannot see that, if there should be but one, and two deacons, or other sound, discerning brethren, there is any violation of gospel order. The members who are constituted into a church are already members in fair standing, as is shown by their having letters of dismissal from orderly churches in full fellowship. And as to the church, or a majority of them, including the pastor, departing from the faith after the reception and baptism of this distressed brother, that of *itself*, cannot invalidate the legality of his baptism. This point of gospel order has been so ably discussed, and so clearly set forth in the MESSENGER by other brethren, especially by Elder Respass, in the number for December, 1886, page 607, that it would seem superfluous to say more now.

Our inquiring brother also asks: "Can a church restore a brother who has joined a secret worldly institution, and still remain in gospel order?" We answer that if the erring brother has been shown the error of his way, and convicted for it, so as to confess and forsake it, and seeks restoration to church fellowship, he certainly can, and ought to be restored, according to the Scriptures. We can scarcely conceive of a more flagrant disorder than that a member should be so abandoned to all decency, chastity and virtue as to live in an adulterous relation with his stepmother, or "his father's wife." This is such an absurd and base thing that of all the abominable sins laid to the charge of unbelieving Gentiles, this one sin "is not so much as

named among them.”—1 Cor., v., 1. It is a sin of such an abominable and shameful character that every lover of truth and gospel order should mourn and bow down his head with shame till he that hath so done shall be put away from them by the administration of wholesome gospel discipline. The Apostle commands the church in her collective capacity, when “gathered together,” to “deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”—1 Cor., v., 5. But though this is a dreadfully aggravated and shameful case of disorder not to be tolerated in any orderly church, yet there is hope that God will “peradventure give the erring one repentance to the acknowledging” of his sin and to the forsaking of it. In Paul’s second epistle to this church at Corinth, we think he refers to this identical case, and renders a decision as one of the princes who should rule in judgment in all cases of doctrine or order in the church, and says: “Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.” Now what *punishment* could he have referred to as being “inflicted by many,” except the united vote of the church putting such an one away from her communion and fellowship? Corporeal, or bodily punishment, fines or imprisonment, are not allowed in the administration of gospel discipline. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, yet, in putting an erring brother or sister away from church fellowship, there is a punishment, and a “*sufficient* punishment inflicted by many,” because it is done by the united voice of all the members of the church.

We notice further with regard to this case, that the brother had become convicted in his conscience for his heinous sin, and was in great distress, asking forgiveness from those who had so righteously inflicted the punishment upon him which he had been enduring. The Apostle tells us that the punishment was *sufficient*,

and as the poor, erring man was now a mourning, sorrowing penitent, he also says “ye ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps *such* a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore, I beseech you that you would confirm your love toward him.”—2 Cor., ii., 6, 8. How else could their love be confirmed toward this poor, returning prodigal, and how else could he be comforted than by their forgiving and restoring him to communion and fellowship in the church? Now if this does not justify the practice of our churches in restoring excluded members upon their penitence, then we do not know of any other text so much to the point in all the New Testament.

But our brother says: “Is not joining these worldly institutions spiritual whoredom? and is not that putting Christ, the husband, to an open shame?”—Heb., x., 29. Yes, indeed, brother, this is trampling the authority of Christ in his church under foot, and if no forgiveness or mercy was provided in the law of Christ, each transgressor must die “without mercy,” as he did under the law of Moses. We understand the Apostle in this 10th chapter of Hebrews, and 29th verse, and its connection, to be contrasting the law of Moses and the law of Christ, and showing that as Christ was so much greater than Moses, it was even a greater sin to transgress the law of Christ than it was to sin under Moses’ law. Those who sinned under that law died without mercy, and O, what matchless grace it is that notwithstanding those who sin against Christ deserve “much sorer punishment” than did those who died without mercy, yet mercy, forgiveness and restoration through the merits of Christ is provided for all returning penitents.—M.

On whom do parents bestow their hearts, but upon their children? and on whom should children bestow theirs, but upon their parents?

ESTHER.—SECOND CHAPTER.

ALL MEN ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD.

“When the virgins were gathered together the second time, Mordecai sat in the king’s gate.”

It must be borne in mind that these virgins were the pick of the king’s empire. In physical, mental and moral beauty they were at the top, and had no equals. Their lack of spiritual grace or faith did not destroy their mental and moral beauty, nor lessen their obligation, nor do away with, in any degree, their accountability to the king in those things in which they were gifted. There had been much given them in mind and morals, and much, therefore, was required of them. Cain and Abel, the two first-born of the human race, made offerings unto the Lord, and Cain’s was rejected and Abel’s accepted. This enraged Cain, and the Lord said to him, Why art thou wroth; if thou doest well shalt not thou be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. We see, therefore, that Cain’s obligation to God did not cease with the rejection of his offering; that though he was incapable of making a spiritual offering, or one in faith, that he was not thereby relieved of making such as he was able to make; nor deprived of the blessing accruing from it. Natural and moral blessings accrue alike to saint and sinner in offerings to the natural and moral law. The idle and thriftless Christian, following after vain persons will suffer the same as idle and thriftless sinners. A drunken Christian’s headache will not only be as bad as the sinner’s, but his heartache will be ten fold worse. Cain was not, therefore, licensed to murder his brother by God’s rejection of his offering, and His acceptance of Abel’s; but was under the same obligation to God as before to reverence and obey Him and love his brother. Abel’s acceptance did Cain no injury, nor would the acceptance of Cain’s offering have done him any good; it would not have

changed his condition, or made him in heart any better a man than before. It would have been an injury to him, in making him believe that he was what he was not. It was not the offering of either of them that changed the heart, but it was the changed heart of Abel that made his offering differ from Cain's. Nor would the acceptance of Abel's offering have influenced him to despise Cain and caused him to think that he was naturally better than Cain, but it would rather tend to increase his obligations to do him good, even good for evil. Man is not relieved of obligation to God as his creator and sovereign by election; the gifts bestowed by God upon the Elect do the world no harm, nor do they lessen the world's obligation to God. It is a vain and sinful thought arising in man's mind when he says, "If election is true, I may do as I please, and I shall not be judged;" for he will be judged and righteously condemned for sins for which he is responsible, and it will be as just as Cain's was. He will not be condemned for inability to offer spiritual offerings, or offerings in faith to God, but will be condemned for sin. And sin is the transgression of law, and the unregenerate, not being under the spiritual law, are not condemned for spiritual transgression, because they cannot be guilty of it. The regenerate can, because they are, by regeneration, under it. But the unregenerate are under natural and moral law, and can, therefore, transgress or sin and be condemned for it. Man in his best estate, before he fell by transgression, could not have offered a spiritual offering to God. This cannot be done by a mere creature of God, but only by a regenerated creature or child of God. The creature must be born again to offer in faith. But as said, moral and natural gifts involve like responsibilities. The gift of life, of time, involve all in obligation to improve the time profitably; and we sin when we waste it in idleness and profligacy. The gift of rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our

hearts with food and gladness, bring all, both saint and sinner, under renewed obligations to reverence and honor our Creator. In times past God suffered all nations, except the Jews, to walk in their own ways, nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons; in time of that ignorance God winked at—that is, he blessed them with natural blessings, notwithstanding their vice and immorality; but now, in the end of the world, he commands all men every where to repent of their immorality; because, having taught them better, and thus augmenting their obligations, he requires better of them, failing in which he will now judge or punish them for that at which he before winked. This is a moral repentance and the fulfilling of moral obligations to God as individuals and nations. And hence is the reason why Chorazin and Capernaum should have more intolerable punishment than Tyre, Sidon and Sodom; because these cities had moral advantages above those heathen cities, and yet with them they were worse than the heathen. And as a white man's state or condition in the chain-gang is more intolerable than a black man's; and it is why unchastity in a cultivated white woman is a greater degradation than in an ignorant black woman. That which would be intolerable to one man, would be but little torment to another. The sin that torments the Christian is a pleasure to the hardened profligate. When an individual or nation to whom God has given special favors perverts them, turning them into a curse, they are like Israel under Rehoboam, who suffered a whip under Solomon, but under his son they were chastised with scorpions.

DANGER OF BAD HABITS.

When a moral man breaks the hedge that morality throws around him, a serpent bites him, and thus weakened, he is in danger of falling, like the Gaderene,

into a legion of vices, and becoming a hardened profligate. The mother (2 Kings, vii.) who boiled her son and ate him, did not come at once to a so diabolical and unnatural crime, but slowly and by degrees. When the thought first suggested itself to her mind, she no doubt repelled it with horror; but day after day of scarcity and hunger, and pinching starvation, gradually wore away her repulsion, and familiarized the (at first) horrible thought until her conscience and heart were hardened for it, and she could consent to the sin that at first she would have died before doing. When at our first boarding school, we remember the horror we felt the first time we saw card-playing. We would not enter the room, but stood at the door looking with amazement at the men engaged in so impious an act. We had been taught that playing at cards generally led to gambling, and that gambling led to lying, cheating, drunkenness, and often to murder. But in, perhaps, less than one month we had learned to play. One step led to another, until we could bet a little, and afterwards could lie and cheat, and swear to it. We were never much engaged in such things, except in idle hours at college, but we went far enough in it to know what it would lead to. The gentle boy, with downy face as soft and sweet as an innocent girl's, takes his first social drink in a tippling shop, and blushes almost scarlet as he thinks of his mother's fond embrace of a moment ago; but in a few months, with full-mouthed profanity, he can gulp down glassful after glassful, and swagger hollow-eyed in the vilest dens of shame. Alas, if we knew how many boys have gone from their first bar-room drink to the chain-gang or gallows, and how heart-broken mothers have gone down to the grave on account of them, we would be inspired to warn the young against them more than we do. The heart of a Christian can become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin so that he can, in his eager greed for

money, listen almost unconcerned to the plaintive cry of the poor and needy. To what depth of shame and degradation men may go, little by little, we cannot tell; but low enough for the contemplation of it to fill us with horror. Think of the awful degradation of the people of Sodom! "Men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." A city so given up that not even five moral men were to be found in it. From a habit of little exaggerations men may be gradually led into bare-faced lying. A man may have a horse to sell and misrepresent his age and qualities, and not tell a direct lie, but still deceive his neighbor. But deception is lying. We heard of a man once who lied in this way when called upon for money. He named one of his pockets "the world," and would say he had not a cent in "the world." And he was silly enough to think he could say that and not tell a lie, when it was indeed as bad as a bare-faced lie. So a man may lie religiously by professing to feel what he does not feel, or by professing to be better than he is or worse than he is. Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?—Prov., xx., 6. A man is faithful only when he speaks and acts under the influence of the Spirit.

CONCUBINES.

These virgins could not, after having been so elevated as to go in unto the king, have been the lawful wives of any other man, at least of any man of less than kingly dignity. They had been rejected as wives and queens, but that did not divest them of the high responsibility of their calling. A great man may be unfit for the church, and yet be well qualified for usefulness as a ruler and teacher of men; spiritual gifts are not required of him, but mental gifts are. Whilst he is not a son or child of God, he is none the less a servant of God. Naaman, the Syrian, was a great man of the

world; not only a man cultivated in mind and morals, but one who had the courage of his convictions. He could reprove a demoralized public opinion though the multitude was against him, and God gave moral and civil deliverance by him. He served God in that sense before he was changed; and so did Paul. But after he was brought to the prophet in Israel, and was humbled and cleansed by grace, he was then a son of God and also a servant of the king of Assyria. But his service was now in a different spirit than before; his service to the king of Assyria was a service to God in spirit, and was the service of one who serves in love, which will never fail. Vashti's service was only a letter service; the Jew's service as a nation under the law failed, because it was only a service in the letter and not in spirit. Had it been in Spirit they would never have been broken off and cast away. These virgins, with all their excellence, were only united to the king in the letter, and their service could only be a letter service; it could not be spiritual. They were not wives, but concubines. Their standing was upon their works, and not upon their faith; and such works were acceptable to the king as long as they were right in the letter, but the moment there was a failure in that they fell. But it was not a falling from grace or love, for that they never had. The wife could not be put away; we say could not, because there would be no disposition in the husband to put her away; for being united in love, there would be no disposition in either of them to be separated. Separation would be the most heart-rending thing either of them could contemplate—what man loving his wife can think of her death without an unspeakable pang to his soul? They are as Christ and the church are, one.

Under Moses a husband could put away his wife for an uncleanness that did not perhaps amount to a sexual crime, by giving her a bill of divorcement; but under Christ it cannot be done. Because under Moses it was

a letter union, but under the gospel it is a union of spirit, so that a man cannot put away his wife and marry another, except for sexual crime. And sexual crime in the wife shows that the marriage was never one in spirit or in love, and never more than a state of mere concubinage on her part.

Whilst the union of the king and concubines was not one in spirit, it was one however involving them in great responsibilities, and of such dignity, that infidelity to its obligations was a sin of such degree as to shame the king and empire. Absalom by the crafty counsel of Ahithophel went in unto David's concubines in sight of all Israel to strengthen his rebellious and patricidal cause by an act so infamous and unpardonable that his followers might know that the breach was irreparable, and a reconciliation with his father impossible. Hagar's service to her mistress was acceptable until her son Ishmael mocked Isaac and sought the inheritance; then she was put away; for the slave or servant could not inherit with Isaac the free-born son. The service of the moral law is good in its place, but when sought to be made meritorious in eternal salvation it is put away, because it would displace Christ and his grace.

So at this time every one was put in his proper place, for the Jew, Mordecai, sat in the gate. The spirit of the law was enforced. When Paul felt the spirit of the law he cried out I am carnal sold under sin. He was not what before he thought he was. He now and ever afterward felt the need of Christ.—R.

We pity a body that is going to the block, and shall we not pity a soul that is hastening to the bottomless pit? He dies the most comfortably, who lives the most heavenly. It is easier for a bird to avoid the snare, than to break the snare. The very beasts will shun the place where their own species have miscarried.

WEAK AND STRONG.

All discerning Christians know by experience and observation, as well as from Scriptural testimony, that some of their fellow-pilgrims are weak in the faith of the gospel while others are described as being strong. But the greatest and most important thing is, whether we have faith at all or not. It may be weak, but if it is truly faith, it is precious, and no brother should be discarded or set at nought simply on the ground, or for the cause, that his faith is weak. Whether weak or strong in faith, all are alike kindred in Christ and of the household *of faith*. And whether they have great faith or little, strong or weak, it is God's gift to each one—dealt out to such a degree and in such proportion as the wisdom and goodness of God has been pleased to bestow. It is the fruit of that Spirit of which they are born, "not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God." Inspired men of God, who have spoken and written as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, have clearly recognized this distinction of weak and strong in faith. And through the eternal purpose of God, as well as his infinite goodness and matchless grace, their written testimony has been preserved and transmitted down to us in this nineteenth century, and we, as Baptists, have adopted their testimony as an Article of our Faith, declaring it to be the word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice. In as much, therefore, as this distinction is so clearly recognized, enjoined and subscribed to with such sacred reverence, we should be very careful, lest in our overheated zeal, in some unguarded moment, we disregard this distinction of weak and strong in faith, and thereby put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall in our brother's way. Those who are weak in faith, knowing but little of the way and plan of salvation, further than to know that their deliverance from a sense of guilt, condemnation and death is of the

Lord, are nevertheless susceptible of receiving gospel instruction, and should not be despised or set at nought by their stronger brethren, as though they were in heart enemies to all gospel truth. Let not the strong brethren set up new tests of soundness in the faith, or new tests of fellowship in the church of God. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye; but not to doubtful disputations."—Rom., xiv., 1. Here are specified directions given the church of God requiring that the weak in faith be received into the fellowship and tender love of the church, regarding him as one of the family—a brother beloved for Christ's sake—a weak "brother for whom Christ died," as well as for the strong. Receive him in the Lord.

For convenience of expression, and by way of illustrating their views of gospel truth, some have divided faith into what they call the "Grace of Faith," and the "Doctrine of Faith." We do not object to this distinction, believing as we do, that both the Scriptures and the experience of Christians will fully justify it. By the *grace* of *faith* is intended that inward evidence, or witnessing testimony of the Spirit by which each child of God is enabled to believe in Jesus Christ as his Saviour. It is that precious gift of God by which one receives and discerns spiritual things, and without which he is not a proper subject to be instructed by gospel preaching in the ordinances, doctrine or order of the gospel. Or in other words, he is a proper subject for membership in the church of Christ, or for any of the ordinances of the gospel.

Now, it is evident to our mind that one may have this precious gift of God—the grace of faith—and yet know but little—almost nothing—about the doctrine of faith. And if one cannot, or should not, be received as a member in full fellowship in the church without understanding and expounding the doctrine of election, predestination, the Everlasting Covenant of redemption,

effectual calling, imputed righteousness, justification and other important and cardinal points of the doctrine of grace, very few, indeed, ever could be admitted into the fellowship of the church. Yea, indeed, would there be any? Do Christians know all they ever are to know as soon as they are born of the Spirit? If so, then truly they are at a perfect stand-still point, so far as increasing in the knowledge of God is concerned. If so soon as they are born into the kingdom of Christ the whole system of salvation, and every point of the doctrine of faith is at once unfolded and revealed to them, why should it be enjoined upon them to "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?" The Apostle speaks as prompted by the Spirit, of a whole church having something "*lacking* in their faith."—1 Thess., iii., 10. But this *lack* in their understanding and knowledge of the "Doctrine of Faith," did not lessen his confidence in them as brethren beloved of the Lord, but he rendered thanks to God again for them, as he had done before, for "all the joy wherewith he joyed for them before God." And not only this, but seeing they were weak in faith, and like little children who are just beginning to walk, needing a helping hand as well as a kind, encouraging word, he is found "praying night and day exceedingly, that he and other gospel ministers might see the face" of the members of this infant church at Thessalonica, and by talking to them, preaching and expounding to them the way of the Lord more perfectly than they had ever yet known it, he might "*perfect* that which was lacking in their faith." Here is one great use of gospel preaching and writing. It is instructive to the weak on many points of the doctrine of faith of which they had known but little, or perhaps nothing.

The apostle Paul found certain disciples once at Ephesus, who were so weak in the doctrine of faith that they had not so much as heard "whether there be any

Holy Ghost" or not. On this point, as well as other points of the gospel, they needed instruction. Having a spiritual birth, and the grace of faith, they were qualified to receive instruction in the doctrine of faith, and thereby their faith and love were increased. And we may reasonably infer that the fervent prayer of the apostle to preach to this church, and thereby instruct them so as to perfect that which was lacking in their faith, was an acceptable prayer to God and one that was prompted by his Holy Spirit, and which he designed to answer. A record of this fervent prayer is found in Paul's first letter to the church at Thessalonica,—but as if to show at once the joy of his heart that God had answered his prayer on their behalf, he, in the very first part of his *second* letter to that church says, "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, because your *faith groweth* exceedingly and the *charity of every one of you all* toward each other aboundeth."—2 Thess. i, 3. This inspired testimony concerning the *lack* and *growth* of faith in the church should be regarded as very instructive to us as Primitive Baptists just at this time. The weak in faith and understanding of the deep doctrinal points of the gospel should be encouraged, but they should not judge or despise their stronger brethren; and the strong in faith should not discard or set at naught those who are weak, but should remember that it is written, "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."—Rom. xv, 1. And whether weak or strong, "Let *every one* of us please his neighbor for his good to edification." Would not this be a delightful state of things among brethren? And would it not cause the charity of every one of us toward each other to greatly abound? It is a truth not to be disregarded that in proportion as our faith groweth, or is increased in a knowledge of the doctrine and order of the gospel, so our charity and love for one another also aboundeth. If we

have the "grace of faith," this makes us susceptible of receiving instruction in the "doctrine of faith;" and if we have faithful teachers and expounders of the word to teach and instruct us in the doctrine of God our Saviour, our faith will grow and be greatly increased in a knowledge of the doctrine of our salvation. When the apostle Jude wrote his short epistle to those "who are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called," he said it was "needful for him to write unto them and exhort them to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." This faith once delivered to the saints by inspiration embraces the whole gospel and every part of it; but many of the saints are "weak in the faith" so far as a knowledge and understanding of it is concerned. They need to be instructed by those whom God hath made "apt to teach." The *apt* teacher must not only understand the weakness and deficiency of those who are susceptible of being taught in the things of the gospel, but he must also understand how to adapt his teaching to their capacity so as to expound and bring forth such parts of the gospel as will "perfect that which is lacking in their faith." It is in this sense that Paul said, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."—1 Cor. ix, 22. His teaching was adapted to the case and to the condition of the saints of God, whether they were Jews or Gentiles, or whether they were weak or strong in faith, all must be instructed, that by all means they may be saved from error, from false doctrines and delusions, and from the chastisements and afflictions which are sure to come upon disobedient children. To the weak in faith, the minister of Jesus, who is "apt to teach," comes right home to them in his teaching and partakes with them in all their weakness, as well as partakes with them in the blessed promises of the gospel that apply to them. "To the weak," says Paul, "became I as weak, that I might gain the weak." "And this I do for

the gospel's sake that I might be partaker thereof with you."—1 Cor. ix, 23. "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory in the things which concern mine infirmities."—2 Cor. xi, 29. O, what a contrast there is in the spirit manifested in the teaching of the above texts and that which is sometimes seen from a few modern teachers who are regarded as able exponents of the word? They dive into deep, hidden and unrevealed things, draw inferences from certain texts to support their favorite theory or hobby, and then make their forced constructions and inferences the test of soundness in the faith, so that all who cannot subscribe to and endorse their expositions and interpretations are branded either as being carnally minded Christians or as heretics and enemies of all gospel truth, ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness.

There is evidently a vast difference between "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" as it is given in the Scriptures, and that contention that sometimes springs up about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearer. The faith once delivered to the saints has positive Scriptural proof, and all inferential proof must agree with it. But the inferences which men sometimes draw have no other proof to sustain them than the positive and bold assertions of those who make them. To strive or contend about deductions and inferences which have no better proof to sustain them than the bold assertions of those who make them, is to strive about men rather than gospel principle. May the Lord deliver us from all such.—M.

The first singular action of sanctified Christians, is,
To do much good and make but little noise.

THE GREAT TEXAS DROUGHT.

Beloved readers, we have an opportunity offered us to show our faith by our works. It is a great privilege our God has bestowed upon us to minister to our needy and suffering brethren. Our information is that in an area of 100 miles in Texas, there has been no rain in eighteen months, and there is great destitution amongst our brethren, as well as others in that section. Let us assist them; if we can send them but little it will help them. If the patrons of the MESSENGER would each send one dime it would amount to over \$700. Wrap the dime in a piece of paper securely, and put it in a letter and send it to Brother R. R. Respass, Gordon, Palo Pinto county, Texas, and we guarantee that he will distribute it righteously. He writes as follows: "Cousin John, I will state that we have four Primitive Baptist families in our immediate section that are destitute and much in need of help; others were here, but have left our section. Two of these are families of preachers, one of whom is the pastor of our church here." Should more be sent than will relieve the needs of these four families, they will aid other families without regard to their religion. We ask Brother Respass to send us a list of all who may contribute a dime, and we will publish it in the MESSENGER. What is done in this matter must be done at once.—R.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

LUTHERVILLE, ARK., Oct. 12, 1886.—*Dear Brethren:*
—By the goodness of God I was permitted to attend the Point Remove Association of Primitive Baptists, where we had a glorious time. There were five able expounders of God's word in attendance, saying nothing of the unworthy writer; for I feel the least of all, if it can be that I am one at all. The preaching was all in harmony. Elders M. Sandage, W. Garner and myself

filled the stand on Sunday, and whilst singing the farewell hymn, one trembling man came up among us and told that the preaching had drawn him over the line. He had been with Missionary Baptists. This was one evidence that our preaching was not in vain.

Let me here say I commend the MESSENGER to the brethren everywhere, and I ask our ministers everywhere to carefully consider Elder E. Rittenhouse's article in October number, and see if they can't endorse it. I do with all my heart. I think it would be much better for us, dear brethren. Pray for me and mine. Your little brother in gospel bonds.

J. C. HENDRICKSON.

FLOYD COUNTY, VA., Aug. 10, 1886.—*Dear Brother:*—The MESSENGER comes to us regularly and we are always glad to receive it, as it always brings good news from different portions of the country. We love to read the editorials. We are living where we can hear almost all sorts of preaching. I have just returned from the Smith River Association; the preaching seemed to me as good as I ever heard; peace and good will seemed to abound. We have just passed through trials and difficulties, but all seems quiet. O, how much we enjoy the genial sunshine after a long, cold and cloudy season. Wishing you may long live to publish your paper, I close.

V. H. PENDLETON.

BIG SANDY, TEXAS, November, 1886.—*Beloved Brother Mitchell:*—Having often heard my father, Elder Jeff. Stringer, speak of you as a beloved brother and minister of Christ, I have felt desirous to write a brief sketch of my Christian experience and send you for publication in your valuable MESSENGER. Three years ago I felt to be quite overcome with an impressive sense of my awful condition as a vile sinner against God, and thought I must do something for relief. My feeble attempts to pray availed me nothing, and I soon became so prostrated as to think I had some serious bodily affliction, and was as helpless as a little child for several days. Kind friends gave all the attention and assistance they could, and death seemed to be near at hand. My awful sinful condition was on my mind

continually, and I was constantly saying, O, what shall I do? What can I do? But I now think it was not physical but mental sickness and distress that prostrated me. But blessed be God, there on my bed, relief was given me, and I could then put all my trust for eternal salvation in our glorious Mediator, the Lord Jesus. I felt assured that no power on earth could have given such relief and caused me to rejoice in spirit as I then did. My next impression was to go to the church and ask for a home among the Lord's people, but it would be suggested to my mind that "you are not a fit subject for the church." So I kept putting it off till I could no longer forbear, and Saturday before the 5th Sunday in October, 1886, in much weakness, I ventured before the church conference, and as my poor, aged father had just recovered from a three months' spell of sickness was presiding as Moderator, my sympathies, or something, so overcame me that I could not tell my feelings as fully as I had desired. But the dear brethren and sisters appeared to be satisfied and extended the hand of fellowship, and the next day I was baptized by Elder J. K. Holcombe, my father being too feeble to administer the ordinance. One other sister was also received and baptized at the same time. Dear brethren, I submit the above for the MESSENGER if you think proper to give it a place. I desire the prayers of all the dear saints of God. MRS. NANCY J. BAIRD.

HOPE, ARK., Dec. 21, 1886.—*Dear Brother Respass:*—The MESSENGER is all the preaching that myself and wife get to hear. There is what is called preaching in this country, but it is no preaching to us; no Baptist Church nearer than sixteen miles, and we are old and feeble and but seldom can go. I will be seventy years old in January next, and my wife four years younger. I have been a Baptist over fifty years, if ever one, and there has never been a charge preferred against me in a church, though I feel less than the least of all saints, if one at all. When I would do good evil is present; that I would I do not, and that I would not that do I, and if saved it is by grace, not for works of righteousness which I have done; but according to his mercy he saved me by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Yours to serve, D. B. SMITH.

STOWERS, KY., Nov. 3, 1886.—*Dear Brethren:*—The Lord has visited his saints at Sulphur Springs, Simpson county, Ky., again. Seven intelligent, precious ones joined the church. The Lord sent Elder John Perkins to us, and was mouth and wisdom to him, for evidently he spoke with the ability that God giveth. What an astonishing and wonderful gift the Lord has bestowed upon Brother Perkins! He is a valuable gift to the church. Our church is one in sentiment again—the Means question happily disposed of. “How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” Love and peace prevails with us. For fear, though, the impression may be made that there was out-spoken dissension among us, I will just say our good people were very respectful towards each other, and always careful of each other’s feelings. May the Lord be praised for his goodness towards his people. Yours unworthily,

J. W. STOWERS.

RANDOLPH COUNTY, N. C., Oct., 1886.—*Dear Brother:*—I can’t get along well without the MESSENGER. Although we have the word of God as a sign-board to the traveler, to direct us on the rough journey of life, yet we love to have a medium by which we can hear from our friends and fellow-travelers going the same way, how they are getting along, and what they are meeting with on the way. This is a fast age of the world, especially this season of the year, and a mighty hurry and flurry among the people. Religion is greatly on the increase, and money on the decrease, but each member brings a dime, and every dime helps a little. I said religion, and was I right or wrong? I know the Apostle James says: “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain.” But this is among you (us)! How about the not among us? Perhaps their religion is vain too—easily puffed up, heady and high-minded. Dear brother, remember our poor little church in your prayers—only eight members, and dwells where “Satan’s seat is.” But I feel sure she has some there that have not defiled their garments, and have kept themselves unspotted from the world, and they have the promise that they shall walk with Him in white. Yours, as ever.

VANDELIA E. JONES.

WHIGHAM, GA., 31st Dec., 1886.—*Dear Brethren:*—Having made a short tour of preaching, and many brethren requesting me to write, I do so through the MESSENGER. I left home 7th December, 1886, and reached home again 26th December. I visited ten churches in the Ocklockonee and Union Associations, and one in the San Pedro Association, and I met with hearty receptions by all the dear saints. On my tour I visited Elder T. W. Stallings, who was suffering greatly with a wound received in his right arm in the late war. Elder Warren Battle* was very low with consumption; also, Elder Moses Westberry, who is about 80 years old, is very low; but while the old servants are going out, there are young ones coming in. When I reached home I was sick with cold and fatigue, and found my wife sick with pneumonia; but we are now getting along very well. So, dear brethren, farewell in love.

PETER T. EVERITT.

* Since died.

FAYETVILLE, TENN., Dec. 8, 1886.—*Dear Brethren:*—I have been desirous for some time to write you in appreciation of the MESSENGER, especially the last volume. While I hold the Bible as being the only truly inspired work on record, yet I favor a medium through which the dear people of God can speak often one to another; and I have never seen a periodical more adapted to that end than THE GOSPEL MESSENGER; and while I do not favor strife and bitterness anywhere, I do think a free and full interchange of views on all important subjects, in a brotherly spirit, is profitable to all concerned. I have often felt comforted and confirmed in reading the MESSENGER, and especially the editorials and experiences, and when I hear a brother from Texas, one from Indiana, one from Maryland, one from Kentucky, one from Georgia, one from Tennessee, etc., and hear them all speak substantially the same things, it makes me think of the pomegranates and bells on the garments, testifying that our great High Priest liveth and reigneth, and that his peculiar people are all taught of the Lord. And may He spare you and enable you, by sound speech, to comfort all the mourners and bring joy to the hearts of all the afflicted. I subscribe myself a miserable debtor to grace,

E. W. WALKER.

ARGYLE, CUMBERLAND COUNTY, N. C., October, 1886.—*Dear Brother Respass:*—There is a great deal on my mind that I would like to write to you, but I fear that I shall never be able to do it, as my nerves continue to get worse, and I am in a badly unsettled state of mind, being twenty-eight miles from any Baptist Church, or any Baptists, except myself and wife. I have just traveled fifty-five miles to our—the Little River—Association, in my feeble state of health. But the Lord was with me, and it was a feast of fat things to me, for I heard a great deal of what I thought good preaching, and I, for one, felt like the Lord was in that place. Brother Respass, I am well pleased with the MESSENGER, and hope I will be able to aid in the extension of its circulation after a while. I hope you will pray for us, and pray the Lord to send his gospel into this community, for it does seem like a desert place. I must close by signing myself, your brother in love.

I. J. CARTER.

CORN HOUSE, ALA., 24th Nov., 1886.—*Dear Brethren:*—On the morning of September 17th I took leave of my loved ones, and in company with my aged mother, started for Texas. After a dashing ride of twelve hundred and ten miles, we landed in sight of the beautiful little city of Rockdale, where we expected to meet four dear brothers, three of whom I had not seen in nine years. The whistle blew, the train stopped and on rushed four stalwart Texians, dashing past where I sat, and grasping their aged mother. It was a scene that my feeble pen cannot portray. A short drive brought us to the home of one of my brothers, and there once more in life, and perhaps the last time, we were all permitted to sit at the same table, and *mother* at the head, to wait on us. It must have been a source of gratification to her to look around the table at her five boys, two of whom are faithful deacons of the Primitive Baptist Church, one a private member of the same church, one in good standing with the Methodists, and the unworthy writer doing what he can in the line of the ministry. After my arrival in Texas, I found my first appointment advertised for the first Sunday in October, at Pleasant Hill, and on arriving at the place I

found a large, beautiful house situated in a nice grove of post-oaks. The house is certainly a credit to the Methodist order, to which it belongs. A large concourse of people gathered by the hour appointed for preaching, not to hear a Bishop, Presiding Elder, or any other dignitary of that order, but a little Primitive Baptist of Alabama. There I tried to preach my *first* sermon in Texas, with the ability the Lord afforded, and judging from the liberal manner they contributed in defraying my expenses, they were well pleased. The people of Pleasant Hill will long be remembered, and if this meets the eye of any of them, they will please accept my thanks for their liberality. My next appointment was at New Salem, where I met some precious brethren and sisters. To my great surprise I met one brother (Phillips) that I had known in Alabama. There I tried to speak to a small congregation on Saturday, and Saturday night to a very large one, and Sunday to a small but attentive audience. Monday morning I boarded the train in company with my brother in the flesh to visit Bell and Coryell counties. I filled appointments at Cedar Grove, Pilot Knob, Little Flock and Pleasant Valley (school-house). At Cedar Grove Elder W. G. Norman, formerly of Alabama, was with me. He also was with me at several other places. At Pilot Knob I met the celebrated Elder Downing, the "Cow Boy Preacher." He is, of himself, a wonderful display of the power of God in taking a wild cow boy from the plains of Texas, destitute of a common education, and sending him forth preaching the gospel in demonstration and power. Such is God's work, and it is marvelous in our eyes. I never expect to meet a man that handles the deep fundamental points in salvation with more ease. After a week's visit among brethren and friends in Bell county, we again started to Lee county to attend a three days' meeting at Beulah Church, it being their communion meeting. There I met the aged pastor of the church, Elder Miley, formerly of Alabama. I would state here that at this same place, ten years ago, I was arraigned before a Missionary Baptist Conference for believing it right to wash the saints' feet in a church capacity, and would have been excluded if I had not joined the Primitive Church. I was put up to preach

on Friday, and I can never describe my feelings, for I had longed to visit that place. The Missionaries that formerly held forth there have moved off and sold the house to the Primitive Baptists. We had a pleasant meeting Friday and Saturday; Elder Miley preached an excellent sermon. He is a sound, consistent Baptist, an able defender of the doctrine of God our Saviour. The old soldier is nearly worn out, and must soon lay his armor by. The meeting was a little unpleasant Saturday, for it became necessary to exclude four or five members, mostly for uniting with a secret order, known as the Farmers' Alliance. I would here give a word of advice to the brethren in Texas: It is best for us to steer clear of all such, for they are institutions of the world, and the Saviour says His Kingdom is *not* of this world, and hence we should not participate in any of them, it makes no difference how harmless they seem to be. If we are members of the Church of Christ it is institution enough. We are under every obligation we possibly can be to assist each other in every way possible. But to return: Sunday we had a glorious meeting; between five hundred and a thousand people assembled, and to them I tried to preach my *last* sermon in Texas, after which the saints proceeded to commune and wash each others feet, in obedience to the command of the Saviour. A scene was witnessed on that occasion that is rarely ever seen: I, as unworthy as I felt, had the pleasure of handing the bread and wine to the officiating deacons, who were brothers in the flesh and brothers to the administrator. The day will long be remembered by many who were present. Monday, October 25th, I bade farewell to mother, brothers and sisters, brethren, sisters and friends, boarded the cars, and after a three days' pleasant journey I landed safely at home and found my loved ones all well, for which the Lord be praised. In conclusion, would say that my visit of one month in Texas was passed pleasantly, forming the acquaintance of many precious brethren and sisters that I am sure I'll never see face to face in this life again. But ere long we will finish our course, be done with the care and turmoil of this world. "But if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal

in the heavens." I trust that it may be the pleasure of God to permit me to visit you again; if not, 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."—2 Cor., xiii., 11. Yours to serve,

W. R. AVERY.

DAWSON, GA., Jan. 5, 1887.—*Dear Brother:*—We are having fatal sickness here now. There have been many deaths in this section of late. Sister Parker, of Dawson, died a few days ago, and Elder I. L. Blackshear, of Cuthbert, is partially paralyzed; his left side is about dead, I hear. I hope the good Lord will restore him to health again, that he may continue to preach for the people, for he is a good man and a sweet preacher. My health has not been good of late. We have no trouble in the churches in this country. Your brother in hope.

W. T. EVERITT.

OBITUARIES.

MRS. DELILA ANN BATIE.

My niece, DELILA ANN BATIE, daughter of Andy and Adaline Crump-ton, was born May, 1859, and died June, 1886, of typhoid fever. I do not remember the date of her marriage to Joseph Batie. About two years before their marriage, they were both baptised into the Missiouary Baptist Church. She left two little children, the youngest about five months old. Her father had her carried to his house during her sickness, so they could help her husband wait on her. She was a great songstress during her life, and delighted in hearing singing through her sickness. She had grown very weak, and just before she died she called to her brother and said, "Tommy, I want you to sing

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

I believe I can help you." She raised up on the bed and helped him sing one verse, and then she said, "I feel stronger; I believe I can help you sing it all," and she did so. Then laying back on her pillow, she turned her eyes to her babe and said: "God bless you, honey, I must go and leave you, but Jesus will take care of you; I am not afraid to leave you with Jesus." Then said, "Jesus' blood has washed my soul as white as snow." With these remarks she passed away, leaving a father and mother, three brothers and four sisters, with many relatives and friends, together with a loving, kind and affectionate husband, who has nothing to regret in his

treatment of her. We all mourn her loss, and sympathize with the dear husband and little children. But blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Grieve no more, dear parents and beloved husband; grieve not for Delila Ann, since she is gone to heaven.

Written by her aunt,
Spradley, Ala.

E. C. CRUMPTON.

If any reader of the MESSENGER can give me the whereabouts of S. M. Vandiver, (my brother) I will be thankful.

MRS. MARY J. JACKSON.

MRS. MARY JOSEPHINE JACKSON was born February 25, 1859, departed this life October 8, 1886. She was raised in Union county, Ga., the daughter of R. N. and L. A. Amos; came to Houston in 1880, on a visit to her aunts, the Misses Amos. December 14, 1882, she gave her hand in marriage to Mr. C. H. Jackson, Byron, Ga. In the same year she united herself with the M. E. Church. She leaves a sorrowing husband, two small children, mother, sister and half brother to mourn the loss of Napper. After an illness of two days, her bright spirit wended its way homeward—crossed over the river—aye, the river of death! Yes, Napper's pure spirit, safely garnered home, can rest, sweetly rest, on the bosom of her Father, God. Napper was beautiful, she was good, discharging her duties with patience and forbearance. To her husband she was kind and affectionate, to her children ever loving and tender, to her relatives and friends she was generous and true. But Napper has gone; the house is made desolate, the husband sad and the babies are lonely. The still, small voice has been heard in its whispering, "Soul, come up higher; thy home is not here, thy home is above."

W. E. WARREN.

MRS. MARY PHILLIPS

Was born 28th May, 1848, and died 16th October, 1884, aged thirty-six years and six months. Her maiden name was Berry. She leaves a husband and four children to mourn her death. She was a good companion and a loving mother. She professed faith in Christ and joined the Missionary Baptists, and lived a member until her death. She died of consumption. She bore her sickness with Christian patience. She sent for me a few days before she died, and when I got there she said she wanted me to sing and pray one more time for her. I read the ciii. Psalm and sang, and tried to pray for her. She then talked to me about her troubles. She told me she had prayed that she might get well, so she could join the Old Baptist, (she had become dissatisfied with the Missionary Baptist). While her body sleeps in the mother earth, we believe her spirit has gone to God who gave it; and when the trump of God sounds she will rise with a body fashioned like Jesus. Dear children, your mother is gone from this world of sin. She has paid the debt that you will soon have to pay. May the good Lord prepare you to meet your mother in heaven, where there will be no sorrow. Dear brother, may you

imitate the life that she did, and when you come to leave this world, God will be with you.

Dearest sister, thou hast left us,
Here thy loss we deeply feel,
But it's God that has bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal.

Yet, again we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is fled,
Then in Heaven, with joy to greet thee,
Where no farewell tears are shed.

DAVID PHILLIPS.

A. J. HARDGRAVE.

A. J. HARDGRAVE was born in Williamson county, Tenn., in 1826, and immigrated to this county with his father when a small boy, and was baptized into the fellowship of New Providence Church by Elder J. D. Miracle on the 14th day of May, 1882; had never belonged to any church up to that time. He dated his experience back to his seventeenth year, I learn from his neighbors, that his walk has ever been orderly. I have been acquainted with him since the year 1872, and have never seen the first wrong act in him. He was sober, truthful and honest; a good neighbor, a good and kind husband and father. He was very industrious, owned a good farm and provided bountifully for his family. He suffered with chronic diarrhoea for a year or over, and took his bed in October, 1885. His sufferings were great until the first day of February, 1886, when he was released by death. He never murmured, but took his illness very patiently. I was with him and saw him breathe his last. He was in his right mind to the last, and said he was not only willing to go, but wanted to go; that his way was as bright as a gold dollar, and he died perfectly happy, slapping his hands as long as he had strength to raise his arms, and when he could raise them no longer he motioned his hands. He leaves a widow and a large family of children and grand children. May God sanctify his death to the good of his widow and children, and may He be praised for His goodness.

Johnson Co., Ark.

J. H. SANDERS.

JAMES BRIDGES.

Cousin JAMES BRIDGES, son of Mr. and Mrs. Benj. Bridges, passed quietly away September 11, 1886. He was born 18th October, 1866. It was hard to give him up, but we must bow in submission to God's will, and learn to say, O God, thy will be done, and not ours. Our Heavenly Father saw fit to take him from us, and dear relatives, weep not over our lost one; he has gone to rest with the angels and we cannot call him back, but we can go to him

MAGGIE C. GROVES.

By request of the dear mother of the deceased, in addition to the above: I visited him on the day of his departure at 1 o'clock at night, that being the seventeenth day of his illness, and finding him in a sinking condition,

(4)

and learning that he desired to see me a day or two before, I asked him if he wanted to talk to me? He said, "Yes, I do." He seemed to be rational, and recognized me, but said "we could not talk there, and we would walk out to the lot; he wanted to talk privately." I said to him, "You cannot walk to the lot, Jimmie." "O, Yes," said he, "I am better." I put him off as best I could. I asked him what he thought about his future? He said "that was with the Lord." He seemed to be suffering then so intensely I said nothing more to him. A few hours passed and he seemed to become calm, and I approached him again on the subject, and he said "he was in the hands of the Lord, and that his suffering was just for his disobedience, and that he hoped he would soon be better off." And soon he passed quietly away into sweet sleep, without a quiver or frown on his countenance. The writer attended the funeral services in his weak and imperfect way, using the words spoken by Job: "If a man die shall he live again?"

WM. A. STRICKLIN.

Yazoo County, Miss.

MRS. SARAH LANIER.

My dear mother, MRS. SARAH LANIER, died at her home in Emanuel, county, Ga., August 9, 1885, in the sixty-second year of her age. Through grace she obtained a hope in Christ when she was quite young, and in her twenty-third year was married to my father, Wm. Lanier. Three daughters were born unto them, of whom I am the oldest. She was much distressed for two years previous to her death, by the death of her sister and a little grand child, my son. I do not claim perfection for my precious mother, but think it is not saying too much to class her among the best of wives and mothers, and like the blessed Saviour, whose image was stamped upon her character, she was all the time doing good to the poor, the needy, the sick, or the stranger, without sounding a trumpet before her. She was a devoted Primitive Baptist in principle, and greatly enjoyed gospel preaching, the songs of praise and the privilege of assembling with the Lord's people for worship. Many of the Lord's ministers can testify that her house was a home for them, and she spared no pains to make them comfortable, and while she had her own trials and afflictions, she often seemed to forget them to administer to the wants of others. But her labor of love on earth is all done. She has fought a good fight, and finished the course, and has received the unfading crown of glory. I could write a week about her, and then give but a sketch of what I feel, but I will close, asking the prayers of Christians for myself and my unconverted family.

LAVINAH COLEMAN.

MRS. MARY G. BROWN.

My grandmother, Mrs. MARY G. BROWN, died at the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. Stephen Dodson, in Clayton county, Ga., May 26, 1886. Deceased was born in North Carolina, February 3, 1793, making her age ninety-three years, three months and twenty-three days. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Bethlehem, (dissolved) in Clayton county,

Ga., in October, 1833, making her a member of the church near fifty-three years. She was ever faithful to attend her meetings, if not providentially hindered. Her walk and talk was ever that becoming a Christian; always having a word for the distressed. It was once said by a Missionary preacher, that if he wanted to find a true and devoted Christian, he would go to Grandma Brown. No one knew her but to love her. Deceased had twelve children, sixty-nine grand children, one hundred and forty great grand children, and thirty-nine great-great grand children; in all two hundred and sixty. As ever, your brother,

Hapeville, Ga.

W. Y. W. DODSON.

RACHEL BRAMBLETT.

Only a few months since, Death, the mighty leveler of all things earthly, hurled his cruel dart, and another fills the silent tomb. Aunt RACHEL BRAMBLETT, wife of James Bramblett, died at her home in Bedford county, Tenn., August 6, 1886. She was born July, 1826, hence she was in her sixty-first year. But she has been called away, leaving behind a devoted husband, five children and many friends to mourn their loss, which we feel assured is her eternal gain, after only a few days of intense suffering, of congestion of the stomach and liver.

"Gently the passing spirit fled,
Sustained by grace divine;
Oh, may such grace on us be shed,
And make our end like thine."

At an early age she professed a hope in Christ which was exhibited even in her last days by the patient endurance of her suffering. She was a strict member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and lived a devoted, consistent Christian to the end. As a mother she was all that could be asked; as a wife, was faithful, loving and kind; as a church member, orderly and pious. Her seat at church was seldom vacant so long as she lived; even on Sunday before she was a corpse the Friday following, she attended her regular meeting. But now as she is gone, we can realize—

A vacant seat is left there,
A vacant seat at home;
But she has gone to heaven,
There with the blest to roam.

Then grieve not for thy dear mother,
For Heaven is free from care;
It's free from sin and sorrow—
Pain nor death can enter there.

Glorious truth, there will be in Heaven,
All we yearn for here below;
Safe within the golden portals,
Strength and beauty, both immortal,
All the pure in heart shall know.

The church has lost a pious mother in Israel, whose godly walk and Christian love has been the example and encouragement to all who knew her. Her remains were interred in the family graveyard, and burial

largely attended. Dear Aunt, fare thee well! Thy work is done. To-day you wear angel's plumes in the realms of the sky. Dear uncle, weep not. Thy grief is great, but remember that "The Lord doeth all things well," and that she who is gone will be your guardian angel, ever hovering near to pour the healing balm of comfort into your troubled soul. Look up, O, bereaved ones! She is your beacon star to point you to heaven. May the Lord comfort us, and may we live nearer the Saviour as we draw near the end, that there we may meet the dear one again where parting is unknown.

RACHIE RIPPY.

Wartrace, Tenn.

JOHN W. ESTES.

Died at his residence, three miles south of Overton, July 15, 1886, Mr. John W. Estes. He was stricken down while at Tyler, on a visit to relatives, full of life and buoyant with hope. His attack was sudden and unexpected. He gradually grew worse, and his brother brought him home. Medical aid was sought, but the decree had gone forth, and all the appliances of art could not stay the disease. He bore his sufferings with resignation and Christian fortitude, and was heard to say, "It is strange how the Lord in mercy can remember one so vile as I." He was a good neighbor, always willing to accommodate his friends when in his power. He was honest, truthful and just in all his dealings with his fellow-man, and if he had an enemy in the world the writer is not aware of the fact. As a husband and father he was kind, affectionate and considerate. He joined the Primitive Baptist church at Salem, and was baptized by the pastor, J. K. Halcomb. As a member he was firm, consistent and unwavering; and we can truthfully say, the community has lost one of her best citizens, the church one of its brightest ornaments. And now let us indulge the hope that our loss is his eternal gain; that he has gone to reap the reward of a life well spent. To his heart-broken and grief-stricken wife we would say mourn not as one who has no hope. 'Tis true

The light is from the household gone,
A voice you loved is stilled,
A place is vacant at your hearth
Which never can be filled.

A gentle heart that throbb'd but now,
With tenderness and love,
Has hush'd its weary throbbing here
To throb in bliss above.

Rusk County, Texas.

J. K. H.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

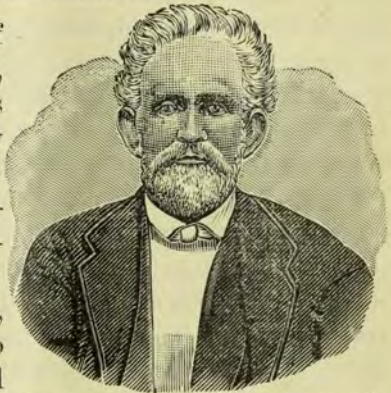
Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 3. BUTLER, GA., MARCH, 1887. Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER T. K. PURSLEY.

I was the oldest son of James and Nancy Pursley, both of whom were natives of South Carolina. My mother's maiden name was King. After their marriage they moved to Murray county, Tenn., where I was born, 26th June, 1810, after which they moved to McMinn county, then called the Hiwassee Purchase. When about fourteen years old, while ploughing one day, I was made to see and feel myself such a guilty sinner in the sight of God that I left my horse and ran to the house, and for three years and six months I was in deep distress, and often asked ministers and other good people to pray for me, and tried to pray for myself day and night, but all seemed to be in vain. One night, at a large camp meeting of the Presbyterians, I took my seat at the extreme corner of the arbor, by a post, and thought I would never trouble good people any more; feeling that I was without God and without hope, almost, in the world. When the ministers were extending an invitation to penitents, I thought I would not go—that it was no use



—when all at once there was a light shined around me as bright as the sun; my burden fell off, and “Glory to God” I cried. I arose from my seat and gave my hand to a great many people who came around. I loved everybody, and felt that I could take them all in my arms and tell them of the love and mercy of Jesus. At that time (if I am not deceived) the Lord done a work for me that I had long tried to do for myself. This has been nearly sixty years ago, and I can see, in my imagination, the past and its surroundings as plainly as on that never to be forgotten night. Since that night, often when in doubts and fears, has my mind gone back to the endeared spot, and I would get fresh courage and go on my way rejoicing. My parents being Presbyterians, I joined them, but soon became dissatisfied with my baptism. I had never heard a Baptist, as there were none near where we lived, and I had never been far from home, as I had to work hard to help my mother raise my little brothers and sisters, my father having died when I was about thirteen years old. As I have already said, I was not satisfied with my baptism, and reading in my Testament that our blessed Saviour went down into the water to be baptized, it was my desire to be baptized the same way. I heard of a Baptist Church several miles from home, and found out when their preaching time was; so when the day came I set off to try to find the place. When I got there they were baptizing, and I thought it was the most beautiful sight I ever beheld. I felt like these were the people I wanted to live with, but knew that my mother would be very much displeased with me should I join them, so thought I would say something to her about it. She objected very seriously, saying I would throw myself away joining those ignorant people; but being impressed with a sense of duty, and hoping my mother would pardon me, it was not long before I cast my lot with the people I loved so much. I soon had impressions to preach, but

decided I never would attempt such a thing, for I was nothing but a boy, with but a very limited education, and could not read a chapter or hymn correctly. My impression became so strong, and my trouble so great, that I thought I would try to relieve my mind by holding family prayer, but it was as great a cross to speak to my mother about it, as the attempt to sing and pray in our little family. But this did not rid my mind of the impression to preach, as I had hoped. I would sometimes try to pray at night meetings and other places. From some cause it was noised about that the orphan boy would have to preach, but I did not know how they knew anything about my feelings. My church (the Friendship Baptist Church) gave me license to preach. (This was in McMinn county, Tenn., before there was any division.) I folded my license, put it away, and resolved to try to live right, but not to tell any one that I was even a member of the church, as I was on the eve of starting to South Carolina to visit my grandmother, to escape trying to preach. I could leave my home and people, but could not get rid of the impression to preach. I now began to feel that my trials were fast increasing, and the cross getting heavier, if possible, as my grandmother, uncle and aunts were strict seceders, and should I attempt such a thing as speaking in public would be bitterly opposed; and as I felt that I could not live without trying to do what I felt God was requiring of me, I decided that I would venture to tell my grandmother, should she ask me again, as she had several times done, "What was the matter; was I sick, or what troubled me?" as she would say she "could hear me groaning and sighing in the night." So one day she said to me: "Thomas, I know there is something the matter; did you not get into some trouble before you left home?" I now felt that I was compelled to tell her to ease her mind, as I found she, as well as my uncle and aunts

were getting uneasy about me. But, just as I expected, they all seemed alarmed at the idea of my attempting to preach, and said positively for me never to let it be known that I thought of such a thing; that I would disgrace myself and all of my family; asking me how could I think of preaching without an education, (or trying, rather,) and many discouraging words they often spoke to me. But I had gotten to the point where I felt that it was better to obey God than man. God in great mercy opened a way for my beginning, which was in the following manner: I visited a gentleman thought to be in the last stage of consumption, and was standing at the foot of his bed, and he fixed his eyes on me and some one said, "young man, he wants to speak to you." I stepped around to the side of his bed and asked him how he was? He said he "was a poor sinner." He did not know that I was a professor. I told him Christ was a great Saviour, rich and full of mercy. He gazed upon me with great tears in his eyes as he lay upon his back, and asked me if I would pray for him. I told him I would try, and said to the people, "let us pray." Some sat down and some stood up, and all looked as if they were filled with astonishment. I arose, pointing him to Jesus as the way, the truth and the life, whereby he might be saved, before I thought who I was, or where I was, a poor orphan boy, five hundred miles from home. He died in a short time afterwards, professing a hope in Christ. I did not see him any more. His wife sent for me to have prayer meeting at her house, and after much hesitation I finally consented, and Sunday after his death was the day appointed. It got out that that boy was going to preach there that day, and as there were no Baptists anywhere near there then, a great many people assembled—so many that the house would not near hold them. Some gentleman asked me if I would be willing to go down in a little grove near by, and they would fix seats out of some new

rails that were there. They set a little table under a large pine tree and laid a Bible and hymn-book on it. My feelings can only be imagined by those who have traveled the same road. As I opened the hymn-book my eyes fell on these words, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" which words we sang, after which I tried to pray, then opened the Bible, and my eyes fell on these words: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." This was my first effort, which was in York district, S. C., three miles from Yorkville, in 1833. Since that day I have traveled thousands of miles, in different States, through heat and cold, and tried to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; have supplied churches and met with many good brethren, sisters, friends and strangers, who have all been very kind to me, and notwithstanding I have had some bright days, and have been able to pluck some sweet flowers by the way, yet my trials have been great, and I have often traveled through darkness, gloom and fears. All that I have ever done or said in trying to preach, I have done from a sense of duty. Now if I am ever saved it will be by grace alone. This is a part of the orphan boy's experience.

T. K. PURSLEY.

Dear Brother Respass:—By the request of Brother Dossey, of Texas, and some other brethren and sisters in Georgia, I send you this very imperfectly written biography which, if you think worthy, you will please give a place in your dear MESSENGER. I could have written many other of his trials, which would have made it more interesting to all those who have been made to pass through the like trials; but for fear of taking up too much space, have only written most of what he had our oldest son to write as he would tell him, a few days before his death. He was perfectly rational to the last.

Now, dear Brother Respass, if one so unworthy may claim the endearing appellation, I hope you will remember me in your prayers; I often feel the need of and

desire the prayers of the dear brethren and sisters. In much affliction, your unworthy sister, if one at all.

MRS. E. K. PURSLEY.

Andersonville, Ga., July 30, 1885.

DANVILLE, IND., Jan. 3d, 1887.

Elder J. R. Respass and Readers of the Gospel Messenger:—The great apostle to the Gentiles in his Ephesian letter has laid down some plain gospel truths, from which, as governing principles, we may profitably reason from the Scriptures concerning the spiritual kingdom of Christ; one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling—iv. chapter. This seems to lay the foundation for the following truths to harmoniously follow in connection in the scheme of redemption through Christ for fallen sinners. Their first state being described as aliens, strangers, dead in trespasses and sin, such being their condition, by nature children of wrath, if this is the true character of all the heirs of promise, gosselly described, there can be no vital or life relation existing before quickening by the Spirit. But this state is a suitable one for grace from God through Christ to make its glorious display, that when the saved from that state understands the fellowship of the mystery that has been hid in God from ages past and gone, but is now made manifest by the appearing of the Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who has abolished that death they were in, and brought life of another kind they were never in possession of, and immortality as a result that fits and prepares them to see God as he is in the light and be like him. Surely when brought into such a glorious state contemplated by the gospel of their salvation, that assures them they will be accepted in the beloved. Let us now begin personally to examine where and how this great change commenced, that contemplates so much for the sinner. The negative is, he or she cannot give themselves a life

that they do not now, nor never did have, then if received it must come from the one who alone possesses it to give. The gospel tells us God has given us life, and that life is in his Son. It must begin personally then with quickening or giving life. Life from Christ given is evidenced to the one receiving by feeling as never before felt, hungering for what never was desired before, thirsting for what they never knew existed till now. This life being of a higher order of life than relates to this natural world, with all its diversified forms of life, it causes the individual to cast off in loathing and abhorring former delights and practices, and hunger and thirst after what the gospel describes. O, how this life struggles within to attain what is set before them in the gospel. God, who is rich in mercy, having provided in Christ to deal with them in the way of mercy, the Spirit within begins in a weak, struggling way, to grasp or appropriate what that requires, and cries give me Jesus or I die. Never was the breast, with its health-giving supply, more suitably adapted to the new born babe, than is the gospel, sincere milk of the word, adapted to this state of things, hence all things are of God. Breath is not the cause of life, but the effect to a mortal state, and one way of its continuance. So faith is not the cause of spiritual life, but the evidence of the fact, and a fruit of the Spirit that gave the life and becomes the source from which the life is developed, so the apostle could say I live, yet not I, separated from Christ, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. In this sense we are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, and if children, then heirs and joint heirs in the inheritance of the saints. I wish now to ask you, one and all, is the first state described yours? Do you know by sore experience that a part of your history and life here as a mortal being, is evidence against you that at that time

you were an alien and stranger to what the gospel describes to be in Christ? Can you not remember when no appetite, no craving desire of soul for the mercy of Christ, how dead and insensible to the charms of Christ as set forth in the gospel? Are you so now? I hope I hear you say no, no. Do you not wonder at the change in yourself, and do you not wonder that others around you are so careless and indifferent to what interests you so much? The apostle tells the cause, ascribes the whole, first, to God's choice; secondly, to God's purpose or plan, revealed in Christ. The calling is according to the purpose; the one Spirit that gives the life makes the vital life union, that unites all the members of the one body to Christ, the head, and to one another member in particular, so here is the truth of the text, there is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. Things becoming this doctrine, or consistent with this plan, I have been trying to preach over thirty-six years, and if not deceived, have a hope that it embraces me, a poor sinner, trusting in that grace given in Christ before the world began, and having tasted, as I hope that God is gracious to me, I would magnify that grace. If I am not deceived, the GOSPEL MESSENGER advocates this doctrine, and because of it I greatly desire its continuance, and the peace and prosperity of editors and correspondents. If you can fellowship me I desire an interest in your prayers. Yesterday being our meeting where my membership is, the thermometer sixteen degrees below zero, I started, facing the piercing wind, feeling my old body shivering and shuddering as I went, but when I arrived a few faithful brethren and sisters were there, and others not expected, and among the number a precious sister, raised under my ministry, after preaching came forward and confessed a hope obtained through God's mercy eighteen years ago. O, how joyful was her reception and how sweet the fellowship. She had come three

miles in a buggy alone, to discharge this neglected duty. May many more follow the example, is my prayer. Yours in hope, E. D. THOMAS.

EMMET, ARK., Dec. 28th, 1886.

Mrs. R. A. Philips—Very Dear Sister:—I thought before I received your communication in GOSPEL MESSENGER that I would write no more, nor ask questions, seeing I was so poorly gifted in communicating my ideas, but in this I find I am like I am by preaching, reviewing my endeavors so much weakness is discovered, I almost resolve to quit trying. When necessity seems to demand, I am again in my weakness making the attempt. Seeing Brother Woodson's communication in last number of the MESSENGER, and also contemplating that perhaps the consideration in your communication expressed in these words, "The hearing and following is applicable to the life of faith, and not the walk of a child—fulfilled in following Jesus in the regeneration instead of obedience to the gospel rule afterwards." I say contemplating that these suggestions possibly grew out of a failure to locate and identify the sheep, and consequently failed altogether to accomplish the end intended by the suggestion made to you, viz: To cause your scrutinizng mind and fluent pen to clearly present the responsibility resting upon the household of faith. But for myself, my dear sister, while I rejoice in your review of the types and the characteristics identifying anti-Christian teachers, I am made to feel that the instruction contained in 4th verse of 10th John is applicable directly to me individually, and has direct reference to the gospel rule, and seeing my failure to recognize his voice, also that he has gone out before me leaving his footprint for my direction to follow after, I am admonished that I have failed in my covenant in the profession of faith and disobeyed the very first

commandment, to wit, deny self and follow me, therefore, with the apostle, my sister, I die daily. That self of mine, and the disposition to leave off following Jesus, is my very greatest besetment, and that only it is I feel that makes it so hard for me to take up my pen and clearly define to others the blest instruction which that glorious grace given has taught me. This responsibility is the prompting of these questions being submitted to you. With a very strong desire my mind surveyed the many readers of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, desiring that each little one who was saying in all candor and honesty, under impressions that I do not want to be disobedient, nor do I want to be presumptuous, but if I only could know his (Jesus) commandment, I would make any and every sacrifice to do it; all I want is definiteness. Now my dear sister, there are more governments in this world beside the Lord's, for God said of man, "Let them have dominion," &c. The make up of God's government is predestination and decrees with sovereign power, consequently there can neither be failure nor error, therefore if error is in demonstration it must necessarily exist in some other government, hence the necessity of redemption, that the purpose of God's glory as declared from the beginning be effected. But since man, as a creature, cannot be equal to his Creator, or the thing created equal to him who creates, it is evident that imperfection exists in the creature, and therefore imperfection must be dependant upon perfection for a rule of action, in order in the exercise of his dominion he may escape all the results of imperfection. So to accomplish his glory as purposed, God sends the Spirit of his Son into your heart, teaching your imperfections, and in contrast revealing the perfection of God, which when revealed show forth God's glory, and thus instructing you that the only way under heaven or among men to glorify God in obedience to that holy calling, which is of God, is to deny the crea-

ture and follow this the only salvation (Jesus) and all this was exemplified in the Son of the Virgin Mary, the seed of the woman. Therefore, my dear sister, being thus fortified with instruction, and seeing our brother or sister having need, failing to put in demonstration the life of this faith as the salt of the earth, light of the world, lets obey the covenant of church ordinance and be helps for one another, considering one another to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another to love and good works, and so much the more as you see the day approaching. Have you watched it? the slow, but steady march of light in the eastern horizon, until the full face of the sun of our day may be seen, then change or transfer in imagination from this natural to that spiritual sphere, and learn this rich lesson, for it is the same author reflected in both, and shedding this gives knowledge of that, and this diligence exercised make to you and I, as well as to others, the election of us by that same Spirit evident, then to me filled with comfort. But I must close, but before doing so, let me just say that originally man was created in the image of God, to reflect that image is God's will, to do God's will Jesus came exclaiming on the cross "it is finished," it has been fully done. He (Jesus) is the brightness of his glory and express image of his person. If you know these things to follow Jesus is the way of assurance, when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice and a stranger they will not follow; the flesh, self, anti-Christ, is never seen following, always trying some other way, hence thieves and robbers. My dear sister and brethren, how many times when reading your epistles have I felt that if able I would see you face to face and speak of the rich treasury of God's grace, it seems to me I could see traces of Spirit shining in the face, the nearest this is

writing faithfully. O that I could as some of you can.
Write on then, following Jesus, exposing all else.

Yours in love,

B. L. LANDERS.

REISTERSTOWN, BALTIMORE Co., MD. Jan. 5, 1887.

Dear Brethren:—A few days since I received a kind letter from Brother John R. Wilson, of Logansville, Ga., asking me to write through the MESSENGER upon the words found in Romans, 5th chapter and 6th verse. The dear brother says these words came to his mind with power a few years since, and have been with him more or less till this time. And I want to say to Brother Wilson that I have often thought of him since he first wrote me, in 1880, and have wondered how it had fared with him since, and that I am glad he is now a member with the people that he then did not feel fit to be among. The words referred to read as follows: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

This certainly contains one of the most cheering truths that can ever be revealed to fallen, sinful man. The great mystery of redemption must ever challenge the wonder of angels and men. In it are revealed the power, wisdom, holiness and love of God in a superlative degree. Into these things angels desire to look; and for these things, saints ransomed from the fall must praise God forever. The cross of Calvary, blood-stained from the veins of Immanuel, must ever be the central point in the great story of redemption. Without the remission of sins, no man can approach nigh to God or ever enter the holy place, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so," said Jesus, "must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Literally upon the cross was our Jesus lifted up,

and by the word preached, and through the ordinances of his house, is he still lifted up. And we still see in him the only hope of the perishing and dying. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The prophet also said: "He shall see his seed and shall prolong his days." And to-day are these Scriptures being fulfilled. We cannot, then, contemplate Calvary and him who was crucified there, too often, or too intently. In the death of Jesus is the foundation laid upon which alone could be built our salvation, and the gift to us of every heavenly blessing in time and in eternity.

I will not take up time nor space to speak at length of the connection in which these words stand. The whole substance of the matter involved in all the first six chapters of Romans, is that we are all sinners; that we cannot be saved by our own deeds; and that Jesus has saved his people from their sins by his death and resurrection for their justification. And in the text the full measure of our need, and of the Saviour's condescension, is stated. It was not when we were worthy, or when we had some strength that he died for us, but when we were without strength. It was not for the godly, whose hearts turned to God and hated iniquity, even though they still were without strength to carry out their good desires, that he died, but for the ungodly, who neither knew nor cared to know God. Man had not asked for release; he had not desired that a ransom should be found; he knew not that he needed a ransom; he hated the Saviour when he did come. Yet Jesus died for just such sinners as this, even while they were still rebels against him, and esteemed him stricken and smitten of God even when he was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities. It was not for those who had *done* wrong simply, that he died, but for those who in heart, spirit and life were wrong,

all wrong, haters of God and enemies to him by wicked works.

These, it seems to me, are the general truths taught in the text and its connection. Let us now consider the words of the text themselves. And first, "when we were yet without strength." We were yet without it. It had been so, and we had got no better; had made no improvement; we had not started to meet God; we had not taken the first step. Our condition was just as bad as it had ever been. This, it seems to me, is the force of the word "yet" in the text. "Without strength;" that is, we not only did not love, fear and serve God, but we had no strength to do so; we had no desire to, and there was no power in us to give rise to such a desire. We were so weak that we were insensible to our weakness. We could bring no offering for our sins and we did not desire to bring any. Think of anything that we needed to save us, to make us Christ-like, and of that thing we were destitute. No strength to love, fear, hope, believe, to be humble, submissive and lovely. We were without strength. And when we were made aware of these things through the operation of Almighty strength in our hearts, we found ourselves so weak in knowledge that we could not devise a plan whereby we could be justified. And so it is written, "By his" (not our) "knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." And so his portion is with the strong, while ours is with the weak. Blessed be God, we weak ones gain a portion too, by reason of the victory of our bruised champion who comes with died garments from Edom and Bozrah, traveling in the greatness of *his* strength.

The addition of the word "ungodly" at the end of the sentence seems to me to make the expression wonderfully strong. It fixes the real character of those for whom Christ died beyond a question. The most godly of men and women that I have ever met, felt themselves

to be without strength, and yet they were not ungodly. They did love and follow him. They knew him and bore his image. Now, lest it should be said that it was for such as these that he gave himself, this word is added. Not only when we were without strength, but when we were ungodly, did he die for us. We were without God, and opposed to God.

“Christ died.” Surely there could be no other way to save us, else such a sacrifice as this had not been demanded. All through the Scriptures death is presented as the proper penalty for sin. To Adam it was said in the beginning, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die,” or (see the margin), “dying thou shalt die.” This was the sentence pronounced upon all men alike. Elect and non-elect were involved in the same condemnation. All died in Adam. And so the apostle could say, “For as by one man’s transgression sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned,” etc. Adam, when he was created, lived. Now, in any and every sense in which he lived, in that sense he died. Just whatever kind of life he had was that life that was forfeited. No other life was, or could be, demanded. Whatever blessings and privileges were his then, or to be his bye and bye, were all forfeited—no more, no less. He was created as a man, he sinned as a man, the sentence of death was pronounced upon him as a man, and we, as men and women, fell under the dominion of sin and the curse, and are lost. When Adam fell all his goodness was lost, life was lost, the privilege of talking with God was lost, all was lost. Man is lost, absolutely lost. Now all this seems to me beyond dispute. This is our wretched condition, and must ever remain so, unless “Christ dies.”

Now does it not seem evident that when Jesus comes to pay our debt he must pay just the debt we owe, no more and no less? We have heard a great deal said

about the life of the church being lost. Now I want to suggest that the only spiritual life the church has is "Christ himself, who is our life," and I should hesitate before being willing to say that Christ was lost. The church of God is nothing more or less than the body of redeemed and quickened sinners, in whom Christ lives and reigns. They are men and women like other men and women, "by nature children of wrath, even as others." They forfeited the same life in the fall that all others forfeited. No other life but the life they held in common with all was demanded. God from all eternity chose a portion of mankind to be saved. He chose them as sinners. This he did because he would do so, because it seemed good in his sight. There was no difference between them and the rest as a reason why he should choose them. It was not because of any foreseen good in them, or because they occupied any relation to him different from other men, that he chose them, but that they might be one with him and be made holy. Now Christ died for these chosen ones. That which was demanded of them he paid. He paid all the debt they owed. Divine life was not laid down, but the life he took on him did he lay down. He had power to lay it down and power to take it again. But he did this for a chosen number. The decree of the Almighty had fixed that number. Jehovah chose persons and not characters. Christ died for these. All might have been left to perish, and no principle of justice or of goodness been violated. Election harms no one, leaves no one worse off, but, on the contrary, is responsible for all the salvation of all who are saved. If we ask why one should be chosen and another not, we can only answer, because it seemed good in the sight of the Father.

I have heard the expression used "Eternal life did not die." I agree with this. Eternal life could not die.

It would not be eternal life if it did. *And it died no more upon the cross than it did in the garden.*

One other expression in the text demands a moment's attention, or rather one word, "*for the ungodly.*" "For." It is a word used frequently and must mean something. The force of the word here is "in behalf of," "instead of." So in 2d Cor., 5th and 15th, we read if one died FOR all "instead of all." So in 1st Peter, 3d and 18th, we read "he gave himself the just FOR the unjust," "instead of." The work of atonement was all the Lord's. He paid all the debt. We did not pay one farthing; we did not help atone for ourselves. Our sins were not actually his, but they were imputed to him. His death was not actually ours, but it was imputed to us; it was counted as ours. The only rule of justice is the will of God; and this is just, because he willed it. Just as I may pay the debt of an imprisoned debtor, my friend whom I love, and it is so counted to him, that he is set free, so Jesus pays our debts, and it is so counted to us that we are set free, with this difference, that he loved his enemies and did for them what I might do for my friend.

How glorious the theme! How full and complete is this salvation! I hope that this may be a comfort to Brother Wilson, and all readers of the MESSENGER, if it is published. May God bless you, brother editors, and grant you all a happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel.

F. A. CHICK.

A man in the exercise of faith, is like Joseph; the archers may hit him, but his bow shall abide in strength. He is a rich man who lives upon his wealth, and he is a righteous man who lives by faith. Christians are far from wrapping up the talent of faithfulness in the napkin of idleness.

(2)

The spirit of modern missions, founded in distrust of God, makes Christ a false witness concerning himself, his power and mission on earth; and, if true, damns Christians, in making them responsible for the eternal damnation of the heathens.

What an awful declaration! What an awful responsibility rests upon the man who makes it, and more especially one professing godliness, and set apart by a people claiming to be the church of Christ, as a minister and teacher. With full consciousness, as I hope, of this responsibility, and as I trust, prompted by no other desire, save that of speaking the truth in plainness to the edification of those desiring to know the truth, I undertake, in the fear of God, I hope, to establish the startling declaration that heads this article.

In the discussion of the subject, the order in which the charge is made demands first an inquiry as to what is the spirit of the modern missionary cause? As I understand it, and as thousands understand it, the Bible and the preacher are the means held to be ordained of God for bringing souls to Christ, and without the employment of these means, there can be no salvation and escape from eternal punishment. Upon this foundation the great and glorious work, so called, of the modern missionary cause is builded. The cost of the superstructure in dollars and cents is now, and has been so great, the human mind pales in its computation.

First, as to its being founded in distrust of God: "In the beginning he created the heaven and the earth." That the earth was made none can deny: where he got the material out of which to make it, no one can tell. Then "he said let there be light, and there was light. He made the firmament and called it Heaven. He said let the earth bring forth grass, the herb, and let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and made two great lights, the greater to rule the day, and the lesser to rule the night; he made the stars also." These are stupendous works,

and as David says, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." These things, as well as all other things which he has made, cause us to clearly see and understand his eternal power and Godhead, so that we are without excuse, says Paul. Then we conclude that there is no limit to God's power and wisdom. The things in nature, without the Bible, teach us this. That he had a purpose in making all these things none can doubt; to doubt that purpose will be accomplished, nobody but a fool or an infidel can teach. This being true, I would ask, when we gaze on these wonderful things, has God in any way or any where taught us that purpose? The Bible says yes; all these things were made for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.—Prov., xvi., 4. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom., xi., 34, 35, 36. And continuing, Paul further develops to us this purpose of God in creation, in speaking of Christ the God-man: "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. Thus clearly establishing the fact that the creation was a part of his plan to glorify Christ and through Christ himself. This was only a part of his purpose, and I think the smallest part, for the chief part of that purpose is further developed by the Scripture in the fullness and completeness of the work which he was to accomplish in his son, to the glory of his grace, in the final and triumphant redemption of his people, or that people which he gave to his

son, and for whom Paul says grace was treasured in the son before the world began; let that people comprehend a part or all that should live upon the earth.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed *us* with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having *predestinated us* unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to *himself*, according to the good pleasure of his will (not our will) to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, * * that in the dispensation of the fullness of time, he might gather together in *one all things* in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the *purpose* of him who worketh *all things* after the counsel of his own will.” “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.”

Having quoted a few of the many Scriptures going to show the purpose of God as manifested in the Scriptures, and this purpose is as unmistakable as the eternal power of God is manifested in the things which he made, we advance another step to inquire scripturally if there is any more possibility of a failure of the accomplishment of this purpose than there was in the sun giving light, or going out after it began to shine, when God said let there be light, and placed it in the heavens to rule the day?

“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work; for I come down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the father’s will which

hath sent me, that of all which he has given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. 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. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. *I and my Father are one.*" Again God saith through Isaiah, "My word which has gone forth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that I please, and shall prosper in the things whereunto I sent it."

I could multiply Scripture *ad infinitum*, but deem it unnecessary for the instruction of the one who desires to know the truth. And now I ask you, reader, if one teaches you that the Bible and preaching the gospel are the means of eternal salvation, and that although God wants to save them and carry out his purpose, yet many for whom Christ died are dying and going to hell for the lack of these means, (which is the spirit of the modern missionary cause) is it not founded in distrust of God? And again, if one should teach you such a doctrine, is it not only founded in distrust of God, but does it not also make Christ a false witness concerning himself? Jesus said he was the Christ, that he and his father were one; all power is given unto him in heaven and earth; the Father loveth the son, and hath given all things into his hands; the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto his son; and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy son that thy son may also 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 may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou

has given me, for these are thine, and all mine are thine, and I am glorified in them.”

And now in conclusion, we come to consider how it is that the spirit of modern missionaries, if true, damns Christians, in making them responsible for the eternal damnation of the heathen. If it were true, as claimed, that the Bible and preaching the gospel are the means of *eternal* salvation, and without it any will be lost and go to hell, then all Christians who are blessed with the Bible and the preaching of the gospel, stand in their relation to the eternal salvation of all those who are without them, just as a man in a life boat, well manned, and with all the means at his command for life saving, would be to one or more persons in the act of drowning in a stream or lake of water. Imagine such a man sitting quietly in his boat in sight of a drowning man, and claiming that he has it in his power to save him, and declining to do so; or to use to the *utmost* every means at his command to do so, and more especially if he is under peculiar, and yea, the highest obligations to do it! Don't you think such a man would morally, yes, legally, be guilty of murder? Undoubtedly so. But suppose that man on his trial should begin to say, I would have gone to him if he had called on me; would that have been a good defense? But to bring the allegory more nearly to the relation of the heathen, suppose the State's attorney should prove that the drowning man had never seen a life boat, did not know, in fact, anything about such a thing, which fact he further proves, the life boat-man well knew? How damaging such evidence would be to the man who controlled the life boat. Don't you think such conduct would beget such indignation in the minds of right-thinking people that they would mete to him the most severe penalty of the law? Of how much sorer punishment do you not think all Christians, to whom God hath given the life boat of the Bible and gospel preaching, in allowing the heathen to die and

spend an endless existence in a lake of fire and brimstone, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, and do not, to the *utmost* of their ability, use every effort to rescue them. If such a responsibility is the result of our having the Bible and gospel preaching, are we not worse off than the heathen themselves? The Scriptures say there is no imputation of sin where there is no law, but to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

You observe further that such a doctrine contravenes the Scriptures, for they teach that the world by wisdom know not God. Now learning would have to precede the Bible and preaching, for without it, the heathen would not know what you were talking about. God said, through Jeremiah: "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them." Can't God put his law in the inward parts of the heathens, and write it on their hearts? If not, why not? If you answer no, because he has ordained the Bible and the preached word as the means of his salvation, then I ask you, reader, can you place your hand on your heart, in the sight of the living God and his holy angels, and say, I am guiltless; I have done everything in my power to get the Bible and the preacher to them, and therefore I am free from the guilt of the eternal groans of the heathen? So far as the Bible and Bible teaching goes as a moralizer and as an educator in the elevation and amelioration of the vice which results from the lack of it is concerned, I have nothing to say, but would be ready to aid in such a cause. It is not the thing itself which brings evil, but the spirit, the object which is proposed to be accomplished. The gold that went into Aaron's calf was good

gold, and there was no harm in the calf, but when the children began to say, these be the gods, oh Israel, which have brought us up out of the land of Egypt, the anger of the Lord was greatly kindled against them, and he ordered the calf ground into powder, (not put back into ear-rings) and put into the streams, and caused the people to drink it, that it might be the more effectually destroyed.

May God bless what has been written according to his will, is my prayer, for Christ's sake.

Columbus, Ga.

H. BUSSEY.

EXPERIENCE.

Brethren and Sisters:—I write you of my love to you and some of the dealings of the Lord, as I hope, with me, a poor sinner. In 1878 I first realized my sinful state as a sinner before God, about one year from my separation with my first wife. It had always been my thought that I would never join a church without I had been changed, for I did not believe that I could be scared by them saying to me, "you may sit back on the stool of do-nothing and make your bed in hell;" for I believed and felt that without the power of God, I could do nothing. A protracted meeting, however, was going on, and I went and prayed for mercy, and felt that I would be better satisfied if I would join the church; and about the winding up of that meeting, it having been found out that I was going to offer myself to the church, of which my wife was a member, the deacon met me and told me that she would not give me the hand of fellowship; so I went to another meeting going on at Bethel Church and joined; and I felt better for a little while about my condition. But soon I become dissatisfied, and began to read the Bible, as I had never before read it much, to see if I could find the right church. In 1880 my troubles returned with double

power upon me, so that I looked upon myself as one of the vilest men on earth. It did seem to me that everybody had forsaken me. I had worked for wages and my time was out, and I had no certain dwelling place; and I went day after day with my eyes blinded with tears, and at every place it seemed to me that no one wanted me at their houses, because I was such a wretched sinner. I borrowed a hoe and started to my brother's, thinking he would let me stay if I would hoe for him. I went crying and praying the Lord to have mercy on me. My brother asked me what was the matter with me? and I told him that I felt like everybody had forsaken me. He told me to make his home my home; that nobody had forsaken me; and that it would all work out right after awhile; and tried to comfort me in reading and talking of the dealings of the Lord with his people. I tried to throw this off, and did for a while; and went to hear the Primitive Baptists preach, and began to believe they were God's people. But I thought I never could be a Primitive Baptist because I had been divorced from my wife; and there were but few of them where I was. My brother was a member of a little church of them, about ten miles of him; and it seemed to me more and more that they were the little few of whom Christ spake when he said Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. I went on in this way till 1881, when my troubles wore off to a great extent, and I went to Tyler county to work on the East Texas Railroad, but I became afflicted with chronic dysentery and became unable to work, and had to sell my pony to pay my board. But mending a little, I went to making cross-ties. The doctor told me he could cure me, but at any terms my trust was in God only as the all-wise physician who could open the eyes of the blind, make the lame walk and cure the leper. I begged for mercy, but it seemed that there was no

mercy for poor me. In my distress I thought I would marry, as it might ease my mind to some extent, and in 1882 I married Miss Mary Woolley, and our means being very little, we did not have much for housekeeping, and my health also very poor, but was able to build a little box-house on the railroad where I could get some work to do. But before I got work to do I became afflicted with sores on my feet so that I could do nothing, and had to sit and hold my feet up, not being able to bear them hanging down. I remained in this condition until I had spent all my money, and we were in need and destitution. After I got so I could, I hopped along to my wife's father's, where she had some hogs, and which we sold for seventeen dollars' worth of groceries. Farming had always been my pursuit, and my wife's father loaned me fifty dollars, with which I bought a horse and corn, and we made a good crop of corn, and I finished paying for my horse. Before we left there for Brazos county, I went one day and heard Elder T. M. Neal preach, and when he said Christ bore the sins of his people in his own body on the tree, I could not help shedding tears. But it did seem like I was going down to torment every day; and I thought if I did, I wanted to go praying the Lord for mercy.

The first year of my stay in Brazos county I heard no Primitive Baptist preach; but my brother loaned me the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and in it I found the doctrine they preached; but I did not feel worthy of going to hear them preach. My health was bad all the time, and in November, (1884,) my wife was confined and had a spell of fever, and was very low for three weeks, and I had a great deal of setting up to do and underwent a great deal of exposure; and on the 26th December I was taken with a very severe attack of hemorrhage of the bowels; and there then I experienced the right of the Lord to become glorious in power; my natural strength was weakened down so that I had to be lifted and

turned in bed; but the doctor got to me in time to check it. But my cry was unto the Lord. I began to mend, but my mind was so heavily burdened that it seemed unbearable. In some days the man of whom I rented land had a "fence-making," and I tried to help, but I was so weak and burdened with grief that I wanted to be alone. My wife was helping to prepare the dinner and I went home, and was writing a letter to my wife's parents, telling them of my feelings; in bad health, in debt and nothing to pay with, and a near prospect, seemingly, of death; my wife came in and I was crying, and she asked me what was the matter, and I told her it was because of my condition; that I was also in debt and unable to work. About the 15th of March my brother was helping me plow corn, and it had been seeming to me that I was to die in my sins and be lost forever; but it came into my mind that I would hear the gospel preached, and I had been wanting to hear it preached one time more before I died. After this, one day at my brother's, I heard them talk of going to meet some one, and I inquired about it, and they said they had to meet Brother Rowe, in Bryan, on Friday before the third Sunday in March. This day will long be remembered by me. I told my wife about it, and she asked me if I was going. I did not feel worthy to go, and did not have time, it seemed to me. I was harrowing corn and was crying to God, and my eyes were blinded with tears so that I had to stop my horse; it did seem that I would surely die and be forever lost. But when I started from the end, these words came to me as if some one had spoken them to me: "Come unto me all ye heavy laden and I will give you rest," and I felt so happy; my burden was gone; I looked around and everything looked lovely. My tongue cannot express my feelings; I loved everything. I felt like I wanted to go to meeting, and these words rushed into my mind, "You must go; you have been wanting

to hear the gospel preached, and must go." This was all mingled with joy and praise to God. And I said, O Lord, where wilt thou have me go? and these words came back to me, Go to the church. Then it was known to me that the Primitive Baptists were the true church of Christ; and I did love them, and felt like I could take them into my arms. I started to the house to tell my wife what had happened, but before I got there I thought maybe I was deceived and had better say nothing about it. But I told her that she could prepare my clothes for I had concluded to go to meeting. So I went Saturday morning, and when I got there I saw Brother Rowe and Brother Denton, and other brethren, in a little oak grove, and I went to them and was introduced to Elder Rowe; and when he preached his text was the Scripture given me in the field when my burden was taken away, "Come unto me," &c., and he told my feelings better than I could myself; and it seemed that his whole sermon was to me. Before he left me, he advised me to join the church. But it was a month before meeting time, and in the meantime I had many conflicts, and decided not to join, lest I should deceive so good a people and one that I loved so well. But when the door of the church was opened and they were singing, Ye have suffered and died, thus my Lord was crucified to redeem such a rebel as I, the first thing I knew I was giving Brother Denton my hand and was talking to them, and was received by them, and was baptized the third Sunday in May. I had been twice baptized before, but never with such feelings as I had then; because I had not been baptized into the true church. This was in 1885, and I have had many trials and afflictions since, and am now very weak from another hemorrhage, and have been unable to work my crop; but I know the Lord will not put more upon me than he will enable me to bear; that as he suffered for us, we must also suffer with him and be made reconciled to his will.

Often it seems that the road in my journey to that country he has told us of, is mighty dim, but then he clears it up and opens the way, and gives water for my thirst out of the flinty rock and makes the bitter waters sweet, and I can bless his holy name and put all my trust in him.

E. T. HOLLIGAN.

Hyatt, Texas.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, WM. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

PREDESTINATION.

For several months before getting so badly hurt, as noticed in October MESSENGER, page 502, we felt inclined to say a few words about predestination, especially to express our inability to see and understand a few expressions of some of our highly esteemed and beloved brethren who have written upon it; and even now, after having such a terrible shock, and so much suffering of body and mind, the inclination has not entirely left us, though the points upon which we designed to speak are not so vividly before us as they were previously. And besides this, we now write in much pain, and at short intervals.

But through the superabounding grace of our God we trust, as far as possible, to “forget the things which are behind, and press forward to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ. The cup of suffering which our Father hath given us to drink, shall we not drink it?”

So far as relates to predestination, certainly no well-instructed Christian, who has ever read the Bible, or been fed on the sincere milk of the word, can say it is not a Bible doctrine. “Whom God did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of

his Son." This is no far-fetched idea, or fine hair-spun theory of man, but it is a divine revelation from God himself, and recorded in Rom., viii., 29. Nor does it stop here, but it is further written that "whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified." And as if to forever silence all cavil among brethren upon this point of predestination, the inspired writer goes on to ask this searching and unanswerable question: "What shall we then say to these things?" What ought we to say? What can we say, but to lay our murmuring mouths forever in the dust, and be still before our God? To give the definition or meaning of the word predestinate, or predestination, in our own plain and simple way, we will say it signifies a settled and fixed predetermination of mind to do a thing before it is actually done. This predestination, even among men, embraces a knowledge to some extent of what is to be done, the difficulties which are in the way of its accomplishment, and what is necessary to remove them, so as to secure the accomplishment of that which is predestinated or determined in the mind to be done. There is no sane man or woman who is not an every-day, practical predestinarian in transacting and executing the ordinary daily business of life. Men of sound minds do not, and cannot, build a house, make a crop, sell goods, or transact any business affairs of this mortal life, without first having a fixed and settled purpose of mind, intention and predetermination to do whatever they are doing. Predestination, therefore, as taught in the Bible, in Christian experience, and by all sound reason, instead of setting people down on the "stool of do-nothing," as some say, puts them to work with courage, confidence and hope of final success. But the man who works without predestination, having no fixed plan in mind, will certainly expose himself to be laughed to scorn by all who pass by and say, "This

man began to build, but was not able to finish." And who is he that is thus exposed to ridicule and laughter but the man who has so little predestinatinn in his work? He *intends* to build, it is true, but he does not sit down first, before he begins the work, and count up *all* the cost, nor does he look at his limited means and ability, whether he is able to finish such a house as he intends or wants to build.

Now we think that our brethren and sisters generally can understand this principle of predestination as it applies to men. But surely it is doubly true as it applies to God. The great God is the Fountain of all intelligence and wisdom, and surely He has never done anything, or prohibited anything being done by his creatures, but what he first predestined in his own divine mind to do or not do, precisely in all things just as he has done and is now doing. To believe or argue otherwise would be a base reflection upon divine wisdom, as it would represent God as inferior to intelligent creatures, and acting without any fixed plan or purpose. If men accomplish anything by first determining in mind what they will do, they must *work* according to their predestination or predetermined purpose, else their purpose in mind will amount to nothing. So it is with our God; He not only decrees in mind, purposes and predestinates that a thing shall be, but He also *works*, without a failure, to its final accomplishment. He is, therefore, not only a God of purpose, who predetermines and predestinates things to be as they are, but he is a God of work, who works and brings to pass everything which he has purposed or predestinated to do. In strict conformity with this principle, as set forth in the above remarks, we have this infallible expression by the Spirit of God: "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who *worketh* all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph., i., 11. It is clearly seen by this text that God not only predestinates, but that he also *works*,

and works according to his own counsel, purpose and predestination. And whether the word predestinate is mentioned or not, if we know that God has done a thing, we may also know, assuredly, that he first purposed or predestinated to do that very thing. That God purposed and predetermined in his own eternal mind to create the heavens and the earth and all that in them is, cannot be successfully disputed, because the earth and heavens are here as his handiwork, and show forth his glory. Some of our excellent brethren, fearing they might go too far on the doctrine of God's predestination, limit it only to the salvation of God's chosen people. They say the word is mentioned only three times in the New Testament, and each time it is applicable only to the people of God. Now while the prudent caution of these beloved brethren is commendable, it is possible that their position embraces much more than even they themselves, at first view, may have thought it did.

When we come to consider the creation of man upon the earth, the lineage through which Christ should come, the manifestation, preservation, eternal salvation and final glorification of all the redeemed of our God, it would be exceedingly difficult for us to tell what part of the developments of time have no relation or connection with this grand and glorious purpose of God in the salvation and glorification of his chosen people. To the writer of this feeble article the subject is a great deep, unfathomable to his weak mind, and in contemplating it, the inspired words of the Psalmist are quite expressive of his own feelings: "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me."—Psa. cxxxix.

We know assuredly that God's way is in the sea of mystery to us in many things, "his path is in the great waters and his footsteps are not known." Nor can any

of his creatures by searching find out any of these hidden things, "his judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out."—Rom. 9. "Secret things belong to God," and not to man. But while it is commendable to have a prudent caution not to pry into unrevealed things, it may be that some carry their caution to such an extent as to hinder and stifle full investigation to understand even what God has revealed in his word upon the subject. It is rather an egotistical and dangerous position for any brother to assume to know all that can be known upon any subject, especially on one of such unfathomable depths as the decrees, purposes and predestination of God. But while there are some who carry their limited view of the subject to one extreme, there are others who perhaps go still further in the opposite direction. They assume to pry into the secret counsel, purpose and decrees of God, and where Revelation fails to tell us of certain things, they resort to philosophy and human reason to tell us what is, or what must have been the secret will of God with regard to sin, and how he has "introduced it in the world without being its author," and a few other similar things of which we have no sure word of prophesy. A beloved Elder once said in our hearing, while preaching, that "Some of our brethren say it is by one *man* sin entered the world, and not by one God or one devil," and then after quoting Rom. v, 12, "By one man sin entered the world," he said, "Yet there is something behind all this—something still further back as a seed or germ to which we must look." Now what does all such reasoning as this amount to? Is it not vain philosophy? What do we know, or what have we to do with anything "further back" than that which God has revealed in his word? Secret things belong to God and not to man, and none have a right to plead exemption from sin and guilt on the plea that there is some secret coercive power driving him to sin against his own inclination.

(8)

Some time ago we read an article from a beloved brother in which he said, "I am glad in my heart that Adam sinned, because Adam's sin made me a sinner, and now through Jesus Christ, my Saviour, I can be saved." But some time after this, in conversation with this brother, he disclaimed all intention of conveying the idea by the above remarks that salvation from sin was in any sense the result of man's works, either good or bad. But are not such uncalled for, and we may say, unscriptural expressions, liable to be construed in the sense that the great system of salvation as provided in Jesus Christ, was the result of secondary causes, and one of these causes was man's sin? But surely none of our brethren believe this; though some assertions have been made, and arguments used, upon which many brethren find it difficult to put any other construction. "If the trumpet give an *uncertain* sound who shall prepare himself for the battle?"—1 Cor. xiv, 9.

God is a sovereign, in the most absolute and unlimited sense of that word, and salvation and all his works are according to his own good purpose, which he hath purposed in himself.—Eph. i, 9. God is not moved or prompted by sin, or anything else outside of himself, in the great work of salvation. Man's sins have not procured the plan, nor is it the result of sin.

We do not call attention to the above remarks of brethren to cast reflection upon them, but to show how easily brethren may glide into things beyond the limits of Revelation. We know from the Scriptures that God's purpose, predestination and decrees do extend, in some sense, not only to the eternal salvation and glorification of his chosen people, but to everything he has created. Otherwise, it is not possible for us to understand how anything could have been created at all. Sin is not a creature of God, as defined in the Scriptures, yet God's foreknowledge and predestination bounds it, circumscribes, defeats and overthrows it, and men and

devils are held accountable to God and justly punished for their sins. "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God."—M.

THE UNION ASSOCIATION.

The Union Association of Primitive Baptists, (colored,) convened with the Ebenezer Church, Pike county, Ala., on the 23d, 24th and 25th days of October last. It was our pleasure to be present on the last day of said meeting, and to note the proceedings thereof, and we hereby give a brief sketch of the same for the general information of our readers:

In the first place, we had been kindly solicited by some of those colored brethren to attend, and to assist them in the transaction of their business, whereupon we accepted their call to the Moderator's seat, while preaching services were conducted at the stand in the grove near by. After some minutes of observation, we became deeply impressed with a sense of duty towards those colored people. They seem desirous to do right, and to copy after the old order of business and worship, and in order to do so they need instruction; and we think that the white brethren should give them more attention and encouragement than they have done. There are two organized Associations of them here in South Alabama, viz: The one above named and the Pilgrim Rest. The Union has eight churches, the other we know not how many. They seem to have but little knowledge of the usual form and order of Associational business; yet, with a little help from the white brethren, they may soon become able to conduct their own business. There is one thing which, perhaps, will require some check, that is the rapid increase of the number of their preachers. One of those Associations has about fifteen ordained preachers, and the other

about an equal number, besides a number of licentiates. We think it would be well for them to have one or more white preachers to assist in the examination of their candidates for this important office, as probably two-thirds of the present number are void of the least qualification of a bishop or elder.—H.

ESTHER.—SECOND CHAPTER.

IN OFFICE.

“——then Mordecai sat in the king’s gate.”

This was a trust of honor and great responsibility even for a native born subject; but for a member of that despised, impoverished, subjugated race, the Jews, it implied a trust and confidence of the most exalted character. As if, in these days of political and personal corruption and office-seeking, an humble Primitive Baptist should be sought by the people for a high position, and be entrusted with great power and responsibility in spite of his despised religion, it would be an expression of public confidence in his integrity and capacity far in excess of that in one selected of a popular religious faith. It would be an indication of good for the country, and the manifestation of a great need of, and a strong desire for, honest and faithful civil service. It would be the office seeking the man, because of his fitness and the public need, and in which contempt for his religious faith would be swallowed up by confidence in his integrity. A Christian, impelled by the right spirit, will rarely if ever seek an office of honor simply for the honor of it, but will rather avoid, if possible, responsibilities both in Church and State. In fact, he will accept office in State as in Church, from a sense of duty to God. People of the world are not actuated by this spirit, but by the spirit of the world; and they may be, and often are, faithful from motives of patriotism,

honor, self-esteem and aspirations for future and higher elevation. It is, therefore, a rare thing for a genuine Christian to be in high office; not only because of his unpopular faith, but also because but few of them are qualified for high places. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called," etc.—1 Cor., i., 26. So when they are rightly invested with such trusts, it may be considered providential, or of God. It was in this spirit that Esther sat as queen upon the throne, and that Mordecai sat in the king's gate. He was a Jew (Christian, or spiritual man) there as he would have been in his worship in the temple; as in the temple his offerings and sacrifices were to God, so in the king's gate his obedience was to God. So Esther was a Jew (spiritual) upon the throne as queen, and a Jew as the king's wife. Her responsibilities to God were not diminished by her high calling, but greatly augmented. As a Jew she was required by law to God to be faithful as a queen and faithful as a wife. As Jews, their first, highest and only service was service to God, and that prompted and required fidelity to natural, moral and civil responsibilities, as well as religious or spiritual responsibilities. In fact, spiritual responsibilities embrace all responsibilities. They were faithful, therefore, not because the king's law required it, but because God's law required it. A Christian man is faithful to civil and moral law not because he expects to be saved by it, but because God requires it of his people.

DUE TIME.

Esther had not yet showed her kindred nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her; for she did the commandment of Mordecai like as when she was brought up with him.

Hence Esther obeyed Mordecai whilst queen as she did when a child in his house; that is, no high worldly honor elevates the Christian above the need of the

Spirit; but the higher the place in Church or State, the more the need of the continued attendance of the Spirit. And therefore the child of God cries as Moses did: If thy presence go not with me, carry us up not hence; and therefrom springs his fear of responsibilities. Because, however much his flesh may covet honor, he is afraid to seek it unless the Lord gives it; because he knows that without the Lord, it would be a plague and snare, and in the long run a shame to him.

Esther did not tell she was a Jew, because Mordecai had charged her not to do it. The time to tell it had not come, and she could not tell it in the Spirit, before the time. There is a time to all things; a time to confess and a time not to confess; a time to be born and a time to die. To be born before the time is an abortion, and to die before the time is suicide or murder. Christ's time to die came, and he said the hour or time is come, and in due time, the time his death was due, he died. But our times are in God's hand, and not in our own, and when the time comes to speak, do or suffer, we will do it in the Spirit. Moses thought his time to deliver the Israelites came forty years before it did; and he killed an Egyptian and fled to Midian forty years; but when God's time came he returned emptied of his own strength and self-confidence, and loth to do the work he once so hastily sought. There was a time to shout whilst marching around the walls of Jericho, and it was when God bade them shout; "when I bid you shout, then shout." Some people can shout any time, and with such people one time is as good as another, because God is not in it with them at any time. Some can exercise faith at any time, and rejoice at any time, and mourn at any time, but as for ourself, we can do nothing in the Spirit, only as God bids us.

However wise a child of God may be and exalted in the church or world, he is as dependent upon the Spirit as the most lowly and ignorant. Esther upon the

throne was as dependent upon the Spirit, and as poor in Spirit as the most lowly Jew of all the captivity. But the time to confess it was when it would do good to confess, and when it would be confessed in Spirit or from necessity. That is God's time, and when done in that time he gives the victory. A confession made to a brother or the church that justifies our wrong doing or palliates it, is not made in God's Spirit and does no good, but harm. It is made before the time, that is the confessor has not been sufficiently humbled. It is an abortion. When sin is confessed in the Spirit the flesh is abased and Christ is exalted; there is no boasting, no justification of self, but a putting of the rope around our neck and going to the executioner, and throwing ourself upon his mercy. This may be feigned, but not when we are charged by the Spirit to do it. It would have been boasting in Esther to have proclaimed before the time that she was a Jew, and have tended to dishonor the king's choice, and been as if to have said that the king chose her because she was a Jew; which would be as if we should say that God chose us because we were sinners. This God did not do; and to say he did would be to say that God loved sin, which we know he does not. To say that the king chose Esther because she was a Jew, would be to say that he hated morality and loved immorality; because the Jews in captivity were as the publicans and sinners in Christ's day. The self-righteous despised them and would have nothing to do with them, and were offended with Christ because he received them and ate with them. But they loved Christ and the pharisees hated him, as they do to this day; because they believed he set the law of God aside in having compassion upon sinners. But that was not true; Christ did not set the law aside, nor undervalue their morality; he commended it, but taught that it would not save them; that they must be born again; and that a regenerated publican and sinner was in

advance of them, notwithstanding the sinner's past uncleanness and the ceremonial cleanness of the pharisee; because the penitent publican was right in heart, whilst the pharisee was right only outwardly. Esther was right in heart, though she was of the despised Jews; and it is that in a spiritual sense, which makes a Jew—one right in heart. In her heart there was a secret that none but the spiritual can know or reveal; it is not one that the law imparts, but one taught by the Spirit, and which honors the law. This secret was in Esther's heart, and could only be revealed by her in the spirit of her kinsman when he bade her. To have proclaimed it before the time, would have been of the flesh, and been boasting of that of which she should have been ashamed. No convicted sinner can boast in the Spirit of being a sinner; but it is made to confess it with penitence. It would have been pharasaical in Esther to have boasted of being a Jew. For a Primitive Baptist to boast of being a Primitive Baptist, and of his honesty and uprightness, is a species of pharasaism; and especially so, if he is somewhat high in the world and boasting of it as if it was great humility in him to be one. It would be like a boy whistling whilst passing a graveyard at night; whistling to make as if he was not afraid, but really whistling because he was afraid. Sometimes we have thought some of us were afraid of doing something like somebody else, though it was a good thing to do, lest we should not be different from others, thus making our difference a boastfulness and self-righteousness; when in fact we should be glad that the influence of truth regulated even the outward conduct of others in doing even a worldly good. The difference between us and the religious world is a difference mostly of spirit, as it was with Esther and the other virgins. We dare boast of nothing; our mouths are closed, and when opened in defense of and in obedience to the truth, it is of necessity, and not in anywise to

the honoring of the flesh. The king did not choose Esther because she was a Jew; being a Jew had nothing to do with his choice, any more than our sins had to do with our election, which was nothing at all. God did not choose us because we were sinners, or because we were not sinners; neither because we were penitent or impenitent, or moral or immoral. True, we are made penitent, but that and all the graces of the Spirit, are the outflow of God's eternal love. He chose us in Christ before we fell in Adam; our fall in Adam did not affect our standing in Christ, for grace was given us in him before we fell in Adam, and when the time came it was manifested—in due time Christ died for the ungodly; not because he loved our ungodliness, but because he loved us, even whilst dead in sin, with a love that our ungodliness did not affect. We cannot boast of our unrighteousness, but of his mercy to our unrighteousness; to boast of it is to glory in sin. When the time came Esther, though upon the throne of the empire, revealed to the king her identity with her despised kinsmen, the Jews. It was for them as well as herself that she did it, and thus through the spirit of Mordecai she offered herself in their behalf. It was no boast, but a death to boasting.—R.

Sister S. J. Underwood, of Marianna, Ark., writes us that she remembers hearing only two sermons delivered by Old School Baptist ministers, and that when she was a little girl; and also states the particular passages of Scripture upon which those sermons were founded. One was on Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones, chapter xxxvii., and the other was, "My sheep hear my voice," etc., John x., 27. She requests that we write her a sermon, explaining these passages of Scripture.

In the vision of dry bones, the prophet saw a striking representation of the Israelites in a state of utter deso-

lation and hopelessness. They were in a condition from which none but God could deliver them. They were as dead and dry, nationally, as a heap of dry bones. This being the case, they were not capable of any concerted action by which they might revive their national strength and regain their former status. The existence of a bone, however dry and lifeless, is positive evidence that there once existed a living animal or creature to which it belonged, and of which it was a necessary part. Now the question was put to Ezekiel, "Can these bones live?" His answer was true and wisely discreet, viz.: "O Lord God, thou knowest." He had faith to believe it was possible with God, however impossible with man. "Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O, ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." Now, some people have thought these dry bones represent unconverted sinners, and that the preaching of the gospel is the means of giving them divine life; but this is a great mistake. The dead sinner is not reckoned among the house of Israel in any sense whatever. "These dry bones are the whole house of Israel." How could we make this mean that these dry bones are dead sinners who may, through the instrumentality of preaching, become parts or members of the house of Israel? The dry bones were declared to be the whole house of Israel before Ezekiel prophesied to them, and before the promise of their restoration was fulfilled. Now if this vision of the dry bones has any gospel application, it must apply to the people of God, the church, which is the house of Israel in a gospel sense.

We have not time and space to write much now upon the other text. It is a precious and comforting declaration of the Saviour. "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.

Jesus here speaks of His people under the figure of sheep. He is called the Lamb of God himself, and His people are partakers of Him. They are called the flock of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. They are His sheep by the gift of the Father. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Christ is also given to them, as it is written, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given."—Isa. He fully recognized and represented them all in His life of obedience, and in His glorious death and triumphant resurrection. They hear His voice, being quickened by the Spirit, as He saith, "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."—H.

In February MESSENGER, page 90, near the bottom, the little word *not* is omitted in our editorial, making us to say precisely to the reverse of what was intended. In same issue, on 73d page, W. C. Mitchell, of Mississippi, speaks of his *belief* that God kept a "pure blood from David to Mary," and he assigns that as a reason why Jesus, the Son of God, was also called the Son of David. To say the least of this, it is to us a new idea.

M.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

Very Dear Brethren:—I will give you and the readers of your most valuable paper a little history of God's dealings with his humble poor in this part of the country. On Saturday before the first Sunday in September, Turkey Creek Association convened with Drywood Church, Bourbon county, Kansas, and was blessed with visiting brethren (considering the weather) who came laden with the precious truths of the gospel, which they proclaimed very much to the edification of God's children. At 5 o'clock Saturday, Drywood Church met, and after a very able discourse from Elder S. Dark, of Illinois, organized by choosing Elder S. Dark Modera-

tor. An invitation was given, when two of God's humble poor came forward, gave the reason of their hope, and were received, and Sunday morning were baptized, Elder R. M. Haggatt administrator. Your unworthy writer thought—and am now convinced—that this was the commencement of refreshings from the the presence of the Lord. I say a commencement, from the fact that we had been so long without any additions, or any other visible mark of our acceptance with God. But it seemed as though God had hid his face from us, and instead of increasing we were decreasing. For just a short time before we had dismissed two very much beloved brothers, one of whom was our pastor, A. H. Mahuren, and Sister Mahuren, his wife. O, how I was made to mourn when I looked on the supposed dissolution of Drywood Church, forgetting for the time that admonition, "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you." O, that all of God's children would adore their Father by drawing near to God in perfect obedience to all his holy commands. But we are so distrustful that we become impatient, and think because we don't see a visible manifestation of his presence, that he has entirely forsaken us. Such was the case with your unworthy writer when it seemed as though the last ray of hope was gone, and our mind shrouded in darkness, and our heart overflowing with grief, so that we could only make the solemn inquiry: "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?" If so, then why is it that God's children are not in a more prosperous condition? But glorious thought! right at the time when we were ready to despair, God visits us by adding two of his humble poor to our borders, for which our poor hearts were made to rejoice with that joy unspeakable and full of glory. But his goodness did not stop here, but on Saturday, before the second Sunday in October, the church met, and after hearing an appropriate discourse delivered by Elder J. C. Jones, an opportunity was offered, when two came with letters of recommendation from a sister church, and were received in full fellowship with the church. Sunday following, after services, two came forward, related their experience and were received, but baptism was deferred until next meeting, which

was Saturday before the second Sunday in November, when the church met, and after services one came and gave the reason of his hope and was received. Sunday after services the church adjourned to the water, and attended to the ordinance of baptism, there being three candidates; Elder R. M. Haggatt administrator. Surely this has been a season of rejoicing with Drywood and sister churches near by. Tuesday night one came to the church and related her experience, which she dated seven years back. From this the brothers and sisters of Drywood seemed to take fresh courage, and continued the meeting day and night, forgetting the things of time, at least to some extent, and the good Lord was with them, I do believe, for they were made to rejoice with that joy that the world cannot give. On Friday night one more of God's humble poor united with the church. Saturday the ordinance of baptism was attended to, Elder R. M. Haggatt administrator. Sunday our meeting closed, leaving as great an interest manifested as ever; so much so, that we were loth to leave that place. Not that I think we could give life; oh no, but encourage and admonish God's little ones to a discharge of duty; yes, teach them that in duty is the blessing promised and received. Notwithstanding God has redeemed his people, and manifested that redemption to them, and promised to preserve and keep them by his own almighty power, and finally glorify them at his own right hand, yet he has seen fit, in his infinite wisdom and purpose, to make it obligatory on their part, as living characters, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance that is to adorn their faith, which is a gift from high heaven, by their orderly walk and chaste conversation. Yours in love, if not deceived.

R. M. JONES.

PIRAWAY, N. C., January 14th, 1887.—The MESSENGER has truly been a source of comfort to me. Sometimes, when I was almost in despair, the comforting editorials and communications from different brethren cheered my sad heart. May God bless and spare you to long circulate the MESSENGER, is the prayer of a little sister.

E. C. HEWETT.

(This Letter has been Overlooked.)

CLAIBORN PARISH, LA., Sept. 15th, 1885.—*Dear Brother Mitchell*:—Having repeatedly been solicited to write something for the GOSPEL MESSENGER, I have for months past been thinking of doing so. Its monthly visits have come promptly up to date, and it contains many comforting and encouraging things to us, but it seems a little strange that so few of the articles published are from Louisiana. I hope the near future will reveal the fact that Louisiana is not so much the “Western Rural Tiger” State as some may have imagined; neither is she as destitute of Primitive Baptists as her feeble voice in the MESSENGER might indicate. And now brethren, I purpose coming forward with my part of testimony, as I think and believe to be in harmony with the sentiments contained in the paper. It is recorded in the New Testament by one of the evangelists that “I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God.” He testifies to that which he saw and knew. John saw the Spirit descending and remaining on Christ, and this was the token by which he knew he was the Son of God. Being sent of God expressly to bear witness to this truth and baptize, John thus made “ready a people prepared for the Lord.”—Luke i, 17. In his official work John was not ignorant of prophetic teaching. When the time had come for the manifestation of Christ he could say “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” He referred to many predictions of the prophets, and with such a great cloud of witnesses, well might he say, “I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God.” It certainly is necessary that this glorious truth be on record, and Baptists of Primitive faith and order believe that all Scripture is given by inspiration and is profitable to thoroughly furnish the man of God unto all good works. Therefore, those who speak, exhort or write according to this divine standard, are, like John, bearing testimony that “This is the Son of God.” And every one who has a little hope in Jesus as his Saviour and personal Mediator, should make a public record of it by uniting with the church of Christ. They should bear record that Christ is the Son of God and Saviour of sinners by commemorating his suffering and death as he has commanded, and by following the example given by their glorious Redeemer

to wash one another's feet. Even so should they bear testimony to the truth by speaking often one to another in the name of Jesus, not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is, and in all things walking worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Dear brethren, I will close this first attempt in life to write for the public eye, by saying, "Finally brethren, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you." Editorial scrutiny can easily detect the weakness of this scribble, but if it is thought prudent to publish, please correct. My dear aged father, Elder C. A. Parker, is still living.

Your brother,
M. C. PARKER.

With cheerfulness and pleasure the above letter of Elder Parker finds a place in the MESSENGER. Hope to hear from him again, and as our brother thinks Louisiana has not been so fully represented as he desires, we give below a brief extract from an aged sister in Lincoln Parish, of that State. She says:

"I now remit subscription price for the MESSENGER, as my time is out and I would not be without it for anything in reason. I can go but seldom to hear preaching, but am glad that this opportunity is given me to sit and read my Bible and the MESSENGER. It is preaching to me. I pass many days and there is not a white person in one mile of me, and I have not heard a Primitive Baptist preach in two years, and do not even see one often. I have a lonely life, my children all married but one son, who lives with me, and thus only two in family. Remember me in your prayers.

MRS. S. A. RICHARDS.

Will Elder Parker visit and preach in Lincoln Parish?
M.

WEST POINT, GA., Dec. 22, 1886.—*Dear Brother Res-
pess:*—I arrived at home yesterday evening, having been absent a little over a month on a preaching tour in Southern Alabama. I went down to Greenville, Ala., on Friday evening before the third Sunday in November, and preached the next day and on Sunday at New Providence, in Greenville, at their regular monthly meeting. I filled eight appointments within the bounds

of the Ebenezer Association, and twelve within the bounds of the Conecuh River Association, and one within the bounds of the Clay Bank Association, besides preached four times at night. I met with many of the dear saints, among them a goodly number of beloved ministers. We had some delightful and refreshing seasons, notwithstanding it was wintry weather. The dear brethren, sisters and friends treated me very kindly, and the Lord was very gracious to me. I was greatly afflicted with hoarseness and sore throat soon after I left home, which lasted me for several days. But in the beginning of my tour the Lord assured me of his goodness, and I was greatly blessed with patience and with an abiding trust in God. Though I was far away from home, afflicted, and the weather cold and otherwise unpleasant a good portion of the time, yet I was enabled to feel that the Lord could take care of me at one place as well as another, and would take care of me during my tour as well as take care of my dear family during my absence. I felt to adopt the following lines of the poet:

“He leadeth me ! Oh, blessed thought !
 Oh, words with heavenly comfort fraught !
 What e'er I do, where'er I be,
 Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me !”

I felt very humble and thankful as well as encouraged, while the dear brethren lifted up their voices in the behalf of myself and family at our meetings from time to time. I seemed to have an assurance that their prayers would be answered, and thus I was much strengthened by the way. My dear wife seemed to be blessed with an abiding trust in God for his protection and blessing during my absence. In one of her letters she wrote as follows: “The good Lord has been very good to me. I often feel that he is with me, and that he will take care of us while you are gone as well as when you are here. I do not know what I would do without him, for he is all my trust.” I was greatly blessed of the Lord with the ability to declare the word of the Lord to the dear saints, and I have reasons to believe that the word spoken went not to them in word only, but with power and much assurance. I met with some that were sorely afflicted—some in body, others in mind—who seemed to be specially comforted. To such as are bowed down, how refreshing is the good

word of the Lord, whether spoken through his ministers or directly by His Spirit to the heart! How much to be preferred, after all, is the lot of the afflicted saint, who has an immortal crown of glory awaiting him in the world to come, to the lot of the proud and happy of this world, who have their portion in this life! How precious is the sustaining grace of God to the poor, afflicted and persecuted saints as they journey through the wilderness of this world! I found some anxious to hear the word preached, who greatly feasted upon it, while others seemed careless; and some were unduly concerned about the things of this life—so much so that they would not even go to hear the word preached at all. I hope that I made some progress in *learning* to be content in whatever condition I was in, while on this trip. The dear saints entertained me very kindly, and helped me along after a godly sort. May the Lord bless them all abundantly. I found my dear family all well on my return home. The Lord is good. Yours in hope.

T. J. BAZEMORE.

ORDINATION.—According to special appointment, the church at Harmony, Crenshaw county, Ala., met on the 30th day of October, 1886, and after preaching by Elders B. A. Walker and W. W. Lewis, Conference was organized with Elder T. E. Harrison Moderator, and H. T. Yarbrough Clerk.

First—Invited visiting brethren and sisters to seats.

Second—Opened the door of the church for the reception of members.

Third—Call for references, and on motion deferred the reference from last Conference to the heel of the Conference.

Fourth—Called for business in gospel order.

Fifth—Called for miscellaneous business, and took up reference with regard to the ordination of Brother J. N. Benbow to the gospel ministry, whereupon the following Elders, being present, were called on and organized a presbytery, viz.: T. E. Harrison (Moderator), B. A. Walker, J. E. W. Henderson, O. H. P. Cook, W. W. Lewis and J. Skipper. After a satisfactory examination of the church as to character and qualifications of the candidate, and a careful examination of the candi-

(4)

date as to his Christian experience and evidence of a call to the work of the gospel ministry, the presbytery proceeded to set him apart to all the functions thereof by imposition of hands and prayer; after which the presbytery, church and visiting brethren extended the right hand of fellowship to Brother Benbow as an ordained minister.

Sixth—On motion, the church agreed to send these minutes to THE GOSPEL MESSENGER AND PRIMITIVE PATHWAY for publication.

Seventh—Conference adjourned with singing and benediction by Elder J. N. Benbow.

T. E. HARRISON, *Moderator.*

H. T. YARBROUGH, *Clerk.*

Dear Brother:—I have realized a great deal of consolation in reading and meditating about the goodness of God in putting his laws into the hearts of his children. And he says positively that he will be their God and they shall be his people, so I am constrained to thank God for his mercy and goodness, for they endure forever; and by which his little ones are brought to a knowledge of salvation, and are made willing in the day of his power to submit to the yoke of obedience and learn of Jesus, and find a little rest, even here in this sinful world. Indeed we may exclaim:

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,
In a believer's ears,
It soothes his sorrow, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fears.”

Your brother, I hope, in Christ, J. A. HUGHENS.

OBITUARIES.

DEACON ROBERT IVEY.

It becomes my painful duty to write of the death of my dear father ROBERT IVEY, who was born in Laurence county Ga., November 3, 1813, and departed this life at his residence in Orange county, Fla., October 2, 1886; age seventy-two years, ten months and twenty-eight days. Father united with the Primitive Baptists at Prospect Church, in Hamilton county, Fla., in 1841, and in 1858 drew his letter and moved to Orange county, Fla., where he lived fourteen years without church privilege. In 1872 he was in the constitution of Orange Church, Orange county, Fla., and the same year was chosen deacon of said church, which office he

filled with credit to himself and honor to the cause; ever faithful and punctual in all his Christian duties. Funeral services were conducted by his son-in-law, Elder H. F. Fortner, from these words: "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." He left a widow and nine children (three sons and six daughters) and a large number of grandchildren, great grandchildren and friends to mourn his loss; but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, believing that his happy spirit is basking in the joys of his dear Saviour, while his sleeping remains lie mouldering in the dust to await the resurrection morn, when the trump of God shall call forth that corruptible to incorruption.

R. A. IVEY.

JAMES ILA AND LILLA SUSAN CARTER.

Our two little grandchildren, the son and daughter of Jesse J. Carter and Mary Elizabeth, his wife. JAMES ILA CARTER died of that terrible scourge diphtheria, being sick only two days; took sick on the 8th of December, 1885, and died on the 10th. He was born August 23, 1882, making his days of trouble three years, four months and eighteen days. Poor little Jimmie was a bright boy, but he never knew what health was.

Also, little LILLA SUSAN, their daughter, died on the 11th, after being sick about three weeks with the same disease. She was born 23d July, 1886. Both buried in the same grave. Blessed babies! they are gone to return no more to us forever, but the same hand that led them through scenes most severe has safely conducted them home; the Lord that gave has taken away, blessed be His holy name! We know that the Lord knows best, although it is hard to bear. We trust that the Lord will reconcile us to his will in taking away these precious jewels, for

"Of objects most pleasing, we loved them the best,
But we hope our Redeemer has took them to rest."

Cumberland, N. C.

J. J. CARTER.

MRS. MARY E. V. PAMPLIN.

Mary E. V. wife of A. J. PAMPLIN, aged thirty years and one month, after an illness of twenty-one days, which she bore with patience and resignation, until it pleased the Lord to permit her soul to take its flight to the Spirit land, about 4 o'clock the evening of the 23d November, 1886. She seemed to be inspired with a knowledge of her departure on the previous Monday; counseling her husband and children separately. She also gave instructions in regard to her funeral and interment, and that her deceased daughter should be spoken of that fell asleep in Jesus, October 6th, 1881. The funeral services were conducted by the writer from 2d Cor. v, 1, 2, 3, on the 24th November, after which her body was laid in its last resting place in the earth. Victory gave strong evidence of her acceptance in the beloved. She was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Buckeye, September, 1885, giving full satisfaction to all that heard her speak, of her interest in a crucified and risen Saviour, since which time she has manifested a deep interest in her Master's cause, and sympathy for the afflicted needy. She leaves many friends who will miss her, but most of all, she will be missed by her

loving husband and five dear little children. May the Lord comfort their hearts. Oh, may we all be reconciled to God in all things. Not my will, O Lord, but thine, be done. Then all will be well with us.

Fayetteville, Tenn.

E. W. WALKER.

MRS. S. E. C. WALKER.

My wife's maiden name was S. E. C. Milam, and was born in Henderson county, Tennessee, 24th August, 1845, and died the 12th of November, 1886. She joined the Primitive Baptists in October, 1874. We were married October 16th, 1866, and were both baptised at the same time by Elder D. P. Thomas. She leaves eight children, four boys and four girls. We had lost four infant children. She was sick only six days and suffered much, but bore it patiently, and passed away without a struggle. She was very devoted to her family. We cannot describe our loss, though we feel confident it is her gain. She was firm in the doctrine of grace as believed by Primitive Baptists.

Your brother in tribulation,

PHILIP A. WALKER.

Dyer County, Tenn.

MRS. DISY O'KELLY.

Sister DISY O'KELLY, whose maiden name was Stamps, was born in Oglethorpe county, Ga., March 31st, 1798, was married to James O'Kelly March 20th, 1817, and died November 15th, 1886, aged eighty-eight years, seven months and fourteen days. Her husband died September 23d, 1862, since which time she has lived with her youngest daughter, Sister Lizzie Eberhart, and family, at the old homestead, near where she was born and raised. She was baptized into the fellowship of Beaver Dam Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1838, by Elder George Lumpkin, and remained a consistent member of said church until her death. She always seemed to desire and greatly enjoy the company of the saints, and especially ministering brethren, so that her home was a very desirable stopping place, or wayside home, for God's poor, wayworn servants, and particularly during her husband's lifetime, who was also a sound Baptist, given to hospitality and a deacon of the church. But they are gone to their heavenly home, as we hope and believe. Sister O'Kelly was paralyzed, as was supposed, on the 25th of October. While walking in the yard her powers gave way and she had to be carried into the house, where she lingered until death came to her relief. She bore her afflictions very patiently, having every attention that seemed necessary by the family and neighbors. Elder Westmoreland and I called to see her on the evening before she died, when she conversed freely; and on being inquired of about her prospects, said they were bright, and just seemed to be waiting the Master's will, but we did not think the time of her departure was so near at hand. But early the next morning I received a message informing me of her death, and of the desire of the relatives that I should attend the funeral, which I did on the following day, and spoke for the comfort of the sorrowing relatives, after which her remains were removed to the family graveyard, followed by the large concourse of sorrowing relatives and friends, and was buried by the side of her husband to await the resurrection morn. She leaves two sons, three daughters, forty grandchildren, and a large number of great grandchildren, with her kindred in Christ, to mourn, but not as those who have no hope.

F. M. McLEROY.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 4.

BUTLER, GA., APRIL, 1887.

Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER WM. HUBBARD.

Elder Wm. Hubbard was born in South Carolina, on the 22d day of April, 1809. His parents, Jno. and Mary Hubbard, moved to Hall county, Ga., in 1818, bringing him with them, then a boy nine years of age. Elder Hubbard was raised to manhood, and married to his first wife, Margaret Morgan, in Hall county, in 1829, and from that union one son was born, who died in the late war, in Virginia. Elder Hubbard told the writer of his conviction for sin, which took place while he was witnessing the solemn service of feet washing in which his first wife—who was a member of the Baptist Church—was participating. After his conviction and deliverance, he joined the church called Liberty, in Lumpkin county, Ga., and was baptized by Elder James Whitten, on the fourth Sunday in June, 1831, and soon after was ordained to the ministry.



In 1843 his wife died, and soon afterwards he was married to Miss Sarah A. Whitten, of Murray county,

Ga., who still survives him; and of this union five children were born, only two of whom are living. At the time Elder Hubbard was ordained there were no so-called Missionary Baptists, but shortly afterwards the great question of foreign missions and the institutions of the day sprang up to the dividing of the Baptist denomination. And in this, as well as on all other questions which threatened the destruction of the church, he took the right side—that of the 'Primitive Church—and maintained it until the day of his death. In this great controversy public sentiment and prejudice ran so high that he was threatened by a mob; and on one occasion, when threatened at Valley Grove Church, in Murray county, a company of young men rode up by him, when he was nearing the church, with clubs in their hands, and saluted him very politely. They rode along together on horseback, and when they arrived at the church, he hitched his horse, and the young men hitched theirs close by his, and all went in the church together, he taking the stand and the young men taking seats near by. After services, a conference was held in which was considerable confusion and discussion on the mooted question of missions, etc. After conference the meeting adjourned, and he and the young men who sat by so attentively, rode away. Upon inquiry it was ascertained that these young men had heard that certain citizens, and perhaps some members of the church, who were favorable to the Arminian cause, intended to mob him, and his opinion was the Lord put it into the hearts and minds of these young men to protect him. This, however, was unknown to him until after it had happened.

We feel that although an uneducated man, Elder Hubbard was one of God's ministers. He had been preaching fifty-three years in the Primitive Baptist ranks without a charge against him, so far as is known by the writer, and having been called upon to fill the

highest position within the gift of the churches. He was Moderator of several Associations during his ministerial career, including the Upatoie, Harmony, and in 1880, when the Flint River Association was constituted, as he had moved within her bounds, he joined that Association and was elected Moderator at its first session, which position he held with great satisfaction to the brethren, until the hand of affliction was laid upon him. He was taken ill while on a preaching tour, in Berrien county, Ga., in 1882, and had to return home, where he suffered for several weeks; and after he sufficiently recovered, he visited Brother J. A. Pickron, and while there relapsed and was again brought low by reason of an aggravation of the disease with which he had been suffering. In all his sickness—though being deprived in his last days of articulation—his mental faculties were as clear as when in health. One day while the writer, who was treating his case, was at dinner, he had a vision in open day light, with eyes wide open, in which he said all nature was changed, and it seemed to him as if he was in a perfect paradise. It seemed to him as if the glory of the Lord was shown to him in undescribable brightness—even the trees, houses, and everything else, shined brighter than gold or silver—and when I walked in the room where he was lying, he spoke and told me of what he had just seen. He bore his afflictions with great fortitude, and expressed himself as only waiting for the summons to come. Brother Hubbard leaves a widow and two children, together with a host of the brotherhood, to mourn his death. And well may we say to the bereaved they mourn not as those who have no hope; but to rejoice with the consolation of believing that our loss is his eternal gain. He can now, to all earthly appearances, hear the welcome news: Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord.

Brother Hubbard had been a faithful minister of the

gospel fifty-three years. What a record! We feel the Lord has seen best, in his infinite wisdom, to take our brother from us for his good, and while it has thus pleased him to do so, there is a void in the hearts of the brethren which will be hard to fill. Brethren, pray that the good Lord may send us another minister who will have the gift of teaching as did Brother Hubbard, for we are in a desolate condition as to the ministry, and will be more so, as one and all the ministers in our immediate section, will soon move to Florida.

Sister Hubbard, widow of our departed brother, still lives with her daughter, Sister Sarah A. Buckhalts, in Terrel county, Ga., and I hope that the brethren in that section, and all other sections, will see that her needs are supplied. Yours, in hope of eternal life,

Colquitt, Ga.

E. B. BUSH.

BIBLE MISSIONARIES.

Dear Brother Respass:—The several numbers of your MESSENGER go forth from time to time to meet and satisfy a thirst for instruction in spiritual things that is indeed interesting in its development, as well as in its satisfaction. In this day, when there are many running to and fro, and knowledge is being increased, it would be an occasion of sincere regret if any should suffer discomfort, or fall into error, for lack of knowledge. I notice in most of our religious periodicals, as also in many secular papers, that the denominations, Old School and New School Baptists, are spoken of and designated as *Missionary* and *anti-Missionary* Baptists. I do not allude to this to complain of it, or to charge any improper motive upon those who make use of these terms to designate the sects of whom they speak. But I propose to discuss the appropriateness of these terms in the use made of them, for the benefit of those who may desire instruction, and to prevent perhaps in some

measure the unwearied from being misled. *Missionary* is not a Scriptural term, but it is a term that has obtained extensively in modern times, and seems to be generally understood to apply to efforts to extend the benefits and blessings of the Christian religion over the earth. Accepting this definition as correct, it would seem to follow, as a self evident fact, that no sincere Christian could possibly be anti-Mission. I was acquainted with the Baptists before the division, and when there had not developed any difference in faith or practice on this or other subjects. I did not know of a single instance of any church assuming the title of *missionary*. Now I find the New School division everywhere appropriating this title to themselves, painting it above their church doors, etc. The opposite, *anti-Mission*, has been thrown upon us, until the impression may be quite general that we own it, or have adopted and accepted it ourselves. If it ever has been adopted or acknowledged by any of us, I am not aware of the fact. And I write now, not only to disown the epithet, as being in any sense applicable to us, but to try to disabuse the minds of those who have been stumbled with the idea that we were opposing a commendable enterprise. The question of the propriety of the missionary operations that had been introduced among the churches at that time, was entirely a secondary and subordinate matter. And this was but one among a dozen or more new institutions that claimed recognition and encouragement at the hands of the Baptist denomination. The objections to all of them being incidental and secondary, looking through them to the spirit that brought them into being. To get at this matter understandingly we have need to go back and take our stand for observation when Baptist churches had none of the modern societies among them. There are many Baptists now living who are old enough to remember when no society to aid the church in her work was known, or was

thought to be needed. It had been believed and accepted that the great *mission* of bearing the glad tidings of salvation to the remotest bounds of the earth had been assigned to the church, and that the church in her organization and through her ministry would accomplish the work. The Lord's throne was in Zion, upon her holy hill was her King seated, and he must reign there until his redeemed are all gathered in, and his enemies all under his feet. That the church and the ministry of the word were inadequate to this work, and that various institutions might be devised to aid, and that multitudes of souls might thus be saved that would otherwise be forever lost, was a new doctrine among Baptists. Whether we call it Arminianism, or Fullerism, or Atheism, it is and was an ism, entirely unknown and unrecognized among Baptists of former times. With all these societies the principle was the same, and objections to them was upon the same grounds. It was not merely as Sunday schools, or as education, or missionary societies; what moral good they might or might not effect, but as claiming to supersede the Holy Spirit of God in providing ministers, converting sinners, extending the Redeemer's kingdom, and effecting the salvation of thousands that the grace of Christ would have never reached. The materials of which these organizations were made up, and the motive power that propelled them, I will not stop now to deal with. It is easy enough to see that the sentiment that I speak of would be likely to crop out in a variety of *means* and a multitude of society institutions. That such claims and pretensions would be objected to by Baptists, was to be expected. And I would think it might be expected that ministers that could be provided by theological schools, and converts that had been the result of human means, would be objected to also. There are plenty of them, and we all have a chance to see what they are. Preachers, that own themselves the

product of means, must be expected to preach *means* to others. We should be disappointed to hear one of them "testify the gospel of the grace of God." Their conversions are like all other productions of men. They will not themselves claim that they are *born of God*. There was scarcely a church within the bounds of my acquaintance but what raised their voices against these things at first. Some of them preserved their places of worship undefiled. Others divided; and in some the Arminian sentiment was found to predominate, and the alternative was presented of submission or exclusion. Such is a brief outline of the basis of Missionism. Their preachers are the product of the schools. They are sent to foreign countries at princely salaries, which money is collected off of the people, (often times poor and needing all their means,) under the pretence that the Lord requires it of them, and that souls will be saved by it. Instead of all this, we, as Baptists, are what Baptists were from the beginning. The Master taught us to look to him, as the Lord of the harvest, to provide laborers. He has not failed to provide us able ministers of the New Testament from that day to this. We sometimes think that we need more, or rather, that he needs more; but we are not competent judges. We believe it to be of him to qualify a minister of his word and to send him forth. We have never discovered any other source from whence may be obtained those witnesses that bear witness to the work of divine grace. We can *judge* of the gift, but we have no control over it. We have no authority to designate or restrict the field in which a gospel minister shall labor. We have faith in the Giver that he will send the gift to the right place.

The commission directs those who receive it, to go into all the world and preach the gospel, etc. The first requisite for this is to be in possession of a dispensation of the gospel, and then to go in accord with the

openings of Providence, trusting for divine support. The Lord has directed that they that preach his gospel should live of it. He has not enjoined on one people to support a ministry to another people. If the man is called to the work, and is in the place for which the Lord designed him, he has pledged his faithfulness that he shall not lack bread. The candid reader may know that our ministers are going almost constantly, "everywhere preaching the word." Anything in the shape of a stipulation for their services is almost unknown among them. They are not in the market to be bought and sold, or removed from place to place for pecuniary considerations. Not only do they feed the flock, taking the oversight thereof; but show great joy and pleasure in the prosperity and peace of their respective charges. To make my points more clear I might contrast two cases, and in doing so I shall speak only of what I do know. One man serves a wealthy church that meets within a few steps of his door, and on Sunday mornings and evenings he occupies the stand. For this service a salary is collected from his congregation of fifteen hundred dollars per year. He claims to be a Missionary Baptist. His Missionary work consists in occasionally taking up a collection from his congregation for Missionary purposes. Another man finds a great and effectual door open to him, and he goes forth, nothing doubting, preaching three and four times a week, and dividing his labors among half a dozen otherwise destitute congregations, without any stipulation or other compensation than the voluntary contributions of those who enjoy these labors. One would think that a man giving his whole life to the ministry of the word, waiting upon the openings of Providence and the requirements of those who are hungering for living bread; and then never failing to respond to every call, would be a service that would commend itself to every candid mind. The service of which I speak comprises jour-

neyings to an amount annually of over four thousand miles. Your readers will be ready to conclude that the burden of care in such extended fields of labor, the hardship and exposure, could not be endured for any great length of time. But such is the character and labors of those who are stigmatized as *Antinomians*, *Do-nothings* and *Anti-mission*, *Anti-effort*, etc. If the apostles were missionaries of the right kind, and were actuated by the right spirit, let the candid reader judge whether we are in accord with the pattern they have left us. Going to some foreign point to preach, is not going into all the world, any more than traveling and preaching in this country.

As to the presumptuous pretence of converting heathen, and saving souls, they cannot do either. If they could, there is no need that they should go abroad. There is plenty of work for them here. Instead of being opposed to Mission labor, and the spread of the gospel, we are laboring night and day, (and our own hands frequently ministering to our necessities,) to comfort the sorrowing, support the weak, and seek the lost sheep of the house of Israel. We are opposed to any and all religious systems and institutions among men that seek to rob the Redeemer of the glory of his kingdom, or take the crown from his head.

In fraternal bonds,
State Road, Del.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

MILTON CENTER, O., Jan. 24, 1886.

Dear Kindred in Christ:—How different my surroundings to what they once were. Once my delights were in “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind;” but now such things fill me with sorrow. Surely “it is by the grace of God that I am what I am.”

Well do I remember the time when the terrors of law surrounded my trembling soul. For almost two years my mind knew no peace. I felt that my doom was

sealed, and was only awaiting my final sentence. But in all this gloom and fear, the breathings of my heart were that God would be merciful to me, a sinner. At a time unexpected to me, the angel of mercy whispered peace. I was taken up out of an horrible pit—my feet were placed upon the Rock of Ages, and a *new* song filled my mouth, even praises unto our God.

Then Jesus filled my heart with love,
And drew my mind to things above ;
He banished all my sickening grief,
And gave my troubled soul relief.

Then I thought that peace would be mine forever, but, alas! the tempter was nigh with evil suggestions. This was a sore trial, indeed. Soon it wore away, and I was impressed to follow Jesus into the watery grave. After about four weeks of prayer to God I presented myself to the Old School Baptist Church. With tears of joy they received me into their fellowship. The following day, Elder L. B. Sherwood buried me beneath the yielding wave. Although I walked to the water with a heavy heart, the burden was all left there, and a peace filled my mind. I did not rejoice aloud as some dear brethren have, but my mind was composed and filled with inward joy.

In this state of mind I left my brethren, thinking that my trials were at an end. Jesus and his great love was my constant theme. Finally this precious season was succeeded by darkness, temptations, and fears.

The duties of the gospel ministry bore heavily upon my mind from the day of deliverance. After four long and wearisome years, I began talking of God's goodness to fallen man. Many times I felt that I had spoken for the last time. I tried to quit, for it seemed that any of the brethren were better qualified to talk in the name of the Lord than I. Having talked publicly for a year, the brethren called a presbytery and I was ordained. The many trials and crosses that beset me

through life's journey sometimes almost drive me to despair. Yet, something still causes me to press on. The cause of Christ is all I think of at home or abroad. I do desire the welfare of the church above all things else. I am now twenty-six years of age. How many trials still lay before me, I know not. Pray for me.

GEO. A. BRETZ.

SENDING FORTH THE WORD.

Dear Brother in the Lord:—To-day is meeting time at one of the churches I try to serve, but it being nineteen miles distant, and the weather quite rainy and disagreeable, and having no way to go but to walk, I am at home: and have been thinking some of the blessing that the rain is to our earth. Without it, all would come to desolation; the earth would yield neither seed to the sower nor bread to the eater. This is one of the blessings which our Heavenly Father pours out on the just and the unjust, thus letting them all grow together for the present. The prophet Isaiah uses this to illustrate the certainty of the blessings given by the word that goeth forth out of the mouth of God.—Is., lv., 10, 11. Natural things, even the natural blessing of God in his wonderful providence, are so fixed that the natural eye can behold them and their effects. As in the case of the rain and snow it is clearly seen; and no sane person can deny that they are necessary to make the earth bring forth and bud, that seed time and harvest may continue upon the earth. I know that it is said that the rain and snow are caused by certain planetary movements, certain currents of air working together, etc., but God fixed the planets and ordered the currents of air, and they all move or stand at his bidding. Just as he says to the lightnings “come,” and they say “here we are.” Just so with all of his providential blessings; they stand and are withheld or are

poured out upon us just as God directs, therefore we, and all that we have, are the Lord's.

The rain and snow are sent for a certain purpose, and that purpose is plainly set forth in the scripture referred to; and we see that the purpose is really accomplished. We further see that no agencies can be instituted to do the work assigned them; they alone can accomplish it. Thus God, by his own appointed means, accomplishes that which he designed. He asks for no assistance even in providence; the rain and snow are evidences. Doubtless, if human agencies could have brought about these blessings, they would have been employed long before this, in times of famine, when the earth was parched and cracked, thus opening her mouth and begging for rain. Doubtless our brethren and friends in the parched lands of Texas would like very much to have a providential shower, but cannot, by any means yet instituted, cause that shower to come.

Now, if all such blessings are beyond the reach of man, with all his instituted means, how much more are the spiritual blessings with which God blesses us in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, beyond his reach? Even reason itself teaches us that those blessings come to us as God is pleased to give them. And as the means which God has ordained to bring about those providential blessings are sure to bring them at all times when God appoints and directs, even so it is with the spiritual; the means ordained always accomplish the end to which they were ordained. As for instance: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"—Heb., ix., 13, 14.

From reading the Bible record of the children of Israel, we see that all God had promised them was

fulfilled; and now if those things which were wholly national did really accomplish the things whereunto they were appointed, how much more shall the blood of Christ accomplish that to which it was appointed? *How much more certain* is this *spiritual, unconditional* covenant than that conditional national covenant under which the Jews were required to serve God. The prophet says: "The word that has gone out of my mouth SHALL accomplish that which I please, and it SHALL prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." We do not see in these things any effort on the part of God. In fact he is not a God of effort, but one that DOES. He works and none can hinder, etc. "He sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be."

Then, what did He mean to accomplish by sending out his Word? Did he mean to offer salvation to all mankind, and make a way passable and possible by which they *can* be saved if they will only close in with the overtures of mercy and accept an offered salvation? No, *no*, that is not what he intended then, nor what he means now. Let us have David's testimony: "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, (a pit of noise), out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."—Ps. xl, 1-3. Not one word of effort here, but a deed actually done, a soul actually saved, the thing actually accomplished to which the word was sent. Less than one year ago I heard a very popular young Methodist preacher in attempting to quote the above language of David, supply for the words, "*He brought me up,*" the words, "He offered also to bring me up," etc.

That, of course, is the way they would have it read, but it does not read that way—there is no effort in the

work of our God. Next, let us have the angelic testimony as to what this "Word" is sent to accomplish. While speaking to Joseph, the angel said, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Mat. i, 21. Now, every religious professor will admit the truth of a part of these "shalls," for instance: "She *shall* bring forth a son"—they all confess the fulfillment of that. Then, "Thou *shalt* call his name Jesus"—that they also acknowledge; but this, "He *shall save his people from their sins*"—they say he may fail in that, and will fail unless we submit and subject ourselves to his dealings. O, how blasphemous it is to speak lightly of the power of the Most High God, by saying that he is in anywise dependent on us to submit to him that He may convert us, and that he is dependent on our means to send his word to other people, when God has declared that the word has gone out of his mouth, and that it shall accomplish that which he pleases for it to accomplish. Dear brother, if the Lord had not sent forth that word in our hearts, we would have still been in that deplorable condition of sin and death awaiting the final end which is to be destroyed with the damned. Then, how thankful we should be that God has a word that he sends in to Jacob that lights on Israel, whereby we are quickened from the dead and brought to know the truth in the Lord Jesus Christ. O, how pleasant it is to live in this word, that we may sup with Him and He with us. When he knocketh, let us open, for we never knock and he does not open to us; we ask, and he grants us such blessings as are suited to our case; we seek, and find him in the way as our guide, and he feeds us with Bread that is life forevermore. This gracious Guide will continue with us until he shall take us into his own holiness to dwell in his presence glorified in the sight of his Father and our Father.

"O blessed day when saints shall meet
To part no more; the thought is sweet."

Your brother in hope,
Newport, N. C.

L. H. HARDY.

My mind has been much of late upon the felt infirmities of a child of God, the overwhelming sense of the depravity of his heart that he has at times, the inward trials, temptations and afflictions that are his because of the "bondage of corruption" that he feels.

I have been thinking of these things because I have been deeply feeling them. I seem to myself to be the weakest, the vilest, the most unworthy of all who have a hope in the Lord, and the language of the apostle is true of me, if no one else, "In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing." At times I feel my wanderings in thought and word and deed to be so many, and so vile, that I am filled with an overwhelming sense of wretchedness, and find myself wondering what the end will be. I do not suppose I should write to you, or ever speak to anyone about these things, if they were all the experience I had to tell, for when I am under the controlling influence of that kind of soul-trouble which a view of the corruptions of my nature gives me, I have no disposition to speak to any one about them. But I have some other things to tell—things that are most precious to my soul—which have been brought to my knowledge and experience through these very afflictions on account of my vile infirmities. I can tell of sweet openings of the Scriptures in the very time of deepest darkness, and by that very darkness as a key to the hidden meaning of the word, the darkness itself being made light before me, and of precious revelations of the dear Saviour to my soul through his word, in his wonderful way of salvation, in his finished work, his precious blood, his atoning sacrifice, his glorious resurrection and his intercession, in which he has been presented to my faith "full of grace and truth," as just suited to my case. It seems to me that I have but very few times had a trouble of soul, since I received a hope, but that through it I have received some new, sweet view of the way of salvation in the opening to my mind of some portion of the Scriptures which has come to my help in time of need. And I cannot say that I have ever

received, in any other way, an understanding of any portion of the word that refers to the way of salvation, an understanding in which I could feel absolute confidence, because the word came with light, and life, and power, "in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance." I humbly feel that the Lord has made me to know something of "the blessings of the deep that lieth under," as well as "the blessings of the heavens above," which are given to the Lord's people in their spiritual Joseph; and of "the precious things put forth by the moon," the law, as well as "the precious things brought forth by the Sun" of Righteousness.—Gen., xlix., 25; Deut., xxxiii., 14.

When I first experienced "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," I thought the dear Lord had graciously delivered me from sin in such a way that I should never be troubled by it any more. The first time after the experience of this peace that I saw myself a sinner, I was brought suddenly to the brink of despair. I thought I was deceived, and it seemed to me that if this hope was not good, I would never have another. As I seemed sinking into a terrible abyss, these words came to my mind: "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Instantly I saw that my righteousness was in Jesus, and that it was the gracious revelation of that to me which had given me such joy and peace, and not because I was any better in myself. That was a very rich and comforting word to me, and my soul fed sweetly upon it.

At one time, when I was at a place where I had an appointment to preach, as the time drew near I felt so wretched and undone that it did not seem possible for me to go forward. I went away into a corn field, and thought of trying to pray; but it seemed to me that the Lord would certainly despise the prayer of one so unholy as I. In an instant the words came to me, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer."—Ps., cii., 17. My darkness and trouble

were gone, and I felt a comfort in trying to preach Jesus from those words.

At another time I saw myself so vile and unworthy that I thought I could not preach. My mind was clear, and I did not fear but that I could find something to say concerning the truth, but I felt too unholy to speak in the name of the Lord. Yet, I found myself trying to look for a text. These words were in my mind, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." I felt condemned that they were even in my mind, and I could not put them away, though I tried to do so, for I felt that they could have no application to me, but seemed to manifest more clearly my unholy condition by contrast. I was still trying if I could think of something suited to my condition as a most unworthy, sinful being, when these thoughts occurred to me: "If I should see a diamond and pick it up, it would be no glory to me. An idiot could do that as well as I. But if I could pick up a pebble, or piece of clay, and make a diamond out of that, it would be a crown of glory to me as showing such great wisdom and power." And this is what the Lord has done: He has taken me, a poor, vile sinner, and has put his wonderful love in my heart, and has given me a good hope through grace that I am one of his and shall dwell with him in glory, being made perfect in his dear Son. What riches of grace and wisdom and power and love, are here displayed! Truly, I am enabled to see myself as a crown of glory in his hand, for his is all the work, all the power and wisdom and righteousness, and to him forever shall be the honor and glory.

Space will not allow me to mention many of those instances of the opening of the word to my understanding and help in time of trouble, though many of them occur to my mind as I look back over the way the Lord has brought me. How well I remember when I first

(2)

knew the power of the words, "Perfect love casteth out fear." They came to me in what seemed to be the midst of a dark winter night in my soul. In a moment all fear and trouble were gone, and "the love of God which passeth knowledge," filled me with unspeakable comfort and joy. And, not long since, as I was thinking how far away the Lord must be from one so unworthy, and wishing that I might so call upon him that he would be pleased to draw nigh to me, these words came to me: "He is nigh unto them that call upon him—to them that call upon him in truth." It comforted me unspeakably to see that the very desire of the soul to call upon his blessed name, is an evidence that he is near to that one. One more occurs to me which I will mention. It was some years ago. The greatness, power, majesty and glory of God were suddenly so presented to my mind in contrast with my own ignorance and shortsightedness, that I asked involuntarily, "Where is the evidence that I ever knew the Lord?" These words came as though spoken in return: "He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God," and I saw where the knowledge was—not in the natural mind, however wise, but in the love that a babe can feel as well as a man.

I think I can understand, in some measure, how "tribulation worketh patience," remembering that the meaning of the word patience is continuance, endurance.—Rom., v., 3, 4. That trouble which the Lord causes the poor soul to feel by making him know the depth of his own depravity, he soon learns that he has no power to deliver himself from. When time and again his own efforts and struggles have failed to release him from the bondage, then he will be found looking continuously to the Lord. David thus waited patiently for the Lord when in the horrible pit and miry clay of his own depravity. He was not patient as we use the word. He was not quiet and uncomplaining, for he was crying all

the time, and his "soul refused to be comforted." But he could not get out himself, and he knew that in the Lord only was there help, and therefore he continued looking to him, and endured the trouble until the Lord came, and that is patience in its meaning in the scriptures, except in two places. This kind of patience is only brought about or manifested by tribulation, as the power of gold to endure is only manifested by the fire. When we have come to know in this way, by fruitless efforts, that help and salvation are not in any arm of flesh, but in the Lord alone, then we have experience, "and patience experience." Thus are we brought to know more and more of the blessedness of that good hope through grace which is as an anchor of the soul. It is not manifested through any other channel. Our works have always failed to give us any hope; so have all the works of others. But when our works have all proved useless, and our wisdom is turned to foolishness, and our righteousness to filthy rags, and storms of temptation, affliction, grief, and tribulation, arise in the soul, then does experience bring us to know the power and strength of that anchor—hope. The Lord hears our cry, gives us help from trouble, reveals more and more of the fullness of the precious Saviour to our souls, and so works in us that hope for what we do not see in ourselves, but for what we see by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and "if we hope for that we see not then do we with patience wait for it;" and this "hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

None can understand how it was possible for the apostle to glory in his infirmities, which he hated, and which made him cry out, "O, wretched man that I am!" but those who have learned, as he did, that it is by these very infirmities, deeply and painfully felt under the buffetings of Satan, that the rich and glorious grace of

God is measured and known, and through our sense of utter weakness that his strength is made perfect in our experience. The poor soul loathes as much as ever the weakness and infirmity of the flesh, our lack of all power to do the things that we would (Gal. v, 17), our lack of all wisdom to find how to perform that which is good. But what a glorious compensation is here, when we feel the power of Christ resting upon us. It is only for this cause that a soul that has divine life can take pleasure in infirmities, in necessities and distresses, that when he is weak in himself then only is he strong in Christ.

How well was the apostle prepared to bear testimony to and with the saints to the blessed truth that "All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii, 28. There seems especial need to remind them of this, because there are so many things concerning which they are ever ready to say with Jacob, "All these things are against me." The acts of wicked men, their wrath against the truth and ways and people of God, the constant evil workings of our own carnal mind, and the corrupt desires of our deceitful hearts, our fretfulness, and complainings, and rebellion against the will of God; these things seem to us as though they must work for evil. We are afraid of them when we are left to our own wisdom to judge. We are not afraid of good things, but we are afraid of the evil and wicked things in ourselves lest they separate us from the love of God and the enjoyment of things that are good and holy; and of wicked things in others, lest they work us an injury. If the apostle had merely said that we know that all *good* things work for our good, we would still have been left with the terrible apprehension that the great multitude of evil and wicked things which are in and about us would work for evil against us, and compass our destruction. There would

be nothing to comfort us when we feel the sinful workings of our old man so that we are ready to say with David, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." But the apostle says plainly, ALL THINGS. And he has just been tracing our exercises, and speaking of our groanings under "the bondage of corruption," of our infirmities and our ignorance as to what we should pray for, of the groanings which cannot be uttered caused by the intercession of the Spirit within us. Here are some of the things which we fear will work for evil to us, and separate us from the love of God, and are what the apostle is referring to as among the "all things." Under the weight of this bondage of corruption, this weakness and these infirmities, this inability to pray as we ought, or even to utter what our groanings mean, we cry out, "O, wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Now, the apostle, with comforting assurance, reminds us of what we already know, that those who love God are those who are called according to his purpose, and that they were all foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, and therefore all things must work together through the predestinating, controlling and directing power of God to fulfill his purpose, which will be for their good. His providence and grace do not conflict but work together, a well directed chain, for the good of his people, whom he loved with an everlasting love.

Not only did all the evil that came against Jacob and Job and David and Daniel and the three Hebrew children work for their good; but look also at such things as the terrible sin of Peter. Did he rejoice in it? Does a quickened soul ever rejoice in iniquity? Did it not fill him with shame and self-abhorrence, and cause him to weep bitterly? And yet how it worked together with all other things for his good, sifting out his self-confidence, humbling him under a sense of his infirmity,

awakening feelings of tender contrition and grateful praise for the long suffering and loving kindness of his dear Saviour, and preparing him when converted from his trust in himself to “strengthen his brethren.”

What a labyrinth of evil Job was in the midst of, mocked by his friends, stripped of every comfort, shut out from the presence of the Lord, and feeling himself to be a brother of dragons and a companion of owls; and yet in the end of his trial it was seen to have been all for his good when he came forth as gold.

How wicked was the act of Joseph’s brethren! But when they have been humbled, and have felt the terrible weight of their crime, and have been made glad by the sight of their brother, and so are prepared to hear the truth, Joseph tells them, “You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.”

Even the terrible crime of David, what anguish it wrought in his soul, what godly sorrow, what deep repentance, what just estimation of himself, what cries unto the Lord to be forgiven and to be healed and cleansed in the inward parts. He was no worse after than before the crime, but the awful depravity of his nature was known to him after as it was not before, and he could now see that he was left to this exhibition of it in order that he might see that God was justified in speaking and clear in judging concerning the guilt and condemnation of all. (Ps. li, 4; Rom. iii, 4.)

The most terrible and revolting exhibition of wickedness that was ever made on earth, the crucifixion of the holy and harmless Son of God, what glorious good it wrought for the people of God. The men who with wicked hands did the awful deed, did only what God’s “hand and counsel determined before to be done;” but they were none the less wicked, and long ages before it took place the Lord had declared it by the mouth of the prophets, and declared the just reward of the vile perpetrators of the crime. (Ps. lxi, 20–29.) So no

exhibition of the wrath of man will ever be allowed that shall not work together with all other things for the good of the Lord's people and for his glory. The remainder of wrath he will restrain. (Ps. lxxvi, 10.) This is very comforting to the dear tried, tempted, and persecuted children of God in this world where they are surrounded by enemies who are bitter against the truth, and where it is declared they shall be hated of all men for Christ's sake. They need fear no evil, for it is declared that no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper. They shall be brought through the fire, but it shall only purify and try them, not harm them. Therefore the apostle said, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." The Lord will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. Even when wicked men preach the gospel out of envy to add to the afflictions of the apostle, he rejoiced, not that men were wicked and preached in pretense, but that whether in pretense or in truth the gospel was preached, for he knew that wherever that truth, by whomsoever told, fell on the ear of a quickened soul it would be recognized as the truth and be made comforting by the same God who sent bread and flesh to Elijah by the ravens. (Phil. i, 15-18.)

With shame and self-loathing we remember that we were the servants of sin. We remember the bitterness of the time when that servitude became wormwood and gall to our souls; when we cried out by reason of the hard bondage, and our souls fainted in us. Yet we can join with the apostle when he says, "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you"—Rom. vi, 17. Only as having been the servants of sin, and made thus to feel its terrible killing power, and the power of the law which is the strength of sin, and of being made to acknowledge, "Iniquities prevail against me" (Ps. lxxv, 3), could we

ever have been brought to know and rejoice in the righteousness and salvation and love and grace and mercy of God; only in this way, through this terrible experience as servants of sin could we ever have known "the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works."

Then we can go on without fear, trusting in the Lord, who "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," who turneth the king's heart whithersoever he will, as the rivers of water are turned, who declares that the wicked are his sword and the men of the world his hand, who commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, and who saith to the sea, "Thus far shalt thou come, but no farther." In this glorious God, "whose counsel shall stand and who will do all his pleasure," we can safely confide, assured that he will in his own time and way bring us into the full enjoyment of that righteousness which we hunger and thirst for, and cause us to dwell in his presence forever. Then we can say with Newton:

"Since all that I meet shall work for my good,
The bitter is sweet, the medicine is food;
Though painful at present 't will cease before long,
And then, O how pleasant the conqueror's song."

Your brother in hope of a blessed immortality,
SILAS H. DURAND.
Southampton, Bucks Co., Penn.

WHY I AM A PRIMITIVE BAPTIST.

Elder J. E. W. Henderson—*Dear Brother*:—By request of my dear brother, F. L. Loard, of Alabama, I write you the reason of my hope, and that will explain why I am a Primitive Baptist. I was born in Baldwin county, Ga., August 12th, 1828. My parents, together with all my relatives, were Methodists. I was taught, and believed, that Christ died for all men in the same sense; and that man was capable of performing works of right-

eousness that would be to the saving of the soul; and in this belief I was raised up. I never for one time thought that I would go to hell; for I thought it such an easy matter to shun it.

I cannot remember the time when I first prayed, and I felt that I did as much good as evil—so I felt that I was safe.

My mother died November 3d, 1843, which was a great loss to us. And in the fall of 1845, my father moved to Wilkinson county, Ga.; his family then consisted of myself, two younger brothers and one sister, fourteen years old, who was very religious. We lived near a Methodist camp-ground, where we all attended; and in the fall of 1846, at the camp-meeting, I professed religion, and for three months I lived as strictly as ever any Pharisee did. I was engaged to be married in January 1847, and on Christmas, 1846, I visited my brother, F. L. Loard, who then lived in Pike county, Ga. When I got there, I told him and his wife of my engagement, and his wife, who had ever been very kind to me, proposed to my brother that she would have a quilting, gather the young people and have a party for my benefit, as I was soon to be married. I had not told them that I had joined the church and was very religious. The arrangement was agreed upon and the time set, as neither my brother nor his wife were professors of religion at that time. My troubles then began, as I delighted in such amusement; but when the time came, I laid my religion aside and enjoyed the pastime. I never told them that I had got religion, nor did I tell the church that I had enjoyed a party; for I still thought that a few good prayers would make it all right.—Poor, deluded man, how frail he is!

I returned to Wilkinson county, and was married to Mary Ann Billions, January 14th, 1847. My wife was a Primitive Baptist; we were very different in our religious views, though we never did contend with each

other about that; she went with me to my meetings, and I went with her to hers, and heard old brother William Cooper preach, when it was the most disgusting doctrine to me that I had ever heard; I have been so mad at it that I said it was a *hell-deserving doctrine*.

In 1847, my church passed a resolution that all her members who would not sign a pledge that they would not drink a dram should be put on probation for six months. I refused to sign the pledge, and told them to turn me out, which they did; but it grieved my sister so much that I joined again soon; but still, as is the case with all unregenerate persons, I loved the world, and the things thereof, more than my religion. It happened to me, according to the true proverb, "The dog turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."—2 Pet. 2: 22. But while in this condition, I hope the Lord had mercy on me, and showed me what I was.

In April, 1850, I was at work one morning in my garden, when one of my neighbors came to me and said he had come to see if he could get me to assist in digging a grave. I answered, yes, as I had never refused to help on such occasions. I inquired who was to be buried, and he informed me that it was Wilson Bloodworth, and that seemed to indicate that I would be the next one to be buried in the neighborhood, as Wilson Bloodworth was the hearty, promising young man I had seen on the evening before as I past his father's house, and did not even know that he was sick. The impression was so strong that I could scarcely stand; I was so struck that my neighbor noticed it, and often spoke of it afterwards. His name was Gabriel Jones, who is now gone the way of all the earth. He often spoke of my appearance on that morning, and said he believed it would work good for me.

I helped about the grave and attended the burial, as much distressed as I ever had been, and made up my

mind to commence the work of righteousness again; for I thought I had fallen from grace. I returned home from the burial about sundown, or a little later, and told my wife that I would not be with her long—that I was going to die—which caused her great excitement. She asked me why I talked so; I told her that it had been shown me. She then took hold of me in great emotion, and I in as much; and after she had turned me loose, I went out to seek some secret place to pray; for I felt like I did not want any one to see me. About seventy-five yards from the house, behind a bunch of dogwood bushes, I knelt down to pray, and there I saw myself the worst sinner that ever lived; all the sins that I had ever committed were there presented before me, and those I had thought were small sins were then as mountains; I was as poor and miserable creature as ever lived—condemned to die—with all my transgressions around me. I had also lost all my supposed good prayers, so that I remained there for some length of time, yet did not move my lips in prayer—I got up and went to the house without uttering the form of prayer that I had so often repeated and felt justified in; but my heart was full of grief, and the very emotion of my heart was, “Lord, save a sinner doomed to die.” My trouble was great; the world, with all its charms, was nothing to me. My heart’s sincere desire was, Lord, save a sinner doomed to die. I became weak and pallid, and was often asked by my friends what was the matter. I told them I was sick—so I was, sin-sick.

I went on so until the next spring, when one morning I felt so distressed I went out to try to pray, and while praying, these words came to me: “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.” I did not know whether it was scripture or not, but I got my Bible and soon found it.—Rom. 9: 15. This showed me that I was justly condemned—that God was sovereign and my condemnation was just, and I had been shown what I

was, to show me his justice. There was praise ringing in my mind, thus: Thou art God, high above all, just and true in thy judgments. I continued to mourn, and grieve, and roll from pillar to post at night. My wife often asked me, saying, Wesley, what ails you? My answer was, Oh! I feel so badly. If it had been as easy as I had supposed to have worked myself into favor with God, would I not then have done it? And as I had oftentimes heard, "Come into the altar, and you shall have it," I now found that all failed.

I would still go and hear old brother Cooper preach, and to me he seemed to be another man; his voice was changed to me, and his doctrine, which before had been so contemptible, was different; for I saw that if I was saved, it was by grace. I was willing, and really desired his prayers for me. My distress had become so great that I thought my time to die had come, as was shown me in my garden in the year 1850. On the first Sunday in June, 1852, I went with my wife to her church, Mount Carmel, to hear preaching for the last time, as I thought; for I did not believe I could live another month unless I got better. It seemed that everything condemned me. The day passed as a dream to me. When we returned from meeting, I had no appetite to eat. In the afternoon, my wife asked me to walk with her, which I declined to do, feeling that I was almost gone; I told her to go, as I had rather be alone. She then prepared me a place to lie down with my head in the door-way, as the weather was warm. I got my Bible and lay down, and I remember opening the book, and reading a verse or two in a place, turning over leaf after leaf; it seemed that everything condemned me. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. 3: 10. Just here, whether I went to sleep, or whether my troubles were so great that I was not conscious of what I was doing, I know not; but while in that condition, I

heard a voice at the door, as I thought, saying to me, Serve the Lord in the humble dust of humility. I raised up and looked to see who it was that spoke to me, but there was no one there. My book was lying down by my pillar, open, which showed that it had fallen there before I raised up. In that voice came the peace for which I had longed over two years; and as I raised up I clasped my hands, and said, That is it! My trouble was gone. I hope that I then saw how God could remain just and be the justifier of so great a sinner as I was—that Christ died my poor soul to redeem; I could claim him as my Saviour. The world put on a new aspect: it seemed that all nature praised God; the sun shone brighter; the birds sang newly. I know one thing; that is, the things I once loved, I now hate, and the things I once hated, I now love. This is the reason of my hope of heaven and happiness beyond this vale of tears.

Now, brother F. L. Loard, if this should ever reach you, I have given you my reasons for leaving all my connections. I hope it pleased God to show me my sinful self, and kill me to the love of sin, and that I am not saved by my own righteousness.—“But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even while we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together, with Christ. By grace ye are saved.”—Eph. 2: 4, 5. Then it is by grace, and as I had not kept the law at all, much less was I able to continue in it; I was condemned by it. The merit of Christ is my only hope and desire.

“Now the remnant of my days would I spend to his praise,
 Who hath died my poor soul to redeem.
 Whether many or few, all my years are his due,
 May they all be devoted to him.”

I continued to hear brother Cooper preach, and he now tells me all about my troubles by telling his. The Old Baptists at Mount Carmel are now the most lovely

people I ever saw. I desired to live with them; but I had so many doubts and fears that I was afraid my happy Sunday was a dream, and for fear I was deceived, I did not offer myself to the church until the first Sunday in September, 1863. I had pondered over my hope for the space of eleven years, and came to the conclusion that I would tell the church and let them decide the doubt for me. I was received and baptized by Elder Wyley Rogers, and I then received ease of conscience and peace of mind that the world cannot give. Since that time I have met with many trials and conflicts, which have caused me to go back to that first Sunday in June for comfort; and I have often thought how far I have failed to "serve the Lord in the humblest dust of humility." I desire the prayers of all God's people, that I may be there; for there, and only there is a blessing promised.

Your devoted brother in the bonds of love,

J. W. LOARD.

Graham, Ga., May 8th, 1882.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

We have received Elder Hassell's Church History; and as far as we have had time to examine it, are well pleased with it. We design reviewing it at some length as soon as we can carefully read it. It should be in the family of every Primitive Baptist in all the land, if for nothing else, for the sake of their children. We still offer it as a premium for a club of ten new subscribers, as long as we can get the \$2.00 history. It is a very cheap book, containing over one thousand pages. Brethren may send on names at any time, one or more as they get them, and pay us by first of December next. You will be doing good to yourselves in getting a good book and good to those whom you induce to take the GOSPEL MESSENGER.—R.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, WM. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD.—1 Pet., ii., 17.

Among the many marks of pure, vital Christianity, Love to the Brotherhood stands most prominent. "By this," says Christ, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another." We may have gifts to expound and speak with the tongues of men and angels, and appear to be very strong in the faith of some deep doctrinal point; but if wanting in love to the brotherhood, we are nothing more than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

But in addressing those who are born of God and brought into the fellowship of the gospel, we might here repeat the words of the apostle to the church and say: "As touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another, and indeed ye do it towards all the brethren which are in Macedonia; but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more."—1 Thess., iv., 9. We see, therefore, from the above text, that Love to the Brotherhood of Christ is one prominent mark by which we may rightfully claim that we are taught of God; and not only this, but that this love is susceptible in its practical development of being increased "more and more." Here is encouragement to nurture and cultivate it one to another, and this is often done by little acts of kindness to one another, both by word and deed. A practical example of this love is seen in Paul's Epistle to the Church at Philippi. Epaphroditus was a faithful and beloved minister of that church, having the good and comfort of every member at heart; he also was bound by the strongest tie of gospel love to the aged and persecuted Apostle Paul. His love, which was manifested to this apostle by many little acts of

kindness and attention to his wants, was fully reciprocated and appreciated by Paul; and hence he speaks of Epaphroditus as "my brother and companion in labor and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants." And such was the zeal, watchfulness, toil and labor of this faithful "messenger" of the church and fellow-soldier of the apostle, in the "work of Christ," that his health was greatly impaired, so that he was sick "nigh unto death." He was indeed brought very low in body by his sickness, and to add still more to his distress, he had heard that the church of which he was a minister and messenger had heard that he was sick, and were greatly distressed on his account, fearing he might die and they would have his faithful labors no more among them. He had an inward, spiritual longing "after them all," even while he was sick, and was "full of heaviness" in spirit because he knew his beloved brethren were greatly in need of his faithful ministerial service. But the apostle says: "God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but upon me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." "I sent him, therefore, the more carefully, that when ye see him again ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful."

And now, dear Christian readers, we ask that you turn to the record of this seemingly little matter, read it carefully and ponder it well in your heart, and see if you cannot behold in it the sure sign of pure gospel love and fellowship. Here is a sick preacher who had been engaged in the "work of Christ" by ministering to the comfort of an aged fellow-soldier, a real "companion in gospel labor." He had, through a *lack* of service on the part of the church, overtaxed himself to such an extent that he was sick "nigh unto death, not regarding his own life to supply the lack" of his church in their services towards one of the Lord's poor, aged, faithful and persecuted ministers. But notwithstand-

ing their deficiency or lack in this particular, and notwithstanding all his sickness which had resulted from it, he still loved them with fervent love, and longed after their comfort, and so far from his murmuring against them for their lack or neglect, which had thrown a double burden on him, he did not even want them at that time to know of his sickness or distress, and was "full of heaviness" when he learned that they had even heard of it. This faithful minister of Christ loved the Brotherhood of Christ, and the church at Philippi, of which he was a member and minister, dearly loved him. And when, by the mercy of God, he was raised from his bed of sickness and restored sufficiently to health to be able to travel, the apostle "supposed it necessary" to send him at once to his brethren, that when they should see him again in health, it would add greatly to their joy and comfort. "I sent him therefore the more carefully, that when ye see him again ye may rejoice." To some this might seem as a small matter of but little consequence, but as our God has seen fit to inspire his apostle to write it for our learning, it should not be overlooked, especially when it is enjoined by such authority to "Receive" this faithful minister "in the Lord with all gladness," and to hold all such devoted servants in "reputation; because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death."

Much of the *sacrifices*, as some call it, toil and labor through which many faithful aged ministers have gone, wearing out their life, impairing their health by being overtaxed with cares at home and abroad, are frequently brought upon them by a lack on the part of their brethren to give them that attention by word and deed to which they are justly entitled. Do we receive them with all gladness in the Lord? Do we hold all such in "reputation" for their work's sake? Or do we fail to appreciate God's gifts to his church? How soon, alas! how soon! are the aged servants forgotten when they

(3)

cease to be able to labor. A church is positively forbidden to be slothful in business. And whatever is the proper business of a church in her collective capacity, ought to be diligently attended to without seeking to throw it off on the pastor or other ministers. There is a use for all the members and gifts in the church, though all do not have the same office. The eye is not the ear, nor the ear the eye, yet each is of the body and has its work to perform for the mutual good of all. "If all were one member, where were the body?" If nothing is to be said or done in the church save by the preacher, then where is the body? Has it all become merged into one member? Is there nothing left of it but the eye? Love to the Brotherhood will manifest itself in little things as well as matters of great consequence. Even a word spoken to a brother in *due* season, how good is it? It is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. But remember, it must be a word in "due season." How important that we watch carefully for the comfort of others, lest the opportunity to do them good should pass. Our kind words will then fall upon their ear as empty air, cold and lifeless. A word in due season comes at the right time and in the right manner. It is adapted to the condition of our brother to whom it is spoken. It may be that it is a word of reproof, but it comes in due season when it will be most effectual to enter into the heart. Or, it may be a word of cautionary warning against some error into which our brother is about to fall in doctrine or practice. There is a due season to see your brother and speak to him. He may be afflicted in body and mind, and suffering sore temptations caused by neglect and indifference on our part. Where then is the one like Epaphroditus, who, for the work of Christ, will not regard his own comfort, or his own life, but will perform double duty to supply the lack of others? "Hold such in reputation."—M.

HOW IS THE CHURCH THE BODY OF CHRIST?

“Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

In what sense is the church the body of Christ? Does he not possess distinct and complete personality apart from the church? or shall we say that he is only the head, and that the church is the body? Our view of the matter is, that the church of Christ is a complete body of itself, and that Christ is also a complete personage of himself. The church as a body is of Christ by his creative power, as it is written, “Thy Maker is thy husband.” The church is of him, because it was made by him. “Ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus,” &c. The church is of Christ also by redemption, “Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” But it could not therefore be said that he would not be perfect as God without the existence of the church; yet the Scripture says that he is the “head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” But shall we therefore say that Christ is the church, and that the church is Christ? No, but rather that the church as a body is of him, receiving its life and everlasting existence from him and through him, and by him, together with all the spiritual and heavenly endowments with which it is glorified. If such be not the case, then the church is no less than Christ, and as he and the Father are declared to be one, the church is no less than God himself, and this of course cannot be true.

But the truth is, Christ is eternal, undivided in his divine essence, while the church, or children of God, are in a collective sense a created body, and as individuals they are members of the one created body, and hence are “members in particular.” Each member, therefore, is a subject of address in the divine instruction given in the Scriptures, and as such any one mem-

ber may act independently of the rest, so far as individual duties and personal obedience is concerned. They are required to obey separately and severally as members of one body.—H.

Brother R. R. Respass writes us from Texas, saying: I have just returned from seeing and carrying contributions to the needy; and they were all very thankful, many of them shedding tears. Praise the Lord, we have had a fine rain, and all who have seed are sowing oats; wheat all dead. If people could get seed oats, it would enable them to get feed for stock, and make a crop, etc. Yours in love,

R. R. RESPASS.

Something near \$200 have been sent them, we think, by readers of the MESSENGER.—R

The Esther article is unavoidably crowded out.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

BREWER, TEXAS, July 10th, 1886.—In about twelve months after I received a hope, there being no Primitive Baptist Church nearer than forty miles, I went and made my home with an Elder, Allen Samuel, near a church called Union, of the Predestinarian order, belonging to the Union Association. To this church I related a part of what I have heretofore related, and was received. Soon after joining the Church I began to have many thoughts on preaching, which I decided were false impressions, which made me doubt that I had an experience of grace. In about a year after this I went to Arkansas and was married to Miss Sarah Jane Martin. Still around me hankered those impressions to preach, which I could not account for. I became so discontented that I came back to Texas and called for my letter, which was granted. We then went to the Indian Territory, where we lived till the war, and my wife was the mother of three children, when I went into the army on the Southern side. I never saw her again; she died December 23d, 1862. When the war closed I was in very poor health, very much discouraged, having nothing left me but three

little children, and they in the Territory. I returned to Texas, where I remained and recruited my health to some extent, but having no home I was dissatisfied. I found a widow Hawes, with four children, to whom I was married the 13th day of September, 1865. We have lived together agreeably, and have raised a large family. She is the mother of fourteen children; six dead, eight living. My impressions increased greatly after I was married the second time, until my wife discovered there was something the matter with me. She interrogated me till I told her, and it was not long till it was further known. I had by this time offered my letter to Salem Church and was received. I was soon brought to make proof of my calling, if called at all, which thing I have often doubted. I was soon liberated to exercise in the bounds of the Association. About this time there arose an excitement about the Two-Seed doctrine among us, which was preached, also an Eternal Devil, with many other things of the like, too tedious to mention now. I, for some time, acceded to the above mentioned doctrines; a partial split took place after a while. Some churches and parts of churches withdrew and declared non-fellowship. I remained with Union Association—the majority. The contention still continued, and I at last took my Bible to decide the question. Point after point I found the Bible to condemn of the Two-Seed doctrine, with all its connections, to my satisfaction and honest convictions. I began first to confess my faults, and to show why it was not a consistent doctrine. Several churches withdrew from the Union and organized Big Creek Association. I think the source of it is told in Carlton's work. So farewell.

SAMUEL BRYANT.

LEVY COUNTY, FLA.—*Dear Elder Respass:*—I hope I believe the doctrine set forth in, and contended for by the MESSENGER. May God enable me to better understand his holy word, and give me grace to contend with the great oppositions of this life to the truth, as I trust I believe it to be. There seems to be a good deal to try my patience. The things I hope I desire to do at times I do not, for evil is ever present and mingled with all I do. I am made to wonder, sometimes, why the

good Lord has spared my unprofitable life; however, he knows best, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. We have had two of our three little children taken from us. Why, I do not know, unless for my wickedness. God knows why, and I trust all is for the best. I often look with fear and trembling for the fierce anger of God to be poured out upon me in some way or another. Oh! why is it thus with me? When I read of the brother's request last fall for the able brethren to help him, as he was in need and afflicted, tears came into my eyes. Why so? Christ was touched with our infirmities; are his people touched with each other's infirmities? I received a card from Elder J. H. Purifoy, of Alabama. He speaks of making a preaching tour through Florida. May the Lord bless and send him and others, with the spirit of love and power. I am not a member of the church. There is no Primitive Church anywhere near here, and none of that denomination here that I know of. I am the only one who takes the MESSENGER at this place. The people here believe works produce Christianity, and not Christianity good works. I hope the Lord will send some of his ministers to this part of the world. May God bless you in your great work, and all the household of faith.

W. M. BARTOW.

HARDEMAN COUNTY, TENN., Jan. 9, 1887.—*Beloved Brethren*:—After long delay I send you \$5 to pay you for our beloved MESSENGER. Be assured I feel rebuked for not remitting sooner, but pecuniary embarrassments have been the cause of my delaying so long. Please do not think hard of me, or think me careless about your interests, for such is not the fact. I love you—I love you for Jesus' sake—I love the Zion of our God above my chief joy. I love her watchmen, for I trust that I have a fellow feeling with and for them in all their trials, difficulties and temptations. Our sorrows, joys and hope are one. May God bless you and prosper you in all good things, both for time and eternity. He will amply reward you for your faithfulness both in the ministry and in the editorial department of the MESSENGER, which you have so ably and correctly conducted, which to my mind cannot be excelled; for I have not

seen the first item that I do not endorse. I bid you God speed. When before the throne remember your poor, weak brother who gropes his way in fear and doubts. Yet unworthy as I know I am, I live in hope of eternal life, that God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began. In tender love to you all,
 W. W. SAMMONS.

NO RAIN IN TWENTY MONTHS.—On Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in January, we received the February issue of the GOSPEL MESSENGER, and at close of our church meeting Sunday, at Mt. Olive, we read to the church and little audience present the account given on 95th page of the "Famine in Texas." Owing to unfavorable weather but few of our church were out, but aided by friends, they determined at once to send some relief by a small contribution of \$13, which was promptly forwarded next day (Jan. 24th) to Bro. R. R. Respass, Gordon, Palo Pinto county, Texas, by money order, and January 29th Brother Respass received the same. We here give a brief extract from his letter, post-marked February 11th, Gordon, Texas:

Dear Brother Mitchell:—The contribution sent by your church at Mt. Olive thankfully received and half of it distributed to the destitute, and will distribute the balance in a few days. On receiving your letter I felt as though we had been acquainted for many years, and if I felt competent, I would write something for publication concerning the destitute in our section of Texas. But as I never have written anything for publication, I will only briefly say here that we are in a bad condition. Many have scarcely any meat or bread, and not able to buy, and if the people in the older and more favored States do not assist, we cannot stay here much longer. Many have already left, and others are leaving daily. No rain yet; (about twenty months.) Wheat that was sown and come up is now all dead. It is now about time for sowing oats, but we cannot plow the dry soil. The Brazos river has stopped running in places. At this time it is quite cold, and snowing a little occasionally.

Dear Brother Mitchell, I am now in my 72d year, and have never before experienced such a time as this.

This is not written for publication, but if you feel

disposed to publish please correct, as it is written in quite a disconnected manner. Any person wishing to contribute to our destitute brotherhood here may, if they think proper, send by money order or otherwise, to me at Gordon, Texas, and I will distribute it to the needy as correctly as I am able to judge.

R. R. RESPESS.

REMARKS.—We see it stated in some of the secular papers that the State of Texas has appropriated *one hundred thousand dollars* in aid of the famished portion of the State. Still there will be much destitution, and in the providence of God, opportunity is here given for individual and church contributions to the “necessity of saints” as enjoined upon Christians in Rom. 12th and 13th. We are glad to see that other Primitive Baptist papers besides the MESSENGER are calling attention to the needy condition of our brotherhood, and thank God that He has put into the hearts of those who have, to readily contribute to those who have not. When, in the days of primitive Christianity, a great dearth was “throughout all the world,” the disciples of Jesus at Antioch “determined, every man according to his ability, to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judea, which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.”—Acts, xi., 29. See, also, 2 Cor., 8th and 9th chapters. But the fault-finder says that is too selfish—“will you let others perish, and help only your own people?” Is the gospel rule too narrow? See Gal., vi., 10.—M.

BIG SANDY, TEXAS, January 27, 1887.—*Dear Aged Brother Mitchell:*—Your card of the 9th inst., informing me of the death of Elder R. J. Cowsert, to hand. It refreshed my mind to know that you still have this poor old worn out man in remembrance. It brought to mind the many pleasant seasons we have had together in former days, in the more youthful and active part of our ministerial life. Many of our former associates and companions in labor are gone to reap their reward, and soon it will be as you have said, “our labors will also cease here forever.” The 23d of March next I will be seventy-six years old. I travel none now, only to attend our church when I am able, which is but a short distance.

But thank God the same comforting hope that has long kept me from despair still abides with me, and I yet hope that when the change comes it will be a happy one. And though I can labor but little, even for our home church, I am glad to know that the Lord has raised up a promising young gift in our church in the person of Brother F. M. Satterwhite, a descendant of the aged Brother Satterwhite we used to know in Georgia and Alabama. Arrangements are now made for his ordination as soon as we can get a presbytery. He speaks well and to the point, and every word is full of meaning. Thank the Lord, he is a great relief to me. My dear brother, I would be glad to write you a lengthy letter, but my eyesight is such that I can scarcely see the ruled lines. I was sorry to hear that Elder Cowsert had been reduced to want of temporal things in his old age, before his death. And in this connection I feel to say "Bless the Lord, O, my soul," for his wonderful goodness toward me, a poor, old sinner. I lack for nothing of this world's goods. I have plenty food and raiment, and am therewith content. My poor aged companion is still blind, and no hope of her ever being otherwise in this life. But thanks to our God she bears it extremely well, and the most of the time is quite cheerful. The Lord has blessed us with two loving and devoted children—a son and a daughter—yet unmarried, ages respectively 25 and 27, who cares for and furnishes all things needful for our comfort. Surely we ought to be contented, thankful and happy, for we have no earthly charge or cares of this world to trouble or perplex us. And, my brother, although I am nearing the house of silence and of death, I enjoy life as well or better than ever before, and feel perfectly resigned to leave all in the hands of my God who brought me into existence without my agency, consent or knowledge, and will dispose of me in like manner. And I say *Amen* to it. Farewell,

JEFF STRINGER.

Many of our brethren in Georgia and Alabama, where the more youthful days of Elder Stringer were spent in the ministry, will rejoice to read the above letter, and to know that though he had many years of hardship, toil, privations, and even destitution, after moving to

Texas, yet the Lord sustained him, and has turned his captivity and distress into joy, comfort and resignation. And how our heart is drawn out with love and thankfulness towards that devoted son and affectionate daughter who so kindly care for and relieve the aged parents of all cares of life. No greater or more pleasant earthly blessing can ever fall to the lot of aged parents than to have such children, and no greater earthly comfort will such devoted children ever have than to minister to the wants of such Christian parents. May the Lord bless them.—M.

FOUNTAIN HEAD, TENN., February 23, 1887.—*Dear Brother Respass*:—Will you please oblige an old man now turned into his ninety-fourth year, by publishing the within thoughts?
M. HODGES.

Is foreknowledge predestination? If it is, then we we must conclude God does not foreknow all things, or he is the author of all evil, which appears to me an absurdity. It is not consistent with his character to predestine an evil action and then punish the actor for that he could not avoid. That his knowledge is infinite is clearly proven by the Scriptures, (John xxi., 17) but that he is not the author of sin is equally proven. (James, i., 13.) I am aware that it is a nice point to discriminate between foreknowledge and predestination, for an event cannot be foreknown unless it is certain to take place. But God in his infinite knowledge knew sin would obtain in the world, but did he predestinate it? We have no proof of it, nor can I believe it. Men have something like foreknowledge, in a very limited degree. By the light of the laws of nature he knows that water unconfined will gravitate downward, and yet this knowledge is not the cause, or in any wise the influence thereof. If God predestined man to sin, man could not have done otherwise, and could hardly have been guilty of a wrong in so doing. But if he was left to his own volition after being taught the abstract principles of right and wrong, and their consequences, then he was guilty; and had lost his power to obey, but God had not lost his power to command, nor had his command abated any; it still required obedience the same as before man sinned; hence man

was, and is still, accountable to God—owes him moral obedience—though he has rendered himself incapable to pay it. God, foreseeing this state of affairs, provided a ransom before man was created. He permits sin, and makes it subserve a purpose in the great scale of his providence, but I cannot think he is the cause of it. To cause is one thing, and to permit is another; both certain.

AN APPEAL FOR HELP.—Elder Samuel Akers, Lincoln, Talladega Co., Ala., writes that a little church of five members has recently been constituted there; that they are very poor, but are trying to finish a plain house thirty by forty feet, in which to assemble for worship; it is now covered and weatherboarded, and they have a few inferior and temporary seats, so that meetings are held there—but they are forty miles from any other Primitive Baptist Church, and unless they get assistance from abroad they cannot pay for their house or have it completed. He makes an appeal through this medium to brethren, sisters and friends everywhere, for help. It is much needed and would be greatly appreciated.

Address as above, to ELDER SAMUEL AKERS.

Lincoln is on the Georgia Pacific Railroad, fourteen miles northwest of Talladega.

MILLWOOD, TEXAS, May 11, 1886.—*Dear Brother Mitchell:*—I write this evening to let you all at my old home, church, and neighborhood hear from me. I travel many rough and dark paths, but thank God, I hope I can see the True Light at times. We live in a neighborhood of high-toned, good, respectable people, yet there are but few Old Baptists, and I have not heard one preach since I heard Elder Price here last summer. He is a good preacher, and it did comfort me much to hear him. The Primitive Baptists are my people, and, though some may call it prejudice, I do love them and the religious principles to which they hold above all others. I send \$1.00 to renew my subscription to the MESSENGER. I feel like I cannot do without it, and I am always watching for the time to come to receive it. We all read it, and it is very comforting to me.

ELIZABETH MCINTOSH.

REISTERSTOWN, MD., Feb. 21, 1887.—*Dear Brother Res-
pess*:—The MESSENGER for March has arrived, and I have
been enjoying the reading of it. Please correct one
expression in my article. At the end, or a few lines
before the end, the word “not” should be inserted before
the word “do,” and after the word “might.” As it is,
I say exactly opposite the truth, and opposite what I
mean. As ever, your brothor in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

OBITUARIES.

JOHNNY ORR.

It is with sadness that we chronicle the death of the oldest son of our
dear brother, John H. Orr, and his affectionate wife, Sister Cordelia A.
Orr. Little Johnny died at their home, Lee county, Ala., November 9th,
1886, in the seventh year of his age. He was truly a promising child, and
such was his sound sense and judgment in conversation, that many
thought he would hardly be spared to live long in this sinful world.
Especially did he speak often of his early death, even before he was
taken sick, telling his dear mother as he returned from the Olive Asso-
ciation that he would not live to attend another the next year, and during
the three weeks of intense suffering he still continued, at times, to assure
his grief-stricken mother that he would not get well, that he was willing
to die, &c. The dear humble Christian mother, yielding to the tender
sympathies and affectionate emotions of a youthful mother's heart, has
written many incidents of the life and death of her darling son, which
would doubtless be of interest to immediate kindred, as well as to all, but
as it embraces nearly *seven* pages we must of necessity condense the sub-
stance in small space. Our dear young sister speaks in the highest terms
and in the most grateful manner of the kind attention of neighbors and
friends, and of the attending physician, during the sickness of the dear
child. Brother and Sister Orr are worthy members of Mt. Olive, highly
esteemed, respected and beloved by all the members, and we do pray that
God may give them sustaining grace in this and every other time of need.
Twenty cents are sent for two extra copies of the MESSENGER containing
this. Address J. H. Orr, Opelika, Ala. M.

BENJAMIN F. LEDBETTER.

Died, December 9th, Brother BENJAMIN F. LEDBETTER, at his resi-
dence in New Orleans, La., in the 57th year of his age. He was born in
Heard county, Ga., but some time after his parents moved to Alabama,
and then to Mississippi. In 1869 he and family came to Louisiana, Clai-
born Parish, where he remained a devoted citizen until last year, when he
received the appointment of Surveyor General of the State, which office
he filled with credit to himself and to his country. His beloved wife and

children had only been with him in New Orleans about three weeks before he died. He was received among the Primitive Baptists in 1872, and baptized by Elder Josephus Barrow, formerly of Chambers county Ala. He was a member of Sharon Church, at Summerfield, from the date of its constitution, and was much devoted to his family, his friends and his church. He leaves a devoted wife and eight children, four sons and four daughters, and some grand children. Accompanied by his dear wife and children his remains were brought to Summerfield and after a discourse by the writer, he was laid beneath the sod, there to wait till the voice of God shall call him forth in the resurrection.

Peaceful thy silent slumber,
Peaceful in the grave so low,
Thou no more wilt join our number,
Thou no more our songs shall know.

“Yet ere long we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is fled,
When in heaven with you we greet thee
Where no farewell tears are shed.”

J. C. KNIGHTEN.

JAMES J. RENFROE.

JAMES J. RENFROE departed this life October 1, 1886, at his home in Brooks county, Ga. He was a son of Asabel and Rachel Renfroe, and was born near Augusta, Ga., March 19, 1818, being at his death sixty-eight years, six months and twelve days old. He was married three times and leaves a wife and eleven children, eight grand children, and two poor lonely sisters, who miss him more than any pen can express; for he was a source of great comfort to them, being truly a brother in Christ as well as a beloved brother in the flesh. He was a kind and indulgent father, a good husband, and upright and fair in all his dealings with his fellow-man. He manifested considerable interest in church matters, attended his meetings regularly as he well could, and was a great lover of the doctrine of grace. He joined the Primitive Baptists at Bethlehem church, Irwin (now Brooks) county, Ga., when he was about twenty-two years old, and was baptized by Elder William Hunter, and was soon after ordained a deacon of that church and served in that capacity for several years. He remained in Georgia a long while, then moved to Bradford county, Fla., and united with Bethany church, of that county, lived there nine years, and in 1870 he returned to Brooks county, Ga., where he died.

To be with his brethren, and to read and express his thoughts and views on the Bible, seemed to be his greatest pleasure, and he was never better pleased than when praising and speaking of the unspeakable riches of his Heavenly Master. He had been in very poor health for some time previous to his death, and for the last few months of his life had been troubled very much with chronic diarrhœa, and a short time before he died he was quite sick for a few days, but got up and about, and went to see his married daughters, stayed with them a few days, came home, was taken sick and lived fourteen days. While on his death-bed he made several able and very feeling prayers. On Thursday morning he called his wife,

children and sisters to his bedside, and taking them one by one in his arms, he prayed for and talked to them, telling them to do the best they could, and to his children to live as he had tried to raise them; to be honest, respect the truth and deal fair with their fellow-man; they being all present except his oldest and only son by his first marriage, who is a worthy Baptist and a licentiate preacher. He had typhoid dysentery, and his sufferings were very great. He said he was ready and willing to die; all he dreaded was the sting of death, and he prayed all the time to go easy. On the following Friday morning, about 4 o'clock, he raised up on the bed, lay down, turned over on his side and breathed his last as easy and quiet as though dropping off in a pleasant sleep. He was decently buried in the family graveyard near his brother.

He has gone to reign with his Saviour above, where all is peace and love. May God bless and prepare us all to meet him in that upper and better world, where kindred and friends meet to part no more.

By his niece,

N. E. R.

Quitman, Ga., Feb. 9th, 1887.

MRS. MARY ANN JACKSON.

MRS. MARY ANN JACKSON died on Sunday morning last, 19th inst., at the residence of her son, Elder H. E. Brooks, on Sanford street, in this city, and the funeral took place yesterday morning at 7 o'clock. Deceased was born February 1, 1808, and was, therefore, seventy-eight years, six months and nineteen days old. Besides her only son, Elder H. E. Brooks, she leaves two daughters, Mrs. Emily Moore, of Mobile, and Mrs. Josephine Woody, of LaGrange, Texas. She was a Primitive Baptist in faith, and was a pious, humble and unassuming Christian woman, true to life's relations, and possessing implicit faith in her Lord and Master. Conscious during the last week of her illness of the near approach of death, she expressed no fear, but asserted her readiness and willingness to go, in the confident hope and expectation of a blissful immortality. After life's fitful fever, she sleeps well.

H. E. BROOKS.

EXPRESSIONS OF MRS. MARY A. JACKSON DURING HER LAST SICKNESS.

"I see Jesus face to face. Sing that good song; I think I will go off before daylight. It is dark; you all go to bed; Jesus will come for me when I am ready. You can tell by my pulse, can't you? There is a great change come over me; do you think I am dying? I have no fear at all; Jesus is with me all the time. It may be my time; if it is, here is my hand to meet you all in glory. Don't shed tears for me; you have all treated me well. Sing my favorite song, 'How firm a foundation,' etc. When Jesus calls we all must go; he will take care of his children in the end. Salvation is of the Lord. God's time is my time—it is useless to try to have it any other way. I love you all; I feel that I have no foe. I don't want my children to shed a tear for me—I go willingly. The nearer the end the brighter the sun. Don't you feel glad, son, to see me so resigned? I have felt that way ever since 1832. I am like the man at the pool—just as helpless—waiting for the moving of the waters. It was Christmas night when I was delivered, and I have not been afraid of death

since. Perfectly easy; not a bit of misery. I would like to see the doctor, but I don't want him to give me any medicine; I am on God's course now. A little suffering beforehand, but can't go out until God is ready. If the doctor comes don't let him give me any medicine. How long! I wish it was over, but God has his time. Don't shed any tears for me, I am 'most gone to rest. Patience! God is with me to the last. The grace of God is with me—nothing else. Darling, don't shed tears for me; I'm gone to rest. This is the spiritual part—gone to rest—he will raise it up at the last day. Did I sleep, darling? I wish sleep would come without any waking. What time is it? God made the day to suit him. The bad part is that you have to suffer, because flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. The Lamb of God has paid the debt and sets the sinner free. The debt is paid. Did I go to sleep, darling? I want the sleep that knows no waking." When aroused from stupor and asked if she wanted anything, replied: No, I don't want anything but to go home to God. When asked if she was in pain, replied: No, perfectly easy. "The nearer the sun goes down the brighter is my sun. I want you all to stay with me, I don't think it will be longer than this evening. I think I have held out mightily. The nearer the end the brighter it seems. I'm so sorry Emma couldn't come. God provides a rest here, as well as hereafter, for his children."

ELI H. MILTON.

ELI H. MILTON was born August 16th, 1852, and died October 12th, 1886, aged thirty-four years, one month and sixteen days. He had for many years been a faithful and consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and for three years or more, a minister of the gospel, and by his strict and pious walk as a member, was a blessing to the church and community in which he lived. While filling his regular appointment at Mount Nebo Church, he was seized with pneumonia; medical aid was immediately procured, but to no benefit, and on the 12th of October he breathed his last. During his sickness he talked freely, and gave evidence of being resigned to the will of the Father. Nothing seemed to trouble him, except his family. He leaves a wife and five children to mourn his irreparable loss. May God bless and comfort them in this time of sorrow. In the death of Brother Milton the Church has lost a faithful official, the wife a truly Christian husband, and the children the godly counsel of a devoted father. May the Lord help them and us, as a church, in the midst of our weeping, to say, "Not my will but thine be done." Brother Milton kept his lamp trimmed and burning, hence we weep not as those who have no hope, for in the great beyond he will dwell forever, with the white robed throng, a shining saint, and there await the coming of all those who are the "blessed of the Father." "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." Therefore,

Resolved, That the Church at Little Flock, in token of its affectionate remembrance of Brother Milton, declare its sense of loss in his death, and sharing the usual esteem of him as a consecrated minister, we will ten-

derly cherish his memory by inserting this obituary and leaving a blank page in the church book.

Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with his widow, and the relatives of the deceased in their bereavement, and that our Clerk be requested to transmit a copy of the same to his widow as a memorial of our love and esteem.

M. R. McRAY,
WILLIAM BEASLY,
JAS. S. MASSEY,
Committee.

Thomas County, Ga.

Done by order of the Church in Conference, November the 20th, 1886.

ELDER AARON PARRISH, *Moderator*.

CALVIN SURLS, *Church Clerk*.

MRS. ISABEL E. BOZEMAN.

Sister ISABEL E. BOZEMAN, consort of Brother Zimri C. Bozeman, was born December 7, 1825, married March 16, 1842. She was baptized into the fellowship of Elam Church, Pike county, Ala., by Elder R. T. Webb, September 10, 1871, and lived in the fellowship and esteem of the Primitive Baptists until death summoned her to her rest with the church above. Truly it is said of Sister Bozeman that she was an exemplary woman in every relation of life, as a wife, a mother, a neighbor and a church member. She was a great sufferer for several years from lung disease, yet she was never inclined to murmur, but bore her affliction with remarkable patience and fortitude until her death, which occurred November 25, 1886, at twenty minutes past nine o'clock p. m. She had been up during the day, and more active than usual about her domestic duties, but after retiring to rest was taken with hemorrhage of the lungs, which soon terminated in death. She left an aged husband, several sons and daughters and a large circle of friends and relatives to mourn her departure.

H.

MRS. M. D. PARKER.

With a sad, sad heart I write to-night to break to you the solemn intelligence of the death of my precious mother, MRS. M. D. PARKER, which occurred at her home in Dawson, Ga., on the 17th of December, after a brief illness of only six days. She was taken violently ill with pneumonia and suffered intensely, though she bore it with much Christian fortitude. We have every reason to believe it was a happy translation, and although the appearance of the angel of death may have been unexpected, we feel that when the summons came she was ready to meet her God in peace. She was the wife of Elder Stephen Parker, a Primitive Baptist minister, and sister-in-law of Elder Cadar Parker, whose biography and obituary you published some time since, and was the daughter of McKeen and Sarah Cook, and was raised in Randolph county, Ga., near Cuthbert. Her parents were firm and strict members of the Primitive Baptist Church. My mother joined the church when quite young, and ever loved and honored the Primitive Baptists. Her faith seemed to grow stronger as she grew older. Naturally refined, modest and gentle, she won the love and esteem of all who knew her. She died in the fifty-sixth year of her age. Three of her children, and four step children still survive her.

She was a tender, thoughtful, praying mother, solicitous and anxious about all of her children. I am the youngest child, and miss my darling mother, oh, so much! at morning, noon and evening; when I retire to my room tears fill my eyes, and my heart seems almost to burst when I notice her vacant chair. As yet I am not reconciled. I feel that I can't give her up. 'Tis easy for the lips to say "Thy will be done, not mine," but 't is hard for the *heart* to utter it. But I know God is wise, and good, and merciful, and just. "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Humbly,

O. E. PARKER.

Dawson, Ga.

MRS. N. E. BEEBE.

The February number of the GOSPEL MESSENGER was received by me to-day. It was sent to my dear old mother, Mrs. N. E. BEEBE, who has been a subscriber for several years past. She dearly loved to read in it of the glorious works of Jesus in bringing his children from nature's darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the Son of God. But she has gone from this world of sickness and suffering to those blessed mansions above, where she will be at perfect rest, basking in the smiles of her dear Saviour, that she loved and served so faithfully here. She breathed her last at 11 o'clock, P. M., August 17th, 1886, at her son's home in Ellensburg, W. T. It was my privilege to be with her during her last sickness to care for and administer to her wants, and I shall always feel to thank God that I could be with her, for it is still a great comfort to me, for it taught me a lesson in patience and Christian fortitude, that I hope I shall profit by. She had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church a great many years, and dearly loved to hear the brethren and sisters talk, but during her last sickness she was deprived of their company, which was a great trial to her. She had a wonderfully clear understanding of the Scripture, talking of the precious promises to God's people as long as she had strength. She retained her right mind to the last, knowing us all and calling us by name. I never saw such patience as hers; through all her terrible suffering she never complained, but would say it was all right that she should suffer; that it was not anything to compare with what her Saviour had suffered for her. A short time before she died she seemed to be in a doze, when all at once she reached out her arms exclaiming, "Oh, blessed Jesus!" and such a heavenly smile crossed her face that I shall never forget; the dear Saviour appeared to her in all his glory, lighting her way through the dark valley and shadow of death. She called her little grandchildren to her, kissed them and talked to them, giving them such good advice! After a short time we could see her end was very near; her mind seemed to be troubled; she said she could not go at all, that she would seem to get just so far when something would seem to bar her way. She turned to me once and said, "Oh Minnie, they are standing in God's way, keeping me from heaven;" she said, "What did Jesus say?" I repeated this passage, "Come unto me all ye weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and she said,

(4)

"Ain't I weary and heavy laden?" I told her she was, and it was to just such as she was that the Saviour spoke. I shall never forget the ring of her voice as she said, "I'll have it then, I'll fight for it till I die." Speaking to my brother, she said, "Charlie, lift me up just one time more;" he raised her up and she gave a short struggle, and all was over. Her blessed spirit had taken its flight to join the loved ones gone on before. While looking at her still, peaceful face, so calm in death, I felt that I ought to rejoice that she was gone from this world of suffering; yet, it is so hard to give up our loved ones and bow in submission and say, "not my will oh God, but thine be done." My blessed angel mother; oft times now in the stillness of the night, when all the rest are asleep, I will find my face bathed with tears, for I loved my mother! But she is gone from me forever, and I shall never see her sweet face or hear her gentle voice again. But may God grant that I may follow the example she left me. I shall always thank God for the blessing of such parents. My father, Elder A. T. Beebe, was one of the earth's most noble men. But he too has long gone to receive the crown of righteousness that fadeth not away. It will be but a few short years, at most, that we shall be left here to mourn for the absent ones, then we too will be called upon to try the realities of eternity; and may we meet with the loved ones that are gone, to join our voices in praise and adoration to the blessed Jesus, is my heart-felt prayer. With much love to all the household of faith, I am your unworthy sister,

MINNIE HESS.

PINCKNEY T. DRAPER.

PINCKNEY T. DRAPER died 10th December, at his residence in Freestone county, Texas, of congestion of the stomach and bowels. Brother Draper was born in Arkansas, on 20th February, 1850. He was a precious brother in Christ, and a beloved friend to all who knew him. He was baptized by the humble writer near two years ago into the Primitive Baptist Church, and has been a faithful brother ever since, and well beloved among the saints with an humble walk. Godly conversation was his whole delight all through this year, and at times he would get so happy while in the field at work, that he would go to the house and tell his beloved companion how happy he had been. Nothing seemed to bother him, and he seemed to have some premonition of his death, and spoke of it, and it did not trouble him at all. He said all he dreaded was the sting of death and leaving his beloved wife and three little children. May God in mercy remember the lonely widow and fatherless children. He was permitted, by the goodness of God, to see his loving wife baptized into the fellowship of the church with him last summer, which was a great pleasure to him. I was with him when he died; he wanted to have preaching the night he died, and sent after me, and I had been with him but a few minutes when he took a hard spasm; he was so glad to see me, and was holding my hand when he took the spasm. When he came to, he said he felt so happy, and had seen strange things. He then died very calmly, with a mild look over his face. "Asleep in Jesus, O, how sweet!" His remains were deposited in the cemetery at Cotton Gin, Texas. A short discourse on the resurrection of the body, and prayer by the writer.

T. J. MOORE.

MRS. ELIZABETH BRADY.

She departed this life October the 2d, 1886, after a short illness. She was taken sick on Wednesday and died Saturday at 8 o'clock in the evening, of inflammation of the stomach and liver. Her sufferings were beyond description. She left five children, two of them under age, but she said the Lord could take better care of them than she could. Our church has lost one of her main members in keeping up the meetings. We mourn our loss, yet not as those without hope, for we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

ADELIA HARLAN.

Mixerville, Ind.

MRS. ALEY MCPPEAK.

In memory of my mother-in-law, Mrs. ALEY MCPPEAK, who was born in North Carolina in the year 1802, and died at her home in Clayton county, Ga., January 1st, at 8 o'clock p. m., 1887. She was the widow of William McPeak, who preceded her to the grave just seventeen years and one day. They immigrated to Georgia about 1835, and settled in Newton county, and subsequently in Clayton county. There were born unto them three sons and ten daughters, all of whom they raised to be grown. Nine of the children still survive—some of them in Texas. She and her husband united with the Methodists (known as the Protestants) about the year 1852. Some four years after this, mother complained one day of not feeling very well; was left alone for a short time; was heard by some of the family who were at work near the house, making some demonstrations of distress, or something that alarmed them; they ran in and on inquiry found it to be rather exclamations of joy and praise to her blessed Saviour who had manifested himself to her in the free pardon of *all her sins*. A hope springing up within her, inspired her to exclaim, "O, my *blessed Saviour!*" Some time after, she and the writer in conversation, I ventured to interrogate her about the troubles of her mind previous to the day above referred to. She being free to talk, said: "John, my son, I have seen a great deal of trouble, not knowing the cause, nor from where it originated. But the day that I was alone in the house my troubles all left me for a time." I then asked her if the same trouble returned. She hesitated a moment and then answered: "I yet have trouble, but it seems to be somewhat different from the first. My troubles now are doubts and fears—fearing I might be deceived—and am often inquiring, 'can I rely on those things that were shown me, and claim a hope in the blessed Saviour?' " Here I said to her I believed that all God's children are exercised the same way, and that if I was a child of God she also was one. Space forbids, and I cannot speak of all that I desire. Suffice it to say that the community where she lived has lost a kind-hearted friend, the children a devoted mother—surely none ever surpassing her in hospitality—but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. On the day of her demise she was up all day—only complained once or twice of shortness of breath. She ate her supper, as usual, and lay down early, and it was soon discovered that her breathing was unusual; she called her son to her bedside, telling her daughter just previous that her dissolution had come.

She then expressed satisfaction that her children were present; and when she was seemingly unable to speak, she spoke in an audible voice: "*Oh, my blessed Saviour!*" and in a few minutes breathed her last. May God comfort all the bereaved children and relatives in this country and elsewhere.

Yours in hope,

JOHN B. KEEN.

Panola, Ga., Jan. 7, 1887.

HENRY WALTON,

Infant son of James M. and Etta Yarbrough, of Chattooga county, Ga., died, after a painful illness of two weeks, from whooping-cough, on January 5th, 1887, aged five months and twenty-four days. His stay with us was short, but we know that the good Lord has taken him to himself, but oh! how it grieves us to part with our darling babe. We desire to be submissive to the will of Him who doeth all things well: "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return," is the decree gone forth. Oh! that the Lord will prepare us to meet our babe above.

January, 1887.

JAMES M. YARBROUGH.

JAMES G. LANCASTER.

Dear Brother:—I, with a broken heart, send this, the obituary of our son. JAMES G. LANCASTER was born May 19th, 1869, and departed this life December 31st, 1886, aged seventeen years, seven months and twelve days. His death was caused by typhoid fever. He never uttered a word of complaint in the way of a murmur during his sickness, which was three weeks, but bore all his sufferings with patience. Every thing was done for him in the reach of human skill—having two of the best physicians in this place—but death claimed him as his own. He never said anything about a change; yet his walk and deportment gave evidence of something about him that was above nature. He never gave his parents any trouble in his life in regard to his conduct. I have often put the question in my mind: Why was it that so promising a youth has been taken on the verge of manhood? How hard it is to us in nature to give him up and to be reconciled for the will of God to be done. Brethren, if you have the heart to do so, pray that the Lord will give us grace to be fully resigned to his will, that we could realize with Job, The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.

Yours in love,

P. M. LANCASTER.

Bowie, Texas.

We can sympathize with you, dear brother.—R.

MRS. CASSANDRA M. JINKINS,

Wife of the late Deacon Cyrus R. Jinkins, of near Hogansville, Ga., was born August 4th, 1815, in Green county, Ga., and died January 1st, 1887, aged seventy-one years, four months and twenty-seven days.

She was happily married to Deacon Cyrus R. Jinkins, March 1st, 1842. Soon after her marriage she became a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Emmaus, Troup Co., Ga., where her membership remained until her death. Sister JINKINS, up to the year 1864, was a woman of superior intellect and of an amiable disposition; but her usefulness as a

happy mother and devoted Christian was much paralyzed during that year owing to a change of life, and the loss of a precious son; her bodily afflictions, together with the bereavement of her children, almost completely overbalanced her mind—hence, she became badly demented, from which shock she never entirely recovered, though she improved sufficiently to be pleasant and to afford her children much comfort. Religiously, she never lost sight of the precious dealings of the Lord with her soul; she could relate her Christian experience with clearness.

October 30th, 1886, her sister, *Permelia A. Hopson*, died, which sad bereavement proved too much for her already enfeebled mind, consequently she again fell a victim to insanity, which, together with nervous prostration, brought about her death. All who knew *Sister Jenkins* are satisfied that she is sweetly sleeping in Jesus. In the last ten years, ten of *Deacon Jenkins'* family have died—himself and wife, three daughters, and five grand-children. Three of his children yet survive the tomb. May the Lord abundantly bless them, is the desire of the writer,

Hogansville, Ga.

A. B. WHATLEY.

MRS. MARY B. WHITEHURST

Died at her father's home, in Pike county, Ala., on October 12th, 1886. She was the daughter of *Samuel C. and Elizabeth Kendrick*; was born in *Upson county, Ga.*, June 21st, 1868. In all her great suffering she never murmured, nor seemed to think it hard, or wrong that she should suffer. She seemed to be aware of her approaching dissolution, but was not at all alarmed. She was not a member of any church, but still we sorrow not as those without hope, for she left evidences of the love of God as none can do but the pure in heart. She leaves a sorrow-stricken husband, and father and mother, and other near relatives, to mourn the loss of her and her little infant child, who preceded her just a few days. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away," and can we not at all times say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord?" If there be any good children in this world of tribulation, *Mary* was a good child. I do not think that any knew her but to love her. God's will, not ours must be done. *Mary* has left us, as we have good reason to hope and believe, in the triumph of a Christian faith. Below we give a few lines that she claimed as the sentiment of her heart:

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
 My spirit doth rejoice
 In God, my Saviour and my God;
 I hear his joyful voice,
 I need not go abroad for joys,
 I have a feast at home;
 My sighs are turned into songs,
 The comforter is come!

MISS POLLY WILLIAMS

Was born in *Putnam county, Ga.*, in about 1800, and remained there until she was a young lady and was married to *Mr. John Kendrick*. They afterwards moved to *Pike county, Ga.*, where they spent many long and happy years, and raised a family of children, eleven in number. One

little babe departed this life in infancy. The rest of them all lived to mature years, and have all become members of the church. Seven are yet living, five in Pike county, Ala.; four living near together, two brothers and two sisters, who gave their special personal attendance to their mother as long as she remained with them. About forty years ago she joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder Dismuke at Harmony Church, Pike county, Ga. She remained a consistent member there for many years. When she moved she carried her banner of faith, hope, and love, and seemed to grow stronger and stronger until her last days her mind seemed to be on the Saviour and the victory she had won. She was so afflicted with paralysis and for the last four weeks of her life she could not talk to tell us much of what her anticipations were, but as long as she could speak it seemed that her way grew brighter and brighter. On the 23rd of March, 1885, Mrs. Polly Kendrick departed this life, leaving all her loved ones of her own family, and many friends, to mourn her loss; yet they have a consolation, that their loss is her eternal gain.

The writer of this notice was a personal friend of the subjects of these obituaries, and has often had the prayers of the dear old mother in Israel showered upon him from her own lips that he might meet her in a better world, and he asks all who may read this to pray that he and all her family and friends may meet her.

M. M. BELL.

MRS. PERMELIA A. HOPSON,

Our precious old mother, wife of William Hopson, deceased, of Hogansville, Ga., was born November 30th, 1812, and departed this life October 30th, 1886, aged seventy-three years and eleven months. She became a subject of reigning grace in her sixteenth year, and united with the Baptist Church at Shiloh, Green county, Ga., August, 1828, and baptized by Elder Lumpkin; soon after her union with the church, her father (John Bird) moved to this county (Troup), when she and others were constituted into a church called Shiloh. After her marriage to our father in 1833, she obtained a letter from Shiloh Church, and united with the church at Emmaus, where she lived a consistent and devoted member fifty-three years; she was truly a lover of her church privileges, always filling her seat in the house of God, when in her power, doing all she could to advance the cause of her blessed Master, by her piety, godly walk, and liberality, her house ever being a home for God's ministers, whom she delighted to hear preach Jesus. She had been in feeble health for years and greatly deprived of church privileges, but spent much of her time reading her Bible and GOSPEL MESSENGER, which was a great comfort to her. Her last affliction was dropsy, which caused her much pain, though she bore sufferings without murmuring, manifesting the greatest patience, always glad to have her friends and neighbors come to see her. She was a good, precious mother, step-mother and grandmother—the only aged lady in the settlement—and was the pet of all; so her death has produced a vacuum in the affections of relatives and friends that can't be filled. It is hard, indeed, to give her up, but we believe our

loss to be her eternal gain. We did all in our power to prolong her stay, but it was the Lord's will to take her from this world of troubles, and we desire to be submissive to his will.

She often spoke of death; said she did not fear to die. The day before her death she had a sinking spell; she told us her stay with us was short, and she wanted us to give her up as cheerfully as possible; she would soon be through with her sufferings. Oh! what a peaceful departure, passing away as calmly as an innocent babe falling asleep. Her funeral was preached by Elder A. B. Whatley, in a very appropriate manner, to a large concourse of relatives and friends. Her body was then interred in the old church graveyard, beside our dear old father, who passed away before her eleven years and three months.

Dearest mother, thou hast left us
Here; thy loss we deeply feel;
But it is God that has bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal.

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

We are sad and lonely, and wish an interest in the prayers of all Christian people, that we may be resigned to our sad bereavement.

Yours, in love,

ANNIE HOPSON.

Hogansville, Ga.

Truly, in the death of our aged sister Hopson, a "Mother in Israel" is gone to her peaceful rest. We have known her personally for fifty-two years, have frequently visited the dear family, and for a time had the pastoral care of the church of which she was for so many years a worthy member. Though bereft of her dear husband, and of much of her former earthly goods, God had provided and preserved three lovely, Christian daughters who have remained unmarried, caring chiefly for the things of the Lord, and attending devotedly to the comfort of their precious mother. These four sisters constituted the family—a peaceful, cheerful and happy family, struggling at times against adverse winds, but steadfast in the faith with clear conscience. May God's blessing rest on the family.—M.

MRS. ELIZABETH DAUGHETY,

Wife of Reuben Daughety, was born in Onslow county, North Carolina, December 19th, 1819, and died December 3rd, 1886. She was married to Reuben Daughety, in Madison county, Tenn., September 13th, 1839, and united with the Primitive Baptists in 1845. She died of cancer, from which she suffered a great deal for many years, but bore it with great fortitude. She was a most extraordinary woman in many respects. The writer visited her at her home about three months before her death, and remained with her about three days, and was remarkably impressed with her well stored mind on all subjects, and especially on the fundamental principles of doctrine as held by Primitive Baptists. She had read the scriptures much, and showed a depth of thought and soundness of judgment rarely met with.

Sister Daughety lived with her husband forty-seven years, and was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church forty-one years. As a wife, she

was a help-mate indeed, filling all the domestic relations of life well; she was the mother of three children, all of whom are dead. For energy and industry she had few equals and no superiors. She would not tolerate wrong-doing of any kind whatever, and was very severe in her denunciation of every species of hypocrisy and deceit. As a Baptist, she was sound, consistent, orderly and hospitable. Her home was always open, and welcome, to the Baptists; in a word, she adorned her profession by well ordered life and a godly conversation. She leaves a husband and one grand-son, and many friends and relatives to mourn her loss. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, from henceforth they rest from their labors and their works they do follow them."

C. M. SCROGGIN.

BETTIE CLOPTON LAWLER.

Our dear daughter-in-law, BETTIE CLOPTON LAWLER, died at our home, near Brownsboro, Ala., on the morning of December 27th, 1886, about 9 o'clock. She was the daughter of the late lamented Wilson and Mary Lawler, of Mississippi. She was born October 14th, 1865, her stay on earth being twenty-one years, two months and thirteen days. She was married to Robert T. Lawler, February 21st, 1882. Only a few fleeting years was she permitted to gladden the heart of her husband, whom she loved almost to idolatry, with her loveliness, her faithfulness, and her many winsome ways. She was a member of the Methodist Church, and lived a very consistent Christian. She enjoyed going to her meetings so much, and loved dearly the old-fashioned songs of Zion, many of which I have listened to her singing, while she sat in her room and I in mine, and I felt in my heart surely my child knows something of the vileness of her heart and the power and goodness and mercy of God, or she could not sing with so much, seeming spiritual understanding.

On Sunday before she died Monday morning, I saw that she was gradually sinking, and I felt that I could not see her die without knowing something of her feeling. So, I sat down on her bed and asked her several questions, and the sum of her answers was: "I am trusting alone in Jesus; I know that he alone can save me, and my trust in him gives me more comfort than anything else." I felt then to give up, believing that God was with her, and that death could not hurt her. I have reproached myself much, that I did not talk with her often about her future prospect, during her five weeks' sickness; it would now be a sweet satisfaction to me; I might have known from the beginning of her sickness that she could not live, for she was so changed, so quiet, so patient; but somehow, I never thought but that she would get well, till the last few days of her sickness. She left two little girls, one two and a half years old, the other only five weeks, which I have in my care, and by the grace of God I shall do the best I can with them, though I feel the responsibility almost greater than I can bear.

Ever since I was married to her father-in-law, we have all lived together as one family, and Bettie has ever been a kind and affectionate daughter to me, calling me mother, and seemed to love me as if I was her own mother. I feel now to repay her kindness by loving and caring for her children as if they were my own. O, God help me, and dear brothers and sisters, my kindred in Christ pray for me that grace may be given me sufficient to every trial. Affectionately her mamma,

Brownsboro, Ala., Jan. 9, 1887.

SUE LAWLER,

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 5.

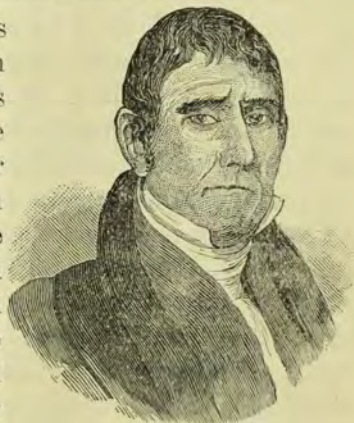
BUTLER, GA., MAY, 1887.

Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER JOHN BLACKSTONE.

Elder John Blackstone was born in Virginia in 1780, on what is called "Old Christmas Day." Of several children he was the youngest, and never saw his father, who fell in battle near the close of the Revolutionary war. From what the writer has heard him say, he was quite a rude boy, and as his mother could not support the family nor manage him very well, she bound him out to a relative. As he was considered a leader in mischief among the boys, he received many hard cuffs and knocks for his unruly conduct, and never attended school but about three weeks in his life.



By some means unknown to the writer, after growing up he went to St. Augustine, Fla., and afterwards to Brunswick, Ga., and for a time was in the military service at St. Mary's. The next account we have of him he was in Augusta, Ga., where he became acquainted with and married Miss Catherine Harvey, about the year 1799. At what time he was received into the church among the Baptists I do not know, but soon

after he joined the church, in 1804, his mind become much weighted with preaching the gospel. But such was his feeling sense of unworthiness and entire unfitness for such a sacred calling, that he shrank from it and even said he could not, and *would* not do it. Thinking to get rid of such impressions of mind, he took his little family and moved from Georgia to East Tennessee, but much to his distress and surprise, the impression increased upon him, even while he was vainly striving to suppress and keep it hid from his brethren and most intimate friends. But after struggling along in this state of rebellion for near three years in Tennessee, it pleased God to sorely afflict him till he was reduced to a mere skeleton, and physicians, family and friends all gave him up to die. And such were the trying scenes through which he passed in this sore affliction, and in fact, during the three years of his stay in Tennessee, that some things would seem so incredible he has often been heard to say that he did not like to talk about them to others, lest they should think it a mere visionary thing, or as an idle tale, and thereby shake their confidence in his veracity. He has told me that he believed he was as miserable and as completely enveloped in darkness the greater part of the last year he remained in Tennessee, as Jonah was while in the whale's belly. And when he was brought to the point to feel that he must preach or die, he took his family and returned to Columbia county, Ga., near Augusta, to the same church of which he had been a member before he left Georgia. From the best information I now have, I think the name of the church was Grove. At this church he preached his first sermon. How long he had been preaching before his ordination was called for is not known. It is true his credentials are in my possession, but by some oversight they are not dated. Elders Abraham Marshall, H. Holcomb and Isaac Justis are the names of the presbytery who officiated at his

ordination at Grove Church. From about 1808 up to 1821, his time appears to have been mostly employed in preaching in the counties of Columbia, Jefferson, Warren and Burke, in Georgia. In 1822 he moved to Crawford county, Ga., and was soon chosen as one of a committee to organize the county and locate the county site at Knoxville, which was named by him. His good sense, quick perception, honesty and integrity soon won for him the confidence and esteem of all who knew him and placed him in the front rank as a representative man of his county.

He was a member of the first Inferior Court organized in Crawford county, as the records will show, and at the first election ever held in the county for Representatives to the Legislature or General Assembly, he was chosen by the people as their Senator, and so well and faithfully did he represent the interests of his constituents, and discharge the duties of the responsible trust committed to him, that he was re-elected annually for *nine* successive years.

But while Elder Blackstone was faithful to the best interests of his State and county in the Legislative department, he was faithful also to his obligations and duties as a gospel minister. He assisted in organizing several churches, to wit: Mt. Paran, Salem, Mt. Carmel, Providence, Abilene and Union; also Old Mt. Pisgah, in Monroe or Bibb, now known as Calvary. He was present and assisted in organizing the Echeconnee Association, the first session of which was held at Mt. Paran, and I think he was Moderator. This was about 1825.

[But of the many striking incidents in the life of this remarkable man, to the honor of his memory let it be written, that of all the Baptist ministers of his day, he was one of the very first to discover the corruption introduced in Baptist churches and Associations by "vain philosophy and the cunning craftiness of men"]

as manifested in the "*Modern Missionary Institutions*," which he regarded as being after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.—Col., ii., 8. As a faithful watchman, he sounded the alarm, and told the churches what would be the result. He boldly met and showed the corrupt tendency of the Modern Missionary Institutions and Inventions, and denounced them as unscriptural innovations which would corrupt and divide the Baptist denomination.—M.]

But the strange and seemingly unaccountable part of his history, of which he seldom wished to speak, is about this: I have heard my grandmother say that during the greater part of their stay the last year in Tennessee, grandfather was very sick for several months, and it was thought by all who saw him he would surely die. He was reduced to a mere skeleton, and for three days and nights he lay with his eyes apparently fixed on some object above him, kicking with one foot and snapping his fingers, incessantly repeating the words, "Now I have it; now I have it." During these three days and nights he took no nourishment whatever, and the last night of the three, after all the family and friends had retired, grandmother dropped into a sleep on the bed by his side, and when she awoke, about light in the morning, she heard some one call out at the door, and rising hastily to see who was there, to her great surprise, grandfather was standing out in the yard holding to a post. But what was to her still more astonishing, the door was fastened on the inside of the house, just as she had left it on retiring to bed. Grandmother said she knew assuredly that he was out of the house, but how or when he got out she could not tell, for he had not walked a step for some time before this, and now, when found out of the house in that strange and unaccountable manner, he had to be carried into the house with all the care which would have been needful for a little, helpless infant. In speaking to the

family and friends about this strange affair, he contended that he had been back to Georgia.

Butler, Ga., March 16, 1885.

Z. A. FOWLER.

In addition to what Brother Fowler has written above, we deem it proper to say that Elder Blackstone was a very remarkable man. We first met him in September, 1843, when the Beulah Association was held with the church at Concord, Tallapoosa county, Ala. He had then been serving that Association as Moderator for about fourteen years, or from the time it was first organized. For many years he had then been living in Chambers county, Ala., about eight miles west of La-Fayette, and was a member and pastor of the church at Macedonia, and in fact, we think he was in the constitution of that church. In July, 1845, he was one of the five Elders who officiated in our ordination to the ministry, and in a few months afterwards he resigned the pastoral charge of the church at Macedonia, and subsequently moved away to Coosa county, Ala. The church being thus left destitute of any pastor, we were unanimously chosen, and in much weakness, fear and trembling accepted the call, though but a youth as a church member or as a minister.

From this date on for six or seven years we met occasionally with Elder Blackstone, and a few times took short tours of preaching with him. As a gospel minister Elder Blackstone was wonderfully blessed with a clear knowledge of all the cardinal points of the doctrine of salvation by grace. He had great variety in preaching, and no matter how often one might hear him, he had something interesting that you had not heard from him before. He expounded his text in such system, order and compactness, and in such a calm and forcible manner as to leave the attentive hearer with the whole body of it in his mind for many days to come. He was a natural, calm and easy speaker; his articula-

tion was clear and distinct, and though he knew nothing of grammatical rules, he seldom made a blunder in this respect.

Elder Blackstone had great conversational powers. Having utilized nearly everything that he had seen and heard so as to make it yield some practical good to himself or others, his fund of general information, and his easy, chaste manner of conversation, made him one of the most agreeable and interesting fireside companions to old or young. But his work on earth is done. He fought a good fight. He kept the faith—and now rests with Jesus. He departed this life at Knoxville, Ga., 28th June, 1859.—M.

ELECTION AND REPROBATION.

Dear Brother Respass :—My mind has been somewhat exercised on the question of election and reprobation for a time, and I have finally concluded to try, in my weak manner, to pen a few thoughts on that subject for the consideration of yourself and many readers. I shall not promise to make myself so clear that I will not be subject to criticism in this effort, but I hope to be able to make myself understood, even if I am not fully endorsed by those who may read. Our brethren have often been charged with holding the doctrine of eternal, unconditional election and reprobation, but I have always, when such a charge was alleged against me, emphatically denied the charge. It is my aim in this article to try to tell why I make the denial; and if I should perchance cross the views of any of the brethren, I hope they may consider well what I may say; and if they think me in error, that they will not impugn my motives, but will remember that it is human to err, and that a man may be ever so sincere and yet be mistaken.

Mr. Wesley, in his opposition to the doctrine of election, classed reprobation along with it, saying that if

election is true, so is reprobation. Once in awhile I hear something from a brother that makes me think perhaps he believes that if one is true the other is. I do not endorse the idea, and for the purpose of eliciting truth, not controversy, I shall endeavor to tell why I do not think eternal, unconditional reprobation must necessarily go with eternal, unconditional election. I wish, then, to begin with the definition of the terms, and see, from that what it is we are talking about:

Elect v. t., 1—To pick out; to select from among a number, to make choice of, to fix upon by preference, to choose, to prefer.

2—To select or take for an office or employment, to choose from among a number, etc.

3—(*Theol.*) To designate, to choose or elect as an object of mercy or favor.

These are the definitions given by Webster of elect as a transitive verb. The definitions "to fix upon by preference," or "to prefer," cannot be the proper definitions of an election that is unconditional. To prefer must be to choose one thing as compared with, or more desirable, than another. Hence, to fix upon by preference could be no more nor less than conditional election. To choose unconditionally, denotes to take by an act of the will. I should think then that as election to salvation is unconditional, that *elect* should be defined to designate, choose, or select, as an object of mercy or favor.

Elect, a., 1—Chosen, taken by preference from among two or more.

2—(*Theol.*) Chosen as an object of mercy or divine favor.

These are the definitions Webster gives of *elect* as an adjective.

Elect, n., 1—One chosen or set apart. "Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth."—Isa., xlii., 1.

2—(*pl.*) Those who are chosen or separated for salvation.

These are Webster's definitions of the word *elect* as a noun.

Now, in all these definitions no reference is had to persons or objects not embraced in the election, unless it is where choice is made by preference, or "to prefer" is the definition. It is absolutely certain that if to elect means to prefer, or to choose by preference, that others, not elected, are considered, or else there could be no preference. But if that is the principal upon which God has chosen his people to salvation, then the choice is conditional; and as it is my intention now to see, if I can, whether unconditional election involves the idea of unconditional reprobation, I shall speak of unconditional election.

I now wish to give a few examples of the original word and its meaning as used in different texts in the Scriptures: *Eclectois*, chosen ones.—1 Pet., i., 2. *Eclection*, chosen.—1 Pet., ii., 9. *Exelexamen*, chose.—John, xiii., 18. *Exelexato*, chose.—Eph., i., 5. *Eclectoi*, chosen.—Matt., xx., 16. *Eclectoi*, picked out.—Matt., xxii., 14. *Exelexato*, chosen.—Mark, xiii., 20, also, Luke, x., 42. *Exelexo*, select.—Acts, i., 24. *Eclectos*, chosen.—Luke, xxiii., 35. We might give more examples, as they are numerous, but I wish to notice some of these, and if we can find any reprobation in any of these passages, we may then conclude that election does necessarily bring about reprobation. If election necessarily makes reprobation, we should be able to find reprobation wherever we find election. Then let us see: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," etc. What reference is had in this text to any but the elect, either expressed or implied? There is not even a hint of any reprobation in this whole connection; but if reprobation is a necessary result of election we ought to see reprobation here. But we do not see any reprobation here,

therefore there can be such a thing as election without reprobation. If reprobation is essential to election, then, of course, reprobation takes place at the same time election does.

“But ye are a chosen generation,” etc.—1 Pet., ii., 9. Here is choice, or election, but I see no reprobation here. “I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen.”—John, xiii., 18. I presume he simply spoke of those whom he had chosen, but how could he speak of them as chosen ones, and not speak of the ones not chosen, if to choose is also to reprobate? “But one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.”—Luke, x., 42. If in the act of choosing one we reprobate another, then Mary chose one part and reprobated another. It seems to me that if we say there is no election without reprobation, we must, of necessity, say that as Mary chose that good part she reprobated some other part. “He saved others, let him save himself if he be the Christ, the chosen of God.”—Luke, xxiii., 35. Whom did God reprobate when he chose Christ to be his anointed? Christ is not only mentioned here as the chosen or elect of God, but other passages refer to him as *elect*.

Having now noticed the words *elect* and *choose*, I will give some notice of the word reprobate, and see how nearly connected it is with unconditional election.

Reprobate, *v. t.*, 1—To disapprove with detestation or marks of extreme dislike; to reject.

2—To abandon to punishment without hope or pardon.

These are the definitions Webster gives of reprobate as a transitive verb, and it occurs to me very clearly that there is no need of election to reprobate a man, from the very fact that guilt or unworthiness is clearly implied in the word. God might reprobate a man without electing one at the same time, it seems to me.

Reprobate, *a.*, 1—Not enduring proof or trial, not of standard purity or fineness, disallowed, rejected.

2—Hence, abandoned to vice or punishment, morally abandoned and lost.

Syn.: Abandoned, vitiated, depraved, corrupt, wicked, profligate, base, vile, castaway.

Here we have reprobate as an adjective, according to Webster, and it seems that to be a reprobate is not simply to be non-elect, but it is to be not right, or to be unrighteous.

Reprobate, *n.*—A person abandoned, one morally lost.

Then they are not lost simply because they were not elected, or because others were elected, but because they are abandoned, or morally lost. The word reprobate does not occur in the Scriptures very often, but I wish to notice how it is used in Scripture when it does occur. I will give a few examples of the original word, first:

Adokimon, worthless.—Rom., i., 28; *adokimoi*, disapproved.—2 Tim., iii., 8; *adokimoi*, worthless ones.—Tit., i., 16; *adokimoi*, without proof.—2 Cor., xiii., 5, 6, 7; *adokimois*, 1, unproved, spurious, base, mean; 2, rejected as spurious, reprobate.—Liddell and Scott.

We thus have the original of reprobate, and the definitions from one of the standard lexicons, and we find guilt and worthlessness attached to the character of a reprobate. I now wish to give some of the passages in which the word occurs, and see how it is used: “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”—Rom., i., 28. It seems, from this text, that the reason he gave them over to a reprobate mind, was because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. It does not seem, though, from the reading of this text, that they were reprobated from all eternity. Their guilt seems to have been the cause of their reprobation. What did eternal, unconditional election have to do with it? Simply

nothing. "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds reprobate concerning the faith."—2 Tim., iii., 8. The literal meaning of *reprobate* in this text is "disapproved," and nothing is more clearly taught in any text of Scripture than the very men spoken of are unworthy characters, and that to be reprobate is to be corrupt, or guilty. "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." It seems to me that comment on this text is unnecessary. They were no more reprobated from all eternity than they were abominable and disobedient from all eternity. But God did elect or choose his people to salvation from all eternity; then reprobation is not the result of election. The literal meaning of *reprobate* in this text is "worthless ones," and I believe it is true that wherever we find a reprobate, guilt or unworthiness is inscribed on his character. "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 Cor., xiii., 5. From this text it seems that all who have not Christ within them are reprobates. If I am correct in this position, then all the elect, prior to regeneration, are reprobates, and I understand by the term reprobate, that they are guilty of wrong, and are not morally what they should be. Their guilt renders them unworthy of acceptance with God. Now, as God foreknew from all eternity every event of time, he knew from eternity the present guilty and ruined state of mankind, and that on account of disobedience all mankind would be reprobates, and that without mercy and grace none of the guilty and ruined race could ever be anything else but reprobates, and that as grace was necessary to save any of them from this deplorable state of things, it was his eternal prerogative to designate in his eternal mind, choose or select those who should be the objects of his mercy and grace. This election was not necessary to

make any man a reprobate, for all would be reprobates without it; but it was necessary to the salvation of any, for none would be saved without it. This election was unconditional, and not simply a preference of some above others, for so far as the people were concerned, none of them had a right to be preferred. They were all guilty, and on account of their guilt were unworthy. With these premises it seems very clear that election from all eternity, and that unconditional, does not necessarily involve reprobation. Without going into an argument in favor of unconditional election, I will simply state that I believe it. I do not believe God's people were saved from eternity, but they were chosen in eternity, and are now saved according to that choice.

But as it is often claimed that if God did unconditionally choose some of Adam's race to be saved, and did not choose all, he must have reprobated those he did not choose, I wish to notice that special point, as that is the object of this article. I would love to call to mind an example of an unconditional choice, and see if there can be such a thing without reprobation: Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."—John, xv., 16. I presume it would not be a hard matter to convince any reasonable mind that the choice in this text is unconditional, for he was speaking of his choice of the apostles. It would be an easy matter also to convince any one that the choice in this text was to the apostleship. Now, if unconditional choice means also unconditional reprobation, then to choose twelve men to fill the office of apostles was to reprobate all others from that position. This is the logic that says election also means reprobation. But let me ask what reference was had to any other man in the world concerning apostleship but the

twelve when they were chosen to that position? Did this election affect any others in any respect whatever? If it did, how? It left them all out of the office of the apostleship, but it did not put any of them out of that office, for they were not in it to be put out. But in choosing the twelve was it necessary for the Saviour to have his mind on any but the twelve? Did he necessarily have to propose in his mind that he would not choose others, naming them personally, in order to choose the twelve? Did he necessarily have to think of any other man in the world but the twelve, in order to choose the twelve? If he did, why? If not, then reprobation is not necessary to election. We are told, sometimes, that if God chooses one he necessarily must reject those not chosen. Let us see if that is so. "Reject, *v. t.*, 1—To cast from one, to throw away, to discard."—Webster. Then I suppose, when the Saviour chose the twelve apostles he cast all other men from him, threw them away, discarded them. Was all this necessary in choosing the twelve apostles? If not, he did not reject them, for that is the first definition of reject. But the second definition of reject is "to refuse to receive, to decline haughtily or harshly, to repudiate." Then with this definition of reject, when the Lord chose the twelve apostles he refused to receive any others but them; he declined haughtily or harshly to let others be apostles; he repudiated them. That is what rejection means, and if he rejected all that he did not choose, then we can easily see his course. But we still have one more definition of reject, that is: "To refuse to grant; as to reject a prayer or request." It is synonymous with "To repel, slight, despise, renounce, rebuff, decline."

I have now given the unabridged definition of reject, and if to choose twelve men to be apostles is to reject all others, I must confess my weakness, for I cannot see it. I can see no way in which the choice of those

twelve men affected any but the twelve. There was no rejecting others, or refusing others, or anything of the sort in the arrangement. Now, if the unconditional election of the twelve did not affect those not chosen, then there can be a choice of some without the rejection or reprobation of others. I know that the Lord chose Abraham from among the Chaldeans, and that choice was unconditional, but if the choice affected any others of the Chaldeans I have yet to learn how. He did not necessarily reject or reprobate all the rest. We have seen that a man that is a reprobate is an unworthy character, and for the Lord to choose Abraham did not make all the others of the Chaldeans unworthy, did it? When Jesus chose the twelve apostles, that choice did not make others any more unworthy of the place than they were before, and if it did not, then he did not reprobate them.

Well, then, if God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, and left the remainder of mankind out, and the choice was unconditional, did he reprobate them? Did he make them any more unworthy?

But I have sometimes heard expressions from the Arminians that sounded as if they thought that the doctrine of election reprobated all the non-elect to the service of sin and wickedness, so that even if they should desire to turn from sin and be saved, they could not on account of having been reprobated to wickedness from all eternity. I have never understood our brethren to hold that position, and if any of them do they must excuse me for the present, until I get more light, for I do not think that is the reason that men cannot come to God. I have always held to the idea that the reason they could not come to God was because of their own inability to come, and not because God had reprobated them from eternity. It is their own want of moral rectitude that renders them unable to come. They are in bondage under the elements of the world,

(Gal., iv., 3,) and not that they are in bondage under God's eternal reprobation. In the case of Cain and Abel we have an unconditional election, but not an unconditional reprobation. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."—Heb., xi., 4. This is the unmistakable language of inspiration concerning Abel. It was by faith, and it seems that the difference in the acceptance of their offerings was, that one of them had faith, which is a gracious gift of God, and the other made his offering without faith. If God gave Abel faith and did not give it to Cain, he must have made choice of Abel as an object of such grace; but his choice of Abel did not reprobate Cain, for it did not affect him in any manner whatever. The gift of faith and righteousness to one was not the cause of the other not being accepted. The gift to Abel was the cause of his works being righteous, but it was not the cause of Cain's works being evil. He was evil without being reprobated. But let us notice the case for a moment and see, if we can, if it was God's reprobation that ruined Cain: "And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect; and Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door; and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."—Gen., iv., 3-7. I should think from this reading that if Cain's works had been as righteous as Abel's, he would have been as acceptable to God. It was his own wickedness,

and not God's reprobating decree, that caused Cain not to be accepted. Cain's works, I presume, would have been no better than they were if Abel's had not been accepted. Cain would have been the same wicked man that he was if God had not conferred the gift of faith on Abel. If I am correct in this, then, God's choice of Abel did not make Cain anything that he would not have been if God had not chosen Abel. Then election is not the cause of reprobation, for all people would be reprobates without election. God's choice of Abel did not say that Cain shall be wicked, or that he is not allowed to come to God by good and righteous works, provided he will do so, but it simply said Abel shall do good works and be accepted. This choice had nothing to do in making Cain a reprobate. He was that without any choice being made. But we are sometimes asked, Did not God reject Cain when he chose Abel? I say no; he rejected Cain for his wickedness, and not by choosing Abel.

When God comes to reckon with the wicked he deals with them according to their just deserts; just in the same manner that he would if none had ever received grace. As all who were not chosen in Christ to salvation before the world began are entirely outside of the covenant of Grace, that covenant has nothing to do with them at all. Grace does not affect them in any manner whatever. Grace given to one sinner in Christ does not affect another sinner, to whom grace is not given, either for good or for evil. In order for the great God to choose a portion of the race to salvation, it was not necessary to reprobate all others to perdition. Jesus said: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," (John, vi., 37); but he did not say that others should not come, for he said nothing about them. He did not necessarily have his mind on them. He simply mentioned those that the Father had given him. They were the only ones affected by that gift. They come to

him as a result of the gift, but that is not the reason others do not come. None would have come without the gift, and none are kept away by it. "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." The reason they will not is not because God had reprobated them from eternity, but because of their own wicked hearts.

For the present I will close, lest I make my article more lengthy than interesting. Love to all the household of faith. Your brother,

LEMUEL POTTER.

Cynthiana, Ind., 1887.

REVIEW.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD, By Elders C. B. and Sylvester Hassell.

We purpose writing a review of the above work in short articles for several numbers of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER. If we know our own heart, we do this in the interest of the cause of Christ. Believing, as we do, that in many respects Elder Hassell's history is the most valuable addition to Primitive Baptist literature made during this century, and that it is destined for great good to the Baptist family, we feel it our duty and privilege to aid to the utmost of our ability, in its wide circulation. We do not mean to intimate that it is perfect, or that it is without fault; but whatever faults and imperfections there may be in it, we are sure that as far as we have read it, it is the best church history that has ever fallen into our hands. We believe that it is a timely or providential work, and will tend to check and rid the church of any tendency to captivity by tradition and unscriptural customs, and materialism and rationalism. It is natural in contending with error on the one hand to go to extremes on the other. It is sometimes hard, in contending with Arminianism, to keep clear of fatalism; hard in contending with the moneyed means system, and an educated and hired ministry, to keep at all

(2)

times in view the Bible mission system and the Bible ministry. There is danger, lest in the conflict, we lose sight of the scriptural and lawful use of money, the scriptural use of the ministry, and the scriptural obligation of the church to the ministry, and turn aside from scriptural effort in disseminating the truth, and insensibly become opposed to it. Because the systems devised by man design the eternal salvation of souls, and divert trust in Christ to trust in men; and that souls for whom Christ died would be lost without their unauthorized system, as they hold; and because books and tracts and money and education are used with that unscriptural design, and Bibles are circulated for that purpose, that is, to save souls, it genders in some opposition to the lawful use of effort, preaching, books, tracts and the dissemination of Bibles, etc., which itself becomes an error. It is easy to get into ruts, and hard to get out of them. We hear such expressions as "Baptist customs," etc., as though they were always scriptural; but it is sometimes the case that an investigation will show that even some Baptist customs are unscriptural. It makes no difference how old a custom may be, its age does not make it any better, if it is unscriptural. But it is not the work of a day to mend the breaches in the wall that has been crumbling for years; nor is it the work of violence. It is better to submit to usurped order than to have anarchy. It is little by little that the enemy is to be driven out; it requires patient and unremitting toil. A people whose whole life has been spent in camp, who have been accustomed to the sound of the trumpet and the clash of arms, are not to be suddenly turned from war to the peaceful pursuits of husbandry. They will have more or less hero of worship; the glamour of military fame will blind their eyes; young captains will sometimes pant, in peace, after the fame their fathers got in battle with the enemy; and having no outside enemy, there will be intestine war; they will often quarrel

and fight amongst themselves. It may be the result of idleness and misdirected effort. If we could learn what to do, and that the war is over, and that the church is no longer to be wasted, but to be built up; that war measures are no longer necessary, many of which though borne with in war are intolerable in peace; we would then turn to honest labor, and work instead of fighting for a living, and let fame go. Strange doctrines have sprung up, of which our fathers knew nothing. They may be deep, fathomless, as doubtless they are, and worse than useless. There are strange doctrines upon the Trinity, upon the Resurrection; and a doctrine of created quickened spirits, etc., of which we know nothing. These efforts to explain away a mystery, and conform it to human reason, always bring trouble. This history leads us back to the doctrine of our fathers from the days of the apostles. It shows us that though the church has veered at times from the right way, yet that God has always brought her back to the truth, so that the fire has never expired upon the altar, and the light never become, in any age, wholly extinct; that the gates of hell have never prevailed against the truth so as to banish it from the earth; but that it is yet shining in the world as the light of God after nineteen centuries of sore trial and fierce opposition; and that in this day the church is perhaps purer than she has been in five hundred years. Thanks be unto God. We wish this history could be in the hands of Primitive Baptist ministers everywhere. We wish we could have had it twenty years ago to study in our early ministry. Primitive Baptists need no better Sunday-school than they can have in reading this history to their children, and putting it into their hands to read. It is true there are parts of it too scholarly for the general reader, and it is a fault, but one, perhaps, that could not be avoided. Such parts can be easily skipped by the general reader without any

detriment to the general sense. There is sufficient upon all subjects that is plainly written and easily understood. We expect, in our next, to extract from the history upon the subject of Baptism, etc. The subject of baptism, etc., is an able research, and worth itself alone the cost of the book.—R.

“THE THREE THAT BEAR WITNESS IN EARTH.”

“And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.”—1 John, v., 8.

Dear Brethren:—Of late my mind has rested with some degree of satisfaction upon the words of this text, and I feel like talking to the readers of the MESSENGER a little about them. Concerning the verse preceding this, “There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one,” I confess that I know but little. Neither have I felt much sympathy with the long time discussions concerning it. Some have seemed to contend so earnestly for the “Three” as to almost deny the “One,” and some have contended for the “One” so earnestly as to seem to deny the “Three.” I can only say that I believe there are “three,” and that “the three are one.” How it is that both are true I do not know. Neither do I believe it is explainable, or comprehensible by mortal minds. Athanasianism, Sabellianism, Arianism, Unitarianism, Trinitarianism, all have been endeavors—futile endeavors—to set this truth in a form of doctrine that can be comprehended by man. Each have seized upon some fragment of truth to the exclusion of other equally important truths. I must frankly confess that all the discussions I have heard or read, have almost seemed to me to partake of irreverence. In my own experience I know this is true, viz: That in prayer or worship of any kind, I find myself coming to God the

Father, through the Son, and by the help of the Holy Spirit. And yet I feel at the same time that I am worshipping the one God and Saviour. Beyond this I know nothing about the matter. I trust to think and speak slowly, humbly and reverently about this infinite theme at all times. I believe that our brethren generally feel that way.

This much with regard to the preceding words. Now to come at once to the words of the text itself: "*The three that bear witness in earth.*" And first of all, let us notice three things concerning the witness that they bear in earth, and in full agreement with each other: *First—It is the witness of God.*—Verse 9th. *Second—It is the testimony of God concerning his Son, Jesus Christ.*—Verse 9th; and *Third—“This witness is within him that believeth.”*—Verse 10th. This, then, is the testimony of God concerning Jesus Christ in the believer. The spirit, the water and the blood unite in speaking of Jesus, and they testify of Jesus in our own hearts as believers. They agree in one. That is, they unitedly testify to Jesus, and they testify the same things concerning him. In all this testimony we hear not the voice of men, but of God. It is true and authoritative. It does not speak of man or angels, but of Jesus. By this we may know the witness which God gives. It is always concerning his Son. And as the testimony is within the believer, we need not look elsewhere for it. If the voice of this testimony is not heard in our own souls, we shall not recognize it anywhere else. There is no question that the testimony of God concerning his Son is found in the Bible from Genesis to Revelations. But even there it was true that holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They testified what they had felt and seen. We recognize a fellowship in their testimony with what we also have felt within, else it is no real witness to us. God did, indeed, testify of his Son by angels to the shepherds, by the star to the

“wise men,” by the dove and the audible voice at the baptism, by the transfiguration in the holy mount, by the scenes attending the crucifixion, and by the resurrection, and by the outpouring of the Spirit at the day of pentecost. This all was dear, good testimony, but, after all, he that believeth hath its very spirit and substance within himself, and by the inward witness does he know it, if he knows it at all. And that which is testified in his daily experience of the spirit, the water, and the blood, is the grace, and power, and salvation that is in our Lord Jesus Christ. What a glorious thing to find our thoughts, affections and desires drawn into and moving in harmony with the saints of past ages, so that WE KNOW that THEIR TESTIMONY is true, and ourselves become witnesses for Jesus! How blessed also to know that he who finds this three-fold witness within himself is by that token a believer, with all that that name implies!

Now first, the text teaches that God bears witness of Jesus by the Spirit in the earth. In agreement with this it is said “that holy men of old spake as they were moved *by the Holy Ghost.*” Again it is said that the prophets inquired diligently what and what manner of time the SPIRIT that was IN THEM did signify when it testified beforehand the *sufferings of Christ*, and the glory that should follow. The Spirit descending in bodily shape as a dove, testified at the baptism of Jesus “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” etc. The Spirit of the day of pentecost filled the disciples with understanding, coming upon them like cloven tongues of flame, and gave them power to understand what Jesus said, and to preach him boldly. And Jesus said that he must go away in order that the Spirit should come. He said it was the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, whom the Father would send in the name of Jesus. He said that the Spirit should take of the things of his and show them unto his disciples. And

this Spirit should be in them, and abide with them. This Spirit is said to intercede for us, to teach us all things, and to give utterance to the disciples. All that we can know or do comes from the Spirit. It is the Great Revealer of the things of God. The water and the blood could bear no effectual testimony in our hearts without the Spirit. But the Holy Spirit is presented in the word as accomplishing another work which seems to me to be specially alluded to in this text. It is presented as a quickening or life-giving spirit. Now in giving life, in revealing, in teaching and in interceding, the testimony of the Spirit in us is all to the exaltation of Jesus as our great teacher, intercessor, eternal life and everlasting comfort. But by the continued work of the Spirit we grow up into a knowledge of Jesus. By this teaching Jesus becomes more and more to us; the first and the last, the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. If we grow to love, praise and serve Jesus more and more, we know it is by the continued quickening of the spirit always awakening us to a perception and reception of the word of truth which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. The witness of the water and the blood could not reach us except the Spirit first quickens us to receive it. The Bible becomes precious only when we have the Spirit to quicken our understanding and our cold affections. When in solitary meditation or prayer, or in preaching or hearing, or in reading the scriptures, there comes into our hearts some glorious vision of Jesus that we never saw before, and that we wonder that we never saw before, that melts us and exalts us above sorrow and pain, this is the quickening power of the Spirit. And we may know it is so, because what we see is a witness concerning Jesus. The Spirit never testifies of himself, or of anything save Jesus. By this we may know when men are called of God to preach. If they have the spirit they will preach Jesus. By this we may know in our dealings one with

another whether we are led by the Spirit. The Spirit leads us to do all for the glory of Jesus. How plain and simple, and yet how severe and searching the test. Oh, God, quicken thou us all so that we may see Jesus, love, serve and glorify him while here, and enjoy full communion with him hereafter! Let us remember, then, first that the text teaches that God testifies "BY THE SPIRIT" of Jesus in us.

Second.—The text teaches that "the water also bears witness in us of Jesus." There can be no question that the use of the word "water" is symbolical in this text as well as elsewhere in the scriptures. And the primary idea attached to it is that of purification, or cleansing, *not ceremonial, but actual* cleansing. It was so used under the old covenant. Priests, people, vessels, and all the paraphanelia of the old tabernacle and temple worship, were washed in and made clean by water. And Paul alluding to this, speaks of those who draw near to God having their bodies washed with pure water. And in the prophet God himself makes use of the term water to figuratively present the idea of spiritual cleansing, saying, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your sins and iniquities will I cleanse you."

Now what is water the emblem of in the word? It seems to me that two or three quotations will settle this matter. In Psalms, cxix, it is said, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy WORD." Here the WORD is declared to be the medium of cleansing. Eph., v., 26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it WITH *the washing* OF WATER BY THE WORD," etc. Thus we see the "water and the word" connected by the apostle in such a way as shows that the water is symbolical of the word. Jesus in his conversation with Nicodemus used the word "water" in the same symbolical sense. First, he said, "Except a man be born from above he cannot SEE

the kingdom of God." Not the visible organizations called churches, but the kingdom of the heavens. But to see this heavenly kingdom is one thing, and to enter it is another. Therefore he added, "Except a man be born of WATER and the spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Remembering the use of "water" as symbolical of the word, we have no difficulty in understanding the Saviour's language. He who is born of God needs now to be instructed, led and guided, and his way cleansed by the word, in order to really enter into and partake of this kingdom of God, and grow in a knowledge of it. Every day this work of instruction, of cleansing, must go on, and by it we enter more and more into the possession of our birth-right. Again, Jesus in his prayer for his disciples, in John, chapter xvii said, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy WORD is TRUTH." Here, evidently, Jesus used the "word of truth" to signify that it is that by which his Father is to cleanse his people and prepare them for his service. By the word of truth their hearts and lives were to be purified even as the body is purified by water. And let it not be forgotten, that as the water must be applied to the body to effect its work, so must the word be applied by the spirit to the heart and conscience of believers. In the 6th verse of this 5th chapter of 1 John, it is said of Jesus, "This is he that came by WATER and blood; not by water only, but by water and blood." I cannot help thinking that John alluded to the baptism of Jesus, by which he entered into his public ministry, thus fulfilling all righteousness, and in fulfilling which he was publicly owned of God, and to the laying down of his life on Calvary. All this that took place was taken together, a witness of Jesus. Again, John in his gospel tells us (and he alone does tell this) that one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and forthwith came out "*blood and water.*" And so in the connection of the text this same apostle conjoins the two words,

saying that Jesus came by "*water and blood.*" Now in all this, as well as in the text itself, it seems to me the same symbolical idea is kept up of cleansing by the word or with the "washing of water by the word." Now then the "*water bears witness of Jesus within the believer.*" The "word" does not have a power to cleanse, to instruct, to purge out the old leaven, to show us the right way of the Lord. The word is written and engraven on the heart, so that we become the epistles of God, written with his own finger by his spirit, and known and read of all men. And this word of God continually testifies of Jesus within the believer, as well as in the scriptures of truth.

The third thing by which God bears testimony of his Son in believers is "the blood." Always in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is "blood" the symbol of atonement, by which sinners are reconciled to God. By the shedding of blood alone is there remission of sins. And "to shed blood" is equivalent to "giving up the life." The blood, then, presents the idea of reconciliation. If I were to define with one word the three words of the text—spirit, water, blood—I should say quickening, cleansing, reconciliation. And all in every Christian experience bears continued testimony, united testimony, to Jesus. By reason of him we receive life, are led about, instructed and cleansed and reconciled to God. Surely I need not refer to the many places where the blood of atonement or reconciliation is presented. Sin separates from God. Its guilt demands punishment, but the blood of Jesus is a full satisfaction. This is taught everywhere in the word. Now by the spirit the blood is applied to the conscience and becomes to us, individually, a witness of reconciliation. In this manner our consciences are purged from dead works to serve the living God. None of us, my brethren, will ever forget when first we felt that blood applied. How near we felt to God! Our sins had shut us out, but

now we were made nigh by the blood of Christ. And this was not only a first experience, but it has been a continued one. Sin often shows its presence in thought and deed, in heart and life. And so again we need and must have a faith view of the blood of Jesus, which cleanses from all sin. Peace comes to the guilty conscience in no other way. Daily, hourly, does the blood bear witness within the believer of Jesus. It tells us that we are reconciled to God, not by our faith, repentance or good works, but by the obedience unto death of Jesus, and the blotting out of our transgressions by his blood. And this witness is always true.

Now the closing thought of the text is that "these three agree in one." It was said, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." And so it may be said that the testimony of Jesus is the burden of the testimony of these three witnesses. And they declare emphatically that "salvation is of the Lord." This testimony is not a mere dogma, written on some dull page of some dusty and forgotten volume, but it is a living, breathing word, spoken daily by the living Lord in the inner experience of living men. God's word in the scriptures declared it, and thousands of witnesses to-day can respond, Amen! As we are quickened by the Spirit, we must say "Hallelujah to the Lamb!" As the word instructs and cleanses our ways day by day, we must say "Hallelujah to the Lamb!" And as we hear the voice of the blood crying out peace and pardon, we can only say once more, "Hallelujah to the Lamb!" And all our gospel preaching, or singing, or praying must simply reiterate the word of the harbinger in the wilderness, "Behold the Lamb of God!" And as we grow up more and more in this experience, we shall say with the would-be disciples, "Sirs, we would see Jesus."

If published, I hope these reflections may be half as joyful to some other heart as they have been to mine.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life.

Reisterstown, Md., March 18, 1887. F. A. CHICK.

EXPERIENCE.

I was born 31st July, 1859, in extreme poverty. My father's house was of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families around in this part of North Carolina; wherefore I have nothing of rank to boast of as others have, neither do I desire it; but instead thereof, I glory in my infirmities and low state according to the flesh, that I may the more abundantly exalt my God. I was born and reared in about eight miles of where I now live, in the most obscure part of Surry county, N. C. I was the oldest child of my father's family. My next brother was nearly two years younger than myself, and was dumb and perfectly helpless, and he lived to be about fourteen years old and died. I have two other brothers, the next-in birth, and they are about grown young men, and are very wicked; and many times have I bowed in prayer for them; and O, may all who read this unite in prayer with me for them. The fifth child of my father's is a girl, now nearly grown, and is my only sister, and is yet out of the Ark of Safety. O, that God may bring her tender soul in. The sixth and last child was my infant brother who died in infancy, and is therefore better off than any of us yet living in time. My dear mother died when I was at the tender age of ten years, and left an old log cabin nearly full of little children, none of whom at that time were able to do any labor but myself; for all were too small to do anything, except my oldest brother, and he was helpless, and my father was a weakly man, being diseased from a child. I had been brought up, until this period, without any education, or any knowledge of religion; for my parents never had any thought for religion, as it seemed, for they never went to any kind of meeting; neither did they seem to have any thought for reading, as they had no Bible or any other kind of a book in their possession. I was

reared in perfect obscurity; for I lived until I was about eighteen years old and had never been at any public gathering, never been to school, nor heard any one speak in public. As I have said, mother died and left me at the age of ten years to take care of a pitiful and helpless family; but my little infant brother in a few weeks followed his mother. O, my dear reader, I cannot tell the trouble, turmoil and hardships I have undergone since the death of my dear mother; and if I were to write for days and days I could not tell half of the many hardships, troubles and trials I have had in this world of sin and sorrow. I had to work out of doors in the day time in summer, to try to make something for us all to eat; and also had to prepare our meals three times a day, and had to carry those little children with me to the field. I also had to chew everything my little helpless brother ate, and had to strip him three times a day, and many times, oftener. I had to wash and patch for them (my three little brothers, father and one little sister) of nights; for my father was gone from home the most of his time. O, the lonesome hours I saw; for no one came to see us, though there were two dwellings just across the small stream from where we lived, both in sight; and after I had become a grown man, I visited those houses and they did not know who I was—even those people who lived in sight of where I was raised, did not know me when I went to their houses, for they had never seen me, only at a distance, since I was a little fellow—and nobody ever came to see whether we were dead or alive. Now the general excuse that they (the people in the neighborhood in which I was raised) put up for not visiting us was and is, that my father was such a wicked and sorry man; but my notion is different from that; I think that the cause was they lacked charity. Now, dearly beloved in the Lord, I cannot describe what I have suffered during those cold and stormy winters; for I never wore a coat

or vest, nor anything else, save a shirt and pantaloons of domestics, until after I was eighteen years old. How piercing those sharp winds felt to my thinly-dressed body when I had to leave my little brothers and sister and sometimes father, and go to the woods for wood to burn, to keep them from freezing! When I would return with my turn of wood on my shoulder, I would be so cold that I would be benumbed all over. When I look back over my rugged road, I am made to wonder that I am still alive. But my wonder ceases when I consider that the omnipotent hand of a loving Father has led me through this terrible desert and preserved me from its numberless dangers. O, was it not the loving hand of Jehovah that kept a poor blind (spiritually blind) boy from having childish ways and from the carelessness common to children. For if I had been of the disposition common to children, I would not have striven to maintain my father and his helpless family, but to the reverse. I have often thought if it had not been for God's kind providence we would all have been burned up together in our little old log cabin years ago. But, thanks to His holy name! he watched over us and brought me to manhood without any help of man, and without any of the luxuries of earth. Then does he not work all things after the counsel of his own will, and out of the sight of poor, finite mortals? After my helpless brother had died my labor was not so severe. Well do I recollect when he died; it was one evening during a thunder storm. I was sitting by his side, rocking him in his cradle, when the thunders were rolling and the sharp lightnings were flashing, and it was almost as dark as night, and I looked my little brother in the face and saw the hand of death there; his eyes were turned into death. How awful I felt! While looking on him the tears rolled down my cheeks, and I called to my father, for I could not endure to gaze alone upon that dying boy. Time moved on with me,

and still I knew but little, and thought less, of a Supreme Being. I knew God only by these names, "The Good Man," and the "Lord." This was all I could learn of God by my father. When I would ask him what caused the thunder, etc., he would say that it was the "Good Man" that thundered. When I was a little boy I remember that my mother told me the same, and that he (the Good Man) would destroy all that stole, told lies, etc., in a pit of fire. So sometimes I would be much afraid of these things, and dreamed frightful dreams. But my disposition was dreadfully wicked. I will mention a few of my many wicked thoughts and intentions while in a state of death. I had heard of the many pleasant (to me then) sinful practices of mankind from my father telling me of them. So I thought that I would work very hard and lay up, and when I became a man I would buy a suit of clothing and fix up and go out into the world and take my pleasure in all the sins common to wicked young men; for I thought as I had always been a subject of obscurity and sorrowful privations, that when I became a man I would see some pleasure. But all my expectations were cut short by the hand of Omnipotence; for I became greatly burdened, and my troubles were very great, for I felt myself to be the greatest sinner on earth. O, how wretched I felt! I was ashamed of myself. There were some black people who lived near us, and I was ashamed of them, so that when they came about I would hide from them. O, how wicked I did feel! I often went and tried to pray, though I knew little about what men or women did when at prayer; what position they occupied, or what words they used, for I had never heard any one pray. So when I went out to pray I would some times, and most of the time, fall on my face. So finally I concluded that I was going to die and sink down into a lake of fire unquenchable and everlasting, and that because of my sinfulness. I viewed myself as

nothing but a great mass of corrupted wickedness, and that the Good Man, as I knew, was going to sink me into irretrievable woe and misery on account of my sin. Then I began to examine myself to see why it was that I must sink down into hell, and why it was that I was the worst being on earth, and could not solve the mystery; for I had never been as wicked as I had heard of some being. I had never acted the thief, neither had I been a liar, nor had I been guilty of any big crime. Then what is the matter? I could not tell why I was so guilty. But when I had viewed sin in all its deformity, then I could solve the mystery; for I then saw that it was that original guilt and my total depravity in nature that condemned me. But all my reasoning about not having been guilty of any great crime did me no good; and finally sleep fled from me; and one evening I watched the sun go down, and as he sank below the horizon I bade him farewell, and never expected to see the sun rise again. O, how dreadful I felt! for I thought I would soon be dead, and no sooner dead than damned. When night came on, and all my father's family were asleep, and I was lying on my pallet in the silent cabin, I arose softly and went out, and going a considerable distance from the house, I fell down upon my face to pray. I thought I must now sink into eternal woe and misery, for what hope have I? I had never heard anything of such a being as Christ Jesus, or a Saviour; neither did I know anything of the New Testament at that time; but just at the moment when I thought I was gone, I saw Jesus as it was a bright star descend from heaven, and the next I saw to that superior bright star was a little infant lying in a very shabby-looking stable, and I thought, or it was revealed to me, that this shining light left heaven to become a way for my redemption from death and hell, and became an infant to that end. I then had a view of the whole life of Christ, even to his crucifixion. I then saw

Jesus suspended between the heavens and the earth, as an outcast of both. He was hanging, I thought, about half way between the heavens and the earth; his feet were crossed, a large iron about the size of a forty-penny nail pierced through them both, his hands were pierced with smaller irons, and his side was pierced open, and a great stream of bloody water was pouring or gushing out of it; and I saw that his whole blessed body was streaming in blood, every part being bathed, and the blood streamed unto the earth. Then I heard a voice say, Fear no longer, for this will overshadow and overspread you from all harm, from the thunder storms. etc. This voice was sweetest melody to me; my whole being was filled with sweet and holy melody, and I felt as innocent as a little new-born infant; for all my load of sin and guilt was gone. Now it was right here I saw, or it was revealed to me, just how Jesus came into the world; for I viewed that he lived for me a perfect life of obedience in the flesh, and that he died for me, or died in my stead, and arose for me a victorious conqueror over death, hell and the grave; and then ascended to heaven for me. I also had the same view in regard to the whole church in her triumphant state. Now this heavenly view and divine revelation was so great to me that in after years, when I had gotten in possession of the New Testament and began to read it, it seemed as though I had always been acquainted with its readings. Now I have never gone to school but about two months in all my life, and that during the winter of 1878, and during this same winter I borrowed some clothing and went to Rock Springs meeting house and heard Elder B. E. Caudle preach, which was the first sermon I ever heard preached in my life. So time passed on with me in many ups and downs, doubts and fears, until the 18th of May, 1878, when I went to the church and told some of the great things which I hoped the Lord had done for me. And in June following I

(3)

borrowed clothing of Brother C. W. York to be baptized in, and walked to Mitchell's River meeting house, about eighteen miles, and was baptized by Elder B. E. Caudle. Now, I never had heard any one tell an experience, or join the church, nor had seen any one baptized until after I was baptized myself. I moved on in poverty's vale in many severe trials, and was favored with many rich blessings of God's grace, as I some times hope, until the second Sunday in August, 1878, when I commenced trying to preach. When I commenced trying to preach I did not know a tune of any song in the world; neither could I give out a hymn correctly, for I could scarcely read. So I passed on in my trials, having to toil yet very hard for my father, and he was all the time opposed to my religious exercises; but I would beg him often to let me go and try to preach, which he would sometimes consent to. So I would go in my rags and walk for many miles to preach to the people. Yes, I would go through the dark as well as the daytime; going through wet and dry, cold and heat, and preaching to the poorer sort of people.

On the 25th of August, 1880, I was married to Miss A. L. Moody, a beautiful girl seventeen years old. She was a very poor girl, for she had nothing but her clothing. We leased a piece of land in the woods and built a little log cabin and moved in it, and we got shingles for a sustenance during the fall and winter, working day and night; for I would some nights dress or draw three hundred shingles after supper. But when summer was come we rented stock and land and made a crop, and have been doing that way ever since. The first meal we ever ate in our little log cabin was in one teacup and one saucer; I ate out of the saucer and my wife out of the cup; and she had one old knife, made in the shop, to eat with, while I used my pocket-knife. We had to go in debt the year we were married for bedding and other household and kitchen necessaries,

and we paid out the next fall, but had to go in debt again. I have had a powerful hard struggle to barely keep something to eat and wear, and many times both myself and family have suffered for want of food and raiment, and are in need even now. I have tried to go and preach Jesus as often as I possibly could, and have always had to walk, for the Primitive Baptists are very few in this country, and are very poor and widely scattered, therefore I never have had a helping hand from any mortal in this part. My family consists at present of my wife and three little children, and I am greatly afflicted with rheumatism and nervous debility. No tongue or pen can tell what I have suffered in the last three years. I was set apart and ordained to the gospel ministry by Elders Joshua Long and Wm. Hall on the 3d Saturday in May, 1882, and have been trying to fill that calling ever since, but have labored under so many disadvantages that it seems there was never given for me any ease or satisfaction in this world. Yes, it seems that I was born unto trouble, tribulations and disappointments, for my days have been as prone to trouble as the sparks are to fly upwards. And there are but two things that make me want to stay here in Time's many distempers, and that is my poor little poverty-stricken family and the poor little saints who are scattered here in this mountain country. They are but few in number and poor in the world, and yet I am knit to them in love.

Brother Respass, I submit this to your kindness, hoping it may find grace in your sight. I am your poor little unworthy brother in hope of the resurrection of life eternal.

State Road, N. C.

WM. R. WELBORN.

P. S.—*Dear Brother Respass*:—It is at the request of several of your readers that I have written this short sketch of my life and experience for your precious paper, THE GOSPEL MESSENGER; please give it a corner in your precious paper. Now I would just say to all the dear brethren,

sisters and friends, that myself and family are in great need for the necessities of life, and if any reader should feel it his or her duty to contribute a little something to our wants, I will greatly appreciate it. If any brother, sister or friend should want to know (or if they doubt these statements) about the certainty of these things, they may write to Deacon T. H. Johnson, J. W. Holbrook or H. M. Milburn, State Road, N. C.

I am yours fraternally,

WM. R. WELBORN.

Very Dear Brother Respass:—I want to speak a word of encouragement to you, in the publication of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, for I feel under many obligations to you for sending me your highly esteemed paper. May God bless you and enable you to long publish a paper in defense of the Church of God—just such a paper as THE GOSPEL MESSENGER. Dear Brother Respass, I wish I could help you by sending you some money to aid you in the good work of publishing THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, but I can't. Please pray for poor unworthy me.

WM. R. WELBORN.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPASS, WM. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

EVERY EVIL WORK.—James iii., 16.

The Apostle James speaks in this third chapter of two kinds of wisdom: one is earthly, such as men of this world have and rely upon to direct in all the affairs of this life; the other is heavenly wisdom, such as God giveth to his people. It is pure, kind, gentle, easy to be entreated without partiality, full of mercy and good fruits. The contrast which inspired writers have drawn in the scriptures between these two kinds of wisdom is very great indeed; so great that the combined wisdom of this world does not know God, and in comparison with God's wisdom it is but foolishness.

In the connection of the words heading this article, we have a brief description of some of the fruits of earthly wisdom, which, if carefully observed and put in contrast with the fruits of the Spirit, will help the humble believer to "try the spirits" by the word of the Lord, and greatly enable him to know "whether they be of God or of the wicked one." Earthly wisdom,

however useful it may be when employed properly in things of the world, is nevertheless corrupt, and has a dangerous and corrupting influence when relied upon and employed in the church and kingdom of Christ. There is where its fruits are seen most clearly to be "Earthly, sensual and devilish." There is where it brings forth its bountiful crop of "envy, strife, and every evil work." When brethren in the church, especially preachers, become a little puffed up with a sense of their superior earthly wisdom above their brethren, they become somewhat like Haman in one particular: they want all the humble Mordecais in the church to bow down to them. Nothing can be done right in either church or State, unless done in harmony with their view of things, and by their advice or dictation. And if there should be two or more rival brethren of this character in the church, each striving for the ascendancy over the other, destruction and misery will be in their path. Parties and religious factions will be formed, each holding with and following after its favorite man, and thus all become more or less carnalized, and walk and talk as men of the world, with anger, malice, envy, hypocrisy, strife, and "every evil work." One party cries out for, and holds with Paul; and another for Apollos, and another for Cephas, and but few for Christ.

When under the influence of a carnal, worldly spirit, hatred and strife are sure to be engendered to such an extent as to stifle, hinder, or entirely prevent an impartial examination after truth. Neither party is in a frame of mind to do the other justice. Nor are they in a proper spirit to put a right construction on the word of God. They go to the Scriptures, not to learn what is the mind of Christ or of the Spirit, but to find some way of supporting their errors, or to know how they can best evade an unwelcome truth. Carefully they seize upon everything which they can distort or construe into

their favor, but cover up or avoid all that wars against their pet errors. Thus the light that is in them has become darkness—darkness of the worst kind. It requires neither faith nor grace of any kind to be an earnest and zealous religious partisan. The wisdom of the world, whether in the church or out in the world, can take a hand in this fight; and they are sure to do it. When Christians become carnal, and bite and devour one another, men of the world will be on hand to enjoy, if they do not help in the fight.—M.

ESTHER.—SECOND CHAPTER.

In those days while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth and sought to lay hands on the king, Abasuerus; and the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther, the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name. And when inquisition was made of the matter it was found out; and therefore they were both hanged on a tree, and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

AS THY DAY THY STRENGTH SHALL BE.

With Esther's elevation to the throne came Mordecai's to the king's gate. He had been her eyes, so to speak, whilst a child in his house; he watched over her in her girlhood; and when she had been brought with the other fair young virgins to the king's house, *he walked every day before the court of the women's house to know how Esther did and what should become of her.* His love and solicitude for her were not diminished by her age, dignity or increased responsibilities; as she seemed to be removed from him by her elevation, so was he elevated that access to her should not be cut off. Thus he watched over, strengthened and protected her. It is often the case that the children of God fear to assume public responsibilities, or join the church, lest they be left to themselves and reproach Christ; but he has promised to be with them, saying: As thy day so shall thy strength be. As he was with Esther in her private

character, so was he with her in her official character, in Mordecai. As he was with her as a child in his house, so was he with her as a wife and as a queen in the king's house. With the wife's care is a wife's love; with the mother's a mother's love; and with the queen's responsibilities is the queen's spirit; so with the member of the church; as God elevates him so he strengthens him. Ministers fear the great responsibilities of the sacred calling, lest they shame the cause of Christ; they fear to go forth in his name, with no money in their scrip, or supplies of wisdom to carry with them, lest they be left in confusion; fear to go forth destitute, forgetting that in that spirit alone will they be brought to the poor and destitute in spirit; to the house of their Master's brethren. As God was with us in our spiritual childhood, so will he be with us in all to which he calls us; as our trials and responsibilities increase, so will he rise up to meet with and deliver us in them. It was not needful that Mordecai should be in the king's gate whilst Esther was a child in his house, as it is not needful we should have the grace of a church member before we join the church, or the grace of a minister before we preach, or dying grace before we are to die. But when Esther was taken from his house and put in the king's house—when she was made not only a wife, but a queen—then it was needful that Mordecai should be in the king's gate. As Esther had official responsibilities, so it was needful that she should have official grace; because she would have official trials and enemies. Therefore, whilst Bigthan and Teresh were plotting, Mordecai was watching. They had access to the king's ear, but Mordecai had access in Esther to the king's heart, because the king loved her. They watched at the king's door, but Mordecai had access in Esther to the king's bedchamber, and even to his bed itself. They were so nigh the king that they felt no need of approaching him in Esther, and therefore knew not how to ap-

proach him and speak to his heart; but Mordecai and the Jews were so poor and far off that they could only approach him in Esther; the only access any could have to his heart. Thus Bigthan and Teresh were too rich to need Esther, and Mordecai and the Jews were too poor to do without her. As the children of God are made to feel the constant need of Christ whilst the self-righteous feel no such need, and despise the poverty that does. Bigthan and Teresh were honored counselors—were the king's familiar friends, to whom was entrusted the king's person—they were to him as Ahithopel to David; and like Ahithopel, in time of trial they forsook him and sought his life; sought to destroy the friend that had honored and enriched them. Like the Jews in Christ's day, they were exalted by that which should have humbled them, and smote the hand that fed them. And like people now upon whom God has bestowed great gifts of mind and morals, they glory in them to their own honor, and not to the honor of God, their benefactor. Publicans and sinners, upon whom comparatively little of such advantages were bestowed, and who were destitute of morals, honored and revered Christ, whilst the self-righteous and haughty Pharisees, upon whom much had been bestowed of mind and morals, loathed and despised him. The penitent prostitute kissed the feet of Jesus and washed them with grateful tears, whilst the hard-hearted Pharisee looked on with supercilious contempt. Thus it was that those who seemed to be the nearest to the king were farthest from him in heart; and those who seemed farthest from him were nearest to him in love. Hushai, the Anchite, though seemingly farther from David, was nearer than Ahithopel; the one was nearer in the letter or profession, but the other nearer in soul, and when the letter fails the heart is found true. In Esther Mordecai and all the Jews were made one with the king, as no other people, not of Esther's kindred, could be.

They were linked together in one, and the weal of one was the weal of all, and the woe of one was the woe of all. The king loved Esther and she loved him; and Esther loved Mordecai and the Jews, and the king loved them in Esther, as the Jews loved the king in Esther.

LOVE NEVER FAILS.

The conspiracy of Bigthan and Teresh was known to Mordecai, and he durst not hold his peace. He was bound, both in letter and in spirit, to make it known to the king. His obligation as the king's servant in the the gate required it; and should that be insufficient of itself, and he should fail of legal duty, his love to Esther, his child, and to his brethren, forbade his silence and compelled his crying out. He could not bear to see the destruction of Esther and his kindred; it would be his own destruction. He came into the king's gate for such a time as that, and was there according to the king's law by the spirit; because the obligations of his high calling were such that no man in the flesh could fulfill them; no man not related to Esther, the queen, as he was, could approach the king in her as he could; and unless the king was so approached in heart, he would hear no word against his trusted and honored servants. It was, therefore, with Mordecai not merely an obligation of the law to the king, but one of love to Esther; he loved her, and fidelity to her and his kindred involved fidelity to the king also; and whilst, therefore, he might have been faithless to the king as Bigthan and Teresh were, his love forbade faithlessness to Esther. Because, if the king should fall, Esther, as his wife and queen, would fall with him, and with her, all the Jews. Thus it is with Christians to God's law; they are made faithful to the letter by the Spirit; nor will any in time of trial and temptation be faithful short of the faithfulness inspired by the Spirit. Bigthan and Teresh and the Jews are examples of this truth. It was with Mor-

decai as it was with the twelve and Jesus. When the letter disciples forsook Christ and turned back, the twelve could not do it. There was something in them that forbade it, that did not forbid the others, and of which the others were destitute. As there is something that makes a man love his own wife and children, though others may dislike them; that makes a mother cleave to her own son, though he may have disgraced himself and dishonored her. It is the spirit; the kinship and identity of soul. It is that which makes a child of God cleave to Jesus, though he feels so vile and unworthy; and to the doctrine that the world hates; loving it whilst others hate it; defending it whilst others seek its overthrow. Because to him it is a necessity; with him it is Jesus or death. It is a matter of grace, and because of grace. He is changed in heart and will be faithful wherein others are faithless. He will be faithful to the law that condemns him, and declare its righteousness, and is thus prepared to receive God's mercy as an unmerited grace, as an amazing grace! So was Mordecai faithful to the king that had led him away from his country and wealth, and impoverished him in a strange land. He was faithful because he knew it was a righteous retribution for his sins, and in soul was made to love that holiness that condemned sin in him. And especially so, as he experienced in Esther the king's love for the poor, sin-stricken and impoverished Jews; and was thus made rich in faith; though having lost all things in themselves, yet, in the the king's love they had all things. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

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

But what a secure refuge it is when we can see it! But most of the time we are like the prophet's servant when surrounded by a host of the chariots and horses of his enemies (2 Kings, vi.) He cried out, Alas, my master!

what shall we do? And the prophet said, Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them; with them is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God. And Elisha prayed and said, Lord I pray thee open his eyes that he may see; and he saw and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and he delivereth them.

GOD APPOINTED OVERSEERS.

The bishop or pastor of the church over which God has given him the oversight, watches over her in love, as Mordecai over Esther; he does it not for love of money, or filthy lucre, nor for honor. He thinks more of the cause than he does of any mere opinion of his; he will not distract and divide them about incomprehensible things, or things not essential. He may seem at times inconsistent, as Paul did about circumcision in circumcising Timothy, (Acts xvi.,) and in declaring himself a Pharisee before the council (Acts, xxiii.); but it was because he thought less of himself than he did of the success and prosperity of the cause of Christ, and could patiently wait God's time to bring order out of confusion. He did not hold his peace when the Spirit impressed him; he did not shun to declare the whole council of God, and to warn every one, day and night, and from house to house, even in tears. He never forgot that it was Christ's cause, and that Paul himself was nothing. He would not be the head of any faction and have any baptized in Paul's name. He had none called Paulites, after him. To him Christ was all in all, and Paul, Peter and Apollos nothing but ministers given the church by Christ.

The bishop or pastor may not divest himself of the responsibility God has laid upon him by shifting it upon the church. If he has been taught the truth he is to teach it to the church; if danger is shown to him he

is to show it to the church. God has put it upon him by giving him knowledge of it. Nor, indeed, can any member of the church to whom sin in another is known against the peace, order and purity of the church, hold his peace, if he loves the church. God requires it of him to make it known; to hide it is to partake of its guilt. If false doctrine is taught, all may not detect it, but by whom it is detected, of him it is required to expose it in love. Aquilla and Priscilla first took Apollos aside and expounded the truth more clearly to him, and he, like a child of God, meekly received it. There is no need to fear doing right if it be done in the right spirit. It may be a cross to bear, but it is to be borne for Christ's sake; it may be dangerous, and in a sense death, but we are to die for one another. But it must not only be done in the right spirit, but it must be done according to law, or the letter. It must be done, not as an individual act, but as a member of the church; ourself is not to be known in it, but Christ. Nor are we, if opposed, to take it as personal opposition, and get angry, but as opposition to the truth we represent; nor are we to forget that others are interested in it as well as we, and that it is as much their cause as ours. We are not to make ourselves big, but little; and he is least who is nearest the king in spirit, and biggest and most self-important, as Bigthan and Teresh, who seek the king's place, and is furthest from him in heart or love.

Mordecai communicated the matter to the king through Esther, that is in the spirit of love and not of the flesh. He communicated it to her not as to his child, but as to his queen; so is the minister to deal in the church; not as her lord and master, but as her servant. And Esther, as the queen, certified it to the king in Mordecai's name. It was all done officially, or according to law. There was no resort to any unauthorized tribunal to try the matter; no appeal to any higher

court than the king's court; no laying the matter before a synod or an association. There was none higher than queen, as there is none higher than the church; and to resort to any other body than the church, is to dishonor the church and Christ, and to put the servant on horseback as the prince, and to put the prince on foot as the servant. It is to overturn God's order.

Bigthan and Teresh had a fair trial in the king's court; as every member must have in the church, and the church only. To be tried and condemned by any other tribunal is a usurpation of law, and punishable by the law. If a member has a standing in any church with which another church is in fellowship, he is to be recognized as orderly until the church—not an Association—deals with him, and if his own church does not deal with him after having been notified that he is disorderly, and which charge has been sustained by gospel proof, then fellowship for the church herself may be withdrawn. This order maintains the dignity and supremacy of the church, and no other does or can. When, therefore, Bigthan and Teresh were fairly tried they were condemned and executed according to law, and the honor of the king and queen preserved.—R.

WORDS FITLY SPOKEN.

If we mistake not, it is written somewhere in the good Old Book that words fitly spoken are as apples of gold in pictures of silver. Surely this signifies that such words, so spoken, are valuable and precious. And while it is true that men cannot speak as God speaketh, yet he has qualified many of his dependent creatures to speak words of this character, words which are profitable to mankind, and which reflect the praise and honor of God. It is indeed a great privilege to speak words that reach and comfort the hearts of poor suffering mortals, as well as to rebuke and reprove those who in

prosperity go astray. We have often thought about what a great blessing God's ministers enjoy in the exercise of their spiritual gifts, and in the use of their talents, imparting comfort and instruction to the household of God. Oh! it is a feast to them to see the lambs feeding upon the gospel of Christ. We sometimes feel that we could be sufficiently happy forever were it the will of the Lord to permit and prepare us to preach the gospel; but we don't always feel so, for it is as often the case that we are enveloped in mental darkness, and feel to lament our hardness of heart, and feel almost ashamed that we have ever presumed to speak in the name of Jesus.

Words fitly spoken are right words, spoken at the proper time, while the same words spoken at another time, or under different circumstances, might be, not only useless and vain, but also painful and sinful. When the tongue is guided by wisdom it speaks profitable words—words that ought to be spoken; but if otherwise, the speaker betrays his weakness and ignorance. Solomon says that a fool's voice is known by multitudes of words. So we should be careful to bridle our tongues and never speak at random, for the Saviour said, "Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Talking, then, is a dangerous employment, as well as a useful one. The last admonition that we received from our deceased father was this: "Mind how you act, mind how you walk, mind how you talk." Those words of our dying father are still as apples of gold in pictures of silver to us.—H.

"Believing that the *Signs* is the only paper that stands firm in the doctrine. There are other papers which we have seen, but there seems to me to be manifested a desire to please a carnal desire. This we do not like in any one; and such are not serving God, but themselves, in our judgment."—*Signs of the Times*, 1st April, 1887.

We call the attention of the readers of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER to the above extract.—R.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

MILLERSPORT, O.—*Very Dear Brother*:—Our little Church at Hebron has been in a very low condition, and it looked as though the candlestick was about to be moved out of his place. Our condition was not unlike that of the Church at Ephesus; we had left our first love. But, notwithstanding, our downcast condition, we have reason to rejoice that God has remembered our beloved Zion, in giving a poor sinner to realize her condition in sin; giving that godly sorrow for sin, that worketh a repentance that need not be repented of, to realize the saving efficacy in a dear Saviour's blood, a trembling hope in God her Saviour, and then grace to come to the church and tell what great things the Lord had done for her; follow the example of the blessed Master and be buried with him by baptism into death, arising to walk in newness of life.

You may rest assured, dear brother, we are greatly encouraged, and feel like praising the name of God for his goodness and mercy to the children of men. May the Lord keep us low at his feet. The sweetest place is to be found at the feet of Jesus, the dear Lamb of God. A young brother, Miller, who came from another order, was baptized into the fellowship of Union Church, Thornville, Ohio, by Elder L. B. Hanover, at their last regular meeting, fourth Sunday in January. Also, three excluded members of Friendship Church, Reynoldsburg, O., came back to the church, confessed their sins, acknowledged they had been bewitched, asked forgiveness, and were received with much joy back into the fellowship of the church. Joy spread from heart to heart. How applicable the Saviour's words, "Likewise, joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that needeth no repentance." Our dear young brother, Elder Frank McGlade, is pastor of this church. May we all be humbled under the mighty hand of God; and may he put it into the hearts of his dear people to pray for our bowed down and afflicted Zion everywhere. Yours in hope of eternal life,

LEWIS T. RUFFNER.

VERDON, NEB., Jan. 30, 1887.—*Dear Brother Respass:*—The MESSENGER comes to us regularly, and we appreciate it very much. My wife loves it next to her Bible. She has been a warm-hearted Baptist ever since 1859; I have been one ever since 1833; and I am now eighty-one and a half years old, and if a saint at all, the least of all. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God! Jesus says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Now, this everlasting love is that which unites Christ and his Church together in regeneration; the children of God are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time; by grace are ye saved through faith, not of works lest any man should boast. It is that eternal love that binds Christ and his Church together so firmly that they can never be separated; they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Jesus says: Lo! I come in the volume of thy book, as it is written of me, to do thy will, O, God! And what was that will? all that thou gavest me I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day. The Church of Christ will be raised up and be presented before the Father's throne without spot or blemish, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. I have loved thee with an everlasting love and with loving kindness have I drawn thee. The Church was in God's eternal will before the world began; it was that eternal love that caused Jesus to come down into this sinful world to suffer and die the ignominious death of the cross, to pay the debt for his bride, the Church. There is no getting any of God's children out of the covenant of grace; for they are kept by the power of God.

The Little Flock Church, here in Richardson county, has just completed a meeting-house, and have got it almost paid for, and we would be glad to have some of the preaching brethren to call and see us.

With love to all the saints, I remain your unworthy brother,
 GEORGE NORTHCUTT.

OBITUARIES.

MRS. E. A. D. WORSHAM.

Sister E. A. D. WORSHAM departed this life at her home in Taylor county, January 18, 1887, leaving an infant child, aged only one day. She was the wife of Brother Z. J. Worsham, and daughter of T. J. and E. A. D. Bynum, being twenty-five years and four months old at her death. In May, 1883, she confessed a hope in Christ as her Saviour, and was baptized into the fellowship of the church at Bethlehem on the second Sunday in July, the same year. She was the mother of three children, two of them having passed to the grave before her. Sister Worsham made proof of her faith by her works, walking blameless before all, delighting in the service, and rejoicing in the promises of God. B. STEWART.

SISTER E. CHISENHALL.

My dear wife departed this life 2d March, 1887, in St. Francis county, Ark. And blessed be God, Jesus manifested himself to us in our time of need in such a plain and unmistakable way, that I want it put in our golden GOSPEL MESSENGER, which she so dearly loved to read. Dear brethren, I, a poor sinner, was permitted to talk with her, and she with heavenly people, for one half an hour. Jesus came to her view, and after that a world of purest people, so that it was with her as it was with Stephen, of old, when dying, it was a triumphant victory over death through our blessed Redeemer, and confirming and reassuring to us who were greatly privileged to behold it. So she fell

Asleep in Jesus; blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep.

May the Lord bless his humble poor. As ever, yours,

E. CHISENHALL.

NEWTON B. REDDICK.

NEWTON B. REDDICK was born in Sumner county, Tenn., April 25th, 1809, and died in Hopkins county, Ky., January 18th, 1887.

Brother Reddick became concerned in regard to eternal salvation when quite young, but did not become fully reconciled for a number of years.

He was married to Miss Elizabeth C. Hodges (niece of the venerable Elder M. Hodges, of Fountain Head, Tenn.), August 26th, 1833, who died in Bedford county, Tenn., October 12th, 1841. He was married to Mrs. Mary J. Parrish, July 25th, 1843. The first union was blessed with three sons and one daughter, of whom, one son, Elder S. T. Reddick, and one daughter are living. The second union was blessed with five children, two of whom died in infancy, the remaining three—daughters—are still living.

He professed a hope in Christ soon after his second marriage, in Bedford county, Tenn., where he was then living, and he and wife united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Enon, in that county, before the division on the Missionary question. He continued firm in the doctrine of the BIBLE through all the troubles that have since divided the Bap-

(4)

tists. After removing to Kentucky he united with Rock Spring Church of Red River Association, and for many years filled the offices of deacon and clerk of the church. His walk was in harmony with the profession he made upwards of forty years ago; and up to the last he continued firm in "the faith once delivered to the saints."

For a number of years he had been troubled with chronic diarrhœa. A short while previous to his death he contracted measles, which, as he expected, settled on his bowels, and would not yield to medical treatment. He had no special desire to get well. Said he, "Why should I want to get well! it will rob me of but few days at least, and I would have to come right back to this point again." He leaves a widow in old age, children, and many grand-children, to mourn his death, but we can all say, "Our loss is his eternal gain." Dear uncle, sleep in peace!

MABEL.

Died, on January 17th, 1887, at White Plains, Ky., MABEL, infant daughter of Dr. J. T. and Mrs. Willie Reddick, being only about two and a half months old, and only sick for two or three days, of severe cold. Thus another floweret, almost ere it commenced to bud, has been removed from earth to forever bloom in heaven. Dear children, grieve not for your darling Mabel, but ask the Lord to prepare you to meet her in heaven.

"Lovely babe, how brief thy stay!
Short and hasty was thy day;
Ending soon thy journey here,
Pain and grief no more to bear."

Bethpage, Tenn., Jan. 27, 1887.

J. W. REDDICK.

MISS O. G. MARTIN

Was born 8th November, 1866, and died of a snake-bite at her sister's, in Tatnall county, Ga., May 31, 1886. She left the house in company with her sister and a friend, for a walk, in perfect health and high spirits, when in a moment the venomous reptile fastened his fangs in the tender flesh of this lovely and accomplished young lady, giving her the stroke that cut her off from life when life was so sweet and the future so bright! How sad to think of giving her up so young. Whilst the providence of God is inscrutable to finite man, yet we would trust his grace, and say, in the words of holy writ, The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. She was the second daughter of Mr. A. J. Martin, of Fort Valley, Ga., her mother having preceded her to the grave about five years ago. She was carefully reared by her parents, and was a member of the Methodist denomination. She bore her suffering with great patience and resignation, telling her sister at once that she would die, and expressed no hope or desire to get well, but was perfectly resigned to God's will.

After her sister's marriage, she filled the responsibilities of housekeeper remarkably well for one so young, making home pleasant, and entertaining friends and visitors pleasantly and happily. She was rational to within a few moments of her death, and sent messages of love to her beloved and stricken father and sisters, that she was leaving them to rejoin her

mother in heaven. She was a dutiful and affectionate child, leaving a father and two sisters to mourn her death, but they mourn not as those who have no hope, for they believe that she is at rest in heaven. May the God of all comfort be with the bereaved father and children.

A FRIEND.

EDWARD LENARD GIBSON

Was born in Sumter district, South Carolina, June 22, 1806, and died at his residence in Pike county, Ala., Sunday, March 9, 1887, aged eighty years, eight months and fifteen days. In 1831 he moved to Florida, where he remained until the winter of 1832, when he moved to his home, five miles from Troy, where he has since resided. He became a member of Beulah Primitive Baptist church in 1867, and has since been a consistent and exemplary member. His remains were interred at the cemetery at Mossy Grove Academy, on Monday evening. He was for many years an active and law-abiding citizen of this county, having lived here for nearly sixty years. His young manhood, his years of maturity, and his old age were spent in the up-building of his adopted home and in the education of his family. He leaves many relatives, and a county full of friends, to mourn for him who lived and died one of nature's noblemen.

The above tribute is copied from the *Troy Messenger* of Thursday, March 10th, to which we feel to add a few words of testimony concerning the life and conduct of this dear old pilgrim deceased. Brother Gibson was a man of uniform habits, active, industrious and moral; plain and candid in his manner of address, and was in many respects what is generally called an old-fashion, common-sense man—the best class of citizens ever known. He was honest and reliable in his business transactions, noted for truth and veracity, which virtuous qualities adorned his Christian life and profession. He was well established in, and a devoted lover of the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, and departed this life in the triumphs of faith and hope of a glorious immortality. His dying expression was that he was not only willing, but desirous to depart and be with Jesus. Indeed, he seemed to have all the preparation necessary for the happy exchange, and none can doubt that he is at rest.

He sleeps that sleep from which no earthly sound can wake him; but Jesus' voice will call His ransomed from the grave to dwell with Him in everlasting life and peace.

H.

SISTER SHUMAN'S THREE CHILDREN.

Dear Brethren and Sisters:—It becomes my sad duty, as a stricken mother, to write you the death of my children. I do it with an aching heart and falling tears. On the 14th of February, ten of my twelve children were in bed with measles and pneumonia. On the morning of the 16th a precious little girl of eight years died, and another one lying very low, with my oldest daughter, seventeen years old, relapsed. Now, beloved readers, you can imagine how a poor mother felt. I felt the need of the Lord and Saviour, as much so as I did when my sins were forgiven. I felt all my hopes were gone, and to be in the depths of sin, and that the

Lord had turned his face from me; but in a moment my tired feet found rest, my drowsy eyes were opened, and my heart made to rejoice that my child was laid away in Jesus. My husband came in and said, "Mother, our little babe will soon be gone," and I told him not to cry; that it would soon be an angel in heaven; but when it died, on the 17th, I was found weeping too. They were both buried that evening. My oldest was the next, and the good Lord gave me strength to bear it, though I felt that I would go crazy. She told me Saturday that she saw nothing for her but death, but she lived until eleven o'clock Sunday night. A little before she died I asked her if she wanted Brother Smith, the pastor of our church—and a precious minister he is—to pray for her, to which she replied, "If he wishes," and being present he offered prayer, to which she listened attentively. He asked her if she wanted to be baptized, and she answered that she did. She then asked her father to let her kiss him, and after kissing him told him, "Now kiss poor mama;" and said, "Now lay me down and let me die." I asked her if she wanted to die, and she said "Yes;" and if she was going home to heaven, and she said "Yes ma'm." She was as good a child as we ever raised, and the idol of the household. O! will I ever get over the death of my children! I want you all to pray for me. Your unworthy sister,

ANNA SHUMAN.

Eden, Ga.

Dear Sister:—You will have grace and realize that, as your day, so shall your strength be. As we become dead to the world, so God's people live to him. We are buried with him; we live with him forevermore. So we may sing, "Nearer My God to Thee." R.

ROBERT L. DURDEN.

It becomes my painful duty to chronicle through your paper, the death of my beloved friend ROBERT L. DURDEN, of Emanuel county. He died in the city of Atlanta, June 23, 1886, aged twenty-two years, three months and twelve days. He was a young man of great promise; nature seemed to have designed him for a useful and honorable career. As a companion, associate and friend, he was genial and generous, kind and true; as a brother and son, he was loving and dutiful; as a young man, his aspirations were lofty and laudible, his motives were honest, his purposes were pure and elevating, his moral character unblemished, and a kind Providence had blessed him with a particularly bright mind. But that merciless reaper, Death, came and Bobbie is no more; and, O! Bobbie, the links of the chain that has bound us were broken as we consigned thy loved form to its mother earth, and your soul passed the "door that swings between Forever and No More." O, Divine Faith, stamp indelibly upon our hearts that there is a happier and better life than this; a home in which the broken chain shall be mended, strengthened, and made perfect; a home within whose sacred portals, we shall once more grasp the hand of our departed friend and know no more parting. A FRIEND.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 6. BUTLER, GA., JUNE, 1887.

Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER H. R M'COY.

I was the third child and second son of Jefferson and Elizabeth McCoy. My mother's maiden name was Wimpole. I was born in Henry county, Ga., January 28, 1828. Eventually my father moved to the Creek Indian Nation, in Chambers county, Ala., in about 1832, and three years thereafter to Tallapoosa county, then the heart of the Indian Nation. In this wild region, on the bright waters of Tallapoosa River and its tributaries, and in the mountain gorges, listening to the rippling waters as they leaped from one precipice to another, sparkling and dancing in the sunlight, there I received the first inspiration of my life. It was in this wild and "wilderness" region that I first heard of Christ and his cross, as it fell from the lips of my mother. Blessed and heroic mother! who, while the Indian war-whoop made the forest ring in defiance of the march of civilization, could gather her three youthful children around her and tell them of salvation by grace through Jesus Christ. Thank Heaven that this precious mother yet lives (1884) to tes-



tify to the truth of this, and tell it to others. Here I could write a long chapter, but this sketch forbids. In the spring of 1836 we were compelled to go east, or in the ordinary language, "to run away from the Indians." On the east bank of the Chattahoochee river we stopped at Green's old ferry, and in consequence of a false alarm one day, of the near approach of the Indians, I well remember the terrible panic and frightened stampede that then took place. If this sketch should meet the eye of any Baptist who was in that stampede, and know the circumstances, please write me, at Mill Town, Ala. [Elder McCoy has died since the above was written.—Ed.]

Except one year in Randolph county, Ala., I remained in Tallapoosa county and grew up to manhood, and in the providence of God, in 1847, then in my nineteenth year, I heard the beloved and now lamented Elder John M. Pearson preach, and from the talk and teaching of my mother, I had a profound reverence for Christian people and their worship, and often thought that I would turn and be a Christian some day. But when I heard Elder Pearson draw the line between the just and the unjust, I saw myself, for the first time, entirely on the side of the unjust, and I then thought of my mother's teachings more than ever before, and I was frequently weeping bitterly over my wretched condition, and determined to be a Christian, which I then thought, or had thought, I could accomplish. But, dear reader, this determination I soon found was all founded on the mistaken view of my own strength and ability. I laid aside my fiddling, at which, up to this time, I had been somewhat of an expert. I girded on the armor of Saul and went forth to battle, and in a month or two, thought I had won the victory. But about that time I entered a conflict in which my sword was broken and my resolves all defeated. I cursed and swore vehemently; plunging back into the dark pool of sin and folly, my

religion all gone, and my confidence greatly shaken in the virtue and power of the Christian faith. For fourteen months I went on, but the voice of my mother and the words of Elder Pearson followed me and added greatly to my condemnation and misery. In September, 1848, I heard Elder F. Calaway preach, drawing the same line, and again I saw and felt myself to be on the wrong side. I then, for the first time, thought of asking the Lord's help to change my course. Now, when I saw that I was helpless and dependent, my condition was intolerable. I wandered about for some time in the darkness of despair, feeling that I was without a friend in heaven or earth. Here I could say much; but suffice it to say that when despair had seized the very vitals of thought, and while the sentence of "Just and righteous are thy judgments, O God," was upon my tongue, I humbly hope that the spirit of the Lord God did apply the truth of his word to my understanding and gave me a good hope in Jesus as my Saviour. I leaped and shouted aloud, and longed for wings to reach the cloud,

"To embrace my Saviour in my arms,
And dwell forever on his charms."

I soon united with the Missionary Baptists at County Line, near Dudleyville, Tallapoosa county, Ala., and was baptized by Elder Frank Calaway, but not being satisfied, I joined the Primitive Baptists seven years thereafter, at Concord, and was baptized by Elder J. G. Edon. In May, 1858, I was set apart by ordination to the work of the gospel ministry in which for some time I had been previously exercising. Elders Moses Gunn, John M. Duke and V. D. Whatley officiated as presbytery in my ordination. Since that time my God only knows the battles, bleedings of heart, vicissitudes and difficulties through which I have passed. In a short time after my ordination I was called to and served six churches, and then again I declined, at short intervals, to serve any, but could not long remain in this way.

I entered the Confederate service January, 1862, and was elected captain of the company with which I went, and on the organization of the regiment I was elected major of the 34th Alabama. After the close of the war in 1865, I was elected to the Legislature from Tallapoosa county, and served in that capacity in 1865 and '66. During the session of 1866 what is known as the "Shannon Bill" became a law of the United States, and I was thereby disfranchised; but after six years, in 1872, my political disabilities were removed by an act of Congress, and I was elected to the Legislature of Alabama from Chambers county, to which I had moved during my disfranchisement.

In 1876 I moved to Denton county, Texas, and there remained during the years 1877 and '78, till brethren and friends kindly furnished the means to pay my way back to Alabama, and as a result I am now here. Of all the incidents of my checkered and eventful life, the most important chapter would be concerning my emigration to, and my stay in Texas, but its length precludes insertion in this brief sketch.

I have ever loved independent thought, religiously and politically, though for some time I preached what I heard others preach, but years ago I began to read and think for myself, and preached the gospel to every creature, believing that the law of God looked at the duty of every man, and not to his ability. For this course I have suffered many hard thoughts and things from my brethren. May the Lord save his church from error.

H. R. McCoy.

TRIBUTE OF LOVE AND RESPECT TO ELDER HENRY R. M'COY.

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from us by death, our beloved pastor, Elder Henry R. McCoy, on Monday, the 15th of March, 1886.

During the many years of his pastorate of our church he seemed to get nearer the affections and grow deeper in the hearts of our people. As a clear, concise, logical reasoner and expounder of the Old and New Testaments, he was unsurpassed in our day. His careful research, his keen analysis, the tenacity with which he held his own conclusions, and his

liberality for the opinions of others, have shed entire pathway not soon to be obscured or forgotten. He has finished his work and his labors and usefulness to that of his rest and mortal host of whom it is said: "These are the great tribulation, and have washed their robes the blood of the Lamb."

Our desire and prayer to God is that when life we may join him in that rest and blissful abode to which he so often pointed us, by precept and example. We are unable to express our love for our deceased pastor and brother, but from a desire to do so, we submit the foregoing preamble and the following resolutions:

Resolved 1st, That the church at Beulah hereby express, with extreme sadness, our sense of the great loss we have sustained in common with the Church of Christ, and Christianity an able defender of its principles. But while we mourn our loss, we recognize the hand of an All-wise God, and bow in humble submission to this dispensation of his providence, believing our loss is his eternal gain.

Resolved 2d, That the church respectfully tender the family of our deceased pastor this expression of our sympathy in their bereavement with a copy of these resolutions.

Resolved 3d, That the above be entered upon our church book, and sent THE GOSPEL MESSENGER for publication.

Adjusted in Conference.

May 8th, 1886.

WM. G. FLOYD,
W. B. WHATLEY, } Committee.
J. W. BRETTON, }

Dear Brother Landers:—I undertake to answer your questions relative to John x, 4; and especially "why so many of the household of faith do not readily discover and obey the Master or Shepherd," when Jesus has so positively asserted that his sheep *shall* hear his voice and *shall* follow him.

But my opinion is that the hearing and following referred to in this parable is directly applicable to the life or faith, instead of the walk, as you seem to think, of a child of God, and is hence fulfilled in following him in the regeneration instead of gospel obedience afterwards. And in this way Jesus, as the good Shepherd, putteth forth his own sheep to lead them from under the law, the legal kingdom or Jewish sheepfold, into the spiritual kingdom or gospel sheepfold. And herein

274
theve
g

They *will* hear his voice, and *shall* follow him, and *shall* enter in and be saved. Nothing shall hinder; none shall pluck one back or out of the hands of the Father, whose power is pledged to save them.

Therefore, I will defer a letter on the parable referred to, and proceed to answer your question as to why so many of the household of faith delay baptism, as that seems to be your main question. It is because they are not assured in faith that they are truly born of God, and have the right to this privilege. The gospel always invites its subjects to do just what they want to do. Such want to, and would be baptized, but doubt their spiritual birth. Then the more immediate and important question arises, why are they so doubtful? My opinion, based upon a long and close observation, is that while they are partly to blame, especially the older ones, in that they have not sufficiently searched the will and word of God, as trying the spirits concerning them, yet that the membership and, more than all, the ministry are to blame. For unto them is committed the gospel, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

The eternal salvation of each child of God is secured in Jesus Christ from before the foundation of the world, and God looks to Jesus alone for that. But the timely salvation, and only effecting this time life, is to be worked out. And "God has ordained by the foolishness (to the world) of preaching to save them which believe," save them from error, from straying in ignorance and disobedience, etc.; and to spiritual life and blessings in heavenly places, etc. Therefore God's ministers are thoroughly furnished to instruct, correct, reprove, rebuke, etc.; hence is commanded to take heed *to himself* and those that hear; save himself from reprehension and remissness *in saving* those that hear by rightly dividing and ministering the word of truth. In which he not only gives strong meat to the strong,

and milk to the weak, in the visible fold, but will strive to find comfort, instruct and bring in the poor, bewildered lambs without.

And now, particularly in preaching and explaining, what we term "experience." "But we often tell our experience in preaching," you say; yes, but that is a preacher's experience, and theirs are not. And, perchance, your telling of those brighter manifestations, without reference to, or explanation of, the usual experience of grace, has tended to weaken instead of strengthen the faith of such as have no such great manifestations. Still, tell your own, and no doubt to profit withal, but tell theirs, too, as by the same spirit to the same salvation, or life, yet as differing in operation, and in degree of spiritual evidences, as well as in the measure of faith. Teach them the "diversity of operations," and differing measures "of the grace of life." And that there are but two main essentials to our "experience of grace," or evidences of a spiritual birth, and these, a *cutting off* and a *grafting in*, always proven by the abiding spirit of God that loves Jacob and hates Esau, or loves holiness and hates sin.

Pardon and peace are most usually spoken by the "small, still voice;" and such a voice is not accompanied by any great miraculous thing to hear or see; and as "still" is not heard by the natural ear, but only heard within. And so differing from what was expected—for such are always led "by a way they know not"—that if left long without gospel instruction and support, that the "if" always suggested by the spirit of evil, will soon be sorrowfully admitted and taken up in its most harassing form. How often have I met and battled with it? "If I had only been *awake*, but I was asleep when my burden of guilt left me. When I awoke, peace, and joy and lightness filled my heart; but had I been awake I think I would have been satisfied," said a brother to me. I told him it was the natural man asleep, and not

the man changed; that that born of the spirit was spirit, and not flesh; that the dead and not the sleeping or waking man heard the voice of the Son of God and lived, etc. Before I had finished that brother was weeping and rejoicing; said he had never thought of it in that light before. I was reminded of our general remissness in regard to searching out and strengthening these bewildered, fearful lambs, and of the fact that if we accidentally find ourselves in their presence, the brethren generally still talk crops and politics, and the sisters domestic affairs and fashions.

A number have said to me: "If I just could point to some particular time and place where my burden of condemnation left me, and pardon came; but instead I only know it is gone—I know not where, how or whence. I often feel a sweet, secret gladness in—some how—hoping Jesus died for me; and I love Christians, and believe in salvation by grace; I see a beauty in the ordinance, and often feel a desire to be baptized, if I was only worthy," etc. Others have said: "If I had seen a light, or heard a voice; and had some particular scripture applied or spoken to me." Others: "If I had have understood the plan of salvation, the doctrine of election, etc.; but I knew nothing, save that Jesus died for sinners," etc. (As if a little new-born child could understand; knowledge comes with age.) Others: "If I had suffered more poignant grief for my sins," etc., etc. Yet, all these have the after-evidence of a spiritual birth in love, joy and peace, to a greater or less extent. They all love Christians, see a sacred beauty in the ordinances, and feel a drawing to the church. The difficulty is, they think their exercises lacking in some essential point.

The Bible requirements are, "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;" therefore, no matter what one has or has not suffered or felt, or understood, while under conviction, if he has felt to be condemned,

and to have sorrowed as a sinner before a just and holy God—and some feel and suffer more than others—and at some time, known or unknown, and by some means, and from certain evidences, has felt to hope that God for the sake of Jesus Christ has pardoned their sins, in which their burden of condemnation is gone, and they feel to rejoice—whether to shout praises aloud, or feel a calm, restful gladness of soul, and a love for everybody, especially the Christ-like—why, they have passed from from death to life.

But there is an infallible proof of a spiritual birth, that is as sure to those without special manifestations as to those with the most miraculous; and so true a witness is it that “you *may know* that you have passed from death to life *because you love the brethren.*” It seems the Lord has given this especially to those who have nothing to tell; therefore, if one loves the brethren—loves them regardless of natural attractions and advantages, and simply and wholly because they are Christ-like—he may arise, without a tangible evidence also, and be baptized.

But for the instruction and comfort of such as can claim no particular *time* and *place*—in my opinion, including the majority—I would notice some facts further in connection with the lepers cleansed by Jesus while on earth. One came first, nigh to Jesus and said: “If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, and said, “I will; be thou clean;” and immediately he was cleansed. So that this one could claim a particular *time* and *place* of immediate or sudden cleansing, in which he *felt* the touch, *heard* the voice, and *saw* and *knew* it was *Jesus*. Then ten came and stood afar off and cried to him for the same cleansing. Now comes a diverse operation of the same power and spirit to the same end. Jesus told them to go and offer that commanded by Moses. And they turned away, apparently, from the personal pres-

ence of Jesus, abiding in His church on earth, and “as they went they were cleansed;” not here while they prayed on this old log, or beneath that tree, or yet as they rested at the well, but—all along the way *as they went*; they started miserable, loathsome lepers; they stopped, and lo! they were cleansed—cured! Suppose they had said, “I heard no voice, nor felt his touch; I am not clean?” Or because I can point to no time and place of *immediate* cleansing as this other leper did, therefore I doubt if I am clean. The same effect proved the same effectiveness. So many feeling the sinfulness of sin, turn to deed of the law, and during weeks or months—here a little and there a little—they are gradually cleansed—relieved “as they went”—they know not how or when; but in proof they love the brotherhood—love Christians.

Another thought: of the ten who were cleansed “as they went,” “but *one* returned to give God the glory.”

No doubt the one who came near to Jesus before, and whom touching and speaking to Jesus cleansed “immediately,” gave God the glory. So the one born again in our midst, so to speak, and who before had come and stood near the Truth, or was inclined to listen to the true gospel from the true church, and so by direct teaching is familiar with the Primitive Baptist faith, doctrine and requirements, is more than apt to give God the glory of his or her salvation by subscribing to the doctrine of salvation by grace, in joining the Primitive Baptist Church. While of the ten cleansed gradually and imperceptibly, as to “the operation of God by faith,” and who before had “stood afar off,” or who, as naturally inclined, and so taught to look and lean to principles and systems professing salvation by human works, and to avoid the Primitive Baptists as the way of truth and life; and so turning away from Jesus, (whose abode is in His church) as it were, to follow Moses, and in the way of seeking legal righteousness,

are cleansed as they go; perhaps not more than one will return and give God the glory by joining the Primitive Baptist Church; and this one probably a "Samaritan and stranger;" or the one naturally the furthest off, as of a family that hate, nor will hear us; and the least expected, as the more stranger to our doctrine and ordinances; while those nearer by surrounding circumstances, and the more expected as drawn by natural familiarity and relationship—yes, even our very children—will go on and give human works the glory of their salvation by joining other sects.

Oh, this is so sad! so deplorable! In the sorrowfully rebuking words of Jesus I have been made to cry out, "Where are the nine?" Where are our children? Where our familiar friends? All naturally go from our doctrine and try human arms for salvation; but surely, when healed, they know "salvation is of the Lord," and they should have returned and given God the glory of their salvation. Did they think all the Primitive Baptists have had bright, "big experience?" Did they think they were all cleansed "immediately" and unmistakably? Did they think we *required* "some great thing" to be told before fellowship? And was it because they had nothing to tell that they did not return?

And, dear brethren and sisters, are we clear of their blame? Have we, in dilligently following every good work, sought out these inquiring ones and explained to them the diverse operations and the essentials of an experience of pardoning, quickening grace in general? Have we told those trembling ones, who have nothing upon which to base a hope, save that their burden is mysteriously gone, and sometimes they feel a blessed restfulness of spirit, and love for everybody, especially the Christ-like, that this is but a diverse operation of the same quickening spirit that suddenly felled Paul blinded to the ground? that it is the same mighty power that awoke Lazarus from the dead, subdued to a

“small, still voice,” awakening “as they went;” that the gentle rustling of the leaves to-day is as good proof of the presence of the wind as the mighty roaring tempest, uprooting great trees to-morrow; that Jesus used this figure to teach us to look mainly to effect; that, therefore, notwithstanding all things else, if *ye love the brethren*, why tarriest thou? Return and give God the glory, and be baptized.

With great desire that we all glorify God,

Butler, Ga., Aug. 1886.

R. ANNA PHILLIPS.

I say unto you, I have not found so great faith; no, not in Israel.—
Luke, vii., 9.

Thus the Saviour spoke of the faith of a Centurion whose servant he healed. Though the Centurion was a Gentile, and despised by the Jews, yet they, with all their advantages, had not such faith, or in such degree, as one whom they would have scorned. There may be much legitimately inferred from such considerations. The Jews in common had the oracles of God committed to them as a special people, and in common had such faith in the Scriptures and in Christ as may even to-day be obtained from the letter of the Scriptures without a special work of the Spirit. They acknowledged a God, but they knew him not in his true and holy character. They also believed in Christ, that he should be sent to them, but they knew not for what intent. They looked to their own service in the letter of the law for justification and salvation, and only expected and desired that Christ should reign over them as a temporal king and increase their grandeur or worldly estate as a people. So it is now, from the letter of the Scriptures the enlightened people of America acknowledge the existence of a God and that Christ has been sent into the world, but they seem to have formed no higher conceptions of the sovereign character of God and of Christ than the Jews entertained. That they look mainly to

their own obedience for justification and salvation as did the Jews we need no better evidence than their constant declarations that many souls are even now in hell for whom Christ died. For if souls are lost for whom he died, then we know that something else and not the blood of Christ is the capital thing securing salvation. But they say we must repent and believe, etc., in order to salvation notwithstanding Christ has died for every one of the race. True enough, and as evident it is that the efficacy of the blood of Christ must secure to us the spirit of repentance and faith, otherwise men possess no faith, neither can they better than the Jews in common possessed. The Centurion must believe in order to the healing of his servant. But what must he believe? Certainly a thing very different from that which fashionable sects of our age and country believe. Hear the Centurion's declaration of his faith: "But say in a word and my servant shall be healed."

Ah, reader, don't you see that his faith declared the complete sovereignty of God? May it not be seen that his faith was as widely different from their so-called faith as the east is distant from the west? And they differ in this very thing—the one proclaims the sovereignty of Christ, while the other proclaims his dependence upon the free-will works of men. The one believed that it was but for God to speak and his work of healing was done; the other believes that there is a great strain and struggle with the Almighty, that he is knocking and striving, wooing and beseeching to influence men in common to accept of a healing, and that his success in the business of healing depends upon the willingness of men to be healed. If such is not a contradiction of the Centurion's faith, then I know not what to call it. If God heals any who are unwilling to be healed then their unwillingness to be healed is the worst part or symptom of their case. This we may grant, but why should we not think as did the Centurion, that it is but

for God to speak and that symptom is removed. Conditionalists suppose that the willingness of Christ to save sinners is hinged upon their willingness to be saved by him, and this I suppose they will hardly deny. But we know that such a principle would not have reached Saul's case. For he was so unwilling to be saved by Christ that he was willing to afflict all he could find that were willing. What should have become of him but for the blessed truth which the Centurion's faith embraced? Though he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and waster of the church of God, it was but for God to speak to him and all his unwillingness to be saved without his own righteousness was gone.

There was Mary, possessed of seven devils, and we should think that she willed but little of good while under their control, but it was but for our Lord to "say in a word" and the devils must be gone out of Mary and she prepared to adore and worship her Saviour. Again we may instance the case of the possessed Gadarene. He was certainly far beyond the reach of Arminian principles—a maniac; nor could his best friends better his condition. However, notwithstanding his demented and ferocious state, he was fully within the scope of sovereign grace. Without a strain our Lord must only "say in a word," and he that would have scorned a mere proposition or offer of grace was found at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.

How beautifully the above instances harmonize with the Centurion's faith, the character of which is evidenced by that saying of his, "But say in a word and my servant shall be healed." Again, may it not be seen from such high stand points that such Bible instances are a contradiction to Arminian principles, and show an utter worthlessness of their faith in conditionality? We see from the connection that the Centurion infers his idea of God's sovereignty from a kind of sovereignty

that he, as a man, exercised. "For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to one go and he goeth, and to another come and he cometh, and to my servant do this and he doeth it."—Verse 8th. Now what could that Centurion have thought had he heard an Arminian preacher proclaiming that Jesus was powerless to heal without the consent and co-operation of the sick? He, though but a man, was not disappointed in commanding. No, he spoke and it stood fast; he issued his orders and they were as certainly obeyed. What an argument for the sovereignty of God, and yet how very few there are that perceive it.

But it is now time to notice in a brief way the effect which the Centurion's faith had upon him. Note what he said through his friends or messengers: "For I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof. Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee." We see then that he was not puffed up with his idea of God's sovereignty, but humbled rather. Nor did his faith, though in greater degree than was found in Israel, cause him to imagine that he had attained to sanctification, soul and body, so that he sinned not at all as some modern Pharisees speak of themselves. No, it is so to this day, that faith which sees the sovereign hand of God working his own will to perfection will surely discover to such as possess it that there is no good in themselves. Certainly it had that effect upon the Centurion, for, as he said, he did not feel worthy to go to Jesus in behalf of his servant, but sent elders of the Jews to put in his request. And when Jesus was coming, such was his feeling of unworthiness that he sent others saying, in substance, "Though I am very needy, my servant is ready to die and yet I am not fit that thou shouldst come under my roof." In connection with these sayings I very often think of my own early experience when under some kind of necessity I united with the church, professing hope in Christ,

though I did not feel like I was worthy of church membership. The sentiment of the poet was and is yet the sentiment of my heart:

“If I pray or hear or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do.”

When opportunity offered I was engaged in conversation with Christians; would tell them my feelings as nearly as I could, and they would state their exercise of mind, and our talk would be much alike. But still I felt, and do yet feel, that there is some lack or defect in me that if I could fully express perhaps real Christians do not feel. Though my needs are many, and I surely do feel at times a longing of soul for the presence of the Lord in my many trials, yet I do not feel worthy that he should come under my roof or even to ask his mercy upon me and my family which is dear to me. Yet I do believe that he is the sovereign of heaven and of earth, that he works his will to perfection without let or hindrance, and as the leper said, “If thou wilt thou canst make me clean.” Yea, I believe that as in the creation when darkness was upon the face of the deep it was but necessary for him to say let there be light and there was light. So now it is but necessary for him to say let there be light in the heart of a guilty sinner and there is sufficient to cause that sinner to cry pitifully unto him, and at last sufficient to produce faith and hope in the heart of that sinner. Then, believing this, the same that the Centurion believed, and seeing that his faith was commended of the Lord why may we not hope that our faith is of the right sort, though, like him, we may deplore our unworthiness? But there are other points in our connection to be considered. Note how differently the elders of the Jews viewed the Centurion's condition to the way he viewed himself. When they had delivered his request in behalf of his servant they added, “He was worthy for whom he should do this.” They had some evidence of it: “For he loveth our

nation and he hath built us a synagogue." We see the elders of the Jews declared the Centurion's worthiness while he declared his unworthiness, and both doubtless expressed their real sentiment. So it is even now there are many without who love our people and are ready to contribute of their earthly substance for the temporal benefit of the church. They believe, too, as did the Centurion, that it is enough for our God to "say in a word," and both wicked men and devils must yield to his heavenly mandates. But speak to them of their duty to honor the Lord by a public confession of their faith, and what do we frequently hear? Ah, say they, I believe in the doctrine of grace and that God is a sovereign who will obtain fully the highest purpose had in making the world at first, but I don't feel worthy to unite with the church. Would it not seem that such might be strengthened by the case of that Centurion? Indeed they might, only provided the Lord by his spirit should make an application of his case to them. However this much seems plain from the letter. That the Centurion's faith was genuine is testified by our Saviour's commendation of it, and yet possessing such faith in such a high degree he was the more sensible of his unworthiness.

I feel at this moment that if I had nothing else to adore and bless God for, my highest praise is due him for that he has shown me that I am wholly unworthy of the least of his mercy, and that in me, "That is in my flesh dwells no good thing." While we should not wish to boast of numerical strength, still if all who possess our faith in the sovereignty of God and have hope in Christ should unite with us as they ought, there would be more of the despised Gadarenes than the world supposes. I hope I feel thankful to the Lord that in the course of this year (1886) there have been many added to the churches in various localities, more than I have known previously in one year since my connection with

(2)

the church. May the Lord still advance his cause and kingdom on earth as he will according to his purpose, and may his people of this age be prepared to lay aside technicalities and as far as they may away with every hindering obstacle that tends to prevent factions of our people from becoming united in one body as they ought. I feel assured that such a course would be honoring to God and profitable to his people. JOHN ROWE.

EXPERIENCE.

Dear Brethren:—I have often thought of writing you a condensed sketch of my travails; but I have felt so unworthy a place in the excellent MESSENGER, that I have not, up to this time, yielded to my impressions. If I have ever been made to know my true condition, it was in 1871. I was brought up by Methodist parents to the age of ten years; and of course at that age I had thought but little of death and eternity, though I tried, as I thought, to be a good boy. My father died in 1859, and the war soon coming on, my older brother went, and I being the next boy, was hired out; and have had to weed my own row in the world to the present time. When about eleven years old I attended a Methodist protracted meeting, and they got me up to the mourners' bench and told me to get up and say I had religion; and I got up and said so, but I knew it was a lie as soon as I said it; and I had told lies before and felt just like I was telling one then. About this time my little sister died, and I was seriously impressed about death and judgment. I tried to be moral, as I was taught that God saved good children and good people. But it was when I was twenty years old that the Lord, as I hope, enabled me to see my true condition, as a justly condemned sinner in his sight, and without God and without hope in the world. I went to work to get religion, as I believed it was for everybody,

and that if they didn't get it, it was their own fault. I was living then with W. K. Miles, Bartow county, Ga., a deacon of the so-called Mission Baptists; and in August they had a protracted meeting, and he gave me leave to go every day if I wished; and I went each day until Thursday, for I had set out to get religion—thinking religion was the new birth. I went to the mourners' bench every time when the invitation was given, and I went to the woods and tried to pray day and night, but it all seemed to be adding sin to transgression. My prayers, instead of helping me, seemed to fall at my feet; my sins appeared like mountains, and I began to think my day had passed. I had thought I was a good boy, but then I saw there was nothing good about me; and that there might be hope for all but me. They told me to believe, and I did believe—believed that of all men, I was the most miserable. I did everything they told me to do, and it all failed; and so on Thursday morning I told Mr. Miles they could go on to meeting, that I was not going; and asking why, I told him "there was no use, for there was no hope for me." So I went to pulling fodder, and now I had a few hours of life that I have never been able to find words to describe. I tried to pray, I tried to sing, and I tried to pull fodder, stopping every little while to wipe the tears from my eyes, so as to see the fodder. It seemed to me that my time was short, and that eternal banishment from God was my certain doom. The anguish of my soul I can't describe! To think that I was nothing but a mass of sin, and that God was of purer eyes than to behold evil or look upon iniquity; and demanding righteousness at my hands. I could not help exclaiming, O, wretched man that I am! for I am undone! But about 9 o'clock Jesus, as I believe, spoke these words to me: "Peace, be still!" I turned around to see who it was speaking, but saw no one. My burden was gone, and I stood still a few moments with both hands filled with fodder, think-

ing it would return, not knowing that God had borne my sins away to be remembered no more against me forever. I felt like all nature was praising God; and that I wanted to tell everybody how happy I was. But soon doubts came, but I still felt, even if mistaken—

'Twas a heaven below, my Redeemer to know,
And the angels could do no more
Than fall at his feet, and the story repeat,
And the Saviour of sinners adore.

The thought of joining the church and being baptized soon presented itself, and I went to the Missionaries; for there were no Primitive Baptists in that part of the country, and I had never heard one preach. I lived with them two years, and in 1874 I moved to West Tennessee, and stopped near old Mt. Tabor Primitive Baptist Church. I had heard many hard things said of them; and the first Sunday in April I went to hear Brother Sammons preach, and thought I would hear something new; but when preaching was over and I was asked how I liked the preaching, I said: If that is what they call the Old Baptist doctrine, I was one myself. From that time my troubles increased; I wanted to join them, but felt too unworthy to be among so good a people. So I continued for two years before I ventured to offer myself for membership, in July 1876. I told them what I believed the Lord had done for me, and was received. I soon became troubled again, and I could not tell why; but I felt that there was a place for me to occupy in the church, but could not tell where it was. But whilst these things were on my mind I had two dreams which gave me much trouble. I hope I shall not be thought superstitious, for the dreams came to pass. One night I was conversing with a man—we were standing in front of a double-pen log house, with a hall between—and the man said to me: All these people have gone to a far country, and I said, I will go and see; and I went into the house, and everything was in

its proper place, and nothing missing, as if the people were still living there. I began to search and found in a cradle in the middle of the room, a little babe lying quietly. I didn't touch it, but walked out and never saw the man again. Again, I saw myself about twenty feet above the timber, and thought I should be killed, seeing no way of escape; but before I could tell how I was upon the ground, unhurt. To try to tell all that came to pass would fill one number of the MESSENGER; but God be praised, for I can say that he has not rewarded me according to my works, but according to his tender mercy, and has spared my seemingly unprofitable life to this time. But what I have passed through, and am now passing through, no mortal tongue can tell. But I wanted to tell you where I found the baby: The second time I journeyed along in my trials about nine years. Our meeting days were third Saturday and Sunday; and in April, 1875, a beautiful day, our pastor and dear old father in Israel, Elder M. L. Roy, did not come, and as the time for preaching drew near, a strange feeling came over me; something seemed to say to me that we would never see Elder Roy's face any more; and I wondered what would become of us; for we were few, and there was not a preacher any where in reach of us, that we knew of. When we had waited long enough, the brethren told me if I felt like it to sing and pray, and to talk some if I wished. It seemed that the burden was more than I could bear; but whilst I was looking for a hymn these words were spoken to me, You are the baby. O, my soul! I can but exclaim, Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and everything that moveth therein; for God will save Zion, and build the cities of Judah, that they may dwell there and have it in possession. I did the best I could with my mind burdened as it was. And I have been trying, in my broken way, to talk for the brethren and sisters ever since. But I am so afflicted that I am

made to doubt my calling; but then it is said, It is not only given you in behalf of Christ to believe, but also to suffer for his sake. When it goes well with you remember me. Your brother, as I hope, in tribulation,

Millington, Tenn.

J. M. HICKS.

IT IS RAISED A SPIRITUAL BODY.

What is this? Is it the spirit, or soul of the creature man? Is it the inward, or new man? Is it the buried body of Jesus, the Son of man? No, it is none of these; and no careful reader of Paul, in 1 Corinthians, xv., will say it is. Yet it is something; an entirety or identity, that is raised a spiritual *body*. What is it raised? It is a BODY—a *spiritual body*. This IT is *raised*. From whence, or what place is it raised? Certainly from the same place in which it was sown, or planted. And Paul clearly shows in the chapter that this was the *grave*. No one will deny this. And he plainly shows that it is the *dead body* that is sown. He says: "It is sown a *natural body*." What is? The same thing that is raised a spiritual body. This is too evident to be denied. Let us read: "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 wickedness, *it* is raised in power; it is sown a *natural body*, *IT* is raised a spiritual BODY." This is a most wonderful and glorious *change* of the same it, the real and personal body, which passes from corruption, dishonor, weakness and natural, to incorruption, honor, power and spiritual, while yet *it is the body*. Language could not more clearly establish any fact. Let us hold fast to this, brethren. Paul was inspired, but we are not; therefore his plain teaching cannot deceive us. He boldly asked a king, and all men, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that

GOD *should raise the dead?*” “For with GOD nothing shall be *impossible*,” said Gabriel to Mary.

Now, *whose* body is it that is sown natural and raised spiritual? It cannot be the personal body of the Lord Jesus which was buried and raised up again from the dead, for Paul had before proved that Christ's resurrection was already past, and moreover, the body of Jesus saw no corruption, and therefore it was not sown in corruption. The raised, spiritual body, was sown a *natural* body. Is not this *man's* body? In this connection, Paul speaks of the first man, Adam, as natural and earthy, and also of Christ, the second Man, the last Adam, as spiritual and heavenly. “And as *we* have borne the image of the earthy, *we* shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” Here are two *men*, each having a likeness, form or image; the first earthy, the last heavenly; and *we ourselves* shall be changed from the image of one to the image of the other. This radical change in us makes necessary both our death and our resurrection from death, and certainly our natural body is involved in death. Then this is the “it” or thing that is sown, for it is the corrupt, dishonored, weak and natural body that is sown in the grave, or that dies. “That which thou sowest is not quickened, *except it die*.” This is true of the seed grain which men sow, or plant in the ground, and Paul applies this striking figure to *our resurrection*, showing that our bodies must first die before they can be quickened and changed, or raised in glory. *Paul was no Sadducee*, nor was he a *spiritualist*; but with him it was a faithful and worthy saying, “That Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*.” Now sinners are *people*, men, women and children, having *natural bodies*, which are, by reason of sin, corrupt and mortal bodies, and must be sown in death, and purified of all sin and corruption, before they shall be raised in holiness, incorruption and glory. Surely all this *actual change* must apply to the *body* of the saint, and

not to the spirit, for the spirit does not die; and this change and resurrection is neither past nor present, but *future*. Therefore, speaking of our bodies, Paul says: "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?"

This, then, is the meaning of the text: *It is raised a spiritual body*. For not only does Paul challenge death, but the grave as well, and asks, "Where is *thy* sting? Where is *thy* victory?" This is a bold, confident challenge, and it certainly looks to the grave as having lost its prisoner, as empty and destroyed. And this is what the Lord declared by Hosea he would do, saying: "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."

When God made man he possessed a body, and in this body he dies. So when God sent his Son into the world to save sinners, he was a man, and the son of man, possessing a body. And in the body of his flesh Christ suffered for our sins, and was put to death; but he was also quickened in the same body by the spirit.—1 Pet., iii. Not as an angel, or spirit, did our holy Redeemer die, but as a man, whom God sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. "For since by *man* came death, by *MAN* came also the resurrection of the dead." Of what dead? Not of dead angels, nor yet of dead spirits, surely, but of *dead men*. For whom did death come to by man but to men? and to whom does the resurrection of the dead come by Man but to men who are dead? Can words be plainer, or proof stronger? Then why do men cavil or falter here? When Christ, the Man, died, did he not

have a body? and when this same Man, by whom came the resurrection of the dead, arose and came forth out of the grave, did he not still possess a body, and his own body? None dare deny this. And does not Paul declare that *we* shall be planted in the likeness of Christ's death, and raised in the likeness of his resurrection?—Rom., vi. Then shall not our mortal bodies be quickened by the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and come forth out of the graves as did his body, and in his likeness? Who shall dispute this?

The Lord says: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they rise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of the herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."—Is., xxvi.

"For the hour is coming in which all that are *in the grave* 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."—John, v. So Jesus declares, and his word shall be fulfilled. "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise *him up* at the last day."—John, vi. Who shall prevent this? If the power of God causes the seed grain, which is sown and dies, to be quickened and spring up in a new form, and gives to every seed its own body, shall he not also quicken and raise up us, and give to every one his own body? Paul says, "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*."—Rom., viii. This means, the deliverance of our body from corruption, mortality and death, in the resurrection unto life and immortality. So, then, our body shall be redeemed, and redemption is from sin, death and the grave, as testified by Hosea, Jesus and Paul. "Know ye not that *your bodies* are the members of Christ?" "Therefore, glorify God in your

body and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Cor., vi. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, 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."—Phil., iii. When this is accomplished, then man, whom God created and made with a body, shall himself, in his body, be redeemed and saved, and go into life eternal. "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." The *body* is sown, the *BODY* is raised. The risen body of Christ is the pledge of this blessed assurance!

My dear brethren, let us not be moved away from this sure promise of our blessed God. Patriarchs, prophets and apostles thus believed in God, who quickened the dead, and our fathers obtained a like precious faith with them. Though the body of Isaac had been burned to ashes, as Abraham expected, yet he accounted that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.—Heb., xi. And this faith of Abraham the Lord accounted to him for his righteousness. He had this strong faith in God. He did not stop to question and say, "How are the *dead* raised up?" *He believed in God.* "He that believeth in me, though *he were dead*, yet shall *he live.*" So Jesus declares, and he is the resurrection and the life, and through him God gives us the victory over death and the grave.

In this faith, my dear brethren, I shall soon depart, and you shall also fall asleep in Jesus. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, *with Thy likeness.*" In faith, hope and love.

D. BARTLEY.

New Castle, Ind., 1887.

The disciples of Christ do more than others, because they expect more than others.

Dear Brother Respass:—The dealings of God with men are set forth by a variety of terms, such as wisdom has chosen, but as they treat of spiritual things, and of Him who is a Spirit, they are not understood, except by the spirit's teaching. As it is written, "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." As the things that God hath declared are the things that accompany salvation, so they are revealed in the experience of the subjects of that salvation, and are not known in any other way. If we have the Spirit of Christ, those things that are declared of him are fulfilled in us. If they have been revealed to us in an experience of the truth and blessedness of them, we may venture to speak of them one to another. They are set forth to us by such terms as Jehovah's *purpose*, his *election*, his *grace*, his *foreknowledge*, *predestination* and the like. These declarations of the doings of Him who is wonderful in counsel, if rightly understood, would exalt and glorify him. All his works praise him, and they are all calculated to show forth the divine attributes. Everything that God doeth is like himself. His *purpose* is immutable, unchangeable. Once only in the scriptures do we find the word qualified. His *eternal purpose*—the purpose which he purposed in himself and of himself—must be like himself, unchangeably the same forever. Everything else is *according* to his purpose. So we read: "Elect *according* to the foreknowledge of God the Father." It is well for us to notice as we go along that all these various declarations of the methods of God's grace are in perfect accord with each other, and that there is no clashing between them. We cannot reject one without having as good reason to reject all the others. Foreknowledge is a term designed to contrast the perfect knowledge of God with the ignorance and shortsightedness of mortals. We can have no knowledge of events until they take place; God has perfect knowledge all the time. I heard of a discussion

once between two men, one of them disputing strongly the *foreknowledge* of God. A man who is now in the United States Senate was standing near, and was called up to decide between the disputants. After listening a moment to the objector he accosted him about this way: "Why, my dear man, you don't know what you are talking about! As if there was anything in existence, or possible, that the Creator of all things did not know. To convey to us the idea intended, it is necessary to use the term *foreknowledge*, but with God it is neither foreknowledge nor afterknowledge, for everything is present, and now, with Him." Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Pre means before; so like foreknowing, this word asserts fore designing or destinating, but there was no beginning time to this knowledge, or these gracious designs. There was no time when they were not known, or when they were not designed. The whole work of redemption was ever present with God. The certain destiny of all his designs of love and mercy are the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever. It would be difficult to find any word in our language that would give a needed or proper qualification to the predestination of God. Yet men attempt to qualify it, I presume to strengthen it. I read not long ago, from the pen of some one, the phrase "Eternal, unconditional, absolute, universal predestination of all things that come to pass." To the writer that would write such a phrase, the term itself means nothing; and he would fain make it mean nothing to others. He robs it of the force that the Deity gives it by propping it with a string of adjectives.

Predestination *accords* with the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. His purpose is declared to be an eternal purpose centering and embodied in Christ Jesus our Lord. In accord with this purpose he *calls* his people. "Called with an

holy calling, according to his own purpose and grace, given them in Christ Jesus before the world began." The purpose and the calling are each qualified with one qualifying term. The purpose is *eternal*, the call is *holy* and *heavenly*. Grace is another term according to which sinners are saved, and which is also in perfect accord with the purpose which God purposed in and with himself. Calling is one of the terms which has also suffered from abundant qualifications. Sometimes we add to it thus: Called and *qualified*; as when God called a man to a position, or to an official station, he had yet to qualify him for the place. Jehovah's calls are like himself; he speaks and it is done; the work is all accomplished. So he called James, and John, and Matthew, and others to be disciples and apostles. He also called Saul to be an apostle, and he was an apostle. He called the brethren at Rome to be saints, and they were saints. If we knew the measure of the gifts and calling of God, we would not think of attempting to add thereto by the use of various adjectives, as *effectual* calling, *irresistible* calling, etc. So we sometimes meet with *free grace*, *sovereign* grace, *unmerited* grace, *efficacious* grace, etc.; sometimes all these strung together. I am not objecting to the sentiment and significance of all these qualifying terms, nor to the design of those who use them, but am trying to get at that foundation of life and grace from whence the terms themselves spring, and see the fulness and perfection that is in them, and the utter futility of most of the qualifying adjectives to magnify them. We are all well aware of the cause that has brought about a resort to efforts of this class to maintain the truth and force of the terms in which the subject of salvation is set forth. Men who neither know the Scriptures nor the power of God, are continually endeavoring to diminish the force and meaning of these terms. In so doing they detract from the glory of God's salvation, and from the honor and glory of his name.

It may be doubted, however, whether those who have no experimental knowledge of the work of the Spirit of God in salvation, will understand such terms as grace, mercy, election, calling, justification, etc., with all the qualifying adjectives that can be attached to them. We, as creatures of time, and subject to the slow processes by which any reformation or advancement is effected, are not very ready to comprehend the working of Him who is not only a Spirit, but *the spirit of the work* to be accomplished. There is a time when we come to know the grace of God, but that grace was just the same before we knew it. With us salvation is as a prearrangement, because everything was provided before it came to us; but we cannot say there was a time when God had purposed to be gracious, when it had not been his purpose before. I have not mentioned all the Scripture's terms that accompany the work of redemption, but have alluded to those that are most frequently referred to. The new birth, or birth of the spirit, is another form of expressing the same work. When we say these all work in harmony and are in accord with each other, we do not say the whole truth. They are in reality all the same, though conveyed to us by various forms of illustration. They are presented as in succession; foreknowledge and then predestination, then calling; and "whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified." To us, things come in this way in the order of time and events. So we have use for such terms as foreknowledge and predestination. The words that he spake, they are spirit and they are life. He gives unto his people his own Holy Spirit; he gives unto them eternal life. All the varied forms of expression in which the work is set forth are embodied in this. They all result; with God it is at once. He has spoken; it is done; conformity to the image of his Son will result. "If the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead *dwells in*

us," what then? Whatever there ever was in the purpose, and counsel, and predestination of Jehovah, is still there, and it is embodied in his Spirit developing in us. Election is not merely a purpose to save, but it is the salvation. The man whom he chooses is caused to approach unto him. Lo, "He hath saved us," and the grace of that salvation is given in him. I know no difference among all the terms used. The work of God in whatever way it is expressed, will meet with objections in the minds of fallen men. The objection is not to the words or terms used, but to the work itself.

Everything emanating from God is of himself and like himself, and is sovereign and eternal because he is so. If we measure the Supreme Being by ourselves, or his works by the works of men, we shall greatly err. If God is ours, then all is ours; and he that gives us himself, is more than all these to us. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. There is no need of additional light from the sun or moon, where God shines, and where the Lamb is the source of light. When we have used all these expressions by which God declares his wondrous working to men, we still must say, Lo, these are but parts of his ways, and yet how little a portion they all amount to. I have been meaning to say that they are all strong enough as they are, and if rightly understood, we would hardly think of attempting to give them any additional force. They are all embraced in the sinner's salvation, and yet each one of them comprehends that salvation in and of itself.

I submit these reflections to you and the brethren. I have not had in mind the writings or sentiments of any one else. If we can get at the truth there is comfort and consolation in it. The desire to be like him is embraced in the spirit already given. In sorrow and trial,

State Road, Del.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, WM. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

REPLY TO ELDER I. N. VANMETER.

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire.”—1 Cor., iii, 13.

“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man, therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”—2 Tim., ii, 20, 21.

Some months ago Elder Vanmeter, of Illinois, requested to hear from us, through the MESSENGER, on the above texts; and after calling attention to these texts, our beloved brother asks: “Are these similar cases?” To which we reply that in some respects they are, and in others they are not.

The church of our Lord Jesus is frequently compared to a building, and in the immediate connection of this text in 1 Cor., iii., 13, the church at Corinth, in its visibly organized form, is identified by the apostle as “God’s Building.” And according to the grace of God given Paul as an apostle and minister of Jesus, he had in his ministerial and apostolic capacity, laid the foundation on which the church is built, and declared that “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Several hundred years before this the Lord declared, “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment will I also lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.”—Isa., xxviii.,

16. In preaching the gospel of the Son of God, all its fullness is in the Lord Jesus Christ, not only with regard to the fullness of the Godhead, but also the fullness of grace and truth in every point necessary for the eternal salvation of all for whom Christ died, and for whom he made an atonement for sin. He is, therefore, the Foundation, and only sure foundation of salvation that can be laid or presented in preaching. He is the foundation of the believer's faith and hope, of his joy and comfort. He is the foundation of every point of doctrine and order in the church, and of every gift and grace by which the children of God are edified, built up and established in the faith. He is the Foundation of all gospel love, obedience and fellowship among the Lord's people. It is only as built upon Him, doctrinally and practically, that any organization of professed believers can be regarded as "God's Building," or as God's Household. Everything built upon this sure foundation which God has laid in Zion, and which has been laid in the preaching and writing of Paul, must be of the same precious character and nature of the foundation itself. Otherwise it will not stand the day of trial, when tested by fire.

Gold, silver and precious stones are comparable to sound doctrine and order of the gospel, and will stand the fiery test of God's word, which is a consuming fire to burn up the wood, hay and stubble of man's work, or any spurious doctrines or practices which may be introduced.

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, some to honor and some to dishonor." The vessels of gold and silver seem here to represent such members in the church of Christ as are sound in the faith and order of the gospel. They are vessels unto honor—they honor their Christian profession by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. They purge themselves

(3)

from such as walk disorderly. "We command you, brethren," says the apostle, "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from any *brother* that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition he received of us."—2 Thess., iii., 6. In 2 Cor., ii., 19, Paul says to the church: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." However painful it may be to the vessels unto honor in the church of God for heretical doctrines and disorderly practices to develop in the church, they must be withstood. These spurious things furnish occasion for those who are approved to be made manifest as vessels unto honor by purging themselves from them. This is done by faithfully adhering to sound doctrine, and by executing wholesome discipline in the church. No church, or member of a church of Christ, should be unequally yoked with unbelievers, nor should they have any fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but should rather reprove them and purge themselves from them, so as to be and remain "vessels unto honor, meet for the master's use, and prepared unto *every* good work." No man in the church of Christ is prepared unto every good work, and fit for the Master's use, so long as he himself is defiled with disorder. "When thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought 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."

The text in Corinthians seems to refer chiefly to doctrine and order, whether sound as gold, silver and precious stones, or corrupt as wood, hay and stubble; while the one in 2d Timothy, to which Elder Vanmeter calls attention, refers more particularly to the members of the church, whether vessels of gold and of silver, or of wood and of earth, unto honor or dishonor, orderly

or disorderly. In a great house like the church in her present militant state, we may expect some vessels of wood and of earth to be occasionally manifested as vessels unto dishonor, such as Hymeneus and Philetus, who, concerning the truth, greatly erred by preaching that the resurrection is past, and thereby overthrew the faith of some in the resurrection—life and doctrine of the gospel. “But, nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his. But let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.” Neither spurious members nor spurious works can deceive our God, nor invalidate the Foundation of the Christian’s hope.—M.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

A church of Primitive Baptist faith and order was constituted in the city of Montgomery April 17th, 1887, by Elders W. M. Mitchell, J. S. Baxley and W. Lively, to be known by the name of Baptist Rest. At present there are only six members, one of whom is Elder W. Lively, who resides in the city, and was unanimously chosen as pastor of said church; W. A. Cook, Deacon, and W. P. Burks for Church Clerk.—M.

WE say to new subscribers who failed to receive the May MESSENGER, that it was because they were exhausted, leaving perhaps fifty or more new subscribers unsupplied. Our list is increasing beyond our expectation for this season of the year.

In May MESSENGER, page 234, and fifth line from bottom, “hero of worship,” should be “more or less of hero worship.”

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

COLMESNEL, TEXAS, March 13, 1887.—*Dear Brother Mitchell:*—By request of Brother E. T. Holligan, I write you by way of explanation on his letter in MESSENGER of March, 1887, page 132. He also mailed your letter to me at same time, so that I might understand where the trouble of understanding his letter was. There are some points on which I have not heard him speak pointedly, but I think I understand him perfectly, though in his letter he failed to make the matter as clear as he might have done.

The church referred to on first page of his published letter in the MESSENGER, and also in your letter to him, to which his first wife belonged, and would not fellowship him, or receive him as a member, was undoubtedly a Missionary Baptist church, for you will see he states in his letter that at the time under consideration “a protracted meeting was going on.” Primitive Baptists have no protracted meetings, except Associations and Union Meetings, here, which meetings continue three days and no more, besides at this time he expresses himself as being “without hope.” Neither the church where his first wife belonged nor the one where he first joined were Primitive Baptist churches, if I understand correctly; for I cannot think that such membership would be accepted by Primitive Baptists anywhere. And as touching the cause of his separation and divorce from his first wife, he stayed a night with me a short time back, and was speaking of putting his letter in some one of our churches, and I asked him if the cause of his putting away his wife and divorce was that mentioned by Christ in Matthew v., 32, and also xix., 9? He said it was for that cause, and I have no doubt of its truth.

Now my dear brother, I know that some doubt the legality, according to the law of Christ, of divorced persons marrying again, and so do I, except in such case as mentioned in Matthew, v., 32. [We presume Elder Neal here means that the innocent party would not be criminal or disorderly to marry again. In this we agree with him.—M.] It is true some other texts seem to allow no justifiable cause, but I cannot believe that our

dear Redeemer ever spoke one word or did one act to make null the counsel of God, for he is "King of kings and Lord of lords." In conclusion, I will say that Brother Holligan seems to be a truly humble Christian, whose conversation and walk, as far as I know, is after a godly sort.

With the hope that this may relieve the mind of Brother Holligan, and also yourself and other brethren, of the suspense occasioned by a lack of a more full statement in his published letter, I will close by submitting the same to your mature judgment. And if this feeble effort can be the means of a more clear and satisfactory understanding, it will be time and labor well spent.

Yours, in Christian love,

T. M. NEAL.

REMARKS.—Our object in requesting of our dear Brother Holligan a more definite statement, was not because of doubts as to the competency of the church to judge of gospel order in the reception of members, but to prevent an erroneous impression going abroad as to what Primitive Baptists consider gospel order in these divorce cases. Doubts occasioned by Brother Holligan's published letter will now be removed from the minds of brethren who were troubled about it.—M.

SAULSBURY, TENN., 20th March 1887.—*Dear Brother:* I see in the April MESSENGER that 600 Baptists have joined the Campbellites in North Mississippi. I am a member of one of our churches in North Mississippi, and am well acquainted with several other churches, and if there has been one member left us and joined the Campbellites I am not aware of it. I suppose there have been a few who were excluded for disorder who have joined the Campbellites, especially Elder John B. Hudston, who came up in this section preaching for the Campbellites. I hope the Baptists are sounder than that in North Mississippi. Old Brother John Rowe knows something about the Baptists here, and tell him that they are as sound now as they were when he was with them. And may the good Lord continue his goodness to the children of men. Pray for me, dear brother, for I do feel the need of the prayers of the saints. Your brother, I hope,

WM. E. McALISTER.

GORDON, PALO PINTO CO., TEX., March 1, 1887.—*Editors Gospel Messenger*:—Complying with the request of many brethren, I will say we are in a bad condition in the way of food and raiment, and for something to make a crop on; and without help from some source, I can't see how the people here can make a crop, that is, a large portion of them. I understand there has been an appropriation of one hundred thousand dollars for our people of twenty counties, and that would not be more than three dollars to the family. It is now about twenty months since we had a rain, to do any good, until a few days since we had a very good rain. Brethren, I will say to you that I have received up to date between two and three hundred dollars, and have distributed it the very best I could to the destitute. It was thankfully received, for a good many of them shed tears when I gave it to them and told them where it came from. Your brother, I hope, in love,

R. R. RESPESS.

We see it stated in the papers that 27,750 families are made paupers by the Texas drought.—R.

DAWSON, GA., April 1, 1887.—*Dear Brethren*:—I have to write you the sad news of the death of my dear father, Elder James Everitt. He was taken down last Sunday with a cough he has had forty years or more, and on last Wednesday, about noon, he died, at his home in Stewart county, Ga., and was laid away at Popular Spring Church, Webster county, Ga., to await the resurrection. Pray for us. Please say in the MESSENGER that Elder Blackshear, of Cuthbert, Ga., has recovered from his shock, and is able to travel and preach again. Yours to serve.

W. T. EVERITT.

SEXTON, IND., March 31, 1887.—*Elder J. R. Respass, Dear Brother*:—Many of the brethren and sisters, during my visit to Georgia and Alabama, requested that on my return home I should let them hear from me through THE GOSPEL MESSENGER. While there I visited and tried to preach at the following places: First in Georgia, at Smyrna, then at Trinity, Emmaus, Good Hope, Ebenezer, Mt. Carmel, Providence, Salem, Mt. Paran, Shiloh, Sardis, Pleasant Hill, Beaver Creek, Fel-

lowship, Union, Butler, Bethel, Shiloh, then Saturday and Sunday at Mt. Moriah, the last appointment in Georgia. Then in Alabama at Browneville, Mt. Gilead, Hepzibah, Carmack's School House, Macedonia, Emmaus, Mt. Hickory two days, then at Roanoke, Zion's Rest, Wehadka, Rock Mills, Salem, and at night at Brother John S. Stephens', then at Mt. Pisgah, La-Fayette, at W. E. McClendon's at night, and last at Mt. Olive at their regular meeting on Saturday and Sunday. And on Monday, March 28th, started home, where I arrived next day at noon, in good health, and found all well at home, after having been gone nearly six weeks, and tried to preach thirty-eight times. And I now feel bound under renewed obligations to the God of all grace who preserved my family during my long absence and brought me safely through all my journey to meet them again in good health, feeling none the worse after all the fatigue of my journey; and I shall ever look back with the most pleasant recollections of that kindest liberality and Christian love and fellowship that met me every where I went, and shall ever cherish in memory the sweet communion I enjoyed with my kindred in Christ, as one of the happiest events of my life. And when it goes well with you, remember a poor old sinner who hopes to be saved by grace.

HARVEY WRIGHT.

GREENFIELD, IND., April 17, 1887.—*Elder J. R. Respass, Dear Brother:*—After some delay, for want of time, I will now try, in answer to many requests, to write a short letter to the readers of the MESSENGER, addressed especially to the many kind brethren and sisters that we met in our recent tour through Georgia and Alabama. I will not try to give a narrative of our trip, for that would require too much space, and only be of local interest. Suffice it to say, Elder H. Wright and myself left our native State on the 17th day of February, reached our field of labor the next day, filled all the appointments that were published for us in the MESSENGER, except two. We also filled several other appointments, continuing up to and including the fourth Saturday and Sunday in March. The tour was undertaken on my part with a strong impression to go, and at the same time a deep sense of weakness and unworthiness. But I felt that the Lord was with me, and with few exceptions I enjoyed liberty in speaking. It was a season of rejoicing with me. We were kindly received and hospitably entertained every where we went. We found the brethren with one mind contending for salvation by grace, discarding all means and instruments in the work of regeneration, together with all the high-

wrought theories of men, with which the Baptists in some other sections are troubled. With the exception of a local disturbance concerning a point of order, all were in peace and tranquility. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." With the brethren of the South there seems to be a quiet resting in the simplicity of the truth. Paul says, in 1 Cor., xii., 12, 13: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been made to drink into one spirit." The apostle here compares the church in its spirituality to a literal body, and calls it Christ. To this the prophet agrees, for he says: "This is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness."—Jer., xxxiii., 16. Christ is the life of his body—the church—and dwells in every member of the body; and although the members differ widely in their office and gifts, they work in complete harmony when each member is performing its respective function. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise, for "we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body." That one Spirit teaches all the subjects of grace the same glorious truths, and as "God has set the members in the body as it has pleased him," we believe that he will put it into their hearts to do the things that he hath appointed that they should do, by working in them both to will and to do. How glorious it is to drink into the one Spirit, and rejoice together in the same precious gospel.

We reached home on the 29th day of March, and found all well, but in a few days my son was taken with a light form of measles that are raging here now, from which he soon recovered. My wife has suffered from a severe cold in her head and lungs ever since my return.

May the Lord grant us all such blessings as will be for our good and his glory, and enable us to bear chastening and affliction with patience.

Your brother in the fellowship of the gospel,

W. N. THARP.

OBITUARIES.

MRS. J. H. BRIM.

Departed this life on the 16th day of March, at Cross Roads, Ga., Mrs. NARCISSA BRIM, wife of Mr. J. H. Brim, in the thirty-fifth year of her age. Mrs. Brim was born in Houston county, Ga. She was the daughter of Mr. Ben King, one of the most respected citizens of Terrell county. She has left several brothers and sisters, a devoted and affectionate husband, and five little boys to mourn their irreparable loss. Her aged father survives her, and keenly he felt the loss of this, the first child of whom death has deprived him. It is but seldom we are called upon to chronicle the death of one whose loss in the family, the church and the community will be so sensibly realized, or whose daily examples in all the relations of life were so faultless and commendable. Cultivated in mind,

gentle in spirit, attractive in her manners, benevolent in her habits and uniform in her deportment, she possessed a combination of qualities that fitted her to adorn society and secure for her the highest esteem of all who knew her. Although leading such an exemplary life, she did not unite herself with the church until last year, as her conscientious scruples were such that she feared she would not adorn the religion of Jesus Christ. During the short while she was a member of the church, however, she was ardently attached to its interests, and was a pious and consistent member of its communions. Although her light was permitted to shine for so brief a period, yet when that light went out, Union Church felt the darkness; for to see her was to behold the upright, and she could be truly called a child of the King. The ties that bound her to earth were sacred and strong. The sacred duties of wife and mother were such as no doubt tempted her a longer stay, but her seat in heaven was prepared, her crown of glory woven, her harp tuned by kindred spirits awaited her touch, and when the summons came her ransomed spirit took its flight to where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. God, who tempers the winds to the shorn lamb, comfort and console her bereaved and desolate family, and may they in heaven be a united family through the ceaseless ages of eternity. A FRIEND.

ROY RHODES.

Not dead, but sleeping.

On the 20th of November, 1886, the four-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Rhodes died. Little Roy was loved so much! He loved so dearly his Uncle John and his grandmother, and grieved so much to see him before he died. He died of a rising in his head. It grieves me to know that I shall never see my dear little boy again. My eyes fill with tears. Home does not look like home, because little Roy is not here. Your friend,

Cany, Ark.

JOHN L. DANIEL.

ANNA B. THARP AND MARY J. THARP.

ANNA, daughter of W. and Mary Tharp, was born 14th November, 1877, and died 24th November, 1882. She fell asleep in Jesus after nine days' suffering with typhoid fever. Thus God saw fit to take the first born child of these dear parents to himself. To the parents I would say, mourn not for Anna, for she will die no more.

MARY J. THARP, their infant child, was born 16th January, 1882, and died 17th February, 1883. On the night of the 17th February, she was at the house of one of her kindred, and sat up till about ten o'clock, and on retiring she woke up her babe, and it played about over her. But she fell asleep and dreamed a frightful dream, and awoke filled with a great dread. She felt for her babe, but could not find it on the bed. It had fallen off the bed and was fastened between the wall of the house and the bedstead, the end of a board having caught under its throat, and the child was dead. All efforts to restore it were futile. But its mission on earth was ended, and it was gathered ripened for heaven. A word to the parents: Your children are free from sin and death, and have gained the blessed abode, and are with the Lord. Your unworthy brother in Christ,

Marysville, Ga.

JAMES A. TOWNSEND.

RHODA SHOFNER.

The subject of this notice was the daughter of Wm. Boone, late of Flat Creek, Bedford county, Tenn., and was born May 19, 1828; was united in marriage to Wm. J. Shofner, January 8, 1846. She was the mother of nine children, two of whom preceded her to the Glory Land. She professed a hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Flat Creek about twenty-eight or twenty-nine years ago, and lived a consistent and beloved member until death released her from all her earthly ties and sufferings. She died quietly and peacefully, yea, triumphantly, January 9, 1887, aged fifty-eight years, seven months and twenty days, leaving her devoted husband, seven children, together with a large train of connection and numerous friends, to mourn her absence; but they should not mourn as those who have no hope. In the death of sister Shofner the church of which she was a beloved member, has lost another one of her most worthy members, which makes three in the past few months. O, dear brethren, who will be the next one of our little band to be called home? O, let us be on the watch, and keep our lamps trimmed and burning. "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." Sister Shofner had been a great sufferer here for many years, which she bore nobly, in a Christian-like spirit, striving to do her duty to her husband and dear children, whom she loved dearly, and was ever ready to do them valuable service, either with her hands or by her wise counsel. Yes, children, you will doubtless think of many of your mother's kind words of counsel, now that she is gone, which at the time you thought but little of, and thus realize, "Though dead, she yet speaketh." "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, they cease from their own labors, and their works do follow them."

J. E. FROST.

J. J. SHEPHERD.

Died, at his residence in Coryell county, Texas, J. J. SHEPHERD, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, after an illness of one month; bearing his affliction with much fortitude. He was born in Newton county, Ga., and resided in Henry, Stewart and Sumpter counties, and was married to Fanny M. Wiggins, daughter of Whittendon and Nancy Wiggins, October 7, 1867. They came to Texas in 1871, stopping first in Panola county, thence to the city of Dallas, thence to McLennan county, thence to Bell, and from here to Coryell county, where he purchased land and settled near Salem Church, where Sister Shepherd's membership is. Justice to his memory requires us to state that his many removals in Texas were due to the desire to find a home for his companion among Baptists. He was a model man, truthful and honest in his dealings, a citizen highly esteemed, a neighbor having the respect of all whom he met, a husband devoted to his companion, a Baptist in principle after the apostolic order. He had for many years entertained a hope in Christ, but a sense of his unworthiness kept him from walking in obedience to the command of Jesus. His walk and conversation proved him to be a renewed man. He left no children, therefore the sister is indeed bereaved, lonely, sad, yet among

friends ready to extend sympathy and needed assistance; but all this cannot fill the aching void, or heal the wound that his absence inflicts, and which she so keenly realizes. God alone can comfort the distressed, bind up the broken heart, and pour in the wine of comfort, and make himself felt in the soul. May she realize the presence of God in her heart, strengthening her for the battle of life to come.

Mr. Shepherd was attended by a skillful physician, and had all needed attention by kind neighbors, but he now sleeps to await the resurrection of the just and the unjust. May we all realize fully the language of the poet in the following lines:

That awful day will surely come—
The appointed hour makes haste—
When I must stand before my Judge,
And pass the solemn test.

Oglesby, Texas, 1887.

J. W. NORTON.

MRS. MARY BRAGG.

Died, at her home in Bryan county, Georgia, on the afternoon of October 16, 1886, MRS. MARY BRAGG, widow of Benjamin Bragg, in the sixty-third year of her age. Mrs. Bragg had been in failing health for some time, and the news of the death of her aged and beloved mother produced a shock from which she died in less than twenty-four hours. They are united again, mother and daughter, in that better land. In the demise of Mrs. Bragg, not only her own sorrowing family, but the entire community in which she lived, has sustained an irreparable loss. She was a most faithful and earnest follower of her Divine Master; patient, meek, forbearing, her character rested upon a broad foundation of Christian charity. She was a woman of large sympathies, and remarkable energy, and though of a meek and retiring disposition, was ever found at the post of duty ready to comfort and bless in times of trouble and afflictions. Often into sad and darkened homes she went with such unobtrusive gentleness that her visits were like those of a ministering angel. Mrs. Bragg fulfilled with faithful love every relation of life, as daughter, sister, wife, mother and friend; but that which sat upon her brow as a crown of divine radiance, lending beauty and benignity to her countenance, was the title of "mother," and member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She was truly a good mother. It was this peculiar fitness for the sacred office of *mother*, which made her so beloved by all who knew her. "She opened her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue was the law of kindness." During the long years of her widowhood she looked for strength and protection to Him who is ever ready to bless all who call upon Him in truth. By casting her own burden upon the Lord, she was able to comfort others. Of no one could it be more truly said that through a long and active Christian life, "*She hath done what she could.*" Her work on earth is ended; she has gone to reap her reward in the mansions of the blest, and to join many of her loved ones gone before. This tribute to her memory is offered by one who loved her.

J. E. H.

MRS. HANNAH SWARTOUT.

Died, at this place on the morning of the 20th of April, our afflicted sister, MRS. HANNAH SWARTOUT. She was born in Ulster county, N. Y., and there spent the greater part of her life. She came to Michigan a few years ago and united with our little church by baptism and experience. She was a subscriber for the MESSENGER while she could read it, and carefully preserved each one as though wishing to keep them for some one when she was gone. Her life was one of sadness and disappointment; her death and sufferings of the most painful kind; being long afflicted with a sort of cancerous tumor. Those whose dear ones pass away without apparent suffering cannot know what it is to see them suffer so. She had every care in her long sickness, and leaves a husband, two daughters and many friends to remember her. Elder Swartout spoke very suitably at her funeral from the words, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

MRS. KATE SWARTOUT.

Kelley's Corners, Mich.

MRS. MARY ANN JACKSON.

MRS. MARY ANN JACKSON was born August 17th, 1817, and departed this life February 28th, 1887, making her sixty-nine years, six months and eleven days of age. She was married July 18th, 1833, to Wm. B. Jackson, of Upson county, who is still living. In early life she became concerned about her soul's salvation, and on the 14th of December, 1850, was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church of Good Hope, Upson county, Ga., being baptized by Elder Creed Caldwell. She remained firm in the faith and practice of the church even unto death, which was a peaceful falling asleep in Jesus, to await his summons to arise in the resurrection. She was faithful to her vows, always attending her meetings, unless prevented by sickness, and her presence was always a comfort to the brethren and sisters, showing in her manner that she had come to the house of the Lord to worship her blessed Saviour. She was always a loving and dutiful wife and devoted mother; her care seemed to be for her husband and children; kind and entertaining to her friends, and especially to the brethren and sisters. I would say to the husband and children that are still waiting for the summons that will sooner or later come for us all, not to grieve as those that have no hope. Children, try to imitate the example of mother. May the Lord prepare us all to meet in that better land, on the shining shore of eternal deliverance, where we will ever be with the Lord. The funeral services were conducted by Elder John Dickey, where a large concourse of neighbors and friends had gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to her remains; where the united resolution of the whole assembly might have been that the voice which used to sing the praise of God, and gave words of comfort to the distressed, is now forever hushed in death; that hand which was ever stretched forth to relieve the distressed and nurse the sick, is now stilled in the grave. Our society has lost one of its brightest ornaments, and the church a devoted member. But, sister, sleep in peace till we meet where parting is no more.

W. W. CHILDS.

MRS. PHEBE DENNY.

Died, in Kansas City, Mo., far from home, January 6, 1887, Mrs. PHEBE H. DENNY, aged about eighty-six years. Sister Denny's maiden name was ROSS, and she was born in the State of New Jersey in 1801, and at the age of ten, she, with her parents, moved to the State of Ohio, and on October 20th, 1816, she was united in marriage with Joseph C. Denny. They removed to Illinois and located in Morgan county in 1832. Here, on the second Sunday in March, 1835, she was baptized by Elder John Ray and united with the regular, or Primitive Baptists, and for about fifty-two years remained a faithful, earnest and unswerving member till death removed her from a world of sin and sorrow. I knew her for many years as one of the true mothers in Israel, unshaken in the faith of the gospel, and well versed in the Scriptures, and dearly beloved by her brethren. Since the death of her husband, in 1871, she has lived among her children, but in triumph she was ready to go and meet her Redeemer. She left eight children, the youngest of whom has since died. A brief service to her memory was held on last Sunday at Union Church, Morgan county, Ill., in the presence of a large audience, where she belonged for many years.

Find one dollar for ten copies containing this notice. Mail them to Elvira F. Stout, Ashland, Cass county, Ill.

Your brother.

I. N. VANMETER.

Macomb, Ill., April 6, 1887.

DANIEL E. WADE

Was born April 27th, 1847, being the youngest son of James and Nancy Wade, both of whom are dead. Deceased was married to Miss Mary E. Renfroe, (daughter of J. G. and Mary Renfroe, of whom the latter still survives,) on the 26th of May, 1872, and died December 9th, 1886. He was a good citizen and high-toned gentleman, and much respected by his acquaintances. He was a devoted husband, a kind father and obliging neighbor, and is greatly missed by many friends with whom he immediately associated, and his death is a heavy stroke to his wife and two surviving children. He had never made a public profession of faith and hope in the Lord, but gave quite satisfactory evidences that he was a child of God, saying on his death bed that he was prepared and willing to die. Many hearts abound with sympathy for the grief-stricken widow and fatherless children.

M. A. PAULK

Died November 9th, 1886. She was born in 1820, and married at the age of fourteen to E. Paulk. She was baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists in her sixteenth year, and lived a devoted Christian until death. She leaves a husband and several children, some of the children are members of the Primitive Baptist. We have a hope that Sister Paulk is now sleeping in Jesus and will remain thus until the morning of the resurrection, when she will arise in immortality and be made like Jesus. May the Lord bless the family.

Yours in hope,

LEE HANCKS.

MRS. FRANCES E. PEARSON.

Our departed sister, FRANCES E. PEARSON, died of pneumonia, at the home of her husband, Jeremiah H. Pearson, in Monroe county, Ga., January 5th, 1887, in the thirty-eighth year of her age, after sixteen days acute suffering, which she bore with unusual patience, fortitude and Christian resignation. She has left a heart-stricken companion, an octogenarian mother, a married daughter, several grandchildren, some of whom are orphans of a deceased son, together with numerous other relatives and friends, to mourn the irreparable loss of a lovely loved one; but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for she has left us good reason to hope that though she is gone from us, she sleeps in Jesus

Till the last trumpet's joyful sound
Will wake the nations under ground,
And bid her sleeping dust arise
And meet her Saviour in the skies.

On Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1883, I had the pleasure of hearing her relate her Christian experience, in which she gave bright evidence, (the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit,) that she had experienced a change from nature to grace, and a manifestation of the gracious and redeeming love of him who manifests himself to none but his own, upon which relation she was received into the fellowship of Sharon Church, Monroe county, Ga., and baptized together with her husband, by Elder Wilde C. Cleveland, since which time her pious walk and Godly conversation have gone to manifest the fact that her trust was in the living God. And while her only hope of eternal salvation was in the free and redeeming grace and dying love of the Saviour, her every day deportment has shown her to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for herself a good foundation against the time to come, that she might lay hold on eternal life. I have no disposition to unduly panegyryze the dead: suffice it to say that as a church member, Fannie was prompt and punctual; as a citizen, she was quiet and peaceable; as a neighbor, she was kind and beneficent; as a friend, she was candid and unostentatious; as a mother, she was devoted and affectionate; as a wife, she was true and faithful; and as the bosom companion of her husband, she was possessed of that true love which comes alone from God, and which is therefore immortal, which can make the two feel as one flesh, and which exemplifies the Scriptural figure comparing the relation of husband and wife to that of Christ and his church; and hence, the greater intensity of that painful feeling of separation, and depressing sense of lonely desolation, which, without God's grace to help, the bereaved husband could no more bear than he could the tearing of his right arm from his body. But with God's grace to help, by the inspiration of a confident hope of the resurrection of the body, and a happy reunion in a state of immortal existence, free from all the depravity and imperfection of human nature, and from all the passions, wants and desires of the flesh; a state purely spiritual and immaterial, yet, retaining a knowledge of identity, and memory of the past; then he may be enabled to say, like one of old, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."—Psalm xlii, 5.

Upon County, Ga., April 5, 1887.

JOEL MATHEWS.

WILLIAM H. CHESER,

Son of Tenerson N. and Eliza F. Cheser, was born November 16th, 1854, and departed this life March 8th, 1887, aged thirty-two years, three months and eight days. Although he had made no public profession of faith in Christ, yet we mourn not as those who have no hope, for he left sufficient evidence behind that he had passed from death unto life. May we be resigned to the will of the Lord, who can but do right.

TENERSON N. CHESER.

MISS SARAH MARTHA DAVIS,

Youngest daughter of Green W. and Ann Davis, died November 13, 1886, aged twenty-one years, ten months and thirteen days. At seven years of age her right side was paralyzed, but she soon regained the use of her limbs, and had light attacks—occasionally a heavy one—and for three years they ceased, so that we felt safe, by the advice of our physician, to put her into school. But in a few months we were suddenly alarmed by their return; and the attacks continued at intervals until her death. Her mother having died in May previous, caused her much trouble in mind. She was talking with her mother at different times (in her sleep) as though she was present, pleading with her not to be in a hurry to leave, and finding she would leave, Sallie said, "Ma, I will meet you." My affections had now clustered around this affectionate daughter; but, alas! the messenger of death again knocks at my door for admittance, whom I have no power to resist, saying: Child, come home; tearing her, as it were, from my bosom, bearing her away in his cold and icy embrace to the grave, before the tears had ceased to gather in my eyes. She was taken down by one of these spells, as we called them, 10th November last, and was not able to talk, or have use of herself any more; living in this unconscious state three days and nights. She had for some time been much interested about her future state; professed a hope in Jesus, wished to join the church and be baptized, and the nature of her case was such that I was at a loss to know what to do, until this irresistible arbiter decided the case for us. (Here, brethren, permit me to say I feel that I did wrong in not taking her before the church and letting her have the comfort and consolation of having her name enrolled with the believers in Jesus Christ. I feel that I was distrusting God, and trusting in an arm of flesh, for which I hope to be forgiven. My advice to all others in such case is to take it to the church, trusting in Him who has power in heaven and on earth.) On retiring to her room at night, she never failed to say "good night, ma," "good night, pa," and when ma was no more, "good night, pa." The only one out of ten that ever did so—precious daughter, indeed—and when lain down would fold her little hands and pray God to have mercy on her and save her in heaven. She loved to hear THE GOSPEL MESSENGER read, taking great interest in the same. When a new number would come to hand, would seem to be elated with joy, having me to read the MESSENGER many times when I did not feel like doing so. [Here again let me say there are thousands in the widespread bounds of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER who are not able, from different causes, to go to

church to hear the preached word, who can read and hear it read around their own firesides, and be comforted and established in the faith. I find it is gaining strength, even by those who have been hitherto opposed to it. May God give it speed.] Little Sallie was very fond of singing; often would have me to sing for her. Her favorite songs were, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," and "Jerusalem, my happy home, oh! how I long for thee." But Sallie is gone—she has fallen asleep—

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

By request, next morning Elder D. G. McCowen spoke on the occasion from St. John, xv., 3, to a large and attentive congregation, after which deceased was conveyed to the family grave-yard, and laid in the silent grave.

"A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

Macon, Ga., Nov. 18, 1886.

FATHER.

ADDRESS TO MY CHILDREN.

Dear Surviving Children.—Your oldest brother and oldest sister left us years ago, your youngest sister November last, and your precious mother 26th day of last May, whose advice and precious admonitions rest as so many golden leaflets on your memories. Treasure them up; they are more precious than rubies or the gold of Opher. They have left us an abiding confidence that they are at rest. They have been taken out of the world one by one, as we too, soon or late, must go. Some of you have come forward and been baptized into the church of Christ; by so doing declared that your home is not in this world; that you seek a country out of sight, a heavenly country. Then let us gird up our spiritual loins, take up our staff and travel on till we that better land shall see. Some of you, I am sorry to know, still seem to stand at a distance, without God and without hope in the world. I know you are as good children as children in common, but will you hear a word from your father while his gray hairs are bending over the grave, connected with the precious admonitions of your mother who has gone before? I would, then, beseech you to harden not your hearts while it is called to-day, as in the provocation in the wilderness, but may the Lord give you a thirst for that water whereof, when one drinks, will never thirst again, and for that bread when one eats thereof, will not hunger again; and though we be separated here one by one, may we all meet in that better world, where parting will be no more, but one continual round of joy, peace and happiness, world without end. Take this, lock it up in your trunks, read twice a year, and keep it as long as you live, and bequeath it to your children.

Yours in hope,

GREEN W. DAVIS.

MRS. POLLY A. M'GEHEE

Was born in Franklin county, Tennessee, in what year is unknown to the writer, and died at her home in Rusk county, Texas, December 21, 1884; Her maiden name was P. A. Hopper, a cousin of Elder James Wagrier's second wife, and was married to John McGehee, of Tennessee, and from thence immigrated to Texas, where her family now resides. She was a

working member among the Free Will Baptists in her youth, and remained with them until the Lord chose to lead her the roundabout way through the wilderness, when her and her husband united with the Primitive Baptists at Mount Ararat Church, in 1872, and lived consistent members until her death. Her home was ever open to the Baptist, and in words, she adorned her profession by a well ordered life and Godly conversation. She would not tolerate wrong doings of any kind, and was very severe in denunciations of every kind of hypocrisy. For energy, she had few equals and no superiors, as long as her health continued. And during her long and painful illness, which baffled the skill of many physicians, she was patient and complying; often repeating that she had fought the good fight, and kept the faith that was once delivered to the saints. She leaves a husband and four children to mourn her loss; two sons that have families, and a son and a daughter that are yet single, who will provide for their lonely father's comfort in this life. Her only daughter was indeed a helpmeet to her invalid mother, ever ready and willing to comply with any duty demanded of her. I hope the children will ever cherish the memory of their mother and patronize her examples. The unworthy writer was present with the deceased on many occasions during her illness, and has many reasons to love her. I love her as a mother in Israel; I love her as a true friend, and for the introduction of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea, saith the spirit, from henceforth they rest from their labor, and their good works do follow them.

Rusk County, Texas.

E. I. BERRY.

WM. THIGPEN, SR.

Brother THIGPEN was born in Cumberland county, N. C., May 27th, 1810, and departed this life at his residence, near Lake Como, Jasper county, Miss., August 19th, 1886, making his age seventy-six years, two months and twenty-two days. Brother Thigpen made a public profession of his faith in Christ in 1841, and was baptized into the fellowship of the Missionary Church at Cedar Grove, in August, during the same year, and lived an orderly member with that people until a little over three years before his death, when he publicly proclaimed that he could no longer walk in fellowship with them as an order of people, but said that he felt it to be his duty to go to his own people, (the Primitive Baptists,) which he did, and was received and baptized into the fellowship of Lebanon Church of the Primitive Baptist faith and order, by Elder Joseph Ishee. Then drawing his letter, went into the constitution of Bethlehem Church, near where he lived, and remained a consistent and orderly member up to his death, always enjoying himself, apparently in peace and harmony with his brethren in what he often called his new home, (the Primitive Baptists.) Brother Thigpen was firm in the Primitive Baptist faith and true to the principles of Christianity. He was always found in his proper place at his monthly meetings, until about fourteen months before his death the Lord saw fit to visit him with the hand of affliction which deprived him of the privilege of visiting the church any more. The writer

(4)

of this visited Brother Thigpen several times during his sickness, and must say, in his judgment, that the pains taken by his dear companion and little daughter, or little Janie as he often called her, could not be excelled for comfort and kindness. I do not mean that they were all, but will here say that seemingly all was done that could be done, both by doctors and nurses, relatives and friends. But alas! after all, we see the Lord's time comes, and the summons must be obeyed; he is gone, but we hope that our loss is his eternal gain. The Lord has called his spirit home, as we humbly believe, but like one of old, he yet speaketh. His deportment has been such, both as a Christian and in worldly attainments, that although he be dead, yet it speaks for him. The church has lost one of her best lights; his dear companion, a good husband; his dear children, a kind father; the neighborhood, a good friend. Brother Thigpen will be greatly missed by all who knew him. And may the Lord give the bereaved family sustaining grace to bear them up in their afflictions, and enable them to become reconciled to the providential dealings of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

W. S. FERGUSON.

A. D. CRECELIUS.

Dear Brother and Sister J. C. Madden:—On Wednesday, 12th January, 1887, our son, A. D. CRECELIUS, was taken sick, and on Monday, 24th, at 2½ o'clock P. M., he breathed his last. Brother Madden, it seems that I was unprepared to give up Fox. When I went to Damascus (church) I always found him there, as regular in attendance as any of the male members of the church. But, my dear brother, while I am a poor old man of sorrow, it is not as those who have no hope; for surely I never witnessed such a triumph in death in all my life. On Sunday evening he called for me, and going to him he said: "Father, I want you to pray for me." I said: "Son, I have been trying to pray for you all the time." "But," said he, "I want you to pray for me right now, that if it be the Lord's will to restore me, I may live a better man." I took his loving hand in mine and dropped upon my knees by the bedside of suffering humanity, and tried to ask the Lord for his restoration to health and the bosom of his family, but more especially that all of our wills might be swallowed up in His blessed and holy will. Soon thereafter he called upon me to pray for his poor, distressed companion, which I also tried to do.

Sunday night he commenced singing "Jesus died for me." I asked him if he felt to hope Jesus died for his sins? He said "Yes." Monday, in the fore part of the day, he sang with a clear and audible voice, the first verse of the song, "Salvation, O, the joyful sound," and then asked the company present to carry it through. I handed Billy Madden a hymn-book, with a request that he turn to the song. I set the music and several aided in singing, and that poor, dying boy sung the bass to it, and at the close of the song he offered one of the most solemn, sublime prayers that ever I heard fall from the lips of man, closing the word Amen. I firmly believe that the heavenly attractions were so great that he lost sight of wife, children, and everything of an earthy character; for his wife went

to him and said, in her usual way, "Fox, don't you want to talk some to me, and tell me what you want me to do?" His only reply was, "All I want you to do is to rejoice with me."

Dear Brother Madden, I want you to pray for me that when I come to die I may die like my poor boy did, in the triumph of a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am more convinced than ever of the correctness of my version of that scriptural prophecy that says, "It shall come to pass that at the evening time it shall be light."

Fox said he saw his sister; he saw the golden candlesticks, the New Jerusalem; he saw his way clear. On Monday morning Fox used the word "Baptism," and I said to him, "Son, did you want to be baptized?" and he said "Yes." I am inclined to believe that this failure to identify himself with the church militant gave him some trouble and anxiety of mind, even on his dying pillow, and it should be a warning to all those yet failing to take up their cross.

Uncle Buck came down to meeting, but we had no meeting, only what we had around the death-bed scene of poor Fox. Uncle Buck said he believed that Almighty God was worshiped there in spirit and in truth, and that bread was cast upon the waters there that would be gathered in in after time. And I believe so too, for I have already heard that one of the nurses was coming to the church. Truly Fox's house was a place of mourning and a place of rejoicing. Poor Fox was not neglected by his neighbors and friends, for they were coming and going all the time; and on Sunday before his death, the collection of people there looked like it might have been at a meeting-house. I am satisfied I never saw as many people at one time at a burying, and I thought Fox was the most angel-like corpse I ever beheld. His dear old mother stayed with him seven days and nights before his death. During a portion of these death-bed religious exercises E. J. Madden was present, and I think he had all he could carry, and I thank God for it, too, and hope Jack will be among those that will tell, in the near future, what grace has done for him.

Forest, Miss., Feb. 16, 1887.

J. G. CRECELIUS.

MRS. M. E. WYATT,

Wife of Alston Wyatt, was born 2nd October, 1849, in Franklin county, Ind., and moved with her parents to Carrol county, Ind., in 1851, and was married to Alston Wyatt 2nd June, 1876, and departed this life 6th February, 1887, aged thirty-seven years, four months and four days. She was afflicted for several years with that dreadful monster consumption, but I must say she was one of the most patient sufferers I ever saw. She never made any public profession, which, according to the teaching of some, would say she was lost, but what a glorious comfort it is that it is not of works but of grace, free grace, grace given us in Christ, and that before the world began. O how our souls should magnify the Lord when we learn that all the sins of his elect were laid on his own Son and borne away in the land of forgetfulness, all, past, present and to come; never, no never, to be remembered any more. Deceased leaves a husband and five small children, and many friends, to mourn their loss, which we believe to be her eternal gain. We are commanded to judge the tree by the fruit; and she was very meek and resigned; she said that

all was well ; when she could only whisper she gave directions concerning her children, and when she could no longer speak she reached out her hand and bidding the family farewell, fell asleep in Jesus. The unworthy writer tried to speak to the comfort of the family and friends from the words, "It is finished," after which she was laid away to await the Master's order.

Wild Cat, Ind.

H. P. HAYS.

DEACON A. P. JOHNSON.

Brother JOHNSON was born in Johnson county, N. C., August 31, 1806. At the age of eighteen years he moved from North Carolina to Henry, but now Butts county, Ga. He professed a hope in Christ and was baptized in 1828, at Sandy Creek Church, in Butts county, by Elder John Holmes, and was ordained a deacon in 1848. In 1857 he moved to Arkansas and settled in Oachita county and put his letter in Antioch Church of Primitive Baptists, and then into Mt. Zion Church, where he lived an orderly Christ-like life until the day of his death, which took place at his home in Nevada county, Ark., on the morning of the 13th of December, 1886, with pneumonia. The writer of this article got acquainted with him the day I was baptized, which was twenty-six years ago. I have been intimately acquainted with him ever since. He was a man of a remarkable constitution, and had always been able to work and make plenty to live on. I stayed with his bereaved widow last Saturday night. She told me that Brother Johnson, on the 8th day of December, helped to kill his hogs, and the next day, the 9th, he salted all of it down, and then him and one of his grandsons sawed stove wood the balance of the day, and seemed to be more lively than common, and ate as hearty a supper as she ever saw him eat, went to bed well and said he felt as well as he ever did in his life. He was taken sick the next morning, (Friday,) about two o'clock, and suffered on until Monday morning the 13th, at 10 o'clock, when his spirit took its flight to God who gave it. Truly we can say that a father in Israel is gone. Brother Johnson was married to his first wife, Miss Jane Gross, in 1832, who died in 1864. On the 18th of August, 1868, he was married to Mrs. Martha A. Wamble, whose maiden name was Lee, a daughter of old Brother Anderson Lee, formerly of Heard county, Ga. Brother Johnson will be missed among the Baptists ; his place will be hard to fill. We feel to return our heartfelt sympathies to his dear bereaved companion. While we mourn for him, we sorrow not as those that have no hope, for we believe our loss is his eternal gain. May the Lord bless and sanctify this sore bereavement to the good of his dear wife and children.

L. M. COOK.

Nevada County, Ark., Feb. 23, 1887.

SARAH M. TAYLOR,

Wife of Simeon Taylor, and daughter of George V. and Penelope Baisdon, died November 4th, 1886. She was born in Georgia, 5th July, 1835. Herself and husband united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Laodecia, Pontatoc county, Miss., and were baptized November 10th, 1869, by Elder McCam Maples. They moved from Mississippi to Arkansas in 1876, and lived there one year; from there to Hopkins county, Texas, where she united by letter with Pisgah Church, and in 1882 they moved to Freestone county, Texas, where she united with Hopewell Church and died in fellowship with the same. She leaves a husband, four children and many brethren, sisters and friends, to mourn her loss, though we feel assured that she has exchanged this sinful and God dishonoring world for one of joy and bliss. Though she is gone, the memory of her will live with those who knew her till they shall also pass away. And when our time shall come to leave this world we hope to be able by grace to say, "I have fought a good fight."

J. M. CHASTAIN.

Freestone County, Texas.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 7.

BUTLER, GA., JULY, 1887.

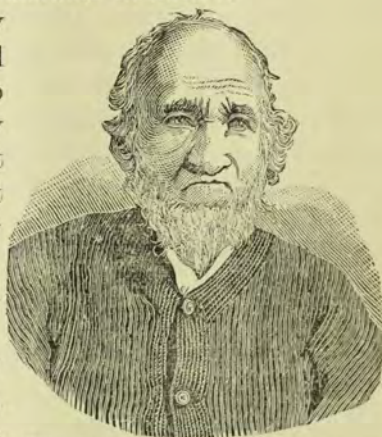
Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER SAMUEL BRANCH BURNETT.

By request of many brethren, sisters and friends, I undertake to write a short sketch of my spiritual life, and my heart trembles whilst I do it; it being the first time in my life that I have written anything for publication, except circular letters.

I was born in Dinwiddy county, Va., 7th April, 1803. My father was Benjamin G. Burnett, and my



[This picture was taken whilst sitting up out of a sick bed, for that purpose.]

mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Jordan. They moved to Luenburgh county, Va., where my father died leaving nine children—two sons and seven daughters. After this, I was raised principally by my uncle, Branch Jordan, a negro trader, in about twelve miles of Lynchburgh, who gave me what little education I have. I become dissatisfied with his business, and begged him to let me choose a business for myself; and as the Court House in Campbell county was then being built by Mr. David Lane, I worked a short while with him in finishing it up. From thence, in my twenty-first year,

I made my way to Georgia, and soon after my arrival I married Patience M. Morris, after which I decided to engage in farming, and bought a small farm in Crawford Co. and went to farming. I often thought of the bereaved mother I had left behind. Now, my beloved brethren and sisters, my troubles began. I lived in four miles of Mt. Paran Church, and went one Saturday, a poor prodigal wanderer, to meeting, and Elder John Blackstone, the pastor, preached from Ezekiel, xxxvii. 3: "Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered O, Lord God, thou knowest." After which saying I became alarmed, and something impressed my mind that it was my condition. My feelings were inexpressible. I saw that preparation was necessary to be made for death. I had often been told by preachers of the world that it was an easy matter to get what they called religion; but I continued in that distressed condition, not even revealing it to my wife. Oftentimes in the night did my tears, dropping on her arm, awake her, and when she asked what was the matter, I would only say "nothing much." My case was like Solomon's. By night, on my bed, I sought him whom my soul loved; I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me, to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him and would not let him go until I had brought him into my mother's house and into the chamber of her that conceived me. I then went to the church at Mt. Paran, was received and baptized by that dear old brother, John Blackstone, 6th October, 1827. I was made clerk of the church in 1834, and in 1836 was ordained deacon of the church, by Elders Jonathan Neal, Simon Parker and M. Ansley.

Dear brethren in the ministry, I wish to say a word to you: I have felt that God required me to preach his everlasting gospel; but feeling my weakness to do so

great a work, I plead it to the Lord and my poverty, that my father's house was the poorest in Nazareth, and I the least in his house; so I resolved not to undertake it, lest I disgrace the cause that I prized above life itself. I still refused, though impressed to warn the people, and that if I did not, their blood would be required of me. I preferred death to such a high and solemn work, incompetent as I felt to be, in every respect; and resolved to move to some distant State, and get rid of the call, where it would not be known that I was a Baptist. I took, therefore, a trip to Alabama, and bought land, intending to move there. No human knew of my intention; it was known only to God. I roamed the woods and mourned, but all in vain; so to home I returned, and sat me down, crying, Alas for me! there is no relief. Little did I think the church at Mt. Paran was in travail for me to preach the gospel. For my disobedience the Lord afflicted me so that I thought he was going to take me out of the world; and I then told my wife that the Lord was going to call me hence for my disobedience, and I wished to give her direction how to keep herself unspotted from the world. Dear brethren, here was a life and death case, and there I became willing, and pledged myself to the Lord that if he would go before me and prevent my injuring his cause, I was in his hands, and would obey his commands. At the next meeting at Mt. Paran, a group of brethren were in council in the yard, and returning to the house, Brother Henry Newsome, a deacon, with the rest of the brethren, said to me that the church had been carrying my case in their minds for a time, and were satisfied that the Lord had a use for me, and that "We now give you to the Lord; see you to it." I told them that I feared we were all mistaken, but relying upon the promise of God that he would not leave nor forsake me, that I would pay my vows—salvation is of the Lord.

There was great rejoicing in the church that the Lord

had given them one chosen to preach the everlasting gospel; and brethren, if I ever had liberty in preaching it was then and there. I was enabled to take my blessed Saviour in my arms and thank God for the gift of that child. I was ordained to the ministry 3d November, 1838, by Elders Jonathan Neal, Luke J. Nowell and Simon Parker. I was called to Bethel Church, Houston county, Ga., Salem Church and Mt. Paran and Shiloh, the last two of which I have served to this time. I attended the Echeconna Association the first time, I think, in 1836, and have been in every session of that body since, except one during the war. I was with the churches in the Missionary struggle, and was the only minister who stood by the churches in the Masonic struggle. I have ever tried to defend the rights of the church, and to defend and honor the doctrine of God my Saviour to the best of my ability. And now, dear brethren and sisters and friends all, I am ready to be offered up; 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 glory, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me at that day; and not only me, but all that have his appearing. For the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; and we who are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet him in the skies, and so shall we ever be with the Lord; therefore comfort ye with these words. Amen.

Bibb Co., Ga.

SAMUEL BRANCH BURNETT.

SAMUEL B. BURNETT.

SAMUEL B. BURNETT departed this life of dropsy of the heart, February 5, 1887. He was one of the oldest citizens in Bibb county. His rectitude of life and firmness of character is well known by all who knew him. He was one of the oldest and ablest ministers of the gospel of Christ, having worn the gospel yoke fifty years defending the cause of his heavenly

master, bearing up the standard of King Emanuel on every high hill and every green tree, contending faithfully for the faith once delivered to the saints, unreservedly, knowing no compromise. And as a disciplinarian he scarcely had an equal. Well may Zion everywhere put on the badge of mourning for the loss of such a gift. But the Lord giveth and taketh away. May we all be blessed with the spirit and made able to exclaim like Job, "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" His appointed time had come, he had fulfilled his labors on earth, hence he was called home to enter into the joys of his Lord. He fought the good fight, kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up in heaven for him a crown of glory that fadeth not away. As a husband, father and neighbor, your unworthy writer, who had been intimately acquainted with him for forty years, knew of none to excel him. I visited the deceased a number of times during his protracted illness, always found him calm, in right mind, recollection good, conversed with him freely, could quote scriptures readily. I was with him near his last hours, when his voice was so near lost in death that he only could be heard in a low whisper. He was still in his right mind and firm in the faith, and willing, yes, I can say more than willing, to leave his tenement of clay, and go to that house not made with hands eternal in the heavens for all the finally faithful, who love the Lord and look for his coming. The old father and faithful soldier of the cross, after his decease, was taken to Mt. Paron Church, where he first gave in his Christian experience, and where his membership has ever been, and taken into the house, placed before the stand, the two Deacons of each church, Paron and Shiloh, and Brother Newberry of Shiloh, and Brother Yates of Mt. Paron, the churches he was then serving, being pallbearers. Elder Isaiah Grant was requested to occupy the stand and exercise as the spirit might direct. Before him sat the largest and most solemn audience I ever witnessed on such an occasion. After some touching remarks from the stand, and prayer, deceased was taken to the tomb, and decently laid near his long-departed consort, to await the morning of the resurrection when this mortal shall put on immortality, be raised in spiritual life.

Deceased left a beloved wife, many children, grand-children and friends, to mourn their loss, but their loss is his great gain. Then I would say to the bereaved ones, I know that human nature is such that you cannot help but grieve, but while that is the case you mourn not as those who have no hope. Your old husband and father lived to a ripe old age full of years. The Lord has gathered him home, where he is much better off. Then let's wipe all tears away, set our faces Zionward, praying the Lord to further us on in emulation of the dear departed one. Finally, may you all meet again in the world of bliss, where there will be no more grief, no more sorrow, no more farewell tears to shed, and parting will be no more.

Why should we mourn departing friends,
Or shake at death's alarms,
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends,
To call us to his arms.

February 23, 1887.

GREEN W. DAVIS.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, MICH., Nov. 9, 1886.

Dear Sisters in Christ:—In the Scriptures are found many and various things for our learning and instruction, specially in the teachings of Paul, who “kept back nothing that was profitable” for the children of God; and we find no state or circumstance in life concerning which he has not given instruction. All classes who are to compose the church are warned and admonished as to how they should walk, as becoming their high profession. He instructs a young minister how he should teach them all, both the aged and the young of either sex, and says, “Let no men despise thy youth.” So we understood his teaching was not to be despised on account of his being young in years. Among those whom he was to teach were the aged women, “that they should be teachers of good things,” should be sober, “not given to much wine,” etc. Teaching, also, these same things to the younger women. These are the good things they are to teach. Not only that they be sober, not given to much wine, but that they be “keepers at home, chaste, lovers of their own husbands, and of their children.” From the temperance mania in our land it would seem, at the present time, that the only one thing to be taught was that they should not be given to much wine, and upon these words we have thought to write at present, and if this should grow to be a temperance letter we hope to be considered as not out of order inasmuch as women as well as men are admonished to “not be given to much wine.” In our day we are brought to understand that women do not partake of anything of the kind, and for themselves it would not be necessary to heed the admonition nor take the pledge and engage in the great work of temperance, only for the sake of the poor weak-minded fathers, brothers, husbands, etc., who are portrayed as being frail, defenceless victims of the demon of the wine-cup, whereas we always supposed that man was to be the strong and noble one, who was

to be the head, pattern, protector and guide, and to give honor unto the woman as unto the weaker vessel—at least we would love to think this way. But now, because the outrageousness of men is so great upon the earth, in this one awful evil of drunkenness, that ladies have to leave their families and homes, and go about by day, and especially by night, to keep the men all straight by their appeals of eloquence displayed from the platform and pulpit to large audiences, and by their influence in taking the pledge and being initiated into a secret and what is called a most solemn and mixedly pious order. Let us hope that their influence in all things, and all respects, is for the best. Indeed, let us hope for the best. Let us not forget that we are admonished to be temperate “in all things.” Yet, why an order promoting so much good should be attended with a “secret,” is not so clear to a dull comprehension. I think we are told, “He that doeth good cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest that they are wrought in God.” And we think we have read of a people who “love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.” And although the claim of religion is mixed with all, yet we are told that if they say, “Behold, the Christ is in the secret chamber,” believe it not. He commanded his children to pray to him in secret, it is true, and he himself would reward openly their prayers and alms given in secret. But in this there was no organization named only between them and the Father, and said he to them, “What I tell you in the ear in the closet that proclaim ye upon the housetop, and fear not those who kill the body and afterward can do no more. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him who hath power to cast both soul and body into hell; I say unto you, fear him.” So we are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. And how pretended rational beings submit to the secret oath (or

obligation), initiating ceremonies, and to wearing the silly badges of such orders, is something hard to be understood. "O, my soul, come not then into their secret." Laying aside all these things, and "renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty," how simple, easy, and plain it would be to just heed the admonition comprised in these few words: "Not be given to much wine." But the claim is that it is for great good, and to put down the one great evil which is the root of all other evils. In our Saviour's day the same good people could say of him, "Behold, a man gluttonous and a winebibber." But he said unto his followers: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." And let us hope that these temperance people do sincerely practice what they preach. Let us hope that especially the orators (ladies, of course, excepted) never fortify themselves with "too much wine." Indeed, let us hope for the best. And as for this being the one crying evil, are we not told that "The love of money is the root of all evil," and how many temperance orators think you we would have, of either sex, if the hat did not go round at the close of the address to gather up the cash? Of course they could not spend their time, travel about and exert themselves so wonderfully for nothing, of course not. But it does seem that so much love for good, and such anxiety to shed abroad so much "influence," ought to call for considerable "sacrifice."

With so much zealous good works going on in our land, one would think the people ought to be truly "very good." Yet I was reading a sermon from a prominent doctor in which he said he had been asked, if he did not think the wickedness of the city of Charleston was not what called for the earthquake at that place, and he answered: "That if all our cities were to be visited according to their wickedness, they would all be sunk five hundred feet below the tops of the tallest spires under the surface of the earth." I could but

think of all the great and costly churches with which our cities are lined; of all the combined organizations in them, ostensibly for good; of the salaried clergy who had nothing to do but attend to the good of souls, and look after the brotherhood and the sisterhood; of the united works of the ladies in their apparently commendable efforts in their many societies wherein they bestow so much labor, and yet, according to their own testimony, there is so much wickedness. Whereas, with all this ponderous weight of "influence," we should think there ought not to be left an evil-doer in all our land. They cannot say they are obstructed by the influence of the Old Baptists, for I think there are many cities where they are not even heard of. Yet the fact that the cities remain, is evidence that the Lord has some dear hidden ones among them all. "For the same day that Lot went out of Sodom the Lord rained fire and brimstone upon them, and destroyed them all." And we can still say: "Except the Lord had left us a remnant, we should have been as Sodom or like unto Gommorah." But is taking too much wine the only evil, as is often represented? Is it the cause of all this wickedness, or can we be allowed to prove that the love of money is the root of all evil, according to the scriptures? We have already spoken of it in connection with the temperance cause. We do, indeed, read that "no drunkard hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." But there are several other characters spoken of in the same connection as having no inheritance there, and they are all classed together, one equally as bad or good as the other, all not fit for the kingdom (or church)—no effeminate person. Do we hear these characters cried down like the poor drunkard? Indeed, we think we see them held in high esteem. They are such refined, elegant, polished articles, and I have read that to fill the popular pulpits they are chosen "by the people" according to their looks and appearance. The handsomest

ones commanding the highest prices, as they are so much more ornamental in their parlors. Surely one would not want a nice parlor ornament marred and scarred by the marks of honest labor. "The people love to have it so. The people are just as much to blame as the priests." The heads thereof judge for a reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money. Yet they will lean upon the Lord and say: "Is not the Lord among us, none evil can come upon us." Of course the *fluffy, gaudy* creatures do not wish to soil their delicate hands, so as not to be enabled to turn the leaves of the Sunday sermon in an acceptable and genteel manner. It is such a fine-polished article, got up with so much care and study, expense and time.

To be expected to work with their hands would be cruelty amounting to almost impiety. 'Tis true they claim to labor in their line; but to take away the money, which seems to be both the foundation and the cornerstone of the whole fabric, and we very much fear that the carefully-prepared sermon would be laid away to waste in the closet. But where is the "influence" in all this? Is not the disgust of honest toil throughout all our land, and a turning to every other way of securing money, traceable, to some degree at least, to this influence? We do not mean our own tired and often o'erburdened ministers, who are always ready to preach the gospel to the poor, and if the occasion so requires, to work with the hands to make themselves an "ensample" to others, "non-covetous persons." There is another character who hath none inheritance in the kingdom, yet do we not see them everywhere applauded? Will they not do anything for money? for with it they can buy place, or anything they wish. With it the greatest of wrongs can be redressed; with it expiated the worst of crimes? Honor and virtue are bought and sold like articles in the market, until we can truly say, "Help,

Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, and the faithful fail from among the children of men. Yet, one evil does not, in any sense, excuse another, and the admonition still remains that we should not be given to *much* wine. It does not say "Not any." I have heard people say they would not taste a drop of it; no, not to save their lives. Even a bottle is considered a vessel of dishonor, no matter how small, nor how innocent the contents thereof, it is a *bottle*. Whether they smell a camphor bottle or not I do not know, but I believe the use of the article by them in any form, is "prohibited." I wish all regard to the opinion of others; yet, in this there may be more *pride* than *principle*; yet, if people cannot use it as they should, it is better for them to not use it at all. By Timothy, who was an Elder, it was said to use a *little*. If a physician were to give a patient a little poison, which is often done in case of extreme and dangerous maladies, and because it was sweet to the taste the patient should eat all he wished of it, it would prove a curse instead of a blessing. I have often heard many curses poured out upon wine, but always think of the time when our Saviour took the cup, and blessed it, saying, "Drink ye all of it, this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many." It is the manner in which it is used which calls for consideration. "No drunkard hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. We are not to eat and drink with the drunken in any sense. Neither in their delusions, fanaticisms, rebellious banquetings, nor abominable idolatries. A sumptuous worldly feast may be just as abominable in the eyes of the Lord as a bacchanalian riot. For men looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart. I know but little about bar-rooms, but I think they would be strange places for the children of God. I think we are told that "Every creature of God is good," and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving and

prayer. And how much is the voice of thanksgiving and prayer heard in a bar-room? And when ladies are so much called upon for their *influence* and example in this matter, I would like to ask how many of the sisters of the Old Baptist Church have been seen at the bar calling for drinks? Have we not been a good example all the time? and no one has said anything about it, nor given us any praise. I wish to call attention to the matter at this time. It may be said, we are not expected to be seen at the bar; such a thing would be very "immodest" for a woman. But we do not consider this a question of modesty, but of principle, unless we are allowed to say that all true modesty arises from true principle. This admonition is equally to men and women. It is a question of right and wrong, and such questions know neither age nor sex. If any of my dear brethren and sisters were to see Sister Kate at the bar asking for something to drink, or under the influence of the same, would they not be greatly astonished? Would they not be awfully ashamed and justly indignant, and would she not forfeit the fellowship of the Baptist Church? Would they not every one feel like casting a stone at her? And they would feel just right. Just so would I feel if I were to see the dear ones doing this way. But again, let us call the attention of the sisters of our order: Are they not an example for all in these things? Are they not usually in their own homes, especially at evening? Would there be a drunkard in our land if their example was to be followed? Why should so good an example be so little heeded, while a bad one will draw attention far and near? And when we find ourselves walking in the commandment, it is a witness and a pleasant assurance to us that we are sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. But if this should be a temptation to any weak one, and sore besetment, where should we look for aid? Should we seek for help in some humanly devised combination or

organization, and encourage others to do so? To take pleasure in those who do forbidden things is just as bad as to do them ourselves. Is there not still a God in Israel, and is it not better to come to a throne of grace where help is to be found in every time of need? "O, house of Israel, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield. O, house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield. O, house of Judah, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield. Yea, for cursed is the man that trusteth in man, or that maketh the son of flesh his trust."

Your sister in Christ,

MRS. KATE SWARTOUT.

EXPERIENCE.

Dear Brethren:—I have been wanting to write some of my feelings for a long time, but through fear have never done so. When I was a boy I had many thoughts of death, and what would become of me if I died without grace. I thought I could and would do better, but I did no better, and found out that I could do no better. The more I prayed the worse I got, and continued in this way till February, 1874, when I married, and thought I would get rid of these wretched feelings, and did for awhile. But they returned with increased force, so that I was made to cry unto the Lord for mercy on me, a poor, lost and ruined sinner. In January, 1875, I was moving from Newton county to Morgan county, Ga., on top of a load of fodder, filled with cries and petitions to God for mercy the last time; and it seemed as if I suddenly awoke from sleep, and felt that my sins were all gone and I was rejoicing; and it seemed that I could not doubt any more. But it was not long before the tempter came and brought many doubts, and I have been tormented with many such things since. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1875, I joined

the church at Shoal Creek, Newton county, Ga., and enjoyed myself with the brethren and sisters until 1879, when I joined Holly Spring Church—moving near that church. In 1882 I came to Texas, since which time I have had but little spiritual enjoyment, having none to converse with, and no Primitive Baptist Church to attach myself to; so I am here as one alone. Brethren and sisters, pray for me and my family.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

R. A. JACKSON.

Dear Son:—By your request I will write a little of the dealings of the Lord, if not deceived, with me. Whilst young, I often thought of death, and wondered what would become of me if I were to die. Being amongst the Methodists at their big meetings, I was taught to believe that I could get religion at any time, if I would go to the mourner's bench, which I did often, hoping to get rid of sin; but I failed in every way, and finally quit going amongst them. My parents were Primitive Baptists, and father died when I was very small, but mother remained faithful to her faith and attended to her meetings as long as she lived. In December, 1844, I married, and we set out to try to have something in the world, so that I thought but little of spiritual things, and having no opportunity of hearing preaching, I became very cold and unconcerned, until after the war, in 1867, if not mistaken, I became troubled about my condition, feeling to be the vilest sinner on earth. I began to amend my ways by praying and reading the Bible, but it was a sealed book to me, and my prayers nothing but sin. I was in this state of mind several days, and getting up one morning before day, your father having gone out to feed the stock, I went to the well for water with which to prepare breakfast; and looking up, the stars were so bright that all things seemed full of the praise of God but me; but

that I was the guiltiest soul on earth. A black cloud appeared before me, that seemed as my sins, like a mountain between me and a just God. I then and there believed that God would be just in my everlasting condemnation. But still I resolved to live a different life, and from that time I tried to pray, but my prayers seemed to be unavailing, so that I believed that the Lord would never forgive me. I was desolate; I had none to comfort me; none seemed to care for my soul. My trouble seemed to be more than I could bear. One day I felt like I wanted to get in a secret place where I might get on my knees and try to pray; and I went up stairs and knelt down by a bed-side to ask the Lord one more time for mercy; and if I said a word I do not remember it, but it seemed to me I heard, or it passed through my mind, I do not know which: Thy soul in heaven shall live! A light appeared around me, but it was gone so soon that I do not know whether it was or not, but it seemed plain to me then, and does yet.

I do not know what I did, but when I found myself I was on the stair-steps, going down. I stopped, looked out at a window, and everything looked so full of joy that I thought I would never see trouble again; my burden was gone, and I never can describe my feelings when I felt that the Lord had forgiven my sins. But, dear son, before the sun set it did not seem so plain, and I began to be afraid I was deceived, so that I began to pray, if I was deceived, that the Lord would show it to me. But I was never fully satisfied until, in 1873, I went to meeting, and there was baptizing that day, and when Brother Beebe began services he talked of experience, and I was given more understanding than I ever had before; that day it seemed made plain. I had never told my feelings to anyone, and had thought I never would, but from that time my mind was led to the church. I felt that baptism was a command that all God's children should obey. I loved the brethren and

sisters so well that I wanted to be with them, but felt so unworthy that I feared that such good people would not receive me. I went to meeting as often as I could, and my mind still being directed to the church, on Saturday before second Sunday in May, 1874, I went up and related in substance what is here written, and was received and baptized the next day by Eld. Wm. Beebe, at Hollis Spring Church, Newton, Ga., and have lived ever since as near right as I could in many tribulations. I lived with that church and enjoyed myself with the dear household until 1882, when I got my letter and came to Texas. There is no Primitive Baptist Church near me, and I have heard no preaching since I have moved here, and would be very lonely were it not for THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, which is a great comfort to me; and I trust God will help the editors to continue that good work. Remember your mother at a throne of grace.

N. B. JACKSON.

Wm. Penn, Texas.

Brother Taylor:—I was raised by very strict parents. My father was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church long before I could remember, and also my mother. My father often told his children what would be our doom if we died in the love of sin, and it often caused me sad feelings; and I promised myself to do better, but would find these promises broken. In 1864 I went to Florida, to stay with one of my sisters; I was to stay five months, and go to school, away from my parents, brothers and one widowed sister at my father's, in Early county, Georgia. I left my dear sister in very bad health. She stood looking so wistfully after me when I left her, and she was a dear sister to me! I was gone a few months when the good Lord took her from us, and it appeared to me that I could never give her up. I was fifteen years old then; and I thought she had gone to rest, and that by the help of the good Lord

I would try to meet her. And from 1864 to 1883 I was often weighted down in sorrow and trouble. In 1868 I married a young man in his nineteenth year, I also being nineteen. After I was married, I thought that my troubles would not be so great as before; but I had the same soul as before. We lived in Georgia until 1871, when we came to Texas. And when I had to part with my dear parents, sister and brothers, and friends, oh, what an awful day to me; the most miserable day, I thought, that ever passed over me; to leave my mother standing in the door, looking after me as far as I could see her, and I was satisfied I would never see her again in this life, and that if I ever did see her again, I must see her in heaven; and I have never seen her only in the spirit; she departed this life in 1875. In 1877 my father died, and by this time I was the mother of five children, having twins a month old when my father died. My husband and friends thought I would die, too. I was confined to my bed a long time; and when my twins were six months old, the little boy was taken from me by the will of the Heavenly Father, leaving the little girl with me. All this time I was striving on, trying to pray; and in September, 1882, I gave birth to my seventh child, and was confined to my bed from that time till June, 1884. My husband was very attentive, and had five doctors called in to see me, none of whom could do me any good, and at last they said to my husband it was my mind. I lay fasting and trying to pray for days; and I gave up my children and little baby to the care of their father. I had been lying for days in a kind of stupor, very weak, and having cold spells seemingly as if I was dying. The time passed on in that way for weeks, and at last one morning in May, 1883, my husband left the house for a little while, and my eldest little daughter was sitting by me, (she was nine years old), I said to her, "Lillie, where is your father?" She said, "I do not know, mamma." I said to her, "I

(2)

can't stay here," and as weak as I was, I sprang off the bed and I walked across the house and out into the yard, and I called my husband, Willie, several times. I then looked at my hands, and they looked so bright; I looked at my clothing and everything looked new, and oh, my feelings I cannot tell! My husband heard me, and came running to me, and carried me into the house, though I did not feel as if I needed any help to get back into the house; and when he took me in the house there was a voice that talked with me; and I do thank my Heavenly Father that I have had no doubts since that time, but I am satisfied that I will see my mother in heaven. I lived out of the church for three years, having a desire to join the Primitive Baptist church, but had no opportunity until the third Sunday in March, 1886. My brother, younger than myself, was baptized that day, and I joined at the water, and I was baptized third Sunday in April. I have been better satisfied since I joined the church; and dear brethren and sisters, I trust by the grace of the Heavenly Father I shall strive on for the glorious home in heaven. Pray for me in my troubles and afflictions. As ever,

Freestone Co., Texas.

MARY C. GRAY.

SANTO, PALO-PINTO COUNTY, TEXAS, May 8, 1887.

Dear Brethren in Christ:—Feeling a great desire to converse with you and the readers of THE MESSENGER, and having no way by which I may do this only by means of the pen, I thought that (though it be in much weakness) I must trouble you again with some of my scribbling.

You will no doubt remember the statement of Brother R. R. Respass, of this county, as well as that of my own, concerning the rain which we had here in this country about middle of February last, which was the last we had till about the middle of April, when the Lord was

pleased to send a sufficient rain to wet our land thoroughly. And now, to-night, while I sit and write; the rain is pattering down upon earth, the heavy peals of thunder rumbling through the elements, and the vivid lightnings lighting up (seemingly) the whole face of the earth, thereby manifesting the wonderful mercies, the great power, and the universal sovereignty of God, our Saviour. O, what an humble, thankful, and God-loving people we should be!

This is Monday morning, May 9th; the rain and wind became so terrific last night that I could but sit and wonder, and fear and tremble, before the almighty hand of my Creator. And this morning I thought I would finish my letter, and before I proceed any further, I wish to say, that if there ever was a people who were under obligations to turn from their evil ways unto the living God, it certainly is the people of this section, for when we remember the destitution of our people, and the many great strides that has been made by the different religious institutions and secret societies, together with other combinations of men, to obtain help, and all have failed, signally *failed*, either to get the help, or else it has been gobbled up by their agents or committees. And then, remember, that a few lines written by a man who is connected with that people, accused by their enemies as being a stingy, narrow-hearted and unkind people, I say, just a few lines from one of that people, has brought more help to us than all the other efforts combined, and I have no thought that the brethren and friends who have sent this aid have much idea of the thankful and grateful hearts that their liberality has made; but, had it fallen into the hands of covetous men, it, like all the rest, would have amounted to nothing. But no longer ago than yesterday evening, while in conversation with the dear brother with whom you have trusted your bounty, to wit, R. R. Respass, he told me that he had not had as much as ten pounds of meat in

his house in three months, notwithstanding, said he, I have had money in my possession nearly all the time, and had the right to have used it for the supply of my own family, and might have laid up a sufficiency to have done me a year or more; but I saw so many people in a worse condition than I was that my conscience compelled me to distribute to them for their present wants.

I speak of this, dear brethren, in order to give you an idea of the course that has been pursued with your bounty. But the question is often being asked: Are the people suffering there for the actual necessities of life? If so, how long are they likely to need help? First I would say to you, brethren, come over and place yourselves in our condition, just for a little while, just in my condition, for instance, with eighty pounds of corn meal and fifty pounds of flour; two weeks yet without milk; no vegetables of any kind, (though I think that in three weeks I will have potatoes, and this rain will make them, I think), with almost everything you have in a shape that you can neither turn it into money nor take it away with you, with a large and helpless family, and no money to even buy bread with, and then tell me that you do not suffer, and I will acknowledge that I know nothing about human nature. No, brethren, I do not know of any one that has, or that I think is likely to starve, but I do know of several living on bread and water and bread and coffee; and I had a conversation yesterday evening with a man who told me that he had but fifty pounds of flour in the world, and that, with water, was all that he had to eat; and where, said he, the next is to come from God only knows. But if we can get along a few months longer (and *I feel sure that we will*, for the Lord has promised that his people should not be forsaken), the prospects are now, that we will make plenty to subsist upon. But I will close, lest I weary you with this dry talk.

Yours, in hope of eternal life,

JESSE L. COLLINGS.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, Wm. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

IT IS CHRIST THAT DIED.

At the suggestion of some one in Texas, a beloved minister asks: "Did the Divinity of Christ suffer on the cross?"

In contemplating the glorious character and awful sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, a sense of our entire nothingness, as well as the sacredness of the subject, forbid our treating it with lightness, or in any vain, speculative way. While we do most joyfully receive by faith the grand and mysteriously sublime revelation of Jesus Christ as God and man blended in one Mediator between God and man, yet we do not claim ability to dissect his holy Divinity from his sacred humanity, or to comprehend the mystery of such a union. We feel, however, divinely warranted to say and believe that "The Mystery of Godliness is great," and the grand central embodiment of the wonderful mystery is that "God was manifest in the flesh." This fact is established beyond all controversy, and is so stated by the apostle of Christ in 1 Tim., iii. 16. And without this unspeakable union of God and man in the one person of our Lord Jesus Christ, his sufferings and death could have availed nothing to put away sin, or in making reconciliation for transgressors. While the fullness of the Godhead with all its power, wisdom and holiness was in Jesus, the fullness of sacred Manhood was also in him. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."—Col., i. 19. And not only is the fullness of the Godhead and Manhood embodied in Jesus, the Son of God, but all the fullness of a sinner's salvation from sin, death and hell is in him. He is full of grace and truth, and of his "fullness have all his saints received grace for grace."—John, i. 16.

Several years ago, it was occasionally preached by some of our aged ministers that the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ was the Altar on which his humanity was offered as a sacrifice for sin; and it was also held by some that the Divinity withdrew from the humanity when the suffering Son of God was suspended upon the cross. Now, while this may be very clear to some of our beloved brethren, it has not been so to us; and we have, therefore, avoided making any such assertions. Would it not be better to take the plain declaration which the holy apostle delivered, "first of all," to the church at Corinth, that "*Christ* died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." This doctrine is experimental, and the apostle says he had himself *received* it, and he preached it to others who had also received it in their own experience, by the teaching of the same spirit of revelation that had made it known to Paul.—1 Cor., xv. 1-3. In every part of the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, our Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of as suffering for sin, and after his resurrection he says to his disciples: "Thus it is *written*, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."—Luke, xxiv. 46. It is Christ that suffered, and Christ that died for our sins, and it is Christ that rose again from the dead. God and man were represented in him, whether in divinity or humanity. "Being in the form of God, he 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. 7. The unspeakable and incomprehensible character of our Lord Jesus as God and man, is such that his relation to God is not more full and intimate than his relation to

man. This inconceivable and incomprehensible character of the blessed Son of God, though so mysterious to us is, nevertheless, absolutely necessary to constitute him the "One Mediator between God and man." He must be equally related to both, and "through the Eternal Spirit offer himself without spot unto God, and thereby purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."—Heb., ix. 14. Though "found in fashion as a man," and in the "likeness of sinful flesh," he was not "sinful flesh," but in his Complex Mediatorial character, he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Now whatever may be thought of this, as to whether his "Divinity or his humanity suffered on the cross," one thing is certain, that just such an High Priest was necessary for us, to "offer Himself for us." Nothing is said here about any division of the nature and character of this spotless victim, or that he offered only a part of Himself to God as an atoning sacrifice. "But this Man," this wonderful God-Man, "offered one sacrifice for sins," and so fully did it meet every demand of the law, and appease Divine wrath against those for whom Christ died, that when he had made this one offering of Himself, he sat down as one who had finished, completed and perfected his work. Yes, "he *sat down* at the right hand of God," as having God's approval, and "from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."—Heb., x. 13.

We do not feel divinely warranted to say that either divinity or humanity suffered on the cross, separately from that which constituted the One Mediator between God and men. "He gave *Himself* for our sins, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 14. Nothing short of *Himself*—his own glorious self—was offered unto God as a sacrifice for sin, and when he had by *Himself* purged our sins, he sat down at the

right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much *better than the angels*, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”—Heb., i. 3.

The conclusion, therefore, of the whole matter is that Jesus hath once suffered for sins—the just for the unjust—that he might bring us to God, being put to *death in the flesh*, but quickened by the spirit.—1 Pet., iii. 18. The terrible convulsions of the heavens and the earth, the bursting of the massive rocks and the rending of the vail of the temple from top to bottom, strongly indicate that the “Prince of Life,” and “Lord of Glory” (Acts, iii. 15,) suffered and died on the cross. He is God, “Holy One,” and had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again. What a mystery!—M.

THE END OF THE MATTER.

The works of God in the order of his providence and grace are wonderfully mysterious, so much so that mortals can not comprehend them. David said, “Clouds and darkness are round about him.” He veils himself in mysteries, even hiding his counsel from the wise and prudent, so that none can know or find it out. God’s children may well rejoice in this fact; it is Christ-like, for he said, “I thank thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.” And David exclaims, “O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.” Again, he says, “Marvelous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.”

But the most delightful feature in this matter is the end—the glorious and everlasting result of God’s works, providence and grace toward his people. The great Redeemer said, “The things that are written concerning me have an end.” There was a great object in view, a certain end to be obtained or secured through his

mediation, which could be obtained in no other way; and that end is the eternal salvation of his people. This is the end of the Christian's faith, as Paul says, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." In this matter, Jesus Christ is set forth by inspiration as "the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Not that he had a beginning, as a creature; but that he was "in the beginning with God," and that he "was God," and the work of salvation was begun by him, and must be finished by him.

Now our poor, weak mind runs thus: It is not a matter of vital importance to us to know exactly how much is absolutely predestinated, but to believe that all possible good results from God's predestination, and that our adoption into the heavenly kingdom is the good which results to us from that source is a matter of faith, and it is but reasonable that the children of God should receive and embrace, by faith, that end.

Some weeks ago, we were reading in the vii. chapter of Daniel's prophecy about the vision of the four beasts, and the interpretation of that vision was so obscure to our mind that we could gather no comfort nor instruction from it until we reached the 27th verse, which contains, in plain terms, the sum and substance of the whole matter of that wonderful vision as follows: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Verse 28th, "Hitherto is the end of the matter." This was enough for us, and we ceased to worry over the vision of the four beasts in which God showed this great and gracious end to his servant, the prophet. The same is the end, the glorious ultimity of our heavenly Father's allwise providence and grace toward "the people of the saints of the Most High." Is it not enough? The kingdom and dominion, and the

greatness of the kingdom is given. Hitherto is the end determined by Jehovah in his eternal counsel, and all the means by which this end is attained are equally embraced in the counsel, will, purpose and predestination of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The only reason why the saints love the doctrine of predestination is, that nothing else could ever have made them saints, or secured to them the adoption of children. When the effect of this cause is bestowed, which is the spirit of adoption, it is reasonable to expect that love for the cause will be the result. This may account for the extended view that some have of the predestination of God; but if hitherto be the *end* of the matter, it is enough for our joy, and enough for the glory of God.—H.

ESTHER.—THIRD CHAPTER.

After these things did Ahasuerus promote Haman, the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

JACOB AND ESAU.

Haman was an Amalekite, the natural enemy of the Jews, between whom war had been declared from generation to generation. The Amalekites were descendants of Esau, and therefore the kindred of the Jews, the descendants of Jacob. Generated in the same womb, the struggle began with them before their birth, and was perpetuated in their descendants. They were the heads of two nations, one of which was beloved, chosen and blessed of God, and the other hated. Jacob and Esau, though brothers in the flesh, were as different in spirit as if of two distinct families. As the Primitive and Arminian or Mission Baptists, though alike in name and the letter of the faith, they are as different in the spirit of their faith as Jacob and Esau. They are two distinct nations, and there can be no alliance between

them, any more than there could have been between the families of Jacob and Esau, or between Jacob and the family of Heth. Jacob could not intermarry with Heth as Esau could and did; he could intermarry only with the daughters of his own people. Some brethren have thought it not improper to receive the official acts, as baptism for example, of the Arminian Baptists, because they hold, with us, to the doctrine of immersion; whilst in reality, they are as different from us in the spirit of immersion as the Methodists are; and are more dangerous, because they seem more alike us, and hence are more apt to mislead us. To receive their official acts would be to say that Esau had the birthright with Jacob, or was with him equally invested with the official headship, or pre-eminence. In the family of Isaac, as in the elect nation or Church of Christ, there can be but one head, as there is but one name, given under heaven amongst men as her Saviour; but one to whom the pre-eminence is given amongst his brethren, and to whom all must bow, both those in heaven and those in earth. From him, as the head and life of his people, flows all grace, which grace is made pre-eminent in the faith, and works of faith, of the church or elect nation. His people are blessed in him as Abraham's seed were blessed in Jacob; they are chosen in him as Isaac's seed were chosen, not in Esau, but in Jacob, and he could, therefore, be the only proper head. To elevate Esau with him to the headship, would be to do away with the election of grace in Jacob and substitute the works of the flesh for the works of the Spirit. This the Arminian Baptists do, and to it the Primitive Baptists refuse to bow, as Mordecai in the king's gate refused to bow to Haman. To receive their official acts, therefore, though done right in the letter or form, and in that respect according to the king's commandment, would be to elevate the letter or flesh, and Esau, to a higher place than the election of grace; would be to put works over grace;

Esau over Jacob; Haman over Mordecai; the flesh over the spirit and the law over the gospel. But God always makes grace pre-eminent; it was made pre-eminent in the call of Abraham, pre-eminent in the conception and birth of Isaac, pre-eminent in Jacob in blessing him, not according to his natural birth, but according to election before his birth—before he had done either good or evil; and it is made pre-eminent in blessing the Gentiles, not according to their works, but according as God had chosen them in Christ before the world began. The Father ever brings Christ to the headship in Christian experience and in the works of faith of the church; he sets him upon the throne alone, and higher than Agag; he separates his people from the nations, making them dwell alone, so that they are not reckoned with the nations. It is a sin, therefore, for this chosen nation, this peculiar people, this royal priesthood, to ally herself with, intermarry amongst, or sacrifice at the altars of the uncircumcised nations around her, whether they be far from (unlike) her, or near by (alike in name and works) her.

Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his venison; but Rebecca loved Jacob. As an educated and trained hunter, Esau doubtless stood as high in his day as Haman did in his. His prowess as a hunter in ridding new and weak settlements of dangerous animals, and in protecting women and children from their depredations, was probably, in that age, a species of state craft that made him a hero and public benefactor. Hunting, in that early age, was probably the best school for physical and mental development, and therefore the avenue to honor and worldly promotion. Esau soon grew to despise his birthright; that is, to despise being a mere dweller in tents and minder of flocks; he had no taste for the simple life of his family, and little, if any, respect for their religion.

It was too tame and unpretentious for the ambitious and progressive hunter. This is sometimes to be seen, even now; it is true, in this day that once in a while the children of Primitive Baptist parents, who get up in the world become ashamed of the religion of their parents. Poor, weak Esau! If he had never gotten up in the world he would not have been ashamed of his parents' religion. His pride and vanity made that a curse that should have been a blessing to him; that which should have humbled him, and prepared him for usefulness to his family, puffed him up and made him despise his birthright. The boy to whom his father has given the advantages of wealth and education, will sometimes look down upon his old-fashioned and unpopular religion, and esteem himself as too wise to give up the world for so poor a thing. And it is to be feared that even Christians may themselves sometimes become puffed up from their worldly advantages, to their own injury, and the hurt of their brethren. But those upon whom God has bestowed the birthright of grace, will condescend to men of low estate, as their Master did, and will not arrogate to themselves in his spirit, spiritual superiority on account of worldly or natural advantages. And it is possible that it may sometimes be the parents' fault that their child has so little respect for their religion. The Lord help us! The father may love too well, as Isaac did, his son's venison; that is, he may unduly stimulate his child's love for the honors and riches of the world and those worldly pursuits and associations that shall wean his affections from the father's house. We may have so little home religion, and so much love for the world ourselves, as to teach our children, by example, that the world is to be preferred to Christ. Our children are not as often seen at our Conference Meetings as the children of parents professing godliness should be. We remember once a brother who did not have time to go himself to his Conference

Meeting, but on the following Monday we saw that brother, with his wagon loaded with his family, whipping up his mules to the circus, in time to see the street parade.

Isaac was proud of Esau; and it is natural that a Christian father even should be proud of a son who had achieved honor in the world, and risen to be a Governor or member of Congress. He overlooked plain, simple Jacob, whose fame had not spread beyond the family circle, whose care had not exceeded the bounds of his father's flock, and whose struggles with beasts had been only with the enemies of his father's lambs. His days passed silently away in the obscurity of his mother's tent; his struggles, wrestlings and cares were hid from all eyes save God's and his mother's. To his mother's sympathizing heart he no doubt poured out his sad complaints, thinking too little of himself to parade them before others. He was not above his people, but loved them and revered their religion in his humble way, and gave himself for them. If he had aspiration to achieve honor, as Esau, in capturing game in distant field or mountain, it was struggled with and suppressed for the sake of his mother and her God. Whilst Esau was capturing and making a prey of wild beasts, and feeding his father with his own renown, Jacob was struggling with and keeping self under, to the glory and praise of God's grace. He learned to be gentle with ewes great with lamb, and to lead the flock beside the still waters and into green pastures. Not for the flocks of Heth was Jacob concerned, but for his father's flock. The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him as with Esau.

Esau's meat (religious food) was prey taken by his own strength, strategem and dexterity, with sling and bow; his study was the haunts and habits of the beasts of the forest, and he had learned to out-wit, out-wait and en-

trap them. In this he achieved honor. In this profession—which was self-gratifying—he endured cold, hunger, fatigue, and many privations; he suffered as Jacob did in keeping Laban's flock—drought by day and frost by night—but in a very different spirit from Jacob; Jacob's was from necessity, or of faith, and was a denial of self, as David's was when he guarded his father's flock in the wilderness, and rescued the lamb from the lion and bear. Esau's strength, dexterity and endurance were of the flesh; there was no self-denial, dependence and helplessness in his struggles, and no praise to God in his triumphs. If he delivered lambs, or the helpless and defenceless, it was not because he loved and pitied them, but for the honor of doing it; if he brought savory meat to his father, it was not for love of his family, or their God, but for the love of the honor and praise it got him.

But he grew to be a prince among men, for he who has learned to tame, subdue and control wild beasts, (his own passions) has learned to control men, and men become his prey. Thus did this strong man run well; but it come to pass one day that he came in weak and faint; he had taken no venison, and his endurance was put to the test; he was weighed in the balance and found wanting. Disappointed in his expectations, his pride and vanity were so mortified that he was ready to die. He came to Jacob's tent, and his pot was boiling, and he fain would eat of Jacob's pottage. And shall it be that the simple-minded shepherd shall prove wiser and stronger than the accomplished athlete, and cunning hunter? And wherefore, save for the wisdom given him from above, according to God's eternal purpose? And thus the timid dweller in tents takes the prey that the practiced artisan, the nimble-footed and dexterous archer failed to overreach; and Esau, so famed in hunting, so familiar with danger and death, so inured to fatigue and hardship, lays all his spoil down at the feet

of plain Jacob—giving it all for one mess of pottage. How superior, when tested, is Jacob's wisdom to Esau's! and how weak and foolish is the wisdom of the world, when compared to the wisdom from heaven! How poor the training of man and the flesh to the teaching of the Spirit; and the trust in man to the trust in God. Esau, trained in the flesh, of long endurance, of practiced eye and inflexible nerve, crouches, subdued by hunger as the wearied deer had crouched to him; and at last, he whose worldly wisdom had overwrought his inferiors, and beguiled them to his feet, is himself entangled in his own toils at Jacob's feet; so that after all the sacrifices he had made, and the sufferings he had endured to establish his own wisdom and righteousness, he lost the birthright by the very means he employed to secure it; and for Jacob the election obtained it, so that he knew it was by grace and not of works, and thus boasting was excluded from his heart, which is indeed the birthright of grace. But Esau was ready to die if he could not boast, and so his birthright went for a mess of pottage. Jacob preferred the birthright to the pottage and Esau preferred the pottage; grace was a necessity to Jacob, but not to Esau. Jacob desired a good thing, and Esau an evil thing, and is, therefore, condemned for selling his birthright; and the church is warned against such fleshy conduct, and charged to look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright; for ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

We were speaking not long since to some persons dear to us, and said, "You have been living in Butler several years, and have had opportunity of hearing the truth preached at least three times a month, but you have hardly averaged twice that sum in a year; and the

opportunity is passing away, and the time may come when you will desire to see one of the days of the son of man and shall not be able." A short time ago we got a letter from a young kinsman in Texas, who wrote in substance that he hadn't heard a Primitive Baptist sermon in several years; that he would have gone fifty miles to hear Elder Rowe when he was there, but did not know of it until the time had passed; and that now it seemed to him that he could set and hear us preach a whole week. He was raised to manhood in this county, and in access to gospel preaching every Sunday, but then the opportunity was not appreciated. Thus, in a sense, many despise their birthright, selling it for a morsel of worldly ease and pleasure. And Christians are warned of this spirit and reminded that Esau, though he sought to get back what he had lost, could not recover it. How like Esau many of us have been; and many have been the tears vainly shed over lost opportunities. The many opportunities, with the ability we have had, to minister to others in their poverty and distress, and have let them slip, passing away forever, leaving to us vain regrets over a wasted life. How many have died regretting on their death-bed that they had never joined the church! But Esau did much, and Jacob did comparatively little; but the little Jacob did was more than all Esau did. The little that Jacob did honored his mother and showed his love for her; Esau went to distant field to honor himself with honoring his father; but Jacob staid at home and minded the flock because he loved his mother and her God. Esau showed in the works he did that he loved the praise of the world; Jacob in not doing them that he loved his mother better than the world. Though the bargain was made and sworn to by Esau, yet he struggled to evade it, and to influence his father to bestow the blessing upon him anyhow; and Isaac would, no doubt, have done it had it not been for Rebecca, to whom the Lord

(3)

revealed before their birth that Jacob was the chosen and beloved of God, and that Esau should be subject to him. Rebecca's work was therefore a work of faith, and by it Isaac was convinced so that he bestowed the blessing upon Jacob contrary to the flesh. But Jacob afterwards bowed to Esau, but it was simply rendering obeisance to him as a worldly prince; a rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. This Jacob does yet. It is not the thing done we have so much objection to, but the design of it and the spirit prompting it. Works for worldly purposes and the good of society we respect and render aid to; but if these works are given a religious character, and are done as means of soul-saving, then we dare not bow to and reverence them; because they are substituted for Christ. We believe in and advocate temperance and sobriety, and detest drunkenness, but if we must advocate temperance and oppose whisky lest some soul for whom Christ died should be lost by it, then we dare not co-operate with such religion; because it is fleshly and dishonoring to Christ, as making abstinence from whisky more efficacious in the salvation of the sinner than his righteous obedience. But we believe in temperance in Christians, and that their temperance should honor Christ; and we try, as a people, to discourage intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be used mainly as a medicine, as Timothy was charged to use them for his often infirmities.

The execution of Bigthan and Teresh for their evil works gave Haman, who doubtless made himself conspicuous in their trial, a good opportunity for elevation in the king's court by his zeal and good works for the king's safety. Mordecai was overlooked whilst Haman was in exaltation; and it is always the case that when works are done in the flesh, and men are honored in the flesh for doing them, that the spirit of the truth is unknown in them; and, like Haman, works are set up over grace. Not that the works are wrong if in the

right place and spirit, but wrong because in the wrong place. The servant on foot is useful and the prince on horseback useful, because each is in his right place. But put the servant in the prince's place and the prince in the servant's place, and God's order is overturned, and both are injured as well as society—the servant is puffed up and the prince dwarfed. Put grace first, as God does, and works under grace, and all will be right; the works will then glorify God and humble man. But put works as the cause of grace and we put the cart before the horse; and the cart can as easily pull the horse as works cause grace; but put the horse before the cart and the horse moves the cart. Ye are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that ye should walk in them. It is very easy to unduly elevate works and become vain of them instead of grateful for them. Primitive Baptists have reason to be thankful to God for the character he has given them for honesty; but if they become vain of it they will be scourged for it. One is not a Christian because he pays his debts, but he pays his debts (if he is able) because he is a Christian. Good works are not the cause of grace but the result of grace; but when Haman is exalted they are set up above grace, and to this the Jew will not bow.—R.

ELDER SAMUEL BENTLY, of this village, and the Butler Primitive Baptist Church, fell asleep in Jesus on the morning of 19th May, 1887. He was born in Wilkes county, Ga., 7th June, 1816, married in 1838, baptized in 1844, and ordained to the ministry in 1856. He was universally beloved by Primitive Baptists wherever known, having lived a godly life and descending to the grave in his 71st year without a stain upon his name as a man, husband, father, citizen, Christian and minister. He leaves three children, Sister Amanda Bently, of our church, Mrs. Brewer, of this village, and Elder S. T. Bently, of Crawford county, Ga. Few men have ever reflected the light of Christ as he did in his community. Peace to his ashes. See his autobiographical sketch in MESSENGER, May, 1884.—R.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

ORDINATION.—On Sunday morning, 9 o'clock A. M., August 8, 1886, in response to a call previously made by the Primitive Baptist Church, called New Providence, Johnson county, Ark., the following named Elders and Deacons were present for the purpose of ordaining Brother J. M. Hardin to the work of the Gospel Ministry; also to ordain Brethren J. H. Sanders and P. H. James to the office of Deacons viz. Elders J. D. Miracle, J. T. Middlebrooks and L. F. Griffin; Deacons J. M. Prium, J. W. Willis and J. K. Odom. After the Presbytery was properly organized Brother Hardin was called upon to give his experience and call to the ministry, which he did satisfactorily. After which the Council proceeded as follows: Prayer by Elder Middlebrooks, with the laying on of hands by the Presbytery; charge by Elder Miracle, right of fellowship by the Presbytery; Brethren Sanders and James were found, by examination, qualified for the office of Deacons; prayer by Elder Griffin, with the laying on of hands by the Presbytery; then Brethren Sanders and James were delivered to the church as her Deacons, right hand of fellowship by the Presbytery. Your brother in hope,
J. T. MIDDLEBROOKS.

(*Zion Land-Mark* please copy.)

HUSTON, ONT., CANADA., Oct. 4, 1886.—*Eld. J. R. Res-
pass, Dear Brother in Christ:*—I feel inclined to write to you some of my feelings and troubles, since I cannot speak to you personally the next best thing is writing. I am alone here, that is, as to a brother or sister in Christ. I have many a time thought: Can it be that I am a child of God at all! I have these thoughts after being assailed on every hand by friends and relations as well as foes, for what they are pleased to term my Antinomian belief. I tell you it rends me, and many are the sighs I have, wondering if I am thus alone without a brother or sister in Christ in this part, or have I been drawn by some fanciful notion or whim of the mind. At such times I have besought my heavenly Father to direct me aright if I was wrong, and to strengthen me if I am right. I had almost despaired

that I was alone in the world until I got a copy of the March number, 1885, of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, and saw some of your and Brother Mitchell's sayings. When I tell you I was rejoiced that I had found, or rather that God had directed me to those of the same belief as myself, I tell you, it confirmed me. I thanked God with a joyous heart, and my doubts all passed away. Still, nevertheless, it is hard to think that I must stand alone in this part. Brethren, pray to God, if it is his will to give me a brother or sister in Christ here, that I may not be alone; even one alone, be the same a brother or sister, would be a joy to me. Surely the Lord God has some of his elect here. Were I enabled, I would like to go and see you and Brother Mitchell, to have a talk with you on the glorious work of the Lord God, through the Saviour Jesus Christ the righteous. But I am deformed in my body from my mother's womb—the affliction is very severe. But I rest peaceful on my Saviour's promise, that is: "Whatsoever ye ask, believing ye shall receive." Knowing, also, that with God nothing is impossible; knowing, also, that it is him who gives the desire as a forerunner to granting the request, I have long petitioned my heavenly Father to make me whole where I am deformed in my body, though as yet he withholds the answer all for his own purpose, and to be in his own good time. I have an inward rejoicing that it shall soon be. Like Job of old, I will say: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." Though I would say: Be thou with me, my God, when thou triest me. Brethren pray to God to make me whole in my body, and to strengthen me by his spirit of grace. I am, if one at all, an afflicted child of God. Brethren, pray for me.

Huston, Ont., Canada.

W. C. MEDILL.

GORDON, LA.—*Dear Brother Respass:*—May the Lord bless you, my dear brother. Though we be strangers in the flesh, I trust we are kindred in the spirit; though I feel to be one of the poorest of the poor, and weakest of the weak, yet my desire is to serve the Lord; and I feel that my race is nearly run. I have been trying to preach and trying to quit for twenty-one years, and have served from four to six churches during that time;

and some times I can say, Come, welcome death, and at other times fearing to approach the hour. I have been requested to write my experience for the MESSENGER, but fear it would crowd out better matter, and I sometimes fear I have none; but will at some time, if I can get leisure to do so. Your brother in much affliction,
J. E. KNIGHTEN.

LEON, ALA., Nov. '86.—*Dear Brethren Mitchell and Respass:*—As I am expecting soon to move to the far West, you will please change my address from Leon, Crenshaw county, Ala., to Huffins, Cass county, Texas. I have been taking the MESSENGER, and it is truly a welcome monthly visitor to our humble home. Like the merchant's ships, it "brings its food from far," and brings us glad tidings every time it comes, and has my special attention on its arrival.

I was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists at Good Hope, July, 1884, and it has been my fortune to have many sore trials of faith since, but God is our "Refuge and strength, a present help in trouble." I was baptized by Elder S. Long, who is now in his 87th year, and is very deficient in both sight and hearing, naturally, but not so as to spiritual things. Dear brethren, do with this brief note as you think best. If it should be cast under foot, it is where the unworthy writer often feels he ought to be. When it goes well with you, remember me.
J. R. BLAKNEY.

We hope, Brother Blakney, your way may be prospered of the Lord, and that you will write again.—M.

HOLLAND, TEXAS, March 23, '87.—*Dear Bro. Mitchell:*—I was born and raised in Troup county, Ga., and in my 16th year I joined the Missionary Baptists and continued with them about eighteen years. In 1863 I was received among the Primitive Baptists, and baptized by Elder H. R. McCoy, of Alabama. If a child of God at all, I have been a very disobedient one. I have roamed about, from Georgia to Arkansas, thence back again to Georgia, and soon again to Alabama, in Chambers county, and lived there twenty-five years, and am now, with my family, living in Bell county, Texas. We arrived here December 4, 1886. About nine years ago

I was greatly afflicted, seemingly in the very jaws of death, and I vowed to the Lord if he would restore me I would be obedient. I was mercifully restored to health, but I did not keep my vow. I went to Mt. Vernon last Saturday and Sunday and think I heard the gospel preached by Elder Maples, and I now feel to try to do the will of my Heavenly Father, and I do hope the brethren and sisters will pray for me. Dear Brother Mitchell, will you please give your views of Col., ii. 6, 7?

Your unworthy brother, A. M. JENNINGS.

REPLY TO BROTHER JENNINGS.—It will be seen by turning to the Epistle to the Colosians, that it is addressed by the will of God to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, and the text submitted for consideration by Brother Jennings specially enjoins upon those who have “received Christ Jesus the Lord, so to walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” Those who have received Christ Jesus the Lord are born again, not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God. They have, therefore, received the Anointed Saviour as their only hope, their life and their salvation. They have received him as their great Atoning Sacrifice, to bring them near to God in his own righteousness; and they have received him by faith while they were in the very depth of humiliation and dependence. And they have joyfully received him as their Lord, to rule in them and over them by his spirit and word as the only King and Law-giver in the Church of God. They have received him as God’s gracious gift to them, and as embodying in himself all the power, wisdom, goodness and grace of the whole Godhead, with all the gifts to the church by which it shall be instructed, fed, nourished, comforted and governed till time shall end. And now, as you have thus received Christ in love and humility, “so walk ye in him.” Let your daily life practically demonstrate your faith in Christ, and let it illustrate the manner in which you have received him into your soul. And as the tree or shrub whose roots go deep in the earth entwining around and under the massive rocks, cannot be blown down, so be ye rooted and built up in the doctrine and

order of Christ, and thereby you will be established in the faith as ye have been taught.—M.

PILOT MOUNTAIN, N. C., 20th May, 1887.—*Beloved Brethren and Sisters:*—In 1861 I felt that all was not well with me. One morning, soon after this trouble, these words, as if spoken by some person, awaked me: The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the living God, and they that hear shall live. I asked my husband, lying by my side, if those words were in the Bible, and he said the verse in the Bible read the Son of God instead of the living God. I felt to be undone, as without God in the world; nothing that I could call my own. I now, for the first time in my life, felt that I was a helpless sinner, and that I had lived in rebellion all my life; and that the Lord had been merciful to me all my life, and that I had been unthankful for all his mercies, and that I wanted to live a better life, but did not know how to begin. I begged for mercy night and day, and I did try to pray. All nature wore a gloomy cast. The sun itself went out, and I believed I should soon die, without hope beyond death. Feeling so vile, I did not want to meet any of my friends or neighbors, and would go alone and weep and mourn, trying to seek the Lord, and was made to cry, "Lord, seek me or I am lost; I know not the way;" and then there was a time I cannot recollect anything, when my distress left me, and I would have given any thing to have had it back again, for my burden was gone and I was no better. About this time I became distressed about the sins of the world. I wanted everybody to be saved by God's grace. Shortly after this I went with my husband to an Association at Tom's Creek, and there I saw a beauty in man that I never saw before. Twelve old, sun-burnt soldiers filled the stand, and it seemed to me their faces outshone the sun. I felt like I would give the world if my husband and only brother were fit to join that little band. As for myself, I felt too sinful to go with them, notwithstanding I loved the Primitive Baptists above all people. In 1867, if my memory serves me right, on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, I went before the church at Volunteer, and told the church

in substance what I have written, and was received and baptized next day, by Elder W. M. Moran, of which church I am yet an unworthy member. And, dear brethren and sisters, I sometimes lose sight of the promise, and then I go back to where I first found the Lord precious to my soul. Sometimes I feel like my affliction is so great that I can't be a child of God; then again I thank God for the chastening rod that makes me feel less than nothing in his sight, and that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, and that are called according to his purpose. I desire your prayers, brothers and sisters. Yours in hope of eternal life.

MARY A. VENABLE.

HACKBERRY, TEXAS, 19th May, 1887.—*Dear Brother in the Lord*:—I wish to give a brief account of my visit to the churches south of my home, in Hamilton county. We left home 20th April, and came into Coryell county, and attended the regular meeting of Salem Church, where we met many lovely brethren and sisters dwelling together in the blessed peace of a Saviour's love. But I felt depressed in spirit, owing to the affliction of my wife, that she could not attend the meeting. Yet I surely felt that the Lord cared for me, and although he was pleased to give us the bread of affliction, his loving kindness he did not take from us, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. After spending several days among the brethren, especially with our highly esteemed and worthy brother, Elder J. W. Norton, and his dear family, whose kindness and love we shared until my dear wife was sufficiently recovered to travel again, when we came to Bell county, where we had once lived, and attended the regular meeting at Little Flock—the church of our first home in Texas. Elder Wm. Thomas, their faithful pastor for almost a quarter of a century, was present, and many other dear saints. Our poor spirit was again refreshed, and made glad; the church being in sweet fellowship. An opportunity was given and four came forward (one by letter) and told of God's dealings with them, which caused the joy of the soul to spring up, and the saints could cry in David's language, Bless the Lord, oh, my soul; all that is within me bless his holy name. It is better to feel the presence of the

Lord than to try to tell of it. I know there are many poor, hard and impenitent hearts that tell us there is no such thing as a Christian experience, and mock and grin at the poor, humble child of grace, as did Ishmael, not realizing that his mocking was evidence against him that he was not the child of promise, but that he was born after the flesh, and that his legitimate mother was a bondswoman. We came to Rockdale, Milam county, and attended the regular meeting of New Salem Church, and here we found some faithful brethren and sisters contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. The church had excluded some of her members for joining the Farmers' Alliance, and kindred innovations. Oh! why is it that the poor children of God will walk from the Holy Hill of Zion to Moab, to transgress the commandments of the Lord? for the Lord has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. We came to Beulah Church, ten miles south of Rockdale, on Tuesday, the 10th, and met a small congregation, and tried to strengthen the brethren. They had been troubled in like manner with New Salem; some following off after the world and the rudiments of the world. In this church yard rests the remains of our beloved Brother Baxley, father of Elder J. S. Baxley, of Alabama. We felt a sadness that fills the heart, when God releases his dear children from the toils and temptations of earth and takes them home, leaving the vacant seat in the assembly of the house of God to tell us he has gained his blessed abode. This dear old father had quit his mortal abode since we had been at this church before, and we could but groan in spirit as we passed his resting place. Well might Baalam have said, let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. We arrived at our brother-in-law's, in Lavacca county, Brother Wm. F. Smith's, formerly of Bullock county, Alabama, on the 12th inst., and space forbids an expression of the joys we felt, meeting again our old uncle and aunt, (Samuel Smith) also of Alabama. Here we hope to spend some time, as may be ordered of the Lord. We find discord here, but trust the Lord will deliver Israel. May the Lord deliver us from error, and save us above. More anon.

A. V. ATKINS.

OBITUARIES.

ELDER WARREN L. BATTLE.

Died of consumption at his home in Lowndes county, Ga., December 21, 1886. ELDER WARREN L. BATTLE, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. His first wife was Miss Lizzie Cottle, of Schley county, Ga., by whom he had five children, three living and two dead. His last wife was a daughter of Deacon James Whittle, of Chattahoochee county, Ga., by whom he has three living children. He was baptized into the fellowship of Phillipi Church, Schley county, by Elder J. R. Respass, many years ago. Was ordained deacon in the summer of 1871, and moved to Geneva, Ga., in the spring of 1872, and united with the Upatoi Church. In the fall of 1876 he moved to Orange county, Fla., and he and his wife put their letters in at the constitution of Fellowship Church, Mt. Enon Association, which church soon after licensed him to preach. He lived in Florida three years, and I have often heard him say he never knew a well day while there. He moved back to Georgia, Lowndes county, in January, 1880, and united with Cat Creek Church, which church had him ordained to the gospel ministry in September, 1884.

He was wonderfully gifted in the spiritual meaning of the written word of God, and was the most unassuming preacher I have ever known. He often said he was not worth anything to the cause as a preacher, but the brotherhood throughout his acquaintance greatly appreciated the gift of Brother Battle. He was blessed to exercise more forbearance towards an erring brother—at least as much as any brother I ever knew. We all as Baptists, and especially his own church, have given up an humble Christian and a good preacher, and his neighbors an exemplary man. I heard him the last time he ever spoke publicly, when too feeble to stand, and sat in his chair and closed the services by talking a short while, and many of us will long remember the dear brother's good talk. He made known to the congregation that his departure was near at hand; that perfect love casteth out all fear, therefore he was not afraid to die. He begged the saints present to honor their profession by a well-ordered walk and a God-like conversation. These few remarks in the way of preaching to the people were his dying testimony. I must say that I shed tears of joy when the message came that he was gone. I instantly felt that another faithful soldier had been discharged; the warfare had ended with him, and the great trial of his afflictions had ceased. He had suffered long and patiently, being confined to his home twelve months. The brethren and friends were extremely kind during his long sickness, visiting and carrying him delicacies of every kind to tempt his appetite. He was always cheerful and pleasant until within a few days of his death, when he ceased

and talked but very little. He died sitting up in a large rocking chair, into which his wife had just helped him, and leaning back on the pillow he told her to sit near him, so he could feel her touch him all the time, and in a few minutes he had passed away without a struggle. Brother Battle was a kind husband and father. Let us all try to pray to the God of all grace that he will take care and provide for his dear wife and little children every blessing needful for time and for eternity.

T. W. STALLINGS.

The church at Cat Creek, Lowndes county, Ga., in conference Saturday, the 2d day of April, 1887, appointed a committee to draft some words in her behalf, of her high esteem and Christian love for him, as a memorial of our dear departed brother. The church at Cat Creek esteemed him as an humble and exemplary Christian, and he was also an able and delightful preacher. We, as a church, feel that our loss is great, at the same time we feel satisfied that our loss is his eternal gain. We, as a church, deeply sympathize with the heart-stricken and bereaved wife and children. We truly desire that the God of all grace will take care and provide for them.

J. B. ADAMS, }
E. L. MOORE, } Committee.
W. C. MARTIN, }

MRS. LUCY FRANCES LORD.

Our dear Sister LORD was born of her parents, Wm. and Mary Frances Wheeler, in Alabama, February 8, 1861, soon after which they moved to Putnam county, Ga., and thence they moved to Hancock county, Ga., where they now reside. Sister Lord joined the church at Crooked Creek Church, Putnam county, Ga., Saturday before the first Sunday in March, 1883, and was baptized by that worthy Elder, John Gresham. She was united in wedlock to Brother Iverson Lord, August 5, 1885, the ceremony being performed by Elder A. W. Patterson. Soon after her marriage she obtained a letter of dismission, and she and Brother Lord united with the church at Mt. Gilead, Washington county, Ga., where she remained a consistent member to her death, which took place at her home in the beautiful little town Tennille, Ga., March 2, 1887. She seemed to pass away without, apparently, much suffering, leaving an infant two days old. Sister Lord was an amiable lady in every sense of the word, a good neighbor, a kind and tender-hearted stepmother, and an affectionate companion and a good Baptist. Sister Lord was not so loquacious as some ladies, but she seemed to observe the rule, think twice before speaking once. Her neighbors have lost a good neighbor by her death, Brother Lord's children a tender-hearted stepmother and he a loving and affectionate wife, and the church a true member. But we must all bow in submission and say the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May the members of Mt. Gilead imitate her example the remainder of their time, and

prove, as our Sister Lord, that what is good, perfect and acceptable, will be of God.

HER PASTOR,

A precious one from us is gone,
A voice we loved is still-d,
A place is vacant in our home
Which never can be filled

JESSE HARDY MITCHELL.

After intense suffering for five weeks, JESSE H. MITCHELL *died* at his home in Cobb county, Ga., September 18, 1883, in the twenty-fourth year of his age. He was a son of Henry and Martha A. Mitchell. My beloved brother, Jesse, had been afflicted all his life, but whatever befell him, he was enabled to bear it all with patience and calm resignation to the will of God; but it was not until a few days before his death that he was enabled, through God's grace, to cherish a comfortable hope in Christ. In August, 1882, he was married to Miss Fannie Hill, with whom he lived happily till his death. One son was born unto them, but it pleased the Lord to take the dear child from this world of sin and sorrow when only about one month old, and but a short time before the death of his dear father. His name was Henry Young Mitchell. Our lamented and beloved brother Jesse leaves a father, mother, wife, one brother, three sisters and numerous other relatives, but we sorrow not as those without hope in Christ. Dear cousin W. M. Mitchell, we crave an interest in the prayers of all Christians. Please correct this and give it a place in THE GOSPEL MESSENGER as soon as possible.

MISS C. A. MITCHELL.

Upshaw, Ga., April 24, 1887.

DAVID L. BOAZ.

Died, of congestion of the lungs, April 16, 1887, Brother DAVID L. BOAZ, at his residence near Joshua, Johnson county, Texas, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. The deceased was a native of Virginia, and was born August 6, 1823, was married to Miss Ann Robertson in his twenty fifth year, moved with his family to Kentucky in 1849; but was called to part with his dear wife and mother of his three little boys in 1858, but in 1859 was again married to Mrs. L. J. Trevathan, who survives him, and deeply mourns her loss. She is lonely indeed, having no children to go to for comfort, or to care for her in declining age. May God bless her with sustaining grace. Brother Boaz was baptized by Elder Wm. Hutchins into the fellowship of New Salem Church, Caloway county, Kentucky, in 1870, moved with his family to Texas in 1873, and was in the constitution of Buffalo Church near his home in 1877; was clerk of this church about six years, and remained faithful up to the time of his death; was a dear lover of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, and of the cause of Christ. Our dear brother was afflicted for many years with asthma, but seemed to bear his affliction with Christian fortitude and resignation. The church will greatly miss Brother Boaz, for he was always in his seat at church, when his poor health would admit of it. We sorrow not like those who have no hope, for we feel sure that our loss is his eternal gain. May God comfort all that mourn. Brethren and sisters, please remember the bereaved when it goes well with you.

W. L. ROGERS.

Acton, Texas, May 2, 1887.

THOMAS SHEALY.

After dreadful sufferings for five or six days, MR. THOMAS SHEALY died of hydropobia at his home in Lee county, Ala., May 1, 1887. He had been bitten on his little finger by a rab'd dog some weeks before, but felt but little pain from it, till the week before his death, he served on the jury, and towards the close of the week was heard to complain of his finger and arm hurting him very much. Every attention was given him by physicians, neighbors and friends, but nothing could be done to arrest the progress of the terrible poison till death closed the scene. He leaves a wife and several children, and we suppose was between forty and forty-five years old. His sad death spreads gloom upon the whole community.

M.

MRS. WILLIAM FINDLEY.

Departed this life the 17th December, 1886, MRS. WILLIAM FINDLEY, of Emanuel county, aged sixty-eight years, three months and twenty-eight days. She leaves an aged husband and seven living children to mourn an irreparable loss. She was for forty-seven years a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church. It has often been the privilege of the writer to rest beneath her hospitable roof. I knew well this devoted Christian mother. I have seen her under many of the varied circumstances of life. She was most thoroughly devoted to her own family, always placed the most lenient and charitable construction upon the acts of others, always ready to help and console those who were needy and distressed. As a member of the church she was quiet and unobtrusive. Any casual observer would hardly have imagined that there was beneath that quiet exterior so firm a Christian faith; but it was our privilege to stand by the bed-side of this dying lady, and we could see that Christian faith brighten, become stronger and more glorious until it burst forth in a shout of glory to God. We still imagine we can see her as she lay upon her deathbed, repeating some childish prayer learned in the days of yore, then that disease-wasted face would wreath itself in smiles, become radiant; she would clap her dying hands together and exclaim, "Heaven! heaven! heaven! the amazing grace of God!" Then she called for the old Family Bible, and with the Bible in one hand and the hand of some member of the family in the other, her soul left its tenement of clay, crossed the border that divides this life from that purer and better one on the other side, there to hold a glad reunion with those dear ones gone before. It has been the writer's misfortune to witness many death scenes, but one more triumphantly happy I have never witnessed. We felt like exclaiming, This is not death, it is but the happy releasing of the spirit that has grown tired of earthly prison, to soar aloft to realms above, to mansions prepared by the Master's hands. Mrs. Findley is dead, but her influence still lives in the hearts of her friends and children, to make better and nobler people.

A FRIEND.

Math, Ga.

MISS MICAH FLORENCE ORR

Was born in Heard county, Ga., July 1, 1869, and departed this life in Carroll county, Ga., April 9, 1887, aged seventeen years, nine months and eight days. Miss MICAH FLORENCE ORR was the eldest daughter of Solon B. and Ruhamah Orr. Truly we can say of her one of the nobles of this earth is fallen; possessed of as many virtues and few vices as any one of her age. To know her was to love her, for she was ever obedient and affectionate, interesting and entertaining from a child. She had made no profession, though we are informed she professed a hope and a desire to be united with the church. She told her mother, a short time before she was taken sick, that she dreamed she took the measles and died, and went to heaven, and stayed there three days, and was then sent back as an angel for a four-year-old child, and met the child, which was willing to go with her, and she took it and started back, and just as she left the earth she awoke. In a short time she took the measles and died, and our hope is that heaven is her home, and an angel of God her exalted station forever. Then, parents and relatives, why mourn for your noble Florence, seeing, as we believe, she is gone from this present evil world of sin and sorrow, to that world of perpetual joy and happiness, where the weary are to forever be at rest.

Carrollton, Ga.

GEO. M. HOLCOMBE.

MRS. MARIEL ELIZABETH CLARK.

Sister M. E. CLARK, consort of William T. Clark, died in Pike county, Ala., September 1, 1886, aged sixty-two years. She joined the Methodists at the age of thirteen years, but the last nine years of her life were spent as a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church, and she died in full fellowship with the church at Beulah, in Troy, Ala. While her virtuous life, noble qualities as a Christian lady, would justify a more lengthy eulogy, yet the above stated facts are considered a sufficient commendation for her character; for what more could be said of any person on earth than that he or she, as the case might be, bore the marks and exhibited the fruits of genuine Christianity? Such is the sentence concerning Sister Clark, and therefore we have good reason to hope that she is with Jesus at rest, forever free from mortal ills. Many warm friends are left to sympathize for the bereaved husband and relatives in this temporal loss. May the Lord bless them.

H.

WILLIAM DANIEL.

It is our painful duty to announce to the brotherhood of the Primitive Baptist Church, the death of our beloved brother and life-long friend, WILLIAM DANIEL, of Campbellton, Fla. Brother Daniel was born Sept. 1810, and died March, 1887, attaining the good old age of seventy-six years and six months, and when he was called up higher, he went like the patriarchs of old, rich in wisdom, in grace and in years. He was a consistent member of the Primitive Baptist Church for more than forty years, and during this entire period, not a single act did he do that detracted from his church, but every act of his life was in keeping with his high-

toned Christian character, and redounded to the glory of the God he loved. Brother Daniel lived with us as a kind neighbor, advised us as a father, and by the purity of his example, taught us the "calm and heavenly way" as only one of Christ's own disciples could. During our brother's last illness his mind forsook the contemplation of temporal things, and loved to dwell only upon the joys of his eternal home. He loved to think and talk about the change he knew was coming, after which he would be with his Saviour at rest. Though gone from us, he left a bright example; though dead his influence still lives, and will live and be felt when his name is hardly known. Let us imitate him as closely as possible; let us try to be like him, an humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, but at the same time a bold and valiant defender of the faith.

Geneva Co., March 25, 1887.

A FRIEND.

MRS. NANCY EVANS.

Died at the residence of her son-in-law, James Folmar, Troy, Ala., May 20, 1887, our aged and much esteemed sister in Christ, MRS. NANCY EVANS, aged about eighty-three years. She was first married to Duncan Sikes, who died about forty years ago, and subsequently to Winston Evans, who died about twenty years ago. She was born and raised in North Carolina, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church when about twenty-eight years of age, and continued a consistent member until death, a period of about fifty-five years. Sister Evans was strictly and uniformly a domestic lady of the ancient and spiritual type, ever adorned in modest apparel, with meekness and sobriety. Her sound physical health and vigorous mind, with which she was abundantly blessed until seriously injured by a fall a few months ago, rendered her a monument of praise and commendation of the good old times, fashions and habits of the people of her generation, and a rebuke to the destructive fashions and habits of the present age.

But as a higher encomium, we take pleasure in recording the fact that this sainted mother in Israel was not only primitive in style and manner of creature or human life, but also in Christian or spiritual life. Her constant adherence to the doctrine and order of Christ and the apostles for over half a century, is evidence of the strongest character that she was fully established by grace in the gospel of Christ, from which stronghold and deep-rooted faith in Christ, she could not be driven by Satan and his emissaries. She died as she had lived, trusting in God, and resigned to His will. And, as we laid her lifeless remains in the grave at Elam cemetery, we had the pleasing reflection that, "The dead (in Christ) shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed," and that "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—1 Cor., xv.

H.

CORDELIA J. WALTERS

Was born in Indiana, September 20, 1860, and while quite young came, in company with her parents, to Illinois, and on the 5th day of September, 1880, was married to Lewis Bowin, by whom she had two children, both

girls. Soon after her marriage her lungs became affected, which proved to be consumption: suffering more or less until her death, which took place on Saturday morning, March 5, 1887. On Friday night before her decease, she called her husband to her bed-side and told him that she was not going to live long, and begged him to take good care of her little darlings, and to let nothing but death separate them. She then gave directions in regard to her funeral, how she wished to be dressed, and who she wished to preach her funeral. When through with this, she then called for her children, and putting her feeble arms around their little necks, kissing each one of them, saying, "I'll never do so again on earth." She then assured her husband that he had done for her all that lay in his power to do, and bid him an affectionate farewell. She then offered up a fervent prayer to God, and then turning to her husband exclaimed: "My sins are all forgiven; I am going to be with my Lord," sinking back upon her pillow, and quietly passing off. She also told her husband not to grieve for her; she would not die, but fall asleep in Jesus; also, requesting that the humble writer of this brief notice should preach her funeral, and then follow her remains to the grave, and there sing the hymn, "Asleep in Jesus," for which purpose I was telegraphed for, but failed to get the telegram, hence did not fulfill her desire at that time; but soon got a letter and made arrangements to fulfill her dying request as near as we could on Sunday, the 24th day of last month, when and where we tried to comfort the mourning ones by preaching Jesus and the Resurrection; our text in Job xiv. 14, "If a man die shall he live again?" Tried to answer the query by using in connection Paul's language to the Corinthians, "We know if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens."

Now may it be the will of the Lord to sanctify this sad bereavement to the good of both her husband and father, that they may be able to say, "The will of the Lord be done."

Oh, husband, you must not weep,
I am only going to take a sleep
Till Gabriel's trumpet the alarm shall sound
To call my ashes from the ground.

Hermon, Ills.

CYRUS HUMPHREY.

JEFF. T. McCOY.

Brother J. T. McCoy died January 19, 1887, at his home in Lee county, Alabama, age not known, but suppose about sixty-five. He was born in Morgan county, Ga., but his most vigorous youthful days were spent in Muscogee county, Ga., and he was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Moriah, near Columbus, Ga., in 1857, and was baptized by Elder Jeff Stringer, from which time till the day of his death, he lived an orderly and useful member. For several years before his death, his membership had been with the church at Mt. Gilead, Lee county, Ala, where also his first wife had been received and baptized. His second marriage was to Mrs. Kate Towles, widow of John C. Towles, of Chambers county, Ala. Brother McCoy was faithful to what he con-

(4)

sidered his duty to the needy and to the faithful gospel ministry, never saying "Be ye warmed, be ye fed, or be ye clothed," while he gave nothing to feed or clothe. He will be much missed by the church, his family and community. M.

J. N. BRADY.

J. N. BRADY died November 7, 1886, in the sixty-first year of his age. He was born in Georgia, November 19, 1826, and emigrated to Alabama with his parents when a boy. In Feb., 1848, he married Miss Pertheny A. Pouncey, who still survives him. They were as much devoted to each other as any I ever saw. They raised four children to be grown and married—two sons and two daughters. Brother and Sister Brady were both strict and faithful Primitive Baptists, and one of their daughters, also. Brother Brady served fifteen years as deacon, to the satisfaction of the church. He had a severe attack of pneumonia, after which his health gradually failed for several years, and he was unable to attend regularly at his meetings, but did not murmur at his suffering, but seemed to be resigned to the will of God in all his suffering to the end. He was so feeble for several months he could be up but little, and grew so weak that he could talk but little, but he seemed rational all the time, to the end. When the time came for him to go, his brother was standing by. He looked at him and pointed upward; reaching his hand out to him, he shook hands with all present and passed quietly away, leaving a mourning widow, children and neighbors, and the church also, but not as those without hope, but we believe our loss was his gain.

Mt. Carmel, Ala.

HARDY WILLIAMSON.

DEACON JOHN COLLINS.

He was born April 16, 1806, married to Mary Ann Kennedy, March 10, 1839, and had fourteen children born unto them; eight preceded him to the grave, and six survive. He was baptized into the fellowship of Cedar Creek Church, Primitive Baptist, July, 1853. His life was such that in October 1866, he was ordained to the office of deacon, a position he faithfully filled until his death. He understood well the definition of the text relative to his office, for he indeed served the table of the Lord and the table of the poor. Those who were in need were never sent away by him empty. The traveler and stranger always found shelter from the chilling winds and falling weather at his humble cottage, gratis. It was his meat and drink to care for his brethren, and especially the poor worn minister. He loved the doctrine of grace, and manifested it by faithfully filling his seat at his and sister churches. He led a very exemplary life, and though he is dead, he yet speaketh. The county has lost a noble citizen, the community a neighbor indeed, the poor a friend, and the church a very brilliant light. He fell asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, December 3, 1885, and was consigned to the grave the following day, at the family burying ground, near Brother W. H. Cowart's, Tattnell county, Ga. Religious services were conducted by the unworthy writer, text, Psalms xxxiv. 19. May God sanctify this affliction to the good of his bereaved widow and dear children; may it be the will of God that his children fill his place in county, community and church, with a Christian's life. Amen.

Parrish, Ga.

M. F. STUBBS.

MRS. MATILDA JACKSON.

The subject of this notice was the daughter of Joshua and Elizabeth Rowe. She was raised in Crawford county, Ga., and was married to Mr. John Jackson, November, 1839, and lived happily together until death removed her husband from her, February, 1868. They raised a large family of children, who are all living but one, the eldest, who was killed in the late war. There were ten sons and three daughters who are left to mourn her loss—three of her sons and families in the State of Texas, the rest of them in Georgia. Our dear sister departed this life September 24, 1886; was born March 8, 1820, making her age sixty-six years, six months and sixteen days. She obtained a good hope through grace, and was received and baptized into the fellowship of New Hope Church in the year 1858, by Elder John W. Simmons, where she remained a consistent and faithful member until the day of her death. She was glad at all times to meet with her brethren and sisters. Her house and heart were always open to receive and to minister to them, and to be with them, and to hear them talk of God's dealings with them. The cause of her death was dropsy, which seems to be incurable among aged people. All was done for her that could be done by careful nursing by her dear children and by medical aid. She bore her afflictions patiently, and once we thought that she would recover, but it was only of short duration. She seemed so anxious to be able to attend the Association, but the day before the meeting commenced she received a fall in trying to arise from the bed by herself, and so was not able to attend. She spent some of her time in her afflictions with us, and two meetings before our Association she attended the meetings, as we lived but a few hundred yards from the meeting house, which was a surprise to many knowing her feeble condition, and she seemed to enjoy the meeting so much, saying that it was reviving to her. She did not seem to suffer a great deal, only at times, and on Tuesday before she passed away on Friday, she rested well that night, and the next morning seemed to be taken with something like a chill, which lasted several hours. She then suffered a great deal, but when it passed off she never seemed to suffer any more. She said to her son, George, a few days before her death, when he asked her how she was, that she could not remain much longer with them. She continued rational till the last, talking to any of them at times. One of her grand daughters came in on the day of her death, and spoke to her, and inquired of her if she knew her. She called her name and says, "God bless you," and then asked her where were her twin boys? When she brought them before her, she looked affectionately upon them. Late in the evening she asked my wife, who was sitting on the bed, "where was John; was he gone to his meeting?" She had been used to knowing of the times when I went to my meetings. I spoke to her, telling her I would not leave her. She continued growing weaker, and expired at ten o'clock on the day mentioned. Truly a mother in Israel is fallen asleep. It would be impossible in this sketch to speak of her noble qualities as I would wish, but can say that the church has lost a faithful and devoted member, her children a loving

and affectionate mother, one who was ever ready to serve them with pleasure, society has lost a noble member; but we sorrow not as those without hope, for we do feel that our loss is her eternal gain. At the request of the family we tried to speak words of comfort on the occasion when she was interred by the side of her husband in the grave-yard at New Hope Church, there to rest till the Morning of the Resurrection, when we believe she will be raised in the likeness of her blessed Saviour.

We would say to all who knew her, children, relatives and friends, imitate her worthy example—kind and obliging, quiet and peaceful, loving peace, industrious habits. May God bless her children, as we believe he has blessed some of them, with faith; which is the gift of God, which none ever have but the heirs of God. She lived to know of four of her children being members of the Primitive Baptist Church; (and one has been baptized since); to know this was a great comfort to her. We would say, in the language of the poet:

Cease, then, fond Nature, cease thy tears,
Thy Saviour dwells on high;
There everlasting spring appears,
There joys shall never die.

Jones County, Ga.

J. H. GRESHAM.

JOSEPH HARRISON PARK.

This good man, this faithful disciple of Jesus, has been severed from the church on earth to swell the ranks of the church triumphant. The space allowed for such notices as this is not sufficient to portray the excellent character of our deceased brother. It is but due to his memory that we should say that he combined the physical and mental powers and the moral virtues that constitute a noble manhood. Possessed with extraordinary intelligence and refinement, he stood in the front rank of a genuine citizenship; but never sought to bring himself into public notoriety. He spoke and acted as duty required, and thus merited the universal confidence, friendship and esteem of his entire acquaintance, which he enjoyed during his long and useful lifetime.

Deceased was born in Greene county, Ga., March 3, 1815, and died at his residence in Pike county, Ala., May 1, 1887. His father, John Park, was born in Prince Edward county, Va., December 26, 1786. His mother, whose maiden name was Sarah O. Musgrove, was born in Oglethorpe county, Ga., January 29, 1788. They left Georgia and moved to Alabama in 1839 or '40, when deceased was about twenty-five years of age. He was married to Miss Apsey Kolb, in Pike county, Ala., December 19, 1844, of whom were born to him five sons and four daughters, six of whom are still living, the other three are dead. His wife, the mother of those nine children, was born in Conecuh county, Ala., October 20, 1824, and died in Pike county, Ala., October 24, 1879, after which sad event he remained a widower till death. He professed faith and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and was received into the Primitive Baptist Church at Hopewell, Pike county, Ala., and was baptized by Elder Hiram King, as nearly as we have been able to ascertain, about 1871 or '72, where he remained an exemplary member until removed by death, 'the voice that Jesus sends to call them to His arms.'

He bore his painful and mortal illness with the utmost fortitude and resignation, evincing by many expressions that "For him to die was gain," while the world, the church and his children have sustained an irreparable loss. His mortal remains were buried with suitable ceremonies in Hopewell Cemetery, to repose and wait the voice of the Son of God to "Rend the tomb, with sweet salvation in the sound." H.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 8. BUTLER, GA., AUGUST, 1887. Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER W. A. BOWDEN.

I was born in Randolph county, N. C., 26th January, 1811. My father, Travis Bowden, was of English and Welsh descent. My mother, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Garner, descended from an English family. My Grandfather Bowden was a minister of the Old School



Presbyterian order, and lived to the age of ninety years. My mother's family was of the Methodist faith. I was the youngest of seven children, five daughters and two sons. My father moved from North Carolina when I was nine years old, and settled in Maury county, Tenn. I was early taught to believe that there was a God who took cognizance of all we did or said; unto Him we were accountable, and that our eternal happiness depended upon the way we spent our life here. I often had serious and alarming thoughts about death and my future state. I did not feel that I was prepared to meet God in peace, but intended to get better by and by, so that God would love me and save me, before I died.

When I was about sixteen years old, I attended an old-fashioned Methodist camp-meeting, and while there I became alarmed; seeing so many of my comrades seemingly concerned about their soul's salvation, and hearing so much preached about hell and the torments of the damned, I become scared, and concluded that I, too, would *get religion*. Many of my youthful friends and associates professed religion, and I seemed to be left alone. I set in with the determined resolution to get religion too, and I quit my sinful habits, turned to reading the Bible, had my secret place to pray, and verily believed that I could, and would, get good enough for the Lord to love and save me; and that when He made known to me by a great light or voice that my sins were forgiven, that I should know it, and have no doubts or fears about it. I went on in this way about three months, and in this time having been so often disappointed, I began to despair; and many of my old associates who had joined the church (as they called it) having gone back into their old habits, I concluded that it was all hypocrisy, and that there was no reality in what people called religion; hence, as I still loved the pleasures of sin and the world, and that I would enjoy the pleasures of youth, for this great noise about religion was only a farce after all. In 1831 my father concluded to leave Maury county, Tenn., and move to what was called the Kentucky Purchase, which was then beginning to be settled. He sent me, with three negroes, in advance to enter land and make some improvements, which we did, before the family came. Here I enjoyed the chase and the hunt among the wilds of Graves county, in killing the deer, wolves, snakes and turkeys that abounded in this new and sparsely settled country.

Not to be tedious, and passing by many things that might be interesting to some, I come to the spring of 1835. While riding alone on the road between where I

lived and Boydsville, a feeling of gloom and horror seized my soul. I viewed myself a *poor, lost, condemned sinner* before a just and holy God, against whom I had sinned so long and so much, that my day of grace was passed, and no chance left me for salvation. I then, for the first time in my life, saw that God was holy, just and good, and that I was carnal—sold to sin—and that if justice was meted out to me, I was gone forever. I was now made to cry, “God be merciful to me, a sinner!” This was my only plea, and for mercy I continued to beg, more or less, until it seemed to me that my pleadings and prayers were all in vain; and for me to plead or try to pray for that which appeared impossible, was only adding sin to sin; for it was impossible for God to change, and consequently my eternal condemnation was sealed. In this distress I continued to mourn my sad fate more or less for weeks and months, until one dark and doleful night, while sinking, as I thought, down, down, to a yawning hell, all at once my Saviour and my Redeemer appeared to my view and raised my sinking soul from the terrible pit, and gave me joy and peace, as I trust, in the Holy Ghost. With the evidence of the forgiveness of my sins through the Lord Jesus Christ, and what He had done for *poor me* before I had a being in this world, came the impression to preach the riches of His grace in the great plan of salvation and scheme of redemption, according to God’s eternal purpose, which He purposed in Himself to save His people from their sins, through the blood and merits of His Son, Jesus Christ, who is the head of His body, the church, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. And when I doubt and fear that I am deceived in my hope, and at last may be cast away, I also fear that God has never called me to the work of the ministry; for I am sure that if I am mistaken in the one, I am in the other; and necessity has been laid upon me, and woe is me if I preach not the gospel. The first time I

ever tried, I found myself up in the midst of the congregation, speaking at the top of my voice. I immediately sat down, not knowing what I had said or how I had acted. I remember that I felt easy and empty, and thought that if I had said or done anything wrong that the brethren and sisters would forgive me. I did not feel then that I should ever try again; and if I could have been easy and satisfied, I never would. This took place in the fall of the year, after I had united with the Regular Primitive Baptist Church, at her meeting in July, 1835. That winter I was licensed, and on Old Christmas day, 1836, at Brother Joel Williams', I took my first text: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke xxiv. 26. The church called Mount Zion had been constituted but a short time, and was weak in members, but she was greatly blessed of the Lord, and we have great reason to believe that the Lord added to her the saved until she became strong in number and in the spirit of His might. I was ordained to the ministry by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, composed of Elders Hanes, Harder and Volentine, on the fourth Sunday in March, 1837, and served the church as pastor forty-four successive years, and was Clerk of Bethel Association thirty-four years, and its first Moderator in her organization.

And now, dear brethren and sisters, with all my suffering, and weeping, and preaching, and trying to comfort and build up the Household of Faith, I have nothing to rely upon, or glory in, save the grace and the cross of Christ. And if I ever reach heaven it will be because God loved me, and Christ died for me and saved me by his grace. And I am sure that if ever I reach the Holy City I shall have as great reason to praise my God as any poor sinner that ever was saved. Glory in the highest! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Amen.

W. A. BOWDEN.

Brumley, Mo., Sept. 1886.

“For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.”—1 Cor. iv. 20.

Here are a few words, a short sentence, but very full of meaning, and as they are in my mind, and I have a desire to again write for the MESSENGER, I feel like trying to present what seems to me some pleasant reflections from them.

As we learn from this epistle, Paul had visited and labored in Corinth, and had established a church there of those who loved the truth. He had arranged their affairs upon gospel grounds, and had then gone on his way, preaching the word of life in other places. Meanwhile he has heard from them and of their affairs. And some bad reports had reached him concerning them. These things he alludes to throughout this first letter to them, explaining, exhorting and reproving out of the love he bore them for the truth's sake, and as his children in the gospel.

Among other things he had heard, it seems, that some men professing to be teachers and preachers of the gospel, had come among them, accusing Paul of selfishness in his labors among them, and of being mercenary in his motives, and saying that though he had promised to visit them again, he would not do so. And these would-be leaders were puffed up, and were boasting themselves against him as though he would not dare to face them. And some who were engaged in evil practices, which were God defying and dishonoring, may have scorned the apostle in his absence, and boasted that he would not dare to come and reprove them. Now Paul says in the verse preceding the text: “But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power.” That the eloquence, the boasting, the loud claims of these men were nothing to the apostle, but what was their spirit? Had they the Holy Ghost? Were they real lovers of the Lord? Did their ministry feed the flock and tend to stablish them in the truth and

order of the gospel? This was what he would enquire. The OUTWARD APPEARANCE was nothing; the POWER was everything. Now from this one particular instance the apostle proceeds to state as the reason for what he has said and for what he would do, that the Kingdom of God itself, in all that pertained to it, was not in word but in power. The Kingdom of God is not a form, but life; is not artificial, but real. It stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of the living God. And so its called ministers are not play-actors, but men in whom God's power dwells. They do not SEEM to be, but are real men of God. A real ministry is as easily to be distinguished from a formal, though it may be sincere and eloquent ministry, backed up by every mental qualification, as is a living man from a marble statue. The first may have no graces of form, but he has life and warmth; the last may have every grace of form, but there is no life.

Now, this one great truth that characterizes the Kingdom of God on earth or in heaven, that it is "not in word but in power," is what impresses my mind as I write. The expression "The Kingdom of God," is common to the New Testament. And the Old Testament, in every type and prophesy, pointed to it under different forms and names. The history of the Old Testament is but the building of a vestibule to the great temple of God. Its work was but to clear the way for the "King." Everything, from the day of Abel down to John the Baptist, was but sent to prepare the way before "the King and the kingdom." Under all the former generations it was solemnly and blessedly true that God prepared his throne in the heavens, and all things bowed to the interests of his kingdom; "His kingdom ruleth over all." Of this kingdom a gracious intimation was given when God said "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." Satan seemed to triumph and to reign, but it was not for long. The

foot of the King of kings should, as a conqueror, press his head and hold it in the dust. Of this kingdom Moses wrote when he said, "The sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come, and to him should the gathering of the people be." Shiloh means "one who makes peace." What a gloriously fitting name for our King! Isaiah prophesied of him and "the kingdom" when he said: "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment," etc. And of this kingdom Daniel says "that it shall never be removed, and shall break in pieces all other kingdoms." But these were but dim foreshadowings of this glorious reign. Even the most spiritual of the prophets understood but faintly what it all was to be like. Carnality entered largely into their conceptions of the coming kingdom.

At last the day approaches, and the moonlight dispensation which revealed things, and which yet obscured them, is about to pass away. The King sends his messenger before his face, and as he goes he cries: "Repent ye, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He cries this and nothing more than what is involved in this. Jesus is at hand in this manifestation of himself in real kingly glory to Israel. And he is the very embodiment of the kingdom. He is the seed, the life of all that it is, or ever shall be. He has received a kingdom of his father, and he goes forth to conquer and possess it. In the world, the kingdom evolves the king or ruler, and gives him his power, but here the King creates his kingdom, and gives it all its grace and glory. When he comes, the kingdom of heaven comes. Afterwards, Jesus sent out the disciples, two and two, into every city where he himself would come, and bade them preach "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This is the burden of all the ministry that God has ever committed to men. We are to preach the Kingdom of God.

But what of this kingdom? How shall we know it when we see it? Have we no description of it? Most assuredly we have. Of this kingdom Jesus said: "It cometh not with observation. Its coming cannot be traced. It is like the lightning shining out one part of heaven into the other. No one ever traced the shining. It is not, and lo! it is here. Who ever traced its course and called to his fellow-man to see it? Of this kingdom Jesus said: "It is not of this world, else would my servants fight." And again he said: "The Kingdom of God is within you." If any man wants to see this kingdom let him know that if he cannot see it within him, he cannot see it at all. No man can discern any more of anything than what is within his own heart. If the Kingdom of God be not within us we shall see it nowhere else. If it be within us we shall see it ruling over all that our eyes behold. If God be within, we shall see him in all things. If we can say "our father," as of one near at hand, then will he also be our father in all the heavens and in all the universe, so that we can never be away from "*our father*." So, if the kingdom be within us, we shall find and feel his gracious rule in all places and circumstances. Jesus also tells us what the Kingdom of God is by comparison. It is like mustard seed, like leaven, like seed cast into the ground, etc. Each parable presents some one particular aspect of his kingdom. Like mustard seed, from exceeding small beginnings it grows within us to a tree; like leaven, it works secretly, silently and effectually till all its work is done; and like the seed falling into the ground it brings forth much fruit.

But now we consider negatively, that the Kingdom of God is not like certain things, nor made up of certain things. Paul tells us that the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. That is, it is not anything that can feed, or satisfy, or tempt, or be received by the natural,

unregenerate man, but it is what the spiritual man hungers and thirsts after, and by which he shall be filled. This is in exact correspondence with the words of Jesus, "My kingdom is not of this world," as referred to before. It is not made up of worldly elements; it is not supported by worldly power; its aims are not for worldly gain, pleasure or advantage. It is emphatically the "Kingdom of Heaven"—of God. Again, the kingdom of heaven is not like the visibly organized church. This will appear, if we consider a few things. The phrase, "The Kingdom of God," is never spoken of except in the singular number. On the other hand, we read of churches (plural) often. One may be in the church without being born again, but never in the kingdom. One may be born again, and so be in the Kingdom of God, and never be a member of any church. A child of God may be excluded from the church, but never from the kingdom. The Kingdom of God is WITHIN you, but this could not be said of the church. If I may so speak, the church of Christ is the executive to administer the affairs of the kingdom on earth. The church at Black Rock, Md., and the church at Butler, Ga., is the divinely authorized executive in each place to administer all the order and ordinances of the kingdom. The church is a local assembly, and may become extinct, but the Kingdom of God never. Sometimes the word church is used in the singular number, but it is just as if I were writing on civil jurisprudence and should speak of the Jury, the Magistrate, the State, etc., meaning not one special Jury, Magistrate or State, but the system included in these names.

Now concerning this kingdom Jesus said: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Now bear in mind the previous definition of the kingdom given in the words, "Not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and

joy in the Holy Ghost;" "Not in word, but in power;" "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation;" "It is within you;" "It is like leaven," etc., etc., and bear in mind that Jesus does not say the church, but the Kingdom of God, and we shall see why a man cannot see nor enter it without being born from above. Water in the New Testament is often the emblem of the word, and I understand it to so mean here. It seems to me that when Jesus says a man must be born "*of water*" to enter the kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy, he presents precisely what is expressed in the words of the apostle, "The washing of water BY THE WORD."

Now has any man ever seen righteousness, peace and joy; has any man ever begun to enter into those holy things? He is born again. As by the cleansing power of the word and spirit, he that is born from above adds to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, etc., there is an abundant ENTRANCE administered unto him into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Thus I have given briefly some reflections upon the nature of the Kingdom of God. They are, and have been for some time, very pleasant and satisfactory to me. Some reflections upon the expression "Not in word, but in power," I will reserve for a future letter, lest I make this too lengthy.

In fellowship and love I remain your brother.

Reisterstown, Md.

F. A. CHICK.

BROTHER JOHN POST, of Troy, Ala., has established a job printing office, and is prepared to do a general line of job printing promptly and neatly, and says to Clerks of Associations that he can print their minutes as neatly, cheaply and promptly as they can by done elsewhere. We know that Brother Post is an excellent printer, and trust that he may have a liberal share of patronage.—R.

ASSOCIATIONS.

Brother Respass:—Having for many years been opposed to Baptist Associations, I desire, by your permission, to state through the MESSENGER some of my reasons for such opposition before “I go hence and be no more.”

When I joined the church, I found it connected with an Association, and although Associations had not then existed among the Baptists but little over one hundred years, I, not having read church history, thought it had been the case from the days of the apostles.

In 1837 I was a delegate in the Echeconna Association when it split on the passage of a resolution declaring non-fellowship for all organized institutions for which a warrant is not found in the Bible. This was in consequence of the so-called benevolent institutions having become connected with the churches through the Associations. I then, to use the words of our late brother, Dr. Watson, “Saw at once that Associations were well calculated to develop a dangerous power * * * which may react on the churches in the production of much distress.” In most if not all the churches, there was a difference of opinion in regard to the utility of those institutions, even before they became connected with the church on Mr. Rice’s plan of admitting in the the Baptist State Convention delegates from Missionary Societies, which might be composed indiscriminately of church members and worldlings, and thus connecting the church with the Missionary Societies and the world at large. (But it is due to justice to say that this plan was afterwards changed so that none but church members were admitted.) The members of the church, in her sovereign character, were willing to allow to each other, reciprocally, the right of individual opinion in regard to those institutions, provided they did not violate that maxim which had ever distinguished the

Baptists from all other religious denominations, viz.: That the Church of Christ is the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth, and ought to be exempt, separate, distinct from all other organized institutions.

Seeing, then, that if the church was connected with any Association, either Missionary or anti-Missionary, as they were then termed, it must inevitably split, I proposed to my church to stand on her sovereignty and live out of any Association, which was unanimously agreed to, and all went on quietly and amicably until the question of going into an Association again was sprung and urged upon the church, which terminated in a life-long separation of "chief friends," some few of whom are yet living to testify that the ties of Christian affection which endeared them to each other then, could not be entirely severed by the evil genius of Associations, and that these ties strengthen as they approach the end of the journey of life.

If the churches had then each maintained her true character as the highest ecclesiastical tribunal on earth, and remained disconnected (in a church capacity) from any and all the institutions of man, that feeling of alienation, estrangement and bitterness which not only invaded the churches, but entered into neighborhoods and family circles, would never have attained that degree of bitter intensity which it did. And if those who were then called anti-Missionary Baptists had acted consistently with the above-named maxim, and had no connection, in a church capacity, with any other organized institution but the church, the Primitive Baptists might, in all probability, have now been in a far better fix than they are. But, "O, consistency, thou art a jewel!" after declaring non-fellowship for all unscriptural institutions, they have continued to hold tenaciously and persistently to one of them.

Our late brother, Dr. Fain, said: "Difficulties have been occurring in our Associations ever since they have

had an existence among us. When the first one was instituted it was done in difficulty, some Baptists objecting then, as they do now. This was in the year 1705. Thus you will see that for more than 1,700 years the Primitive Order of Baptists lived without the use or benefits of Associations in their present organized form."

Not only have difficulties been occurring in our Associations, but they have all the while been originating difficulties, and are chargeable with a large portion of the difficulties with which the Baptist churches have been troubled during the present century. There are yet living a number of those who remember that nearly forty years ago a query on the subject of Free Masonry was taken up by the Towaliga Association, which act of the said Association developed itself as the entering wedge to split or distract the churches composing that large body of Baptists, and also as a prelude to great trouble and confusion, with which not only the churches of that Association, but surrounding Associations, have for a long time, and still are being afflicted; there being yet in the camp a root that beareth "gall and wormwood." The operative effect of Associations is contrary to Primitive Baptist principles, and to the original, simple and beautiful model of ecclesiastical policy instituted by the apostles and practiced by the early Christians. History informs us that in the early ages of the Christian dispensation, "There reigned among the members of the Christian church amiable harmony and perfect equality." And also that "The Christian churches were independent with respect to each other; nor were they joined by Association, Confederacy, or any other bonds than those of charity. Each Christian assembly was a little State, governed by its own laws, which were either enacted, or at least approved, by the Society. But in process of time all the Christian churches of a province were formed into one large

ecclesiastical body." These Associations, or *Synods* as they were called by the Greeks, or *Councils* as they were afterwards called by the Roman Catholics, professed at first to be merely advisory auxiliaries to the advancement of the cause of Christianity. But they soon effected a change over the whole face of the church by imperceptibly extending the limits of their authority and turning their influence into dominion, and their counsels into laws, and destroyed the equality which had reigned in the primitive ages, by investing a degree of supremacy on some one of their Bishops or Elders, as the *Moderator*, or presiding officer over their meetings, and by looking upon the office of *Delegate* as a distinguishing honor, paramount to that of other members, and inviting none to participate in their meetings but Bishops or Elders, or special correspondents; thus making distinctions contrary to the precepts of the Bible, just as our Associations have been doing all the while; whereas, every gosselly organized church invites all members of her order, who are present, and who are in "good standing at home," to sit with her, and participate in her meetings.

Those first Associations, or Councils, evidently led to the establishment of Popery, and were adopted, and have been all the while kept up by the Roman Catholics as auxiliaries to their missionary operations. The Missionary Baptists also adopted them as necessary auxiliaries in the machinery of their missionary work. To them, they are useful adjuncts. But the order of Primitive Baptists has no more use, necessity or scripture authority for Associations, as at present organized, than they have for Missionary Boards or Sunday-school Conventions.

The acts of Associations, whether in regular sessions or called conventions, have all the while wrought, and are now working a deleterious effect on the peace and harmony of Primitive Baptists, tending to confusion

and estrangement of feeling, and threatening, at this time, a disintegration of the Primitive Baptists in this section of Georgia.

To recapitulate: I object to Associations because I believe, 1—That there is no warrant or authority for them in the Scriptures, either by precepts or example. 2—That they are a fruitful source of contention, ill feelings and schisms in the churches. 3—That in their manner of organizing and conducting their meetings they depart from that principle of equality which was one of the distinguishing characteristics of the primitive Christians; and, 4—That if the Associations were dissolved, and the churches within a radius of twenty or twenty-five miles of each other would inaugurate and keep up a system of reciprocal visiting, especially during the season of yearly meetings for communion and feet-washing, a better state of feeling, brotherly love, harmony and unity of spirit would be the happy result.

Upson Co., Ga., June, '87

JOEL MATHEWS.

REMARKS:—We do not understand Brother Mathews as meaning that it would have been right for the Primitive Baptists to have remained with the so-called Mission Baptists, leaving it to each individual member of the church to have affiliated or not, as he chose, with the benevolent—so-called—institutions of the day, Mission Boards, Masonry, etc. If he means that, we most emphatically dissent from his views. We hold that these institutions were a departure from the faith of the gospel, and that the church should have withdrawn from them, and did right when she did withdraw. It being a matter of faith, no church could retain a member in her fellowship who affiliated, as an individual, with these institutions any more than she could for the practice of any other heresy. As to Associations disciplining churches, our views are well known; we hold the church to be the only disciplinary body in religious matters; and that an Association is not a disciplinary body, and ought never to have been regarded as an advisory council for the churches. But we believe Associations are good things, if rightly understood and conducted; but they should be regarded only as general meetings of the brotherhood, met to worship God as individual members of the church, and should be no more a church institution than THE GOSPEL MESSENGER is a church institution.

R.

SANCTIFICATION.

As there is unusual attention directed at this time to the work of God in the hearts of his people, and as many are crying perfect personal holiness, a few thoughts on the subject might not be amiss. The doctrine of perfect personal holiness—absolutely sinless personal perfection—is revived in forms and from quarters that would make John Wesley blush were he alive. Scripture is quoted, and some of the Lord's people are being led astray by false teachers who know nothing of the infallible word of God. Now, we know from the experience of God's people recorded in the past, that they are not satisfied with their present attainments in the divine life. His blood-bought church has always mourned over her low estate; and from the hearts of the Lord's people is now and has been going up the earnest prayer for more complete conformation to the divine will. It is evident to every thoughtful person, that man needs a fitness for heaven no less than a title. With capacities and qualities unfitted for heaven, and with a heart unprepared, the most valid title to enter and abide there would be no blessing, but rather to the contrary. Eternal life is a gift of God to us, but it is the personal property of every believer, for he *has* eternal life. This life produces spiritual appetites and desires; it is holy, and is the personal fitness of every saint for heaven, given him through the blood and righteousness of Christ. The title deed is signed and sealed with the precious blood of the Lamb of God, and will stand the tests of time and the issues of eternity. On this the believer may rest. But purity always accompanies pardon; the justified believer is sanctified. When the Lord gives the blood-bought title, he works in the accepted son or daughter the personal fitness for his heavenly home. For salvation in all its parts is one; it is the application of the one grace of the one God to

sinful man; the links are many, but the chain is one. To make this clear to our finite mind, the Holy Ghost speaks of the various parts of our salvation. The believer is said to be justified, adopted, regenerated, sanctified, glorified, but the work is one, and Christ Jesus is the author and finisher. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren; moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified;" in order of thought some of these precede and some follow. Justification is the act of God wherein he pardons all our sins and accepts us as righteous; it is his act, not our work, but God's act as Judge sitting upon the throne, seeking after sin and settling the destiny of the sinner. It is judicial, instantaneous and complete, and never to be repeated. Adoption is also the act of God, the Father, wherein he admits us among his children, thus making us equal members of his heavenly family. The act of adoption, like justification, is a thing done, completed and finished, never to be repeated or annulled. Regeneration is the implantation of spiritual life in the soul, and surely is instantaneous. There was a moment ago the sinner was dead in sin, the next moment he is alive.

We now come to what we wanted to write about—sanctification. Sanctification, if we correctly understand the Bible, is the work of the Holy Spirit working in us the personal fitness for that heaven to which we have a solid title. It is progressive, in the sense that the Spirit continues to work until we are made perfect in personal holiness, when we will at once pass into glory. "We all, with unveiled face, behold 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." Sanctification is not justification, for it is wrought in one who is already justified; it is not adoption, for it is the

(2)

work of the spirit in the heart of one of his children; it is not regeneration, for it is the development of spiritual light that has been implanted in the soul. Let us now look at the different significations of the word as used in the Bible. First, the word "sanctify" is used by the inspired writer in Exodus xiii. 2; the Lord to Moses says: Sanctify unto me all the first born of whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is mine. It is evident here that personal holiness is not intended; no allusion to holiness is made here. To sanctify, then, here means to set apart, to consecrate to God. Jehovah claimed the first born as his; "It is mine." In Ex. xix., the word is used again: "The Lord came down upon Mount Sinai and commanded the priests to sanctify themselves." When the children of Israel were about to cross Jordan, Joshua commanded them to "sanctify" themselves. In those quotations, no reference is had to personal holiness, but the word is used in the sense to set apart, to consecrate. In the New Testament we find a number of instances where the word is used in the same sense. In the Lord's Prayer, as recorded by John, Jesus says: "And for their sakes I *sanctify* myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Here, Jesus Christ, as High Priest of his people, consecrates himself to God—devotes himself as a sacrifice. This is his own priestly act of devoting himself to God in his sacrificial work. The other clause in the verse points to the work of the spirit in all believers. Again in Hebrews the apostle says: "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified;" them that *are* sanctified are those who have been set apart, or consecrated to God by the priestly act of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle addresses the church at Corinth as those who are sanctified. The apostle surely did not mean that they were sanctified in the sense of personal holiness; the phrase, "Them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus,"

must mean those who have been set apart, consecrated to God by their great High Priest, Jesus. Again, "Such were some of you; but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." It is claimed by some that this passage proves that believers are as completely and perfectly sanctified as they are justified, and that the sanctification here means personal holiness; but I would call attention to the fact that this was spoken of all believers at Corinth, and any careful reader of this epistle will note the fact that those Corinthians were anything else but in a state of sinless perfection. The mistake is often made by confounding sanctification as here used, in the sense of the continuous work of the Holy Spirit. If we understand the words "Ye are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus," as applicable to the great act of consecration performed for them by the Lord Jesus, as High Priest, under the covenant of grace, then we can understand that this act of consecration was just as complete and final as the act of God in pronouncing them justified; both sanctification and justification were alike complete and perfect. This view harmonizes with all other portions of this epistle; but if understood in the sense of personal holiness, it is in direct conflict with the entire epistle. Understanding the word in the sense of consecration, there are no degrees; all who are thus consecrated by the Great High Priest, Christ Jesus, are completely consecrated—one as much as another—and none more so than another. In Christ all believers are justified, and all of them are sanctified; many passages might be cited here, but we forbear. The second sense in which the word is used, is to express or set forth the work of the Spirit in the hearts of believers, enabling them more and more to die unto sin and live unto holiness and unto God. The first use of the word designates the act of our Lord Jesus Christ in his office as High Priest; the second use

of the word is to express the continued work of the Spirit in the hearts of the believers. An illustration of the use of the word in this last sense is found in John: "Sanctify them through the truth; thy word is truth." The same idea is repeated again, thus: "That they might be sanctified through the truth." Surely a process of personal holiness or purification is here spoken of; a work of sanctification is being wrought in them. In Eph. it is said "That Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it that he might 'sanctify' and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." The apostle prayed that God might sanctify the "Thessalonesians" *wholly*. These examples are sufficient to show the progressive work of God, the Holy Spirit—a work in believers transforming them, day by day, into the likeness of Jesus Christ. The apostle was "Confident that he who had begun this work in believers, would perform it until the day of Christ Jesus." This work of sanctification is like unto the "leaven" hid in the three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. The reader will not understand that we are here contending for perfection in the flesh; far from it; but we are to understand that a work is going on in us that will eventually perfect us in glory. When we awake in the likeness of our blessed Lord, then we will have attained unto this blessed state, and not until then. Nothing less than absolute purity and perfection, at all times, and under all circumstances, in thought, word and deed, will satisfy the demands of the law as a rule of duty. The believer is bound to seek in all that he does and says, the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is Bible holiness; this is sinless perfection; this is perfect sanctification; but, alas! who of all God's people have attained unto this? We look over the lives of the saints in the past; we may look at the lives of the saints now living in the flesh, we may examine our own hearts in the light of this law, and we can no where find perfect

conformity of heart and life to God's will as revealed in his law. In the scriptures we have the lives of many saints spread out before us; we have their experience, left upon record by the Holy Spirit who will not deceive us, and their experience in this matter of sanctification is of great value to all who are willing to be taught of God. We surely cannot go very far wrong in testing this subject by their lives; the lives of those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and who upon the testimony of God himself, have entered into rest. Abraham, the father of the faithful, and friend of God, long after his regeneration and call, not only felt in his soul the struggle between the flesh and spirit, but was guilty of sin—even falsehood. Jacob presents us with almost ceaseless conflict between his old and new nature; between his own selfishness and the love of Christ in his heart, and while this was *his* experience, yet there was a steady progress in his life towards God and holiness, and in the end the grace of God triumphs most gloriously. Moses, even, the meekest of men, who spoke face to face with God; who was honored in his burial as no other ever was; who was faithful in all his house; even this man late in life, and near the promised land, so sinned that he was not permitted to go over Jordan into the goodly land. David, the sweet singer, the man after God's own heart, whose feelings as expressed in the Psalms have cheered the hearts of many saints for thousands of years, this man so beloved of God, was guilty of adultery and murder—sins for which he was punished in his own family. Peter, an apostle of Christ Jesus, long after his conversion and call to be an apostle, in the presence of enemies of his Lord, and after the most solemn warning, even denied his Saviour, adding oaths to his denial; and then again, long after his restoration, he betrayed for a time the gospel of Christ at Antioch, for fear of some Judaizing teachers who came down from Jerusalem to spy out the

liberties of these Gentile believers. Transgression of the Divine law is sin; want of conformity to that law is sin; and all these saints knew in their sad experience that, tested by that perfect standard, by that law which was holy, just and good, they had not attained unto perfect personal holiness; unto what many now claim to have, and call sinless perfection. The Apostle Paul, in Romans vii., details at length his own Christian experience, his own personal conflict with evil. In this conflict, a true picture of every Christian's spiritual warfare is set forth. Every soldier of the cross must have and take a part in this struggle, in which the Holy Spirit will, ere long, bring victory and perfect personal holiness to every one who has been thus called. This is the experience of one who has been born again; of one who is a child God. The unrenewed sinner knows nothing of this conflict and struggle with sin in our members. The reader is requested to read the seventh chapter of Romans. The description and picture set forth are the experience of one that has passed from death unto life. The natural man never has such an experience; he cannot say or feel these things; no one who has not felt in his soul the terrible conflict here described, its fierceness and bitterness, could cry: "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" These words do clearly describe the spiritual conflict going on in every renewed soul—in every Christian's heart, this is his or her sad experience; the child of God knows that this is in substance his experience. They know that as a steward, they are and have been unfaithful, as a servant they have been unprofitable, as a child of God they have been disobedient. Daily do they mourn over their failures, infirmities and sins; daily go they to their Father in heaven for peace and pardon, knowing that if they confess their sins, God is faithful to forgive and cleanse them from all their sins and unrighteousness.

In his own heart and life the believer finds, from day to day, that good and evil are mixed—wheat and tares are growing side by side in the same field. The more he knows of the deceitfulness of the heart, the more he knows of the spirituality of the law, and then the more ready is he to say with Paul: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.” Brethren, I count not myself to have yet apprehended.

In love to all lovers of truth,

Seldon, Texas.

R. A. BIGGS.

Dear Brethren:—Of late my mind has dwelt much on the trials of life. I think I have realized something of the warfare Paul tells about. The worst enemy I have to contend with is this wicked heart and unruly tongue. We are told “The heart is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things.” How much meaning in the expression! and I think I have fully realized it. James says the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Who could explain it better? Not I. I so often find myself not only thinking, but saying things so unbecoming.

I have been reading Fox’s Book of Martyrs, and it has led me to think much of the blessed privilege of religious freedom. How often have I asked myself if we appreciate this privilege as we should. How careless, cold and indifferent we feel at times. The saints of but a few years past were compelled to seek some concealed spot for worship, and even then were sometimes found out and put to death in every conceivable way. We have never been called to pass through trials of that nature. We live in an age of freedom, and how thankful we ought to be. Ought we not blush with shame at our murmurings when we think of Jesus’ sufferings in the garden of Gethsemane? His suffering was for us. Think for a moment of the love he had for his

people. He had no sin to atone for, but his children were guilty, and his love for them was so great that he shed his blood to redeem them. Hence our righteousness is through him. He it is that has blotted out our sins. We now stand justified through him. How sure, then, our salvation, if we be of the redeemed family. Then let us bear our crosses willingly. James tells us to count it all joy when ye fall in divers temptations. It is also left on record for our instruction: "By the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." It is only when we are allowed to look within that we can see our sins. If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. It is only now and then the precious promises come to me with the sweetness I desire. Sometimes for days everything seems enshrouded in darkness, and we are unable to get ourselves out of this condition. Let us cheer up as we think of being done with the trials of life. Only a few years, at most, till all will be over.

"I would not live always,
I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises,
Fast o'er the way."

What a happy thought! we will be done with trials after awhile. We will soon lay our armor by and dwell with Christ. There all will be joy. In that blest abode we will have no more toil, pain or care, but all will be everlasting happiness; "For we know if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Your weak sister,

Milton Center, O.

GUSTA BRETZ.

What could Jesus do more than die for us? and what can we do less than live to him? "To whom much is given, of them much shall be required."

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, WM. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

FIRST BE RECONCILED TO THY BROTHER.

At the request of a beloved brother and aged minister, we offer a few remarks on the following text: "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath 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.

Without attempting to define at length upon words or terms used in the text, we will say that the importance of purity of character and of loving fellowship among brethren in the church, is here inculcated. Christ is teaching his disciples, and in the immediate connection of our text he points out to them the "danger" of being angry with a brother without cause, or of saying to thy brother "Raca," or any such word as would express ridicule, or contempt; but if one should so far give way to his angry passion as to say "Thou fool," he is in "danger of hell fire." That is (as we understand it) such a course among brethren in their church relation, and such inconsiderate and unbecoming words are calculated to bring the greatest distress among brethren, and especially to him who is guilty of such things. Where there is a grievance in gospel order before the church against any brother, he should stand suspended from Communion, and from the exercise of any gift, till he is reconciled to the brother who thus has aught against him. But when we say it is before the church in gospel order, we mean to say that in private trespass of one brother against another, nothing is in gospel order before the church, unless that order has been observed as given in Matthew xviii: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his

fault between thee and him alone; if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two or 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 to the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

Most of our older brethren and sisters are familiar with this point of discipline, but it may be that younger members, and also a few aged ones, should have their attention called to it. It will be seen from the last text quoted, as well as the illustration given in the preceding verses of seeking the stray sheep, that every step to be taken is designed to save an erring brother from his error and preserve peace and fellowship in the church. This is of the highest importance, and for this reason reconciliation among brethren at variance, is put in the front of all other duties. No other duty or labor is allowed to go before or supercede this. It is of the first importance, and must be first attended to, before the offering of any gift of preaching, exhortation, admonition, or other religious service or Communion in the church will be acceptable to the Lord, according to the order established for his household. But it may be proper here to notice the force of the little adverb *there* in our text: "When thou bringest thy gift to the altar and *there* rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave *there* thy gift." Remember that the grievance, complaint, charge or whatever we may call it, is *there*—before the church, and to its authority, the erring brother should be in subjection. "Leave *there* thy gift"—for the church to dispose of both thy gift and thyself also, according to the law of Christ. "Submit yourselves one to another in the fear of God." But let us not err at this point, and mistake rumor for gospel order, or the decision of self-constituted judges for the decision of a gospel church. A brother is not to lay

down his gift or leave it *there* before such illegal and self-constituted tribunals. If so, many preachers would stand suspended almost continually. Let us remember that in all legal proceedings against offenders, whether in church or State, there is a legal process by which the offender and the offence are brought before the tribunal whose legal right it is to sit in judgment on such cases. In the absence of this, you cannot "*there* remember" that aught is against thee, because it is not *there*. And if not *there*, before the church, in the only manner it is authorized to receive and consider such cases, then the command to "Leave *there* thy gift before the altar" cannot apply.

But however necessary the letter and form of disciplinary proceedings in the church may be, no real good can be expected when the members of the church are in an angry, contentious or bad spirit. There is no part of the worship of the Living God in which brethren need more the grace of self-denial than they do in their labors to heal a breach among brethren and save the erring ones from being lost to the church. It is indeed "A work of faith and a labor of love" in the Lord, in which no selfish, carnal motives should enter. It is a good work which God has ordained in his word that his children should walk in. And when walking, or progressing onward in the good work as guided by the letter and spirit of God's word, we then worship God in spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. It is then that much good will result in healing old sores, settling old difficulties and reconciling brethren who have been at variance.

As long as this world stands, and God's people are here in the flesh, they may expect the thorns and briars of their earthly nature to worry and perplex them, and at times to poison all their comforts and joys. It is impossible but that offenses must come, but woe unto him by whom they come. God has a tender care for

his little ones, and it were better for that man that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones who believe in Jesus. It is not the will of your Heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish.—Matt. xviii., 14. Therefore, if any one in the church “be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”—Gal. vi., 1. We see, therefore, that the spirit of meekness is as necessary as the letter and form of discipline in the 18th chapter of Matthew.—M.

CHOOSING A SUBJECT.

In preparing our monthly articles for publication, we are sometimes so vacant-minded and barren that we are at a loss to determine how to proceed, or what subject to treat upon; and we question whether it is proper to write at all under such circumstances, or while in such state of barrenness. As a rule, if our mind be led into a pleasant train of thought on some passage of Scriptures, and we are permitted to taste a little of its sweetness and precious meaning, we feel encouraged to communicate such thoughts as are presented to our mind to our readers, wondering if they will feel, while reading, as we do while writing.

The Scriptures abound with doctrinal, preceptive and exemplary teaching—more, indeed, than any one mind can possibly retain, however studiously and prayerfully they may read them. Solomon sums it all up in few words, saying: “Much study is a weariness of the mind, and of making of books there is no end. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.” This precept embraces all other precepts, and embodies all that is enjoined upon man in the Scriptures of the

Old and New Testaments. It is a short but full and complete definition of all that we are commanded of God to do, and all that we are forbidden to do. Our acts in relation to these commandments, whether they be of obedience or disobedience, affect in some way our relation to God. He has a sovereign right to command what he will, and it has ever been the duty of his creatures to obey. But in the fall of man he lost both the power and inclination to obey God; yet we must regard his commandments in all their original justice, and as binding upon us as if we were potent to obey them. We must regard them in the light of their original bearing. The law of God is not changed by man's violation of it—it is the very same—and requires no less now than before the transgression, which is perfect obedience. Some may contend that if man has not the power of obedience, he is, or should be, therefore, exempt from punishment; but not so, if he had the ability, he still has not the inclination—he is depraved in his very nature, and would not obey God if he could. Hence, to obey God he must possess both the power and inclination; or, shall we not rather say that man is utterly powerless to obey while he is void of the inclination? When one is forced to do anything which is commanded can it be reckoned as obedience? No; but God works in His children both to will and to do of His good pleasure. The will without the doing would be nearer obedience than doing without the will; but in this case both go together.

If man has failed to keep God's commandments he is condemned already; and who will say that he has not failed? Behold, what a dilemma we are in! and where is the remedy? The answer echoes from Calvary's rugged height; there the bleeding sacrifice appears, the sin-atonement Lamb declares the lawful captives free, saying, "It is finished; the ransom price is paid, the redemption of his people from the law of sin and death

was secured: for by his death they are reconciled to God, and much more, being reconciled, they shall be saved by his life."

Jesus kept the law—he was righteous—and bless his holy name, he represented his people in all obedience and holiness, and of "his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace." (Not works for grace.) "Think not" said he, "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." The whole duty of man was performed by him *as man*, "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."—Rom., viii., 3, 4.

Now, our obedience to Christ comes in on this wise: "Elect according to the foreknowldge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet., i., 2. By faith, which is given, the Spirit applies the atoning blood of Jesus Christ to the wounded and sin-stricken conscience of God's children, and their conscience is thereby "purged from dead works to serve the living God." They now have faith in Christ, and it is the faith of Abraham, and is counted to them for righteousness—not without righteousness, though; for "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is our righteousness." The very grace that was given us in him before the world began "reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Therefore, our righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, and we are thereby justified; and "being justified by his grace, we are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."—Tit., iii., 7. Heirs according to the promise first, and then *made* heirs according to *the hope* of eternal life, which God promised before the world began. God does not leave the heirs of promise in a hopeless and faithless condition, but bestows these upon them freely through Jesus

Christ. And whatever the law of God requires of them is fully supplied by the great head and husband, who “loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.”—Eph., v., 26, 27.—H.

THINGS EARTHLY AND THINGS HEAVENLY.

“Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.”—Matt. xxii., 21.

It is not our purpose, now, to comment at length upon the the above words of our Lord Jesus, by which he put to silence the wicked designs of those sects who thought to “entangle him in his talk.” Cæsar was the Emperor of Rome; to his government the Jews, and nearly or quite all the nations of the earth were tributary. And instead of Christ’s coming to dethrone Cæsar, or supplant his government in any particular, as he had been accused, he teaches in the above text to render all the homage, tribute, custom, fear and obedience to Cæsar, or any other earthly government we may live in, that is due to it; but he also teaches that there is homage, fear, reverence, adoration, thanksgiving, praise and worship, duties and obligations, due to God which should never be given to men, nor to the government of men. He teaches also in the above text that whatever work is exclusively God’s work, and appertaining exclusively to spiritual things, such as the spiritual birth, faith in Christ, repentance, forgiveness of sins and the eternal salvation and future destiny of the souls of men, that all the praise and honor in these things should be ascribed to God alone, and that they are things that belong to God with which no earthly Kings, Emperors, Presidents or Governors have, nor

should claim to have, anything to do. "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

For many years past we have believed that neither the Legislative, Judicial nor the Executive Departments of our State, or the United States government, should attempt to have anything to do with the future destiny of the souls of men, nor should any of those things which belong exclusively to the kingdom of Christ and of God, ever come into consideration so as to prevent any officer of government from discharging his duty according to his oath and the requirements of law. Very recently a man by the name of *Smith* was, by due process of law, found guilty of murder and condemned to be hung on a certain day, at Franklin, Heard county, Ga. Strong efforts were made by his attorneys for the Governor to commute the death sentence to imprisonment in the penitentiary. But facts were too full and clear; the criminal had been fairly tried and justly condemned to hang. Finally, however, the doomed man Smith, himself asks for a few days' respite, that he have "time to repent and meet death as a Christian." This had its effect—a respite of a few days was given, as it is said the Governor thought he could not refuse to allow the murderer time to repent, obtain forgiveness of sins and die at last as a Christian. Whether executive clemency in this case was based upon requirements of law, or upon the religious convictions of the Governor without law—in either case it does not seem to be in harmony with the teaching of the text to "Render unto God the things that are his." If executive clemency can be invoked by criminals on the plea alone of time to prepare themselves to meet death as Christians, may not the other co-ordinate branches of government, Legislative and Judicial, recognize similar requests and thus stay the process of law till criminals repent? But if even what is assumed should be true, that the criminal

“*prepare himself* to die as a Christian,” would he not still be regarded in the eye of the Georgia law as dying as a murderer? So far as ever has been given to man to execute the laws of God or man, in Church or State, his authority does not go beyond the present mode of existence. This subject affords matter for many things to be said, but we cannot now enlarge. We may see, however, how far the conditional system of salvation may affect the official acts of even men of strong minds. And it is not marvelous if the *verdict* of jurors should be controlled by the same influence.—M.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

MANNINGHAM, ALA., June, 1887.—*Dear Brothers and Sisters*:—I had been impressed for a length of time to preach in the bounds of the Echeconna Association of Georgia, where my membership was thirty odd years ago. Whether this was of the Lord or not I could not tell; but the impression so grew upon me that I ventured at last to write Elder Cleveland to make me as many as ten appointments. So I left Greenville, Ala., 3d June, and arrived at Butler, Ga., at 2 P. M., where I was met by Elder Respass' son, and conveyed to his house. In a short time he, with Elder Bazemore, came in from meeting, and with Elders Bentley and Cleveland we spent the evening, and at night met with Elders Murray and Stewart. It seemed that Butler was full of preachers. The next day I preached at Butler to a good, orderly congregation, with some liberty, and to the edification, as I hope, of the saints. With Elder Cleveland, I stopped with Elder Bently to dinner, and bidding him adieu (for the last time) as I stated to him, in this life, but I hoped that we would meet in heaven, where there would be no more parting. It was an affecting scene. We arrived at Elder S. T. Bentley's about night, and brother and sister were very kind to us. May God bless them! Thursday, at Ebenezer, I preached with some liberty to a fair congregation. Here I met with Elder Dickey, who closed after me;

(3)

and here I parted with Elder Cleveland, to meet with me at Bethlehem. At Elder Bentley's, young Brother John Kendrick met me and conveyed me to his mother's house, where I was kindly entertained for the night, for which I was thankful. At Providence met my sister and her husband, John McGee, and her son, Sammy Long, whom I had not seen in fourteen years. Sister Emeline Jordan rode with me to the meeting, and I much enjoyed her religious conversation. She is the daughter of the late Eld. Cleveland, and sister of Eld. Wilde Cleveland. I had a good, orderly congregation, and after meeting dined with my sister's son, and spent the night with my sister, in company with Brother Lee Hix. Early Saturday morning my brother, Judge T. J. Simmons, of Macon, met me at my sister's, the only brother I have, and whom I had not seen in about fourteen years. At Salem I had a good congregation and preached, followed by Elder Grant. Sunday I had a large congregation and good liberty, followed by Elder Grant. We had an interesting meeting, the saints rejoicing in the truth. Here I visited the graves of two of my brothers, Elder D. W. Simmons, and Dr. A. J. Simmons. Sleep, my brothers, until the morning of the Resurrection! Brother Zack Hugely met me here to convey me to Sharon, and we arrived at his house about night. At Sharon I had a large congregation for Monday, and preached with some liberty. Here I met Brother McFarland, and went to Brother Columbus Haygood's, to see his father, who had been confined to his bed for twelve months, and had nearly lost his mind. I asked him how long since he received a hope and his countenance brightened up, and a happy smile played across his cheeks, and he said, "Seventy-five years ago I found Christ precious to my soul; and he is yet precious, and my only trust for eternal salvation." Though he could not remember things of yesterday, yet his mind was clear in regard to his hope. When I bade him farewell, saying that we should probably meet no more in time, he wept like a child. At Bethlehem, Tuesday, I was quite unwell, and preached a very short sermon, followed by Elder Cleveland, who met me here. At this place, nearly forty-four years ago, I had my first impression on the subject of preaching, under a sermon

of Elder Cader Parker, at an Association. At Emmaus, Wednesday, had a good, orderly congregation, and some liberty, and stopped for the night with Brother Frank Matthews. At Friendship, Thursday, preached, followed by Elder Cleveland, and had a very precious meeting. Dined with Sister Reeves, and went on with Brother John Steward, and preached at his house at night, from these words: Come, see a man that told me all things that I ever did; is not this the Christ? At Good Hope, on Friday; congregation not so large, but orderly and attentive; took dinner with Brother W. Childs; went on to Elder C.'s step-mother's, and my aunt, where we spent the night very spiritually. Saturday morning Cousin Wilde (Elder C.) and I visited the graves of his parents, our grand parents, and then my parents, and it was a very solemn time. I also visited the old homestead where I was raised, and pointed out to Cousin Wilde the room in which I found Christ precious to my soul, as I hope; and many times in my troubles have I gone back to that room. My mind ran back to the days when we were all there together! But death has cut the most of us down. I seemed to look around for father and mother, brothers and sisters; but alas! they are not to be seen here; and soon it will be said of me, "he, too, is gone." At Mt. Carmel on Saturday, [I was baptized into the fellowship of this church about forty-five years ago] I preached to quite a large congregation, followed by Brother Jones Harris, a licentiate. Sunday, had a large congregation, preached, followed by Elder C., and we believe that the Lord was with us. May the Lord remember these young people who asked us to pray for them. After meeting dined with Brother Phelps, and spent the night with my sister; and Monday morning, bidding my sister and family farewell, left for my brother's at Macon, Ga., and arrived about noon, and preached at night to a large congregation at the Primitive Baptist Church, followed by Elder Cleveland, we hope to the benefit of many. Here my labors closed, and the burden of preaching left me. Tuesday morning I bid my only brother good-bye and took the train for Greenville, Ala., where I met my wife waiting to carry me out home, and found all well, for which I tried to praise

His name. I will say, in conclusion, that I never was treated better anywhere, and may the Lord reward his people for it. Yours, in the hope of eternal life,

W. C. SIMMONS.

PITTSBURGH, MISS., May 1, 1887.—*Elder W. M. Mitchell, Dear Brother:*—For years past I have felt impressed to write some of the dealings of the Lord with me, but a sense of my imperfections, and a fear that I might say something that would seem egotistic, has prevented. And if, in your judgment, you think what I now write is useful to the brethren you can publish, otherwise lay it aside.

I was born in Tuscaloosa county, Ala., Feb. 20, 1844, of very poor parents. My father, Swepston Mitchell, was born in Lawrence, District, S. C., and died when I was eleven years old, leaving my mother in extreme poverty, with seven children, of which I was the eldest, and had to be hired out to help support the family. A very kind man, R. D. Smith, took me, allowing me all that my work was worth, and was a friend indeed; but as he could not keep me all the time, I was hired to several different men, some of whom treated me kindly and others badly. I grew up, and when the war come on I went into it and learned many bad habits, and had some narrow escapes. I know but little of my parents' religious principles, but have learned that my father made no profession, and my mother was a Missionary Baptist. But ever since I was about six years old I had some knowledge of sin; that is, at times when I did anything bad I would feel bad about it. But this, perhaps, was because I had been told the "bad man" would catch me if I done bad; but after going to the war, I cared but little about these things till 1864; while on Mobile Bay I was sick and lay down in a little house, thinking I would die. The shells were flying about the house and I was much alarmed, thinking if I am killed I am bound for torment. I fell on my knees to pray, thinking it would save me from danger. But when on my knees the thought came that I was the most wicked boy on earth, and my sins rose up like mountains before me, and I became so alarmed that I went out of the house up the Bay to Mobile, dodging from the shells

flying from the gun boats. In this way I went on through the war, thinking I would be killed and forever lost, as I felt to be the worst sinner upon earth, and after getting home I felt ashamed to meet with my friends, because I thought everybody looked upon me as being just what I felt myself to be. I went moping about, feeling so badly at times that I would think I was going to die right at once, sometimes crying, and my mother would want to know what was the matter. I would tell her how mean and miserable I was, and felt as though I had not a friend on earth. She would tell me that people liked me very well, and that I only imagined they did not; but this did not seem to do me any good. I became even ashamed to go to a neighbor's house, and would frequently go around through the woods rather than walk the road or pass by any one's house, and of Sundays would hide myself out in the woods alone rather than be in company. But I felt desirous to commune with God in prayer, for mercy upon me, a sinner. And all this time I really did not know what was the matter with me, for I had never heard of any one being in such condition, and thought probably it might have been caused by my raising, as I never had been to meeting but little, and been nothing but a poor orphan hireling boy, and had to go unnoticed. I had come to the end of my strength, and in the fall of 1865, protracted meeting commenced, and one night I went, feeling that I would never get back home. They called for mourners, telling them if they would come and give themselves up to God they would be saved. Believing it was right for me to go, as I had already given myself up to die, I went and got down on the ground, and it did seem that I was sinking to torment, but the next thing I remember I was praising God. I then thought my troubles over, but soon doubts and fears came on, causing me to feel miserable. Up to this time I had read the Scriptures but little, and as these Methodist people desired me to join them, I did so, but I commenced reading the Bible, and before six months I had read clear away from the Methodist, and told the class-leader that I was no Methodist, and have been among them but little since. At length I became deeply concerned to be settled in life, and was married to Sarah

D. Moore, November 15, 1866; but still for three years I continued much troubled. Eventually I concluded it was all nothing but a mere whim of the brain, and that I never had any real change, for I seemed to be even worse than ever before. So, in 1869, at a Missionary Baptist protracted meeting, I went up as a mourner, and the first thing I knew, when they gave opportunity to applicants for membership, I was there among them, and after telling a part of what I have here written, they received me as a member, to be baptized the next morning. Thinking my long troubles were now all over, I went home feeling good and comfortable; but after taking a night's rest and awaking next morning, I felt dreadfully bad and unworthy, and thought I would not go to the meeting, but my wife was fixing to go, and so I thought I must not then back out. But, O, how I did wish I had not joined. However, with all this struggle of mind, I went along, and was baptized by John Sanders.

W. C. MITCHELL.

(Continued.)

EAST POINT, GA., March, 1886.—*Dear Bro. Mitchell:*
—The 9th day of June, 1877, I was made to feel as I never before had felt about death and eternity. I felt justly condemned as a sinner before God. But soon again for a time I went on seeking the pleasures of this world, thinking as many others have done, that when I got older and more settled I could get religion, and that God would save me on my good works. But soon a feeling sense of my sins came upon me with more force than ever before. I would retire to some secret spot where I thought no one could see me, and there ask God's mercy, but still found no relief. I often read the New Testament, but it seemed to condemn me. In this sad condition I remained till 1882, when it did appear to me that I was still worse than ever before, so that it seemed I could not bear it, but still I went along trying to get rid of such a sense of condemnation until July I was plowing and meditating upon my awful condition, when all at once I felt that I must die very soon. I tied my mule to the fence and went out of the field, and falling on my knees, I asked the Lord for mercy for the last time, as it then seemed to me. I fell prostrate to the

earth, and all I could say was "Lord, have mercy; Lord, have mercy on me." The next thing I remember I was on my feet praising God, and it seemed that everything in God's creation was lovely. Soon I returned to my work, and I felt so much better in my condition that my plow seemed to run better, and everything went on better than ever before. Soon I thought I would tell my folks what had taken place with me, but before I got to the house it occurred to me that I was deceived in the whole matter, and had better not tell it. Finally, however, after several days, this scripture was presented with force to my mind: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Immediately the duty of going to the church took hold upon me, and I could not get rid of it. Many promises were made that I would tell the church what great things the Lord had done for me, but fearing I was deceived, those promises were broken, till Saturday before the third Sunday of September, 1884, I went forward to the church at Shoal Creek, Clayton county, Ga., and told in substance what is here related, and was received and baptized next day by Elder N. B. Hardie, the beloved pastor. Dear readers of the MESSENGER, many doubts and fears have fallen to my lot since I joined the church, but I do know that if I am ever saved at all, it will be by grace alone.

Dear Editors, I am a little behind with my subscription, yet I hope you will bear with me and I will send the money soon as I can, for I do appreciate the paper as much as any one, I reckon. May the Lord bless you in your declining years, and enable you to go forth publishing the good news of salvation by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

J. R. JACKSON.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, BY ELD. HASSELL—BAPTISM.—In all human literature, there is not another word whose meaning is more certain, and yet more disputed, than the Greek word BAPTIZO. The history of this word presents the strongest demonstration of the willful and obstinate blindness and perversity of the carnal mind. For the last few hundred years the meaning of this word has been most unblushingly and industriously perverted—not so much by Romanists as by Protestants—to suit the carnal idea of human expediency,

decency and convenience. The Romanist, as also the Romanizing Protestant, bases the change from baptism to sprinkling, not on an altered view of the original form of the rite, but on the authority of his church to alter rites and ceremonies. But as Protestants generally claim strict adherence to the Bible, they seek, in order to justify their change of ordinance, to explain away the ground idea of the word *baptizo* and make it a general term for the *application of water in any form*. This religious error, because of the headway it has made in English speaking countries, is embodied in the latest unabridged dictionaries of Webster and Worcester. Every respectable Greek scholar in England and America will admit that there is only one standard Greek-English Lexicon published in Europe or America, and that is the seventh edition of Liddell's and Scott's, published in 1883, and it represents the latest and highest combined scholarship of Europe and America. This Lexicon gives absolutely but one meaning of *baptizo*, "*to dip in or under water.*" Here it is seen that *dipping* or *immersion* is the *essential* meaning of the word. The meaning "bathe," given in the sixth edition is expunged from the seventh, because found to be erroneous. The compilers of this Standard Lexicon are Henry G. Liddell and Robt. Scott, both deans or clergymen, and doctors of divinity in the Church of England. It was not their sympathy for Baptists, but their knowledge and reputation as scholars, that compelled them to give *baptizo* its only proper meaning of *dipping*, or *immersion*. Immersion is the proper significance of *baptizo*, and the original form of the rite has been affirmed through all Christian ages, and is still affirmed by the highest scholarship of Christendom, Oriental, Roman Catholic and Protestant. The Roman Catholic Church at first allowed sprinkling or pouring only in case of sick persons, the first recorded case being Novatian, of Rome, in the year 250; but the sprinkling of well persons gradually came in in spite of the opposition of Councils and hostile decrees. The Council of 1311 was the first Council that legalized baptism by sprinkling, by leaving the mode to the choice of the officiating minister. In England and Scotland, immersion was the ordinary practice till after the

Reformation. Calvin says: "The word baptize signifies to *immerse*; and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church." In 1643, the "Westminster Assembly of Divines," (Presbyterians) through the influence of 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 that decision, and decreed that sprinkling should be the legal mode of baptism. The Independents or Congregationalists adopted sprinkling from the Presbyterians, and the Methodists from the Episcopalians. John Wesley says: "The ancient manner of baptising was by immersion."

A dipping in the water is both a washing and a temporary burying. The immediate emersion or uplifting of the body out of the water, which was always done by John and the apostles, fitly symbolized both the birth of the Spirit and the resurrection with Christ to newness of life. Christ, after having been baptized, came up straightway out of the water; so the eunuch who had gone down into the water, came up out of the water. As for a sufficiency of water in Jerusalem to immerse the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost, the city contained, besides a countless number of large and deep private cisterns, six immense public pools affording the most extensive bathing or swimming accommodations—the Mosaic law and the traditions of the elders requiring a vast quantity of water for ceremonial ablutions. During none of the numerous sieges did the city suffer for lack of water. It is not said that the 3,000 were all actually baptized the same day; but it could have been done in a few hours by the apostles, or by the seventy elders helping them. Immersion takes very little longer than sprinkling, if the formula is said with each, which is always done. Allowing one minute for each immersion, the twelve could have immersed 3,000 in four hours and ten minutes, or with the seventy, it could have been done in thirty-seven minutes.

The above we extract from the Church History, page 275, * * but we find that space will not allow us to give an extract of sufficient length to do anything like justice to the author, and hence the greater need of each person who can do so, procuring the History. The

History is a work of great labor, conscientiously done, as we believe, for the cause of Christ, and at great pecuniary loss to Brother Hassell. We trust the brotherhood will come to his rescue and make some sacrifice on their part for his good and the good of the cause; and do try to get that *little* idea out of the head of any that everything of that sort is done for *money*.—R.

The Church of Christ, at Bald Rock, after preaching by Elders Wm. Adams and W. H. Gullledge, from 2 Tim. xi., 15, proceeded according to appointment to the ordination of Brother John F. Almond to the gospel ministry; Elders Isaac Hamby, Wm. Adams, W. D. Almond and W. H. Gullledge composing the presbytery. Brother Arnold Whitaker was appointed to speak for the church, and upon his satisfying the presbytery of Brother Almond's qualifications for the gospel ministry, they proceeded with his ordination; Elder Isaac Hamby acting as Moderator, Elder Wm. Adams conducting the examination on Articles of Faith, Elder W. D. Almond leading in prayer, Elder W. H. Gullledge delivering the charge, and after an admonition by the Moderator, he, on behalf of the presbytery and the church, extended the right hand of fellowship to Bro. Almond.

ELDER ISAAC HAMBY, *Moderator*.

PATRICK H. WHITE, *Church Clerk*.

OZARK, ALA., 8th June, 1887.—*Dear Brother Respass:*
—In some sections, I heard of some little differences on minor points; but I do feel that where the Lord has given us a well-grounded hope in Jesus, and we are established on the cardinal points of doctrine, that we should not try to compel every one to see just as we do on every point; for it is not all revealed to any one man; we only see in part and understand in part. If the brethren differ on the *new birth* they should not try to destroy or sever the bond of union that exists, because they cannot see it alike. The important point with us all should be, "*Have I been born again?*" And the safest ground is to take the language of Jesus, and say, "*ye must be born again,*" or "*except a man*" (not part of a man, or eternal spirit, or child) "*be born again,* he cannot see the kingdom of God." When Israel

crossed the Red Sea, the whole person (man or woman) crossed. *It* was the same one that was in Egypt that sang the song of deliverance. The glorious thought to *us* is, that though we are fallen and depraved sinners, Jesus hath redeemed *us* from under the law and under its curse, and brought *us* to his banqueting house, and the banner over *us* is love; and now we poor, helpless, hell-deserving sinners have a hope in Jesus that reaches beyond this vale of tears, that this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. These vile bodies of ours shall be changed and fashioned like the body of Jesus. Is this not your hope dear saint, that Jesus has saved *you* from your sins? Then let us endeavor to live in peace, and not be striving about words to no profit. I believe it would be much better for all of us, and for the cause, and more encouraging to the poor little lambs, to preach what has been revealed, and not be going into metaphysical ideas that we nor the brethren know nothing about. "Secret things belong unto the Lord, but revealed things to us and our children." The flesh is very proud, and wants to be eulogized. Let us all abide in our calling, no matter what it is. If the Lord has called poor me, he has a use for me; while I am so very weak, he has little weak ones for poor me to comfort. There seems to be a disposition among God's little ones to be finding fault nearly all the time. It seems to be a *contagious disease*, and we should shun it more than we do the small pox. I hate to see it among God's dear ones, it causes them to become sickly, and it drives the little ones away from the fold. Just as certain as you hear one finding a great deal of fault with the brethren, the fault is in himself. Nearly all excluded members will find a great deal of fault with the church that excluded them. Ask what they were excluded for and they will say "Nothing!" I love a Baptist who has less confidence in himself than anybody else; who can say with the poet:

"Of all the foes we meet,
None so oft mislead our feet,
None betray us into sin
Like the foes that dwell within."

Then he feels to be the least of all saints, and can esteem others better than himself. Then, brethren, let

us have a spirit of forbearance and speak the same things. Brethren, if we possessed more love it would hide a multitude of faults. We never see many wrongs in those we love. In conclusion would say, I saw many on my tour who have a hope in Jesus, but are lying out of duty. Some tell them to stay out as long as they can. My advice to the poor little ones is, come home, and tell what you feel the Lord has done for you, and follow Jesus into the liquid grave of baptism. I have baptized forty-two since last fall, and they seemed to feel very unworthy. All of God's children feel to be poor and unworthy. May the God of peace be with you all. Pray for me when it goes well with you. I am yet very feeble. Yours in affliction,

LEE HANCKS.

OBITUARIES.

JUDGE HIRAM DENNIS.

Judge HIRAM DENNIS was born in Lincoln county, Ga., November 20, 1804, and died in great peace at his home in Troup county, Ga., May 11, 1887.

He was happily united in marriage with Miss Nancy Howard, August 24, 1825. The Lord blessed this union, and permitted it to continue until their children were all grown when, on July 6, 1869, He willed to dissolve it, and called the precious wife to rest. On April 13, 1871, he was married again to the now sainted Susan A. L. Brady. He was again happily married November 11, 1875, to Mrs. Mary I. McCrara, of precious memory, and then again, he married the amiable Mrs. Sallie B. Oliver, who now lives to mourn his loss.

In the long and useful life of Judge Dennis, there are presented all the characteristics of a good citizen, always manifesting an interest that imparted zeal and showed a deep and abiding love for his county. He was affected toward everything he believed to be advantageous to his neighbors or to the commonwealth. He was ready for action in all the councils and deliberations of his people, and filled the offices of the county entrusted to him with that care and energy that were honorable to him and satisfactory to his constituency. He had fine business energy and tact, and consequently was largely successful in life. He joined the church and was baptized into its fellowship in November, 1831, and at once became a zealous officer in the Baptist Church. As a clerk and deacon in his own church, and as clerk of the Association, his duties were correctly and faithfully performed. In the deliberative assemblies of his church, his counsel was often sought, and his advice was always given in

love to humanity and the fear of God. Truly a prince in the Primitive Baptist Church has fallen, but earth's loss is heaven's gain.

Draw the curtain aside and look into the sacred precincts of home. Take a view of his private life. We find, first, a true neighbor, a strong friend, particularly to the needy, the poor, the afflicted. A nobler, kinder, sweeter husband the artist's brush will never paint. The biographer's mighty pen will never delineate half so sweetly the characteristics of a father that were expressed in the daily walk of Judge Dennis' life. He was a fond, counseling, loving, self-sacrificing, but withal, a just father.

From whence cometh these things? Look and see in the good citizen, the public officer, the business man, with all his zeal and energy, an humble, self-denying, cross-bearing, God-fearing Christian gentleman, enjoying fellowship with Jesus Christ and meekly journeying along to the rest in the sweet bye-and-bye. Can we wonder that his end was so peaceful, or that his home is in heaven?

J. S. SAPPINGTON.

JANE KING.

Our daughter, JANE KING, died April 26, 1887, in the thirty-fifth year of her age. She was stricken with paralysis in June, 1886, but partially recovered so as to visit relatives and attend church meetings. But last March she was taken with typhoid fever, and in defiance of medical skill, anxious care and attention by brothers, sisters and many friends, about one month filled up the cup of suffering, and her spirit took its flight to God who gave it. She bore her afflictions with remarkable fortitude and patience, saying: "The Lord knows best—it is all right for me to suffer." As a chaste, upright, moral lady, she was distinguished from her youth as an exception, seldom participating in the lightness or frivolities common among the young; carefully selecting modest and becoming language in conversation; and though of a reserved disposition, her manner was affable and pleasant. She was greatly devoted to vocal music, and was practically "a good singer," often sought for by those far and near who had a taste for that soul-stirring melody that is produced by the union of sweet and harmonizing voices. She was convicted of sin in August previous to her death, and became deeply concerned relative to her condition before God. She kept the Bible constantly in her room, seeking instruction therefrom, and desiring to realize her acceptance with God. She anxiously sought to read THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, and said she was made to see and feel great relief at one time, while reading a letter of John Thorn, of Baltimore, in the MESSENGER of June, 1884; and this, with many evidences in her late affliction, gives comfort in believing that she was fully prepared by grace to join the heavenly choir and sing praises to God forever.

It is our frailty makes us weep,
For with the blessed she doth sleep;
No more she joins with us to sing,
But chants the praises of her king.

Henderson, Ala., May 29, 1887.

HIRAM KING.

MARY E. WALDRUP.

MARY E. WALDRUP, of Jasper county, Miss., died at her home Oct. 11, 1886, aged twenty-two years, seven months and fifteen days. She was married to J. W. Waldrup December 3, 1885, but alas! how soon was this blessed union broken by the visitation of death. As a companion, associate and friend, she was genial, affectionate and true; as a sister and daughter, she was loving and dutiful. She united with the Primitive Baptists at Bethlehem, in her twenty-first year, living a devoted and consistent member until her death. Her highest aspirations seemed only to be found at her proper place on her monthly meeting days, ever humble and ardently encouraging the prosperity of the church.

Nature seemed to have designed her for a useful and honorable career, but alas! how soon was this tender branch of Christian constituency espoused to the silent tomb amid the devout lamentations of many relatives and friends! But we mourn not as those who have no hope. She leaves a husband, infant son, and many relatives and friends to grieve her loss.

May the Lord suit unto each of us grace sufficient for our days, and that her only son be directed aright in the path of righteousness to meet his dear mother in the glory world, and may her husband be enabled to say:

Sleep on, dear one, ere long I'll meet you,
In that world so bright and fair,
With a smile I'll gladly greet you
When we join our right hands there.

Lake Como, Miss.

A FRIEND.

LEWIS W. TRUE.

The above named brother was born in Scott county, Ky., on the 6th of November, 1808, and died in Seward county, Neb., on the 10th day of May, 1887, being seventy-eight years, six months and four days old when he passed death's door to the world of life forevermore. Brother was married to Ann E. Hodges, in Bourbon county, Ky, 10th of March, 1830, and was baptized in the year 1831, by the late Elder Thos. P. Duany, into the fellowship of the Elizabeth Predestinarian Baptist Church of Bourbon county, Ky. He moved with his wife and one child to Coles county, Ills., in the spring of 1834, where he lived for several years. He then moved, I think, in the year 1842, to Platte county, Mo., where he lived until about the year 1861 or '62, when he again moved back to Coles county, Illinois, where he remained until the fall of 1884, when he came to Seward county, Neb., to live; his wife having preceded him in death about six years.

Brother was a firm believer in the doctrine held and preached by the Primitive Baptists, and in his younger days a good disciplinarian, and active in church matters. At the time of his death he was on his way to our regular church meeting, at New Hope Church, where his membership then was. He was stricken with paralysis at the breakfast table of our brother, S. W. True, while in conversation with Deacon B. W. Magee, and brother S. W. and his family, after which he never spoke or opened

his eyes until Tuesday morning following, when just at noon he breathed his last, as we trust and believe, falling asleep in Jesus.

In the absence of other preaching brethren, the writer offered prayer and spoke a short time to friends at the house before starting to the grave where we laid his body away to await the awakening of the dead. He leaves a son and daughter, and six grandchildren to follow him in death.

There are yet three brothers and one sister of our family now living, the sister being 83 years past, and the writer 63 years past, the first being the oldest of a large family (eleven), and the last the youngest; all of the family, together father and mother, being members of the Primitive Baptist Church.

We realize that we shall all soon be gathered to our fathers, and that time and things shall know us no more. May God prepare us and all his children for this solemn change.

JAS. M. TRUE.

Seward, Neb., June 1, 1887.

LUCY WHEELER LORD.

Died, June 23, 1887, LUCY WHEELER LORD, infant son of Brother Iverson Lord, and Sister Lucy Lord, the latter whose obituary appeared in July number of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER. He was two days old when his mother died. He lived three months and twenty-six days, and died after suffering twenty-one days of indigestion. He was named for his mother, and was a little pet in the family for her sake; but he is gone, too, to rest with the blessed Redeemer in heaven, where there is no more suffering and death. While it is heart-rending to give him up, let us try to adopt the language of Job: The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

H. TEMPLES.

ELDER J. M. C. ROBERTSON.

Died, at his residence in Hunt county, Texas, Elder J. M. C. ROBERTSON, aged seventy-five years, two months and thirteen days, and at the request of his surviving widow, Sister H. E. Robertson, also at the request of Sabine Primitive Baptist Church in said county, of which he was a member and the pastor, it becomes my duty to write a notice of his death and life. He was born in White county, Tenn., Feb. 21, 1812, and at six years old, his parents moved to Giles county, Tenn., and in 1818 they moved to Franklin county, Ala. In September, 1825, he professed a hope, and in October, about one month after, he joined the Primitive Baptist Church called Hepzibah, and was baptized by Elder Thomas Moss, and soon felt impressed to preach. In 1827 he moved with his parents to Hardeman county, Tenn., and the first of the year 1829 he commenced preaching, and in April of the same year he was licensed, and in November, 1831, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry. In 1832 he was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Watson, whose maiden name was Carter. In 1841 he moved to South Arkansas, and was Moderator of the South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association for about fifteen years. In 1864 he moved to Texas, and was Moderator of the Pilot Grove Associa-

tion for several years, until he asked to be relieved, by reason of his age, to which he belonged when he died. In 1882 his first wife died, who had been his devoted wife for fifty years, and in September, 1883, he was married to Mrs. H. E. Tatum, whose maiden name was McCullers.

As a Moderator of an Assembly of believers, he had few equals; as a minister, he was one of the most acceptable I ever knew. He was well informed, and possessed of natural oratorical powers; a good reasoner, always commanding large congregations and good attention. He preached faithfully, acceptably and regularly fifty-eight years, and in the forty-two years that the writer had knowledge of him, he never heard aught alleged against him. He was taken sick in October, 1886, but was up and down until a little over seven weeks before he died; he was rational, except at short intervals, until a day or two before his death. The writer visited him frequently during his entire sickness, and ever found him patient, perfectly resigned to the will of the Lord, and seemed to enjoy an abundant supply of grace, and told the writer he was waiting the will of the Lord, in the full assurance of the faith he had been preaching for fifty-eight years. The writer does feel to bless the Lord for the Christian patience and fortitude given to his beloved wife; she proved herself to be a companion indeed, and seemed to never tire in attending to his every want and comfort, during his entire sickness, evidencing, indeed, that she was a helpmate, the gift of God. In the death of Brother Robertson truly a father in Israel has fallen, but thanks to the great and good name of the Lord, he has fallen to rise again to receive that inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for him, for surely he was kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be relieved in the last time. He was buried at the McWright grave-yard at 4 o'clock p. m., May 7th. The writer pronounced the funeral services at the grave in the presence of a large congregation, and he trusts to the comfort of all believers present. He was a kind father, a devoted husband, and beloved brother. He leaves a beloved wife, five children and many brethren, sisters and friends to mourn his loss, but our loss is his eternal gain. May God give us consolation in sending able ministers in the New Testament to fill his place and comfort God's people.

Greenville, Texas, May 20, 1887.

ALEX MASON.

DEACON O. M. DODGEN

Died at his home in Acworth, Ga., on Friday evening May 6, 1887, aged seventy-one years, ten months and sixteen days; born June 22, 1815. His first wife and four children, (all but one) and himself, all died of consumption. He lived in this neighborhood for over fifty years. He filled the office of justice of the peace for a number of years, discharging the duties satisfactorily to all. He was mayor of our town several years. He joined Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1873, and was baptized by Elder J. G. Eubanks. Brother Dodgen was a deep thinker, a great Bible reader, and seemed to have spiritual understanding

of the Scriptures beyond that of most common members. He bore his sickness with great patience, never being heard to even groan, and died with apparent ease and calmness. Was buried at the Acworth cemetery. It being our monthly meeting, Brother Casey, our pastor, made some beautiful remarks and a very appropriate sermon. M. C. AWTRY.

MRS. ELIZABETH SATTERFIELD.

November 30, 1883, our dear old grandma, ELIZABETH SATTERFIELD, closed her life at the residence of her daughter, Martha A. Hager, near Hartsville, Tennessee. Grandma was a faithful veteran of the cross, being ninety-one years old at the time of her death, and having spent the most of her life in the service of the Lord. Though she endured the trials of life patiently, she welcomed the hour of departure, and hailed death with delight. For years she was entirely cut off from church privileges, yet she never wavered in her faith nor let go her hope in Christ. She no more shall share our joys and sorrows; no more shall we look upon her face; no more shall her voice greet our ears in this world.

A most impressive talk was delivered at the grave by Brother John S. Rice, and with sorrowing hearts we buried her in the garden, to rest until we are called to meet thee, grandma, in a more beautiful garden beyond the river, never more to part.

MRS. R. BARTON,

Wife of O. P. Barton, was born December 22, 1818, in Jackson county, Ohio; died April 22, 1887. She was the daughter of Thomas and Nancy Mosely. Was married to O. P. Barton December 5, 1836, professed a hope in Christ and united with the regular Baptist Church either in 1837 or '38, soon after which time, in company with her husband and others, moved from Ohio to Knox county, Illinois, where she lived until called away by death. The writer had known her for over thirty-two years, during which time she had lived a Christian life, having cast her membership among the brethren and sisters of our little church (Friendship) in 1857. We can say that the deceased was a devoted wife, an affectionate mother, a kind neighbor, and one in whom the fatherless and motherless found a friend indeed. She was the mother of eleven children, four of whom preceded her to the spirit world, and seven yet survive her who, with an aged father, are left to mourn the loss of a loving wife and kind mother. Oh, may it be the Lord's will to prepare both husband and children to live as we believe she tried to live. Her sickness was of short duration. She was doing her evening work, as usual, and died before 10 P. M. The writer, whom she often spoke of to attend her funeral obsequies, being away from home, his son, Elder S. H. Humphrey, being called upon, tried to comfort the mourning relatives and friends from the words of the angel to John: "Blessed are the dead," etc., Rev. xiv., 13, after which her remains were deposited in the cemetery at Harmon, there

(4)

to await the arch-angel's trump. The following verses were composed by the writer,

CYRUS HUMPHREY.

Hermon, Ills.

HUSBAND :

Dear companion, thou hast left me
Here, in sorrow's vale to wander;
Oh, my God, who hast bereft me,
Give me Thy grace to bear up under
This sad and sorest of all trials,
And to say: "My God, thy will be done."

CHILDREN :

Oh, dear mother, may we remember
The solemn admonitions you have given,
May they ever in our minds be ringing,
Teaching us all how we should live.

C. H.

NETTIE REBECCA WALKER

Died 30th March, 1887, of measles, aged thirteen years, six months and five days. She had been afflicted several years with bronchitis, and the measles settled on her lungs, causing consumption. Three physicians attended her, but her disease would not yield to treatment. She was a lovely and an affectionate child, and all loved her who knew her. She was a bright child, her teachers all giving her praise. She bore her affliction with great patience, never murmuring, and was in her right mind to the last. A few hours before death, she spoke of seeing a bright light, and asked her aunt if she did not see the light. This seemed to cheer her up in her dying hours, and we have reason to believe that little NETTIE has gone to rest. I pray God to reconcile us to his will in taking our dearest one from us. In great tribulation,

Chambers Co., Ala.

B. F. WALKER.

Also, our little babe, JESSE VIOLA, aged six months and five days, died of measles, March 8, 1887. But she lives, and lives forevermore above the sphere of mortal care.

MRS. NANCY TEAT.

Died, at her residence in Floyd county, Ga., May 1, 1887, Sister NANCY TEAT, in the 77th year of her age. Sister Teat was born in Newton county, on the 7th of February, 1810, united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Rockbridge, in said county, in her eighteenth year, was baptized by Elder Luke Robinson, united in marriage with James Irvin Teat on the 9th of October, 1833, by whom she had ten children. With her husband she removed and settled in Floyd county in or about the year 1848, united by letter with the Silver Creek Church, then under the pastorate of Elder Barnabas Pace; subsequently drew letters with others, and was constituted the Rockdale Primitive Baptist Church, with that highly gifted father in Israel, Elder Knehin Rambo. Sister Teat filled the measure of a mother in Israel, and was an ornament to the Christian sister and mother in all that pertained to the varied duties of social and religious life. During her sickness, which terminated in death, she was

confined for the most part to her bed for the space of about six years. Although her sufferings at times were great, yet she manifested that patience and Christian resignation characterized by those that can say with the Apostle, that they have fought a good fight, etc. Although she was afflicted for so long a time, she was greatly blessed with the kind attention of her devoted children, especially the sons and daughters of her immediate household. The writer was present many times during her confinement, and well remembers the consolation realized in hearing the dear old sister speak of her confidence in the great promise of the gospel, that although her present tabernacle would soon be dissolved, she had a building of God—a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens—being reminded thereby of the impressive language of the poet:

Thou tottering form of disease and of pain,
Farewell, my dissolving abode,
But I shall behold and possess thee again,
A beautiful building of God.

L. C. D. PAYNE.

Sister Teat was the daughter of David and Sarah Straum.

JOHN C. M'KENNEY.

The subject of this sketch was raised in Harris county, Ga., was a son of Jeremiah McKenney, who was a worthy citizen of that county. While quite a youth he was united in marriage to Miss Mattie Buchanan, and in the latter part of 1869 he came with his father-in-law to Tallapoosa county, Alabama, where he resided the remainder of his life. Was born Sept. 4, 1849. After being diseased a great while with lung trouble, closed his eyes in death on the 7th December, 1886, leaving an affectionate wife, three daughters and one son—two of his children having preceded him to the better land. He united with the Missionary Baptist Church when a youth, and while it was my privilege to be acquainted with him for more than sixteen years, I can say with full assurance that he had the characteristics of a child of God, and we fully believe that while the grim monster Death was staring him in the face he could adopt the language of the sacred poet in the following stanzas, and say:

"Let me go where tears and sighing
Are forever more unknown,
Where the joyous songs of glory
Call me to a happier home.

Let me go! I'd cease this dying;
I would gain life's fairer plains;
Let me join the myriad harpers,
Let me chant their rapturous strains."

The bereaved widow and orphans have the sympathies of their numerous friends.

R. PEARSON.

MRS. MATTIE BROWN.

MRS. MATTIE BROWN, daughter of B. C. and S. G. Haygood, died April 24, 1887. Born and raised in Monroe county, Ga., and at the age of twenty-two years, was married to Thomas H. Brown, and removed to the city of Macon, where she resided at the time of her death. Although she had not attached herself to any church, she left the assurance that she

died strong in the triumph of a living faith. During her last moments she said God was with her, bless his holy name; and that if an opportunity again presented itself, she would unite herself with the Primitive Baptist Church. Mattie was a kind and dutiful daughter, affectionate sister and devoted wife. None knew her but to love her. She was cut down in the bloom of young womanhood, having just reached the age of twenty-five years, leaving a kind and affectionate husband, many relatives and friends to mourn her loss. Though young, the messenger of death has called her away. What a place of meditation her grave will be to her loved ones; from its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections. There is a voice from the tomb sweeter than song, a remembrance of the precious dead, to which we turn even from the charms of the living. Though her seemingly untimely end throws a cloud over her loved ones, and a deeper sadness over him who feels so great her loss, yet how comforting and consoling it is to them to know she died strong in the faith. When the gloomy hour of death was drawing near, being conscious of the solemn fact that soon she must go, how sweetly she trusted in her Saviour; how rich was the manifestation of his redeeming love to her; how peaceful the resignation to death.

Farewell, Mattie; while we meet no more on earth, I hope to meet you on that bright and shining shore above, where all is peace and love, and parting will be no more.

FATHER.

LAWLER CRUTCHER.

This, my little nephew, whom though I had never seen, yet I loved, because he was named in honor of my dear husband, was born near Oak Grove, Miss., June 7, 1883, died near Banessville, Miss., May 31, 1887, making his stay in this valley of tears nearly four years; but these few fleeting years had nearly all been only days of sunshine and joy to the precious little boy, because he was so generally well and hearty. But when his last sickness came upon him, which was measles, with congestion of the lungs, all the joy and sunshine of life departed, and his little body was so terribly racked with pain that the prayer was wrung from his poor mother's heart, "Oh, Father, take my child; I will gladly close his eyes in death if Thou wilt only take him out of his sufferings." "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise," was truly verified in Lawler's case, for a short while before he died his face suddenly became radiated with an unearthly brightness, and he turned his eyes so wishfully to his mother that she knew he wished to speak to her, and she said to him, "Lawler, tell mother what you wish." "I want to go home to live," he said. O, how precious these few words, which were the last he ever spoke, should be to the mother and father. How they should treasure them in their hearts as a love gift from their Heavenly Father, with which to comfort their saddened hearts, and no more be sorrowful that their merry, laughing Lawler has gone from them, for he has only "gone home to live" forever with their dear little Macy and their blessed Redeemer, God.

Brownsboro, Ala.

SUE LAWLER.

☞ Sister Frances E. Pearson (in June MESSENGER) died in the 48th year of her age, instead of 38th.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 9. BUTLER, GA., SEPTEMBER, 1887. Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER E. C. MAULDIN.

I was born January 9, 1809, in Edgefield, S. C. My father and mother, James and Mary Mauldin, for many years before their death, were Primitive Baptists. My mother's maiden name was Berry. My parents were raised up under the Old Presbyterian faith, but the Lord opened up their understanding, and they united with the Baptists. Soon afterwards my father was chosen by the church and set apart to serve as deacon, which office he faithfully filled, and I trust that I do feel thankful that I had a father and mother who were faithful in church, and capacitated to exercise good discipline, both in the church and in their family. Mother died in her 72d year, and father about 90; both remaining steadfast in the faith till death.



In about my eighth year we moved to Madison county, Ala., and ten years thereafter to West Tennessee, then a sparsely settled frontier country. Up to that time my health had been good, but finally dyspepsia

and rheumatism set in, which prevented me obtaining but a limited education.

In my twentieth year I was married to Eliza Biggs, daughter of Elder Asa Biggs, originally from North Carolina. Up to this time I was without hope in Christ, but from early youth I was much concerned about my condition as a sinner, which led me to plead for God's mercy; and at times, strange and mysterious sensations of mind and body seized upon me, and for several hours some marvelous changes—when all of a sudden the burden of sin and guilt that had been so heavy upon me was removed, and I began to praise the Lord, and felt a desire to appreciate my great deliverance.

Company having come in I rose from my bed and requested some old colored people to be called in and I would tell them what great things the Lord had done for me; and if I ever was enabled to appreciate and tell the beauty, excellence and glory of God's grace, predestination, election and eternal redemption of all God's chosen people, it was on that memorable night. After giving full vent to my feelings I retired to bed and had the most pleasant night I had ever before experienced. The next morning my desire seemed wholly set on the things pertaining to the gospel of Christ, and the great goodness and mercy of God to me. I thought and hoped then that my days would be spent in peace and happiness, and that I never could falter or doubt. But alas! I was soon thrown into the crucible of trial and made to fear that all was a delusive imagination. Here a warfare commenced with me as it did with Paul, such as I had not known before. I found things different from what I had formerly imagined it would be if I was changed, or born of the spirit. In this halting, doubting and struggling condition I remained, desiring for six years to go to the church and give a reason of my hope in Christ, but I felt so unworthy, and the idea that I had once proclaimed to so many what a marvelous

deliverance had been given me, and still to be and feel myself to be such a poor, polluted sinner, prevented my going to the church, lest I might deceive the church.

In 1845 my father-in-law, Elder A. Biggs, and his son, B. F. Biggs, went as messengers to San-Jacinto Association, Texas, and as I wished to see the western country and enjoy religious company, I went with them. On returning home I was greatly rejoiced to hear my wife tell of a precious Saviour to her manifested in my absence. In March, 1846, she was received into church fellowship among Primitive Baptists, and baptized by Elder John Roberts. This circumstance, together with a feeling similar to that expressed by the apostle in 2 Cor. xii., when he speaks of being "caught up," had a powerful effect upon me, and the next church meeting I also was received and baptized by Elder A. Biggs. Since that time we have moved about considerably, and in 1853 I was officially authorized to preach in the bounds of the church, and in 1858 set apart by ordination, Elder James Johnson and Deacon John Miller officiating.

We have been citizens of Texas since 1840, and it has been in this State that most of my labors as a Baptist and a minister have been bestowed. There are many things, mostly of personal and local interest, which might be mentioned, but it is probably more in accord with the design of such publications in THE GOSPEL MESSENGER that only things of more general interest should be published. Both myself and wife have been rather invalids for several years, and both have had recent protracted illness, so that I am poorly prepared to write. I have had many years of enjoyment in the fellowship of Primitive Baptists, and feel that I have ever been over estimated and appreciated by them. It is true I have had to oppose and contend against some things, especially of late, and it may be that I have been

too ultra on some mooted points of doctrine that have marred our peace.

I now close by saying to the editors of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, please examine what I have written, and if published, correct spelling, diction and punctuation. I wish to renew my subscription to the MESSENGER, and will remit in a few days.

Your brother and fellow-servant in Christ,

Bibb, Texas, May 1886.

E. C. MAULDIN.

We have tried to comply with the request of our dear aged Brother Mauldin, but as his sketch was written with pencil, many names of places and things have been omitted—the writing being too dim for our weak eyes to read. We have transcribed and re-written as it now appears, and if in any important particular it differs from the intention of the original, as written by Elder Mauldin, he will please inform us, and we will cheerfully make the correction. We do hope that in future brethren sending so important articles as an abridged sketch of their life, will write plainly with pen and ink, and not with pencil; that is so liable to be badly defaced before we receive it.—M.

Dear Brethren:—Suppose a company of men were to launch out from a seacoast town with intent to fathom the depth of the sea, but in attempting to sound found their line too short; however, on their return to their city, suppose they affirm that the sea is deeper than the diameter of the earth? Should we not expect, under such circumstances, that a discussion would ensue? While others of that city might be as fully disqualified to give the exact depth of the sea as those who had attempted to sound it, still they might—as doubtless they would—question a report that the sea is deeper than the diameter of the earth. And such a discussion, to my mind, would appear much like this discussion on the subject of Predestination. Men—citizens of our city—have been sounding for centuries to ascertain the origin of evil, but their lines being too short, they have failed most signally. But that failure of itself would have been no reproach to themselves nor perplexity to

others, had they not affirmed that evil and wickedness originated in God's holy decrees. But as there is no possibility that the sea should be deeper than the diameter of the earth, so there is no evidence that holiness is the source of evil, or that incorruption is the source of corruption, or that light is the source of darkness, or that God's holy decrees are the source of wickedness. If this vexed question of Predestination can't be settled upon any better terms than for all to consent that mountains obtain their height from the lowness of valleys, or that streams swell to overflowing from the dryness of their banks, or that the dryness of the earth is from the falling of rain upon it, or that the wickedness of the world is from the fountain of all good—I say if this question can't be settled upon better terms than these, it is not likely to be settled within the next ten centuries, if the world should stand that long. Why should we not as well conclude that ice obtains from heat, or that steam is raised from the cold north wind blowing upon the locomotive, or that the mill-man raises his head of water by throwing open his flood gates, or that the plowman stiffens his soil by plowing it up? I ask why should we not as soon suppose such things as to conclude that that which God hates, and that which has ruined mankind, was embodied in God's holy and spotless decree? The fact that I myself am unable to fathom the sea and report its exact depth, lays no obligation upon me to accept the conclusion that it is deeper than the diameter of the earth. So the inability of myself, or of any other man, to explain and state the exact source of evil, lays no obligation upon me to accept the conclusion that it has emanated from a purely holy fountain. It is a poor shift to argue, as some have, that it is consistent and just in God to have appointed the wickedness of the world, seeing that he is supreme and not under law to any. True, God is supreme, nor is he a subject of law; nevertheless he possesses a na-

ture and character, and it is a holy nature and character, and hence all his appointments, purposes and works are holy; to admit which is to contradict the conclusion that He has appointed or imperatively decreed the wickedness of men. Again, it is a poor shift to argue, as some have, that after all there is a great virtue in sin, and that it is greatly to be admired because it is supposed that none would have known the riches of His grace if sin had not entered. Who has shown, or who can show that grace has abounded through sin, or that sin in anywise influenced the abounding of grace? If sin had any such tendency as to influence grace to abound, then the more persistently wicked men were the more certainly grace would abound to their salvation; and with such views could we conceive how any sinner could be lost? True, it is said in Gen. 1., 20: *“But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.”*

Truly Joseph’s brethren meant evil against him, and their conduct toward him was evil, being the fruit of depraved jealousies; and such wickedness, abstractly considered, could have had no other tendency than to destroy God’s purpose to “save much people alive.” Note, I say such wickedness, abstractly considered, would have tended to destroy God’s purpose; but, considered in connection with God’s determination to overrule it, and turn it from its natural effect and from the design of the wicked, thus as overruled and not otherwise, it tended to save much people alive and to glorify our Sovereign Lord. How strange, then, that intelligent men will express an admiration for sin, when its natural effect could tend to nothing else than the destruction of all mankind. Should we not rather honor and adore the sovereign hand of God, by which sin is subdued to His purpose? By quoting and commenting upon that class of Scriptures which declare the foreknowledge

and sovereignty of God, the minds of good people may be diverted from the main point in this discussion. But such a course and effect does not at all affect the truth upon the point.

The question still is, as to whether wickedness is the fruit of God's holy decree. And if so, then unclean things have come out of a clean, though Job asks and answers to the contrary. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."—Job xiv., 4. The question further is, had God previously and imperatively decreed that the first Adam should do the very thing which he had clearly forbidden him to do? If so, where is the unity of God? Once more, did God's imperative decree necessitate the transgression of Adam? If so, how fruitless must arguments be to show that God is not the author of sin! These are questions, and the only questions, that come properly under consideration in this discussion. And if it should ever be proven that God's holy decrees are the fountain from whence wickedness flows, that he has imperatively decreed his own forbiddings, and that his own decree has necessitated his forbiddings—I say if such things should ever be proven during my lifetime, then I stand pledged to recall what I have written in opposition, and to destroy its influence as far as I can. But none will prove such things by pursuing the old stereotyped line of argument drawn from that class of Scriptures declaring the foreknowledge and sovereignty of God.

Butler, Ga.

J. ROWE.

That old complaint may justly be revived: *Bonis male, malis bene*. Here it is sometimes evil with the righteous, and well with the wicked. Those who live most upon God, fare worst from the world.

EXPERIENCE.

Very Dear Brethren:—As I have been requested to write my experience and call to the ministry, I will try to do so if the Lord wills, for without Him we can do nothing.

I am the youngest of four brothers and four sisters, all of whom have passed away from time but three, one brother and one sister. My father was Elder John Knighten; my mother's maiden name was Martha Ellis. They were married in South Carolina, in which State I was born in 1832. My father moved to Alabama in the year 1834, and settled in Lowndes county, and afterward moved to the southern part of Montgomery county, and was from my first recollection engaged in the ministry. His frequent absence from home placed me under the full care of my sainted mother; but I was full of the desires of nature and was as mischievous as common, though I was not allowed to keep bad company. And if ever the Lord wrought upon or in my heart it was in my eighth year. I had had a spell of sickness, and on recovering I dreamed a dream that the world was being burned up, and I could see the people running before the flames. When my own state was brought to my mind I was standing upon a sea of glass, with an impenetrable hedge all around it, and my face was toward the east, where I beheld an opening very narrow, and I began to hallo as loud as I could to the people to "Run! Run!" That was all I remember saying, and when I awoke I was rejoicing, but soon fell asleep again. When morning came I was sad, and this sadness followed me all along at times. And sometimes when to myself I would shed tears, and could not tell why, only I was so very sad and lonely, but always tried to put on cheerfulness in company. In the year 1849 I lost my dear mother, and then it seemed to me that I had lost all the friend I had in the world, and I

became reckless to some extent, and went to Texas. There I stayed four years, and there I learned bad habits, and would sometimes engage with others of my associates in wickedness, and then I would go almost in despair for a time. Sometimes I would seek bad company to drown my feelings, or to try to relieve my mind.

In this way I went on until 1855, when I joined the United States Civil Service department, and went to Kansas Territory with the United States troops that were sent from Texas to Ft. Riley. I was then sent to Ft. Leavenworth, Mo., where I remained in the quartermaster's department until March, 1857. I was staying at the government feed lot with twelve other men, all of whom were very wicked, myself included. In February, 1857, I was suddenly brought to grief. While eating our breakfast one of the men swore a bitter oath, which seemed to sound like thunder. This came to my mind forcibly, "are you better than he is?" Oh, my soul! I there saw what a vile sinner I was. I could eat no more, but arose from the table and went out, and all of my past promises came fresh to my mind; for oftentimes I had promised in my sad hours to quit sinning and do good. Oh, I could not stay there! Every one was so wicked; and there for the first time in four years I thought of dear old father, and I resolved if he still lived to see him once more in this life. I left there on the 14th day of March, 1857, and found my dear old father in Conecuh county, Ala., where I remained for a while, and I seemed to be at ease. On going to meeting and hearing my father preach, I felt as one who was left destitute, and my troubles came worse. Up to this time I had thought through my prayers that I could be saved, and now began in earnest to try to pray. In this way I remained until in the fall, often going off to myself and trying to pray. In October I lost a dear friend, and his last dying words to me were, "Pray for

my brothers and sisters." I there felt like I had never prayed. But I would go in the night, away to a secret place, and fall down and try to ask the Lord to have mercy on me. Sometimes I could not utter a word, and then I would feel that I had added to my sin. I went to hear a man preach, and he told me all I had to do to be saved was to believe in Jesus. Oh, my soul! I would have given all this world, if it had been at my disposal, if I could have believed he was my Saviour. But I felt that I was a poor lost sinner, outside of the covenant of grace; I felt too wicked to be in the company of good people, and I almost got reckless again. I often felt like I wanted to ask my father to pray for me, but I was ashamed, fearing he would talk to me, and feeling sure he would know there was no mercy for me. In this state I remained almost in perfect despair, until I got so I could not eat nor sleep, until the middle of January, 1858. I had spent a sleepless night, and had been for some time feeling that it was sinful for me to try to pray. I thought I would go away in the woods where I could not be seen, and try once more to pray. On leaving the house I looked back to get one last look at my father or the house, feeling like I would not see them any more. As I rambled on all nature seemed to grow dim. Oh, the anguish of my poor soul as I walked along! I had gotten about a half-mile from the house when these words came into my mind as though they were spoken: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance—Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Then there seemed to come a sweet, calm feeling in my poor, troubled soul, and I began to praise the Lord. And while standing there rejoicing in spirit, oh, dear brethren, I saw that sea of glass, and it was God's eternal love to His people, and Jesus the way, the truth and the life. Oh, I feel to rejoice now while I am trying to write, as it is still fresh on my mind, as I viewed him

as my Saviour. Oh, now I did believe He was the perfect gift of Heaven, and then I was made to hope, and these words came to me: "Comfort ye my people!" Oh, I thought I would, and I started back to the house to tell father, but had not gone far before a suggestion presented itself to me that I possibly might be mistaken, So I thought I would wait awhile, and turned into a new clearing I was making, and went to splitting rails; I sang "Wondrous Love," and split rails all day, and before night I had decided not to tell any one. Duty now began to bear on my mind, and I had a longing desire to join the church, but felt too unworthy.

On the 25th of February following I married and went to housekeeping, and often felt like I wanted to bow in prayer with my wife, but she had no hope, and I said nothing to her about my feelings. In this way I went mourning until the summer of '59. I offered to the church, was received and baptized by my father, and then for a short time all was well with me, and then a burden came on me I could not get clear of, and a constant "Comfort ye my people!" I then began to see I was unqualified, as I was not stout, but feeble in body and mind, and very limited in education and slow of speech. I would often dream of preaching, as I had tried to ask the Lord to show me my duty and I would try to do it, and when I would dream so pleasantly and wake in joy. I would promise to go forward and tell the church my feelings, but I could not, and finally I got to where I thought I would never try. Then the war broke out and gave me a chance, as I thought to get killed or get clear of the burden. But after I got in camp the burden came on me heavier than ever before, and when I would go and hear an army chaplain preach a "do and live" to the men, it was a fire in my bones. In this way I mourned until May, '64. On the night of the 8th I was on the skirmish line, and it seemed to me that Justice was unsheathed over me, and I bowed and

tried to pray. After getting off my knees I started to walk away, saying in my mind, "Oh, Lord, I can't, unless thou art with me," and these words were sounded in my mind: "As Aaron was a spokesman for Moses, even so shall the Holy Ghost be a spokesman for you!" I then became willing and was made to rejoice and sing praise to my God.

And, now, dear brethren, I have only given you a very short sketch of my experience, and I have been trying to preach and trying to quit ever since that night. I was wounded four times, but confidence never left me, as the Lord showed me I should go home to my family. I was shot through the right wrist in the last battle of the Tennessee army at Bentonville, N. C. Got home the 9th of May; was liberated to exercise my gift in July, '65; was ordained to the full order of the Gospel by Elders Gibson Boyett and J. R. Jones in October, '66, and from then until now I have ever felt my weakness, my dependence in Him who has said: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, as I am a monument of mercy, saved by grace."

Dear brethren, pray for me, a poor sinner, that I may be enabled to discharge my duty to the honor and glory of His holy name. Oh, may peace everywhere abound amongst the dear saints!

Your unworthy brother, through much affliction,

J. E. KNIGHTEN.

EXPERIENCE.

*To the readers of the Gospel Messenger and all who love the Lord, greeting:—*It is with a trembling hand I take my pen to address you, ardently desiring to tell you of the Lord's dealings with me, a poor, sinful worm of the dust. From my earliest recollection I had thought about eternal things, and as all men have naturally a belief that they can

prepare themselves to meet their God, so thought I; and that I would some day get to work and make myself good, fully believing that I would then be received into the favorable notice of God. You see at once that I labored under the delusion common to our race. I had the advantage of Primitive Baptist parents and of sitting under the sound of gospel preaching, which had a good moral effect, but did not change the natural bent of my mind, until, as I trust, it pleased God to turn me in a different direction. When the war broke out I shouldered my gun and went out like others to aid in driving the Northern army out of our territory or die in the attempt. While on duty one night the thought came to me with great force: "You may fall in battle, and *what then?* You have not made the preparation that you had intended, and where will you appear?" This question took possession of my mind, and I retired to a secret spot and begged God to have mercy and spare my life till I could reform; for so great was my trouble that I did not feel that I could live through the night. I was spared to return home, and tried to do better; attended meetings in order to hear the gospel, also read my Bible, but made such poor progress that I got discouraged, and lost my great concern and even tried to banish such thoughts from my mind, and would go in wild company and try to think of something that would wean me entirely from anything like religion, but never succeeded; for I found that God was everywhere; that his eye was ever on me and my actions. Yet I seemed to get along pretty well until one day (I was living with two maiden aunts and my grandmother—all Primitive Baptists, and was at work in the field), when suddenly the thought came to me, "you must be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God." Oh, what a terror took hold of me! All way of escape seemed hedged up. I was a wicked sinner and had tried to forget God. In my great trouble I went to the

house and told grandmother my feelings; she told me not to look to myself for goodness, but look to Jesus who came to *save us from sin*. I went back to the field, and so great was my trouble that I was even tempted to take my life, but God's power is stronger than Satan's temptations. It seemed that there was no relief, but that I was justly condemned and all hope cut off. I could not help but cry for mercy, but felt that it would be right for God to dispose of me according to his own will; and all at once it seemed that my eyes were opened and that I was in another world. My burden of sin that was pressing me down was gone, and everything seemed to join me in praising God. While in this frame of mind a voice seemed to say: "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you; come thou with us and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." I looked to see who spoke, or where the voice came from, but could see no one. When I went to the house I opened the Bible and found the same words in Numbers x., 29. My troubles were for the time gone, and my mind was drawn to the people of God who worshiped at the Enon Regular or Primitive Baptist church, and I wanted to be among them. But soon the thought came—you may be mistaken. But I attended all the church meetings, and was not aware that any person knew anything about the state of my mind. One day after meeting, old Brother William Hutchinson, the deacon of the church, came to me and asked me why I could not come into the church. I tried to tell him of my unworthiness, and it seemed strange to me that he could ask me to come among them. It was seven years from the time I received a hope until I did go before the church. In this time I was married to a lady who belonged to the Baptist Church, and moved to ourselves. She proved to be a helpmeet, indeed, and how she filled her place in the church and church work I leave others

to tell. She united her prayers with mine that God would lead me right and teach me what to do, and I felt it was made plain in a dream that the Saviour said, "arise and be baptised;" and in my dream I started to obey and waked up. But soon after, Elder Philip McInturff held a meeting of the Enon Church; it was in February, 1873, and many things seemed in the way; among the rest, the creek was frozen over, but the ice went out and we were favored with beautiful weather, and in the mercy of God the poor sinner was permitted to follow the meek and lowly Jesus in company with Brother Israel Alderton, who was baptised at the same time. Oh, what joy then filled my soul! But now I must stop for the present; my tongue or pen refuses to tell the story. An obituary, prepared by my brother, Elder T. N. Alderton, tells the sad story of my great loss. Pray for me, dear friends, that God will enable me to bear my loss like a good soldier of the Cross. Farewell,

JOHN H. ALDERTON.

Paw Paw, W. Va.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, WM. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

THE CHURCH.

The word Church is familiar to everybody. Men, women and children of all ranks, stations in life and grades in society, whether righteous or wicked, rich or poor, wise or ignorant, use the word church with such flippant ease and freedom as to indicate a clear understanding of it. But do they all really know what a church is as defined in the Bible? They certainly do not; and it is seldom used in a Bible sense. People generally have become familiar with the vague, indefinite and popular sense of the word as used in common conversation, and as defined in our school dictionaries,

and hence it is no uncommon thing to hear them talk of building a church of wood, of stone, or of brick; and when built it is then called a "log church," "stone church," or a "brick church;" "a fine church," "The First Baptist Church," "The Second Baptist Church," "St. Paul's Church," "St. Luke's Methodist Church," &c. The name Church is thus given to the house in distinction from those who assemble in it. And in keeping with this latitudinous use of the name Church, we hear of "A Baptist Church," "A Missionary Church," "A Methodist Church South," and "A Methodist Church North," "A Presbyterian Church," "Campbelite Churches," "Mormon Churches," "Reformed Churches," &c. And then again, as if to involve the word in still more obscurity and vagueness, we hear of the Greek Church, the Roman Church, the Church of England, the High Church, and the State Church. But it is evident that by this vague use of the term, that no definite idea is conceived in the mind of what a church really is, and we do not know of one solitary instance in the New Testament where the word is applied in any such way as is now commonly in use. In the New Testament sense of the word church, it is applied—*First*—To all the chosen people of God, of every age and dispensation of the world, and of every nation, kindred and tongue, whose sins our Lord Jesus bore in his own body on the cross, and for whom he died and made an atonement. In this sense it is the "General Assembly and Church of the First Born, whose names are written in heaven," and in the "Lamb's Book of Life" from the foundation of the world. This, doubtless, embraces infants, idiots, heathen, and all of every religious sect or denomination who are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not

having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”—Eph. v., 27. This is the church of Christ, as seen and known of him, even before its members are developed or made manifest here in this world. It is the body of Christ, of which he is the ever-living Head; and when he is thus spoken of as the Head, the church is his fulness.—Eph., i. 23.

But there is another sense in which the word Church is used in the Scriptures. It is applied to congregations and assemblies of a professedly Christian character who are united together by a common principle of faith in Christ, love to God and to one another—called of God with a “holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God’s own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i., 9. “Being born again of an incorruptible seed by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever,” they are thereby separated from the world, and dead to it so far as the hope of salvation is concerned, and from henceforth they are commanded to “Be not conformed to the world; but to be transformed by the renewing of their mind, that they may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”—Rom. xii., 2. It is called the “Church of God,” the “Church of Christ;” and all who are thus called of God out of darkness to his marvelous light, and organized on this one common principle of faith and love, though in distinct and separate congregations and localities, are one people, having one Lord, one Faith and one Baptism; and in this sense they are denominated “*Churches* of the saints.” While it is doubtless true that there are thousands of the Lord’s redeemed people scattered here and there in the world and among the various religious denominations and anti-Christian sects who claim the name of Christians, yet it is also true that no assembly of worshippers, no religious sect or denomination, can be regarded as the Church of God unless in doctrine, faith and order it

(2)

is organized and perpetuated according to the *Model* given in the New Testament. If the New Testament does not furnish us a perfect rule and model of what a gospel church is, then we have no standard to guide us, and one man's judgment is as good as another. Then, also, the claim of one religious sect to be the church is as valid as another, because each is based on human policy as dictated by the wisdom of men. Then, also, the cherished idea of the popular denominations that each sect is a branch of the Church of Christ would have some force. But the New Testament churches are the model of all *gospel* churches, and they are built upon the same foundation of faith and doctrine of the apostles and prophets, having Jesus Christ not only as the Foundation of hope, but also as the chief corner stone, by which all the building of God, whether Jew or Gentile, are united in one body, so that there is but one body and one spirit, even as all saints are called in one hope of their calling. This New Testament model of a church forever cuts off and sweeps away all the commandments, doctrines, inventions and institutions of men as being in any way supplementary or auxiliary to the Church of Christ. It asserts that the Scriptures which God has given the church by inspiration are all "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." If thoroughly furnished to *all* which God accepts as good works, then all these outside religious inventions and institutions of men claiming to be auxiliary or helping institutions to the church, are rejected of the Lord as sinful rebellion against the wisdom and goodness of God. Saul substituted his wisdom as a help and supplement to the wisdom of God when, as king of Israel, he was sent against the Amalekites, and commanded to "utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both men and women, infants and sucklings,

ox and sheep, and camel and ass." To have obeyed this command would have honored God who gave it. In sparing Agag and the chief and best of the flock, Saul "rejected the word of the Lord," and by substituting a way of his own, and blending it with the worship of God, he vitiated and polluted the whole service; and, instead of its being to God as worship, it is said to be "Rebellion," "Sin," "Witchcraft," "Stubbornness," "Iniquity and Idolatry."—1 Sam. xv., 23. In all ages of the world, whenever men have blended the wisdom of their own inventions with the commands of God, their service has been rejected as rebellious and polluted. Our own traditions and inventions in worship do not mix with the word and worship of God. And yet, in this day of boasted religious knowledge, it is no uncommon thing to blend the sacred service of singing, prayer and preaching with some worldly display of schools, or even with carnal amusements. It is a polluted service—a mockery and rebellion against God. "Full well ye reject the commands of God that ye may keep your own traditions." Thus Christ reproved the Jews, and thus professed Christians stand reproved. We cannot keep our own traditions and inventions in worship and follow the commandments and ordinances of God, both at the same time. Nor can we attend to each separately, for the reason that "No man can serve two masters." Neither can we serve God and mammon. In acceptable worship of the True and Living God, there is no middle ground to stand upon. Christ says: "He that is not with me is against me." And his chosen Apostle writes to the church at Corinth that "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils." He also tells the church that the "things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and *not to God*; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils."—1 Cor. x., 21.

But as we must now bring our remarks on this subject to a speedy close, suffice it to say that there is evidently a separating line in the word of God, that separates the Church of Christ, as organized and manifested here in the world, from all religious institutions, or even so-called churches, that are built upon human policy or based upon the wisdom of this world. There are but two great leading principles that enter into and govern all worship. One is right and the other is wrong; one is the spirit of truth and the other is the spirit of error. And it matters not how many religious sects there may be, nor how much they may vary in forms of worship, they are known to be the same in spirit and in the leading principles of their faith, by their intercommunity of worship. They can, without scruple of conscience or violation of principle, mix and mingle in worship together, because they feel to be of the same faith, and based upon the same principle. If all are based upon the same principle of the spirit of truth, their doctrine, order and worship will be according to the teaching of the spirit, and in harmony with the written word of God; while on the other hand, all who are based upon, and governed by the spirit of error, can unite their forces and join hand in hand in every new thing or invention of men that comes "newly up" like the idols of olden times. They are one in principle, no matter how much they may differ in forms and ceremonies of worship. They can bid each other God speed, because each is partaker of the evil deeds of the other, by adapting its worship to the vitiated taste of the ungodly world.

But there is a line of distinction drawn in the Scriptures between the churches of the saints and others who have assumed the name without the principle. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life," and one distinguishing mark of the church is, "Few there be that find it;" while the mark of anti-Christ,

and anti-Christian worship is, "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and *many* there be which go in thereat."—Matt. vii., 13.—M.

SAVING SOULS—PAPER BULLETS DO THE WORK.

The International Sunday School Convention, recently held in Chicago, Ill., is reported in the *Evening Post*, as copied in the *Montgomery Advertiser*, to have been exceedingly interesting. Rev. M. B. Wharton, of Alabama, is said to have made "the most eloquent oration of the occasion." His theme was the "Importance of the International Sunday School Work to the South." His convictions are that it is the "most important instrumentality that *can* be employed for the moral and spiritual well-being of any people; that it makes known, in a uniform manner to the comprehension of all, the precious truths of the Word of God." He affirms that the South is ready for the reception of "new ideas;" that a revival wave is rolling over the land; that one Chicago preacher, who had never before been in the South, had in less than one month converted one hundred and fifty persons in Atlanta, one hundred and fifty in Montgomery, and one hundred in Macon. That the ever-increasing population must be supplied with these new ideas because they are the "best" for gathering members,—first, into the Sunday School, and then into the Churches, ready prepared for usefulness in time and for "happiness in eternity." But the grand ultimatum of what is claimed for Sunday Schools is in these words. The doctor says: "After all, the great object to be accomplished by *this work* in the South is the *salvation of perishing souls*. All other objects pale before this." After this "eloquent utterance," as it is called, the speaker becomes greatly enthused and

says: "The painted devils of hell are bearing our children to destruction," and the cry comes up from all over the South, "Save my child!" Will the National Sunday School Saviour, to whom they cry, "respond" to this Southern cry? The doctor informs the gentlemen of the Convention that God had "given them the high privilege of being *His* marksmen in this great emergency", and then says: "*Your* paper bullets can do the work."

So, after all, this great speech, the greatest delivered at this International Sunday School Convention, whittles down to nothing—absolutely nothing—but "paper bullets to do the work of salvation for perishing souls," and make them ready for the Church and for "happiness in time and eternity." This is evidently one of the "new ideas"—the latest and "best" on hand to supply the new and ever-increasing population of the South, and we are rather inclined to agree with the doctor that the great body of the Southern people are ready to receive it. It is congenial with their carnal nature and in harmony with their early Sunday School training. Remember this now, ye Sunday School men—"Your paper bullets can do the work" in this "great emergency." Well, no doubt paper bullets will do about as well as any other bullets that men ever invented to save perishing souls or to prepare for happiness in eternity. With "paper swords" from the pulpit and "paper bullets" from Sunday School men, the "painted devils" and their subjects in the South may possibly surrender at once and soon become champions to wield the sword and hurl the bullets. It certainly would be easy terms of capitulation for those who love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Salvation from sin, death and hell is of the Lord from first to last, and if any poor sinner is made sensibly to feel that he is a perishing soul, needing that salvation which is of God alone, it is because he is quickened by

the Spirit, and because the Lord has begun a good work of salvation within him, and will carry on that glorious work until the day of Christ; and this day of Christ is to the poor, perishing soul a day of atonement—a day of joy and redemption by the blood of Christ—a day in which Christ is revealed and received by faith into the soul—a gospel day of freedom from the reigning power and dominion of sin—a day of rejoicing, thanksgiving and praise to God the Father, and to our Lord Jesus Christ—a real jubilee day to a captive, perishing soul. And such has been his experience, first of guilt and condemnation before God, and then of peace and joy through the merits of Jesus, that he can sing from the very depths of his heart, “This is the Lord’s doings, and it is marvelous in our eyes.” In bringing a sinner to a knowledge of that salvation which God has provided in Christ for him, the first thing that is done is to impart life—spiritual life—to him who is dead in sins. No power short of Almighty and Omnipotent power can do this, and from the very moment that this is done, that man is alive in a sense he never was before, and is susceptible of feelings and impressions he never realized in all his life before. And there is not one cry, groan or prayer for mercy but what is the result of what the Lord has already imparted to such poor, perishing soul. It is an evidence of life—spiritual life—already within the soul. The cry of such perishing souls is gone up, not to man, but to God, and he has heard their groaning, and his ear is open to their cry. But in this “great emergency,” He who holds the seven stars, or the whole gospel ministry in his own right hand, and out of whose mouth goeth a sharp, two-edged sword, is God’s Marksman. And, unlike the “paper bullet marksman,” he never misses his mark, but the “arrow of his word goeth forth as the lightning,” and is “quick and powerful; sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul

and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Our Sovereign King Jesus is God's Faithful Marksman, and in prophetic vision he was seen by the holy apostle, sitting upon a "white horse," having both a bow and a crown given him, so that He went forth, not to be vanquished or defeated, but "conquering and to conquer."—Rev. vi., 2. Thus we see that the crown of success and glory is given only to our Lord Jesus. But we are aware that this word of truth, this sure foundation stone, is a stone of stumbling and rock of offense to those who stumble at the word; yet there is salvation in none other, neither is there any other name given under heaven or among men, in any age or country, east or west, north or south, whereby they can be saved. And though this may be a "new idea" to many in the South, yet we doubt whether they are ready to receive it. In the days of the personal ministry of Jesus upon earth, unclean spirits—"painted devils" and all other kinds of devils—were subject to his all-conquering word; but as it is now, so it was then, the great mass of the people were all amazed, saying, "What *thing* is this; what *new doctrine* is this? for with authority he commandeth even unclean spirits, and they do obey him!"—Mark i., 27. And when the Apostle Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection at Athens, the very seat of learning, religion and philosophy, he was considered by them as a mere babbler, and they brought him before the learned, grave and dignified council, the Areopagus, at the same time saying: "May we know what this *new doctrine* is?"—Acts xvii., 19.

We are told that the South is ready for new ideas, but it is doubtful about their being ready for this new doctrine which our Lord Jesus and his apostles preached to the people. Are they ready for the doctrine as it falls from the mouth of Jesus, saying: "Murmur not among yourselves; no man can come to me except the

Father, which hath sent me, draw him." "*Every* man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."—John vi., 44. Are the people of the South ready for this?—M.

REPLY TO BROTHER HARRIS.

The duty of answering the above letter has been assigned to No. 3, not because it is a matter of minor importance, but because the senior editors are overtaxed with labor, and cannot answer all the letters addressed to them. We do not feel qualified to fully represent the sentiments of the Primitive Baptists on this subject, but will say in brief that we object to Sunday Schools for the same Scriptural reasons that we object to the doctrines they teach from the pulpit. That which they teach in pulpit exercise, they also teach in Sunday School; and never teach in either capacity what we believe to be true and consistent with God's word. The Sunday School is a religious sectarian school, and hence if Primitive Baptists have any authority in the Scriptures for such schools, they should have one of their own, and keep it separate and distinct from all others. If we can endorse and fellowship what is taught in modern Sunday Schools, we can also indorse and fellowship what they teach in any other capacity. We do not believe, as the leading advocates of the Sunday School system say they do, that it is "a very efficient means of salvation;" that it "sows the seeds of Christianity," etc. How is it possible to reconcile such sentiments with the Scriptures? (See Eph. ii., 8, 9; Rom. xi., 6; Tit. iii., 5.) How can we consistently patronize and encourage an institution of the world whose influence is so completely derogatory to the teachings of the Scriptures?

We believe what the Scriptures affirm, that salvation

is by grace, and not of works—that it is the result of God's electing grace—the legitimate end of his sovereign choice and predestination.—Eph. i., 4, 5. Then how can we believe that the Sunday School is, has been, or may be the means of swelling the number of God's chosen people, or adding a unit to the number that Christ redeemed? All the objections we have to the Sunday School are Scriptural objections; for otherwise they would amount to nothing. If the Sunday School has ever been a good institution at all, it has been perverted, and is now a formidable means of perverting the gospel of Christ; and under pretense of saving souls it has become a source of revenue to the support of what the world calls the gospel. It is of earthly origin, conceived and born of the wisdom of man; first local, than national, now international; uniting the world upon one common platform; embracing in the forms of its affection the spirit that has ever opposed and persecuted the Church of God. We do not marvel that thousands and millions are deeply in love with this institution; it is their religious mother, and it is quite natural that they love and respect her.

With reference to secret societies we have but little to say, and less to do. They are secret, and therefore we can know but little about them. Like the Sunday Schools, they are of the world, they belong to the world, and we are quite willing the world should have them, provided there is any good for the world in them. Church members do not need those secret organizations; the church is a sufficient institution for them. No secret society could be expected to do more for a member of the church than the church is required to do. When a brother joins a secret organization he goes out of sight of his brethren; he dives beneath the common level, and it is a question of doubt with them as to whether he found rock bottom, sand or clay, unless he brings up and exhibits some specimen of its nature, and that he

has pledged himself not to do. The church cannot judge of the propriety or impropriety of his conduct behind the curtain, and he must become his own judge and jury, and the church must abide his verdict, or else clip him off. There is one secret thing enjoined, that is secret prayer; in *the* closet? No; in *thy* closet—alone—the only member of that secret society; pour out your prayer to God, and he will reward thee openly.—H.

ESTHER.—THIRD CHAPTER.

“And all the king’s servants that were in the king’s gate bowed and revered Haman; but Mordicai bowed not nor did him reverence. Then the king’s servants said to Mordicai, why transgresseth thou the king’s commandment. And when they spake daily unto him and he hearkened not unto them, they told Haman to see whether Mordicai’s matters would stand, for he had told them he was a Jew. And when Haman saw that Mordicai bowed not then was Haman full of wrath.”

THE BATTLE.

Amalek was the first of the nations and the first enemy Israel encountered in the wilderness. During all their long servitude in Egypt they had had no trouble with Amalek; nor could they until they had been carried out of bondage. In Egypt they were the servants of Pharaoh and were not required to fight, but to work; they knew nothing of struggles save for natural or worldly things. The children or heirs of God whilst in nature know nothing of spiritual wants and have no spiritual struggles, but are the willing servants of sin making no war against it, never having been brought into contact with it as an enemy; but when freed from sin and made the servants of righteousness the warfare begins and continues until the end of their lives. In nature or unregeneracy they are free from warfare, or rather free from righteousness; free in the sense that acts of righteousness are not required of them, that is acts of faith or that obedience to God that can be rendered only of faith, and such obedience as cannot

be rendered by the servant of sin or the unregenerate. For illustration, baptism is an act of righteousness when performed by a believer, because God requires it of believers as his children; but before they are made believers it is not required of them, nor would God accept it of them; because in that condition, as the servants of sin, they are free from righteousness. The Jews in Egypt, as servants of Pharaoh, were free from Moses, nor was service to Moses or God required of them until freed; because no man can serve two masters, nor is it required of him to do it. Whilst in Egypt they were conscious only of the power of Pharaoh, and to fulfill their daily tasks was all the obligation they felt, and with that performed they rested. But their rest was the rest of a slave. They knew no more of the power and enmity of Amalek than the unregenerate man knows of the power of sin in his depraved nature. But after he is born again and freed from sin and is made a child of God he encounters Amalek as the Jews when thrust out of Egypt encountered him in the wilderness. It is only those who have been thrust out of Egypt, who could stay no longer and could no longer find rest in their daily tasks, and when doubled tasks were beyond their ability to do; and who have been made dead or cut off from Egypt at the Red sea and then experienced life to God in his power and love in freeing them from Egypt and destroying their enemies, it is only these who are brought into contact with Amalek. Their last troubles in Egypt were very sore, unendurable, so they left from necessity; and the thought with them was no doubt that if ever freed from them that they would never have any more trouble; and that to be made free and have a country of their own and be kept by the Lord was to live in ease, plenty and free from struggles; and if they had been told that they would be poorer in the wilderness than in Egypt they could not have believed

it. Their life after freedom was not such a life as they expected, nor has it ever been to the children of God. They rejoiced in the Lord at the Red sea, and were thus being disciplined for the struggle with Amalek; the heavens that had been shut up to them in Egypt were opened to them, as they were opened to Jesus in his baptism in preparation of his struggle with Satan in the wilderness. We would not say that Jesus could not have encountered Satan before his baptism, but his baptism was certainly the antecedent step to the struggle; or in other words that the struggle could not have preceded the baptism; it was, so to speak, an invasion of the enemy's territory, rendering the struggle inevitable. Whatever is done under the prompting of the Spirit antagonizes Satan and involves a struggle with him. It is certain that the Saviour's baptism and the Father's approval did not weaken him; but it rather strengthened him for the encounter. Nor did the deliverance of the Israelites at the Red sea render them less able to fight Amalek, but was really a preparation for it, and without which there would have been no struggle with him. The greater the manifestation of God's power and love in our liberation from sin, the greater will be the struggle with the enemy; because the more we appreciate freedom from sin the greater will the loss of it be felt, and the greater the loss the harder will be the fight to keep it. Thus the enemy is strong as we are strong; if we have strong faith it implies hard battles. When the prophet ate twice in short succession it was that he had to go forty days on the strength of that meat. There is nothing unnecessary given us, nothing that we will not need, and nothing therefore to be wasted. The faith of the children of this world is not tried, but the faith of God's children is always tried; God's children march through a wilderness in which there are snares, traps and pitfalls, and in which they encounter enemies on every hand; they march in paths

they have not before known; often hungry and thirsty, and are the most dependant and helpless of all people and can only go as God leads them, and only eat, drink and rest as God provides it for them. When the cloud rested upon the tabernacle they abode in their tents, and when it was lifted up they fell into line and marched onward following in the lead of heaven. They can't get up a revival as the world does, but have to wait upon the Lord to bring them to their appointed places of rest. They are like the cony, a feeble folk, and have their house in the rock. Who would by nature, or by his own works, be one of them? Not one!

But Israel could not help but fight; they could not go back and to go forward was to encounter Amalek; it was a necessity. So the battle was joined, and to Israel all was staked upon the issue. Amalek, if defeated, could retire from the field with only the shame of defeat; but Israel had no where to retire to, no place to lay his head. So the battle raged until the going down of the sun; it was hotly contested and at times hung in doubt; first Israel prevailed, then Amelek; retreats here and alarms there; the cry of victory on this hand and the moan of despair there. Moses grew weary and had to be seated upon a stone and his hands upheld by Aaron and Hur as Joshua led the host to the charge. The noonday sun poured down upon the ensanguined field and still the battle went on. The day wears away and the sun sinks slowly behind the hills and the shadows spread like a pall over the battlefield, and the hand grows weak and weary and the breath short and faint, and the cry of despair goes up, Master save, we perish! and lo! the battle is won and the enemy is gone and a shout rends the air, Praise ye the Lord!

We battle now, not with flesh and blood, nor with carnal weapons; but with false doctrine; with pride, vanity, self-interest, envy, greed, lust, unbelief, world-

liness, indolence and such enemies as lie, often hidden, in our depraved nature. With such enemies as these we struggle, nor does it end only with our mortal lives. Wherever Israel journeyed or lived, whether in the wilderness, in the promised land, or in captivity, there was Amalek. The people of God will not willingly serve sin; they are freed from sin and are the servants of righteousness; and the service of God is to struggle against sin, to realize that sin is an enemy that is feared and hated of their soul. They are often as a besieged city (II Kings, vi.) invested by an enemy stronger than she is. The siege lasted until her own stores were exhausted and her own strength gone; and as day after day she felt her own strength dwindling away and more and more helpless and hopeless, so she was unconsciously drawing nearer and nearer deliverance; as she grew weaker the enemy grew weaker; for the enemy was self-trust and self-righteousness; and when her own supplies were exhausted, and her own strength gone the struggle was over and the victory was won. But self cannot overcome self; nor does a sense of helplessness overcome the enemy; God overcomes for the helpless; for the Lord made the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and the noise of horses, even the noise of a great host, wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight and fled for their lives.

Mordecai's colleagues in the gate labored with him to get him right, and when day after day, he hearkened not to them and gave them no satisfaction, only telling them he was a Jew, they reported his case to Haman to adjudicate. They did not seem able to understand why he would not bow to Haman; and especially why being a Jew should forbid it. It seemed to have puzzled them as badly as it puzzled Rabshakeh (Is. xxxvi) that the Jews under Hezekiah would not give up and submit themselves to Sennacherib the King of Assyria; seeing they were so weak and few and that all the world

was against them; he could not understand them and said: But if you say to me we trust in the Lord our God, is it not he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away and said to Judah and Jerusalem ye shall worship before this altar? The same as to say, God will not save you because you have offended him in taking away his high places and altars; you are opposing God in destroying his altars instead of increasing them, and you are lessening his worship. And the world to-day thinks that the Primitive Baptists in refusing worship at the Sunday school altars, missionary altars, education altars, *et id omne genus*, that they are opposing good things and are enemies to God and man. And because they oppose these things as departures from the faith and done in distrust of God's power and love, and as unauthorized in his word and as contrary to their experience, they are charged as being *anti* everything good. We can join in with our fellow-citizens in building school houses, etc., in supporting civil government, and in doing all things that tend to natural and moral good; but when it is said to us you must do this thing to save souls; that our children will be lost without Sunday schools; that those for whom Christ died will be lost without a Missionary Board, then we do not do it, for to do it would be to deny the faith and the Lord God that bought us. Nor are we permitted to aid in propagating such religion in any way that we can avoid; because such religion is not only false and dishonoring to God but is an injury to human society. Such religion has been in full blast in the world for now about one generation, and what is the moral condition of the world? Mr. George R. Stetson, a statistical writer of reputation, in an article headed *The Rising Tide of Crime*, asserts that crime is greatly on the increase and supports his assertions by facts.

The *International Record*, a Boston publication, says:

In the first place, I want you to remember that in no land in the world is crime so on the increase as in the United States. With all our patriotic pride, we have to confess that we are going downward in the scale of public morals faster than any great modern nation. In 1850 there were in the prisons of the United States nearly 7,000 prisoners; in 1860, there were 19,000; in 1870, about 33,000; and in 1880, more than 59,000. That is, in 1850, one in every 3,000 people was in prison; in 1860, one in every 1,600; in 1870, one in every 1,000; and in 1880, one in 873. During the last six years the tide has not fallen. The last report of our prison commissioners puts the proportion of our prisoners to the entire population as 1 to 575. This is bad enough, but Mr. Galton, a distinguished writer, expresses the opinion that the social condition of Athens (where Paul preached upon Mars Hill) taken as a whole, was as superior to ours as we are to the Australian savages.

Mr. Stetson ascribes as one of the causes of this great increase of crime, the abolition of family government; the children are given up to moral training outside the precincts of the family. And that is, no doubt, the true root of the matter; and the Primitive Baptists have refused to bow to this Sunday School god, holding that the parent is the natural and divinely appointed instructor of the child in morals. Because God has implanted a love for the child in the parent that he has in no one else, and a care is therefore required of the parent that is not required of any one else, and which no one else can give; and to destroy this order of God is to injure both parent and child, and society at large.

Mordecai knew that though Haman was so highly honored in the world, that he was not in heart a lover of the king and queen; as we know that the good things, so-called and so revered by the world, and upon which the world depends for the salvation of man, are not prompted by God's spirit, because they are a denial of his word. And what Primitive Baptist, who has experienced God's grace in giving him faith, can turn

(3)

from that experience and institute Sunday Schools for the salvation of his children, when he knows that they would not have saved him? Can he suppose that less grace will save his children than it took to save him? and does he not know that nothing less than the same grace that it took to save him will save his children, and that that alone will save them? How, then, can we bow to these things? We can't do it, and God forbid that we should. And how can we aid such religion, seeing it is an evil to human society, and is a fruitful source of human crime? Not long since we were put to the test in this thing. There was a Methodist district meeting in this town, and we were asked to aid in feeding and lodging the delegates: but we couldn't conscientiously do it; and the reason was because it was aiding what we believe to be a false religion; not that we would not have fed our neighbors and fellow-citizens as citizens and neighbors, but not as official representatives of a religion that we believe to be an injury to mankind. And for such reasons Mordecai would not bow to Haman; and we are expressly charged to give no aid to another gospel; though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.—Gal. i., 8. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not unto your houses, neither bid him God speed.—2 John x. Of course this means one coming to us in a religious sense; and does not forbid our receiving them as neighbors and fellow-citizens; but it does forbid our aiding them religiously.

Mordecai's faithfulness to the king and queen inflamed Haman's wrath against him, as was to be expected; and Primitive Baptists may expect the enmity of the religious world; but they have either got to have that or the displeasure of God. "Know ye not that the friendship (religious friendship) of the world is enmity with God?"—James iv., 4. Mordecai had but little if any-

thing of the world to lose; God was all in all to him. He had no political aspirations to gratify, no estate to save, no children to please in his religion, no country to love; he was indeed a stranger and pilgrim. He could not afford to be unfaithful to God; and to be faithful to God was to be faithful to the queen whom he loved and whom he served; and he knew that Haman, with all his affected zeal for the king and queen and the empire, was an enemy to the truth; and that his work in the long run would be for the injury of all, as Mr. Stetson has shown that such things have resulted in this age to the great increase of crime amongst men. The Primitive Baptists cannot be charged in this age with aiding, as a church, the propagation of a religion that has greatly destroyed family government and family love, and increased infidelity and crime amongst men.—R.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

(Continued from August.)

Dear Brethren:—I will now continue my narrative: After joining the Missionary Baptists my troubles of mind soon increased, and thinking there was some neglected duty, I kept up family prayer for a few years, but it seemed to become burdensome, and I discontinued it, but remained a member for nine years without a charge of any kind against me. But during the time I doubtless became a little puffed up with vanity and joined the Masons, and there remained for two years, but felt finally compelled to say, in open Lodge, that I did believe it to be an idolatrous institution for me, with the views I then entertained of it, and in consequence, they felt compelled to expel me, as I desired. But still there was another inconsistency of my life. I was living with, and trying to fellowship, all such things among the Missionary Baptists, so I tried to rid it from among us. This stirred up wrath, and some reported that I was going to divulge the secrets of Masonry, though such a thing has never entered my mind. For

a time confusion and prejudice run high, and I was apparently in great danger. But all this time I had none to look to for pity or help but God alone, and I found, indeed, that He is a present help in trouble. The contest was strong in the church, and as I had emphatically declared non-fellowship for them, a motion was made to exclude me. Some said, "For God's sake, brethren, don't do that!" But the motion prevailed and I was cast out, and from that day till this I have had no religious affiliation with them, not even to bow with them in prayer. Some say this is prejudice, but it is not, for from what I have seen and known of them, I feel like I would be acting hypocritical to deceptively give sanction in form to what I do not believe in heart. But after I and Brother J. M. Easley had been cut off from them, and refused all affiliation with them in worship, a very bad name was given us. And up to this time (1878) I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, nor seen a preacher of that order, or heard the doctrine clearly advocated, though some had, by way of contempt and derision called me a "Hardshell." And while I contended for the doctrine of the Bible as I understood it, some would tell me that no one else believed "such stuff," and it did seem that none but Brother Easley and myself did believe it. But "God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." While we were thus lonely and distressed, a friend in Pittsboro told us that two Primitive Baptist preachers, A. B. Morris and Peter Wood, would preach at Mr. W. C. Brown's, in our neighborhood, for our special benefit. These ministers were on their way to the Little Black Association, in Webster county, twenty-five miles south. Mr. Brown said to me: "You must go with them." I told him I knew no one there, but as he was going, and said he would pay all damages if everything did not come up right, we concluded to go. From some cause those ministers did not get to the appointment at Mr. Brown's, but we started to the Association, reaching there next day in time to hear Elder J. E. Little preach the Introductory Sermon. To our astonishment, he told our feelings and sentiments better than we could have told it ourselves. We saw many others there who seemed to be receiving and enjoying the same things with us,

and after preaching the minister and several other strange brethren gathered around us, asking something about us, as they said they could see some peculiar signs of our enjoying the services. We told them from whence we came—as excluded members from Missionary Baptists—and in reply they said: “We guess, from your looks, they treated you just right.” We soon began to feel that we had found our own people and were almost home, and one sister said to another: “They look like two lost sheep of the House of Israel.” Remaining among them through the meeting, we returned home rejoicing that we had found a people we loved in the truth, and who believed in that God whom we desired to serve. It was not long after this till we presented ourselves to the church at that place (Emmas) and were received on experience, and baptized by Elder C. E. Vessell, and soon afterward Mt. Harmon Church was constituted here, and Brother Easley was ordained to the ministry, and we have him for our pastor. A few years ago the church concluded I had a gift and liberated me to exercise the same, and when I commenced this letter, I thought of saying something of my trials concerning this duty, if it be such for me; but as this has already been too lengthy, and so badly written that it will give trouble to get it right, I will close.

Pittsboro, Miss.

W. C. MITCHELL.

DOOLY Co., GA., July 14, 1887.—*Dear Brethren:*—If one so old, weak and sinful as myself may be permitted to call you brethren and sisters—not indeed in the flesh but in the spirit; your messages of love come monthly, and oh, how they cheer and strengthen my poor heart in the assurance that salvation is of the lord, as Jonah experienced and believed it and so it is and so let it be. If I live till the 20th of September next I shall be 81 years old, and have had a name amongst the Baptists about fifty-six years. And as old as I am were it not for the goodness and mercy of God I would be undone. But surely the mercy and goodness of the Lord have followed me all the days of my life. How thankful ought the flock of Christ to be for such gifts to defend the doctrine of God our Savior as the editors of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER and the many able writers in the differ-

ent states and territories and in Canada also, all speaking by the spirit the same glorious truth. O God, continue to give them the spirit to write for the comfort of thy dear children for Christ's sake.

If not deceived, your brother in the Lord,
STEPHEN WOODWARD.

SHELBYVILLE, TENN., July 14, 1887.—*Dear Brother in Christ:*—While there is not much ingathering in our churches, still we are having some very pleasant meetings, and additions to some of our churches. I baptized one last Monday and have baptised several others during the spring and summer. I would, if competent, write you a good letter about the "Salvation of God," for after all is said and done, it is only the Lord's people that are saved; and they are sinners, the offspring of Adam coming into the world by ordinary generation—conceived in sin and brought in iniquity. They never knew anything of this world until born of the flesh; and must be born of the spirit to see the Kingdom of God, and for the very good reason that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. They are passive in the fleshy birth, and become active after birth, and are also passive in the spiritual birth and active after birth; and let us ever remember that the children of the flesh these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are accounted for the seed. We are all the children of God by faith in Christ and come into this state by the glorious work of regeneration.

As ever your brother,

J. E. FROST.

A LONG FELT WANT.—Bro. Goble, of Indiana, will soon publish, probably within six weeks, a cheap Hymn Book for Primitive Baptist churches containing about 200 hymns in large type, of the old songs that God's people have long been familiar with. The price of these books will be, single copy, (cloth) 25 cents; sheep, 40; Morocco, 60. Per dozen, cloth, \$2.50; sheep, \$3.75; and Turkey, \$6.00. It is probable that he will have an edition at \$2.00 per dozen. Every Primitive Baptist church can supply herself with these books by the dozen and thus have singing without giving out the words,

which is much better. We will keep them at our office for sale and orders may be sent us at once, or orders may be sent to D. H. Goble, Greenfield, Indiana. We will give one of these hymn books to any subscriber sending us one new cash subscriber to THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Dear Brother Respass:—Seeing in Primitive Baptist papers that numbers of brethren are moving West in search of homes, and wishing that some, at least, might come to this portion of the country and cast in their lot with us few, we have been thinking for some time of writing for the MESSENGER a description of the country, giving what we believe to be its advantages for homes for poor men. But fearing that we might be prompted by the flesh, and knowing that our Master is able to take care of his own cause, and that he will direct the course of his people for the best, we had about concluded not to write, until recently we were handed a letter addressed to Brother John Cornett, of our church, by Wm. Ezell, of Gadsden, Tenn. Thinking that others, with Brother Ezell, might desire the same information, by your permission we will answer through the MESSENGER the following questions:

1st. Is land cheap? 2d. Is it healthy? 3d. Any government lands fit to live on? 4th. Can a man get plenty of work to do at the carpenter's trade? 5th. Have you good schools and preaching?

1st. Land is very cheap.

2d. The country is very healthy, enjoying an immunity from chills, except in the large valleys.

3d. There is no vacant land within three miles of the railroad now being built up White River Valley. A year ago most of the land was vacant, but has been, during that time, homesteaded and entered. A short distance from the road, improvements on government land can yet be had for not more than the worth of the improvement; and perhaps some lands not yet settled upon. A Primitive Baptist preacher and tie contractor will have about 1,000 acres of mountain land lying near the road, as soon as the white-oak timber is cut off, that can be had by paying the expenses of making the deed. Small patches of this land, from ten to twenty acres in a place, is fit for cultivation, and plenty of timber on it other than white-oak. Nearly all of this could be devoted to apple raising, and there is no place in the United States that will beat this country producing apples and other fruits. And there is much more profit in fruit raising here than grain farming. The soil on uplands is generally very rich, producing, when fresh, from 40 to 50 bushels of corn to the acre, but somewhat stoney, and inclined to the production of sassafras.

4th. We think that carpenter work will be for some time as it is now, in demand.

5th. The funds received from the State are sufficient to run from three to four months school in each year. In addition to this, the districts have

power to levy a tax of one-half of one per cent. on the taxable property of the district. As to preaching, we have great variety. Among the Primitive Baptists we have such as He who ascended on high and gave gifts unto men, has seen fit to bless His church with. We leave Brother Ezell and all others to judge as to whether or not that is good.

Any one desiring further information can get it by addressing either of us, enclosing postage stamp.

Dutton, Ark., June 17, 1887.

C. W. ANDERSON.

JOHN CORNETT.

Be sure to notice "*A Long Felt Want*" elsewhere in this number.—R.

OBITUARIES.

ELDER MOSES WESTBERRY.

In giving a brief biographical sketch of this departed Elder, the writer will, first of all, make some mention of his inability to do justice to the subject; but as the task has been assigned me, I submit the following for the benefit of your numerous readers: Elder WESTBERRY was born January 12, 1807, in Tatnall county, Ga., and died April 12, 1887, in Lowndes county, Ga.; aged eighty years, and three months. He was married three times; first to Miss Edith Taylor, in 1825; second, to Miss Sarah Taylor, in 1858; and to his third and last wife, Mrs. Nancy Taylor, in 1875. His first wife bore him fifteen children, ten of whom lived to be grown, but only five are now living, four daughters and one son, four of whom are orderly and consistent members of the Church of Christ.

The life of Elder Westberry is fraught with things of interest to the common reader, some of which I deem proper to mention. A few months prior to the birth of Elder Westberry, his father (who was also an Elder of the Baptist Church) was taken ill, and as he thought, to die, and calling his beloved wife to his bedside he said to her that he felt the hour of his departure was at hand, and gave instructions as to the management of his property, and then said: "You will, at the proper time, be delivered of a man child; and I want you to be sure to call his name Moses, for he will surely have to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ." Time was but for the development of the truthfulness of this prophecy, and though Elder Moses Westberry, Sr., did not die, as he thought, but God added to his days, as he did to the days of Hezekiah, the Captain of Israel (2 Kings, xx,) in due time the child was born, and being a man child, of course he was already named. Having been born of poor parents his opportunities for an education were very limited, and we will use his own words as to his early life: "I grew up a wild and reckless boy, full of bitterness and cursing; and when I would think of father's prophecy concerning me, it seemed foolish in him to make known such thoughts; for I believed I knew I never would be a preacher, feeling sure I could govern

myself to this end. However, in the year 1826 something got wrong with me, and I knew not what was the matter; I felt that the Lord was angry with me; I began to view myself a wretched and lost sinner, and the Lord just and holy. Yet, how could I keep from imploring God's mercy upon me? Time after time have I wandered in the silent groves and forests, musing over my wretched condition, and imploring, as best I could, God's mercy upon my poor soul. At last, as I hope, the favored time came; I arose from my bed in the stillness of the night (the darkest night, I think, I ever saw) and went out about twenty paces from the house and fell, almost unconscious of what I was doing, and before I arose from that place I viewed the Saviour as my Saviour. I returned to the house with the praises of God in my soul. Soon the subject of baptism burdened my mind, which gave me much trouble, and at length, in the year 1827, I united with Jones Creek Church, Liberty county, Ga., and was baptized by father. I now felt so good that I thought my work was done, and that father's prediction concerning me was a mistake. But the year 1830 brought trouble for me; I began to feel myself weighted with some duty, I knew not what. I could not think of the responsibilities of a gospel minister without shuddering, and I began to fear father was right. Oh! my soul! At length, in 1832, I was forced to try or die, which I did with much timidity and fear. I was liberated soon after this to exercise my gift wherever my lot should be cast. In 1834 I was ordained to this sacred work, Elder James McDonald and my father acting as presbyters."

Elder Westberry was soon called to the care of Jones Creek and Goose Creek Churches, which he served faithfully until January, 1838, when he moved to Lowndes county, Ga. Immediately upon his arrival in Lowndes he was called to the pastorate of four churches, viz.: Forest Grove, Pleasant Grove, Antioch and Columbia, and was the only pastor of Forest Grove Church for forty-nine years. Elder Westberry was a man of medium stature, with high forehead, and eyes which were the very picture of intellect. As has already been said, he arrived to manhood with but little educational advantages, but his mind was a searching one, and by continual study, he acquired the control of such language as to thoroughly equip him for his holy calling. He was naturally an orator in the full sense of the word. Throughout his entire life he was never summoned before any court of justice nor to his conference to give account of any evil conduct. What an example for his children! What an example for his brethren! Though young and tender, he evinced great argumentative powers in the great conflict between the church and the Mission Baptists. He was among the first to lift a voice of warning against this heresy. He was not the man to use rough, unwholesome words, but was so mild and gentle in his manner of address that even his enemies could but admire him. Albeit, he came not out of this great battle without being evil spoken of, for it was said by the Missionaries of this country that as soon as Elders Westberry, Albritton, Thigpen and Milton were gone, the old "Antis" would be done; which declaration was taken up by their historian, who gave utterance to the following: "For ere the stereotyped

edition of this work shall have met the public's gaze, the Old Antis will be no more." Elder Westberry out-lived the historian, and saw the end of his prophecy. He witnessed its death and saw the inscription (Falsehood) engraven upon its tombstone. He could but take special notice of the similarity that existed between the historian and the historian's father, of whom it was said: "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it."—John viii., 44. He lived to see the church number altogether, nearly 100,000 in the United States, all in peace and correspondence with each other, especially so in his own country, where his own labors were; all, all in peace and prospering, and in some localities prospering almost beyond precedent. He lived to see Albritton, Milton and Thigpen dead (for he was the last to die), and when his time had come to go home, he could look around him and see churches constituted, ministers ordained, until now I suppose there is one ordained minister to every two churches throughout the entire State of Florida and Southern Georgia. In the year 1874 there was another heartrending conflict amongst the Primitive Baptists of Southern Georgia. Some of our most distinguished ministers began to dispute the immortality of the soul, deny the resurrection of the body, and a train of other innovations and heresies too tedious to mention here. Elder Westberry was physically broken down, and could travel and preach but little; but how could he stay at home when the destruction of the church was threatened? Filled with a zeal not excelled by the Apostle Paul, he met again in battle array the enemy, and nothing but the service of the church, to which his whole life had been devoted, prompted him to do this. His labors were abundantly blessed, and old Columbia Church to-day owes her very name to the untiring zeal of this departed Elder. Peace to his ashes! The last few years of his life, he preached but little, having the care only of Forest Grove Church. He preached his last sermon at this church on the second Sunday in March, 1886, from the text: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."—Deut. xxxii., 11. In May, 1886, he went to bed, never to arise again. He and his brethren saw he was soon to be no more on earth, but did not know he was to last another year; but he did. During his protracted illness he was never heard to murmur at his affliction, but bore it with that patience and fortitude that becometh the children of God. To the writer he expressed his willingness to go. At last, on the evening of 12th of April, 1887, the summons came, and dying without a struggle, he looked as if he was only going to sleep. Thus ended the life of one who had stood as witness for Christ fifty-five years. The day following, after a short discourse by the writer, his remains were interred in the cemetery of Forest Grove, there to await the resurrection for which he plead while here. The following hymn was used, at his request. Underneath

this hymn is written the following: "Sing this hymn at my grave when I am laid away. (Signed) MOSES WESTBERRY."

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. The hour of my departure's come,
I hear the voice that calls me home;
At last, oh Lord, let trouble cease,
And let Thy servant die in peace.</p> <p>2. The race appointed I have run;
The combat's o'er, the prize is won,
And now my witness is on high—
And now my record's in the sky.</p> <p>3. Not in mine innocence I trust,
(I bow before thee in the dust;)
And through my Saviour's blood alone
I look for mercy at Thy throne</p> | <p>4. I leave the world without a tear,
Save for the friends I hold so dear;
To heal their sorrows, Lord descend
And to the friendless prove a friend.</p> <p>5. I come, I come at thy command,
I give my spirit to Thy hand;
Stretch forth thine everlasting arms,
And shield me in the last alarms.</p> <p>6. The hour of my departure's come;
I hear the voice that calls me home;
Now, O, my God! let trouble cease,
Now let Thy servant die in peace.</p> |
|---|--|

Rankin, Brooks Co., Ga., May 25, 1887.

A. V. SIMMS.

Zion's Landmark please copy.

MRS. MARY M. ALDERTON AND ANNA ALDERTON.

MRS. MARY M. ALDERTON, the subject of this notice, was born May 12, 1842, and died March 19, 1887, of diphtheria. She was baptized into the fellowship of the Timberridge (regular Baptist) church, Frederick county, Va., about twenty-one years before her death. Soon after her baptism she was united in marriage to Brother John H. Alderton and moved to the neighborhood of the Enon church, Morgan county, West Virginia, where she had the pleasure of seeing her husband baptized into the fellowship of Enon church, and then she moved her membership to that church. Her husband was afterward ordained deacon, and together they served the cause they so much loved. She was an affectionate and dutiful wife and mother, a kind and benevolent neighbor, and a faithful and consistent church member. The Enon church and surrounding neighborhood never had cause to regret that she came among them. Her seat in the church was never vacant without some good reason. She was a good singer and reader, and an able but not severe critic. She seemed to be impressed for months before her death that her time in this world was short; she seemed entirely resigned to her heavenly Father's will and had selected hymns, spiritual songs, to be used at her funeral. She had such a wonderful view of God's mercy in saving sinners and her heavenly home that her soul was in raptures much of the time from the beginning of her sickness until her death, which covered a period of about three months. She seemed to realize that there was but a step between her and death, and as the sting of death had been removed she longed to take that step and be at rest. Our hope is that that precious Saviour who made death easy to her will help her disconsolate husband and children and us all to bear our great loss.

ANNA ALDERTON died March 20, 1887. She was baptized July, 1867, into the fellowship of Little Capon church, and was in the organization of the Enon church, and lived a consistent member, always filling her place in church matters. She was one of the maiden sisters that lived

near the Enon church, and will be remembered by many who read this, especially the ministers who have been in the habit of visiting Enon. They, like the women spoken of in the Scriptures, *done what they could* to advance the cause of Christ. May God bless the *one lone* sister that remains is the prayer of many hearts.

These sisters whose death I have recorded lived about half a mile apart and died twenty-six hours apart. The former was a sister-in-law and the latter an aunt to the writer. So Elder B. W. Power was called and officiated at the funeral of the first on March 21st. It was a time long to be remembered, both graves were open at the same time, not more than a rod apart. The funeral of the latter took place the 22d, and it was a two days' meeting we will not soon forget. The dear brother took advantage of the occasion to call our attention to the frailty and uncertainty of this life and the certainty of death and of the great love of God in making choice of these two sisters (as well as others) by calling them to a knowledge of the truth, and giving them a disposition to choose Him in return, much to our comfort and edification. This makes seven members we have lost at Enon in a little over three years—all of them regular church-goers. Truly Rachel (Enon) is mourning for her children, and will not be comforted because they are not; but we thank God that none of them ever disgraced his cause while here, but tried to honor it by an upright walk and godly conversation, and are now with him in that beautiful world on high.

Why should our eyes with sorrow flow,
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh,
When Jesus calls the saints must go
To their eternal gain to die.

Paw Paw, W. Va.

T. N. ALDERTON.

WILLIAM G. STACKS.

Killed by a tree, WILLIAM GREEN STACKS, in Blount county, Ala., October 2, 1885. He was a nephew of the writer, and was born March 26, 1852, in Tallapoosa county. The particulars of his killing were about these: Their dogs treed something about midnight 2d of October, and he and his brothers and some neighbor boys went to them and commenced cutting a tree until near down, when he went a piece to hold the dog, and when the tree started to fall they halloed for him to run further and the tree fell; and hearing nothing of him they ran, and behold! under the limb of the tree there he lay bruised and mangled. He lay dying and praying as long as he had breath to pray aloud, and then in a whisper to the last breath. The limb broke one arm and one leg and cut a place on the back of his head, and some of his ribs were broken from his back bone and was terribly bruised inwardly. He died in a few minutes on his brother George's lap. He was a lovely boy and a dutiful son, and had confessed a hope a few days before he died to his mother. He was engaged to be married to a charming young lady, a member of Little Vine Primitive Baptist church. She mourned at his burial as much as any. His

parents grieved very much because he was snatched off in the bloom of youth, but their faith is strong that he has gone to a better world; but old nature is so strong it is hard to control. May his ashes rest in piece with God is my prayer. (Poetry crowded out.)

GEORGE Y. JARVIS.

MRS. ELIZABETH PARTRIDGE.

Departed this life March 15, 1885. Sister ELIZABETH A. PARTRIDGE in her 80th year. She was born in Virginia, April 16, 1805. Her parents, John W. Jarvis and Mary G. Jarvis, whose maiden name was Dame, moved to Georgia, Jones county, when she was an infant, and thence to Monroe county, where she married Thomas Partridge August 22, 1822. They had a large family of children born to them, several of whom died in infancy; and three in one week of scarlet fever, two grown and one nearly grown, and one married. Four yet survive her—two sons and two daughters. She was raised by good parents. Her mother joined the Primitive Baptists many years before the split, and her father joined the Methodist church when he was quite old. Her husband died, say thirty years ago, and left her to raise her children the best she could; and no mother ever came nearer doing her whole duty toward her children than she did. She joined the Primitive Baptist church at Bethlehem, Tallapoosa county, Ala., November 17, 1866, and was baptized by the late Elder Hiram Barron. She dated her conviction from the age of 16, while on the floor dancing. She was truly a good christian woman, a kind and affectionate mother, and a lovely sister in the flesh and a bright one in the Spirit. She left no enemies, but a host of friends and relatives to mourn her loss, but all are satisfied that her loss to us is her eternal gain. She died steadfast in the faith of her blessed Redeemer. She leaves one brother in the flesh—the writer—and one sister. Blessed are they who die in the Lord.

GEORGE Y. JARVIS.

Tallapoosa Co., Ala.

FRANK B. MITCHELL.

Died at his father's house—Mr. John Mitchell—his dearly beloved son, FRANKIE, of pneumonia, on the 19th of June, 1887. He was an obedient son and a loving brother, and beloved by all his associates; lacking only a few days of being twenty years old. But it has pleased God to snatch away him by death, so the will of the Lord be done. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." He had never made a public profession, but we have all reason to believe that he was a child of God. All through his sickness he was never heard to murmur or complain, but seemed to be resigned to the will of the Lord. He died on Sunday morning at 2 o'clock, and was buried on Monday evening; his funeral was preached at his father's house, by Elder H. G. Mitchell, after which he was laid away near by, in the family cemetery. He leaves a fond father and a loving mother, five sisters and five brothers, and a large circle of friends who deeply mourn his death, but our loss is his eternal gain.

A FRIEND.

Oakley Mills, Cobb Co., Ga., July 8, 1887.

ALMAH NAOMI MEECE.

Died June 11th, 1887, of congestion. Deceased was born December 22d, 1875, aged eleven years, five months and twenty days. Dear friends and kindred in Christ, the loss of our dear child is a heavy stroke indeed. She was a kind, affectionate one, always ready to wait on papa or mama in any way that she was called on. The unexpected shock was so sudden that it seems to be more than nature can bear, only living about fifteen or sixteen hours after she was taken. But while we weep and mourn the loss of one so near and dear to us, we desire to mourn not as those who have no hope, but trust that her spirit is committed into the hand of the father, and that in the resurrection morn her body will come forth a spiritual, immortal, glorified body. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory; oh death where is thy sting, oh grave where is thy victory. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear brethren and sisters of my father's children, pray for us, for behold my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

G. W. MEECE.

Mayfield, Miss., June 27th, 1887.

MARY E. ALDERTON.

MRS. MARY E. ALDERTON, wife of William Alderton, and mother of the late Elder T. N. Alderton, was born in the year 1816, and departed this life November 18, 1886, in the seventy-second year of her age. She died at the residence of her son, Daniel Alderton, near Pawpaw, Morgan county, W. Va. Sister Alderton was a great sufferer, being prostrated for the last twelve years with rheumatism, so much so that she was rendered helpless for the greater part of her time. But she bore it all very patiently, and past away without a murmur. But we are much pleased and gratified to say she had every comfort that kind and affectionate children and good neighbors could afford; especially her son and daughter-in-law, with whom she spent the remainder of her days; they being her universal attendants since the death of her husband up to the day of her death.

Sister Alderton united with the Regular Primitive Baptist Church in the year 1846. She was a consistent member, a devoted Christian, a kind mother, and was beloved by all who knew her. She leaves five sons and one daughter to mourn her loss, but we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we feel confident that our loss is her eternal gain. The writer of this obituary, by request, tried to preach her funeral on the 11th of November, 1886, from the beautiful words of Jesus recorded by the Apostle John, xi., 25, 26: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he be dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

Yours unworthily,

Slanesville, W. Va.

B. W. POWERS.

ROBT L. CURTIS.

Our beloved nephew, ROBERT L. CURTIS, died at his father's residence in Newton county, Ga., of measles, June 14, 1887, in his twenty-second year. He was a young man of promise. Nature seemed to have designed him for a useful career. As an associate and friend he was genial and generous, kind and true; as a brother and son, he was loving and dutiful; as a young man, his aspirations were lofty and laudable, his motives were honest, his purposes were pure and elevating, his moral character unblemished. Death came and Bobbie is no more. The evening before he died he saw his relatives weeping, and said: "O pa, don't, maybe I'll pull through;" but shortly after he seemed to realize that death was his portion, and said repeatedly, "I am a dead boy!" Oh, how sad to think that Bobbie will never visit us any more, and that we never can see his face again on earth. To his parents, do not grieve, for Bobbie will never die any more. He is gone, but not lost. O we trust not lost, gone home to glory and to God. Let us be on the watch, for in such an hour as ye think not, the son of man cometh. He died quietly leaving father, mother, four brothers and two sisters, together wrth a large train of relatives and numerous friends to mourn his absence. Elder Wm. Adams made some very suitable remarks at the grave, after which the earthly remains of Bobbie was laid away to rest until the resurrection morn.

J. W. CURTIS.

Rutledge, Ga.

VIOLA VILENTIA MATTOX.

Dear Brethren:—Please to publish this tribute of love for another one of my dear children. Little VIOLA VILENTIA MATTOX, daughter of M. M. and Rebecca E. Mattox, aged ten years, ten months and twelve days, was taken by our merciful Heavenly Father, May 9, 1887.

We are again sad and lonely, but we thank God we have hope to meet again where disease and death will never more prey upon our mortal bodies. Little Lenty, as we called her, in understanding, loveliness, and obedience, always seemed to her unworthy father to exceed her years, but it was the Lord's holy will that she should be a suffering child here for awhile with us, and now he has taken her to himself, and we must say "Not our will but thine, O Lord, be done." Dear brethren and sisters, please try to pray for me that as long as I live, that I live in entire submission to God's holy will, and that when I come to die, I still feel that the yoke is easy and the burden light, and rejoice in hope of eternal life. Little Lenty wore a sweet smile upon her face in death; we laid her little body away by the side of those of her mother, brother and three sisters to await the morning of the resurrection. One brother and four sisters survive her, together with her father, the unworthy writer. Her disease was dropsy, by which she suffered a great deal. The skill of kind physicians, and all that friends could do, could not keep the pure spirit in a tenement of clay. Her Saviour called, she had to go home. Safe now, forever safe in the arms of Jesus.

In conclusion I will say to all the dear brethren and sisters, let us be

“patient in tribulations,” ever looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. May the good Lord help us in my prayer. I hope with an humble, contrite heart.

M. M. MATTOX.

MARTHA A. DURHAM,

Born August 1, 1844, died May 4, 1887, aged forty-four years, nine months and three days. Joined the Primitive Baptist Church July, 1877, and lived a consistent member, firm in the faith and doctrine of grace until death. Sister Durham leaves a stricken yet devoted husband, and five children, who sorrow, but not without hope. She died of consumption, with which she suffered seven years; likely no person ever suffered more, or endured suffering with more fortitude and less murmuring than she did. And truly she left many evidences that she has gone home to her house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The scenes at her death-bed were peculiarly touching: being blessed with her right mind till breath left her. Only a few minutes before she breathed her last she called her husband and children to her, gave each a parting word of advice, and bid all good-bye, saying; “Don’t grieve for me, I am going home to live with Jesus,” and quoted the words, “Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are,” etc. Oh, how “Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his saints.” For the strength of sin and the sting of death were both destroyed, and the victory received by her through the Lord Jesus Christ. Sister Durham was a devoted wife and an affectionate mother, and her memory will ever be cherished by her dear husband and children, and though the unbidden and silent tear may often break forth in memory of the past, we say to them that time only and God’s grace can heal and cause you not to look back, but forward;

For are we not tending upward too,
As fast as time can move?
Nor should we wish the hours more slow
That keep us from our home.

“He that believeth in Jesus, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Jesus shall never die. Believest thou this?” But remember that in the world you shall have tribulations, and in Jesus only is peace. May the hand of the Lord lead, and his grace preserve, the bereaved family from every snare and vice of this world, and finally save them with an everlasting salvation, if it be his holy will, is our prayer. Yours in hope,

F. M. CASEY.

EMALINE INGRAM.

Sister EMALINE INGRAM, wife of Deacon W. T. Ingram, and daughter of Judge A. Middlebrook, was born February 26, 1832, and departed this life on April 3, 1887. She was married to Deacon W. T. Ingram, Dec. 19, 1854. She was the mother of six children, four of whom are living to mourn her loss. Two had preceded her while very young to the haven of eternal rest.

Sister Ingram was truly a good woman, modest and unassuming. She waited long after receiving a hope in Christ before she could gather

strength and courage sufficient to offer herself to the church, but on Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1886, she came forward and told of the wonderful dealings of the Lord with her, and was gladly and happily received by the Primitive Baptist church at Ephesus, Monroe county, Ga. We miss her, yea, we mourn because she is not, but not as those without hope.

It was the writer's privilege to be with her the most of the time during her last hours on earth, and while it was painful to the flesh to see her sinking, and to realize that in a few hours she would be clasped in the icy arms of death, yet, what consolation and even rejoicing of soul it was to the unworthy writer to hear her in answer to her dear distressed husband say that she fully realized her condition, that she did not fear death, but was ready at her master's bidding. When asked if she felt that the Saviour was with her. She, with a smile on her face that the writer will never forget, answered, "I know he is." She was perfectly rational to the last.

To Bro. Ingram, who seems almost inconsolable, and to her four daughters who are so deeply distressed at their loss we say, weep not, neither let your hearts be troubled, for while you have lost and the church and community have lost, all of our loss is her eternal gain.

Elder McCowen and Elder Hitchcock spoke words of comfort and consolation to a large audience of relatives and friends, after which her body was conveyed to the family burying ground and there deposited to await the morning of the resurrection.

J. H. WILLIAMSON.

Juliette, Ga.

MRS. SARAH HALL.

By order of the Primitive Baptist church at Bethel, Montgomery Co., Ala., in conference, the undersigned was appointed to write an obituary of Sister SARAH HALL. She was born in Montgomery county, Ala., February 7, 1841, and was the daughter of Eli and Hulda Pouncy, who moved from Montgomery county to Tallapoosa county, Ala., when she was small and died soon after and she came back to Montgomery county and married Mr. Gillis Hall, and not long after their marriage he went into the service of his country and died. She was the mother of one child by her first husband. Soon after the war she was again married to Mr. Hardy Hall, (cousin of her first husband) by whom she was the mother of four children, two of them dying in infancy. Her second husband died in 1873 leaving her in destitute circumstances, but being a woman of energy, she managed to raise her children. She was a good nurse, a good neighbor, and ever ready to do good when it was in her power to do so, and was affectionate in all her associations of life, and none knew her but to respect her. She united with the Primitive Baptist church at Bethlehem, Montgomery county, Ala., on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1867, and was baptized by Elder William Findley, and lived in said church as a devoted Christian, always filling her seat in the church when it was in her power to do so until about four years ago. She joined the Bethel church, Montgomery county, Ala.

(4)

About two years ago her health began to fail, though the most her time she was able to attend to her household duties. About the first of January last she went on a visit to her sisters in Tallapoosa county, Ala., thinking her health would improve, but she gradually grew worse and on the morning of the tenth of March last, when she quietly fell asleep as we believe in the arms of her blessed Saviour, to await the resurrection.

Sister Hall was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and grace alone. The writer of this notice became acquainted with her about fifteen years ago, and having been in her company a good deal since and had much religious conversation with her, I always found her ready and willing to talk of the doctrine of God our Saviour, and of his goodness and mercy to poor lost sinners. She was a sweet singer in which she delighted. She was the best disciplinarian that I ever conversed with of her sex upon that subject. She was a good Scriptorian and it was truly edifying to sit and converse with her upon the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. And to sum up all in a few words she was truly a good woman, and while we feel our loss from the church militant, we rejoice in the hope of her having joined the church triumphant to sing the praises of God forever and ever. And may the good Lord sanctify this sad bereavement to the good of his cause, and prepare her children to meet their sainted mother in eternal bliss is the prayers of the unworthy writer,

Mt. Carmel, Ala.

O. H. P. COOK.

MARTHA L. COATES.

MARTHA LOUISA COATES, daughter of George W. and Martha Jane Coates, died near Dresden, Texas, of typhoid fever. She was taken sick on 2d February, 1887, and fell asleep in Jesus on 3d of April, without a struggle or a frown. She was born in Tipton county, West Tennessee, 14th January, 1878. She lay speechless twenty-one days and passed away. Jesus took a little child in his arms and blessed it, and said, Of such is the kingdom of heaven. O, what a blessing it is that God was pleased to take the little girl from all the turmoils and troubles of this sin-smitten world to himself, ever to be with him, and be like him. So wipe away those tears that trickle down your cheeks, and say with Job: "The Lord giveth and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." And now I would say to brothers and sisters of the deceased, remember that you, too, have to die, sooner or later, and may it be the pleasure of the Lord to prepare you by his spirit and grace to ever be with little Martha Louisa, and be like Jesus. The writer has been acquainted with Brother and Sister Coates some six years; their house was my pleasant home when opportunity offered, when on my travels in that country. Brother Coates and wife were both members of Indian Creek Church of Primitive Baptists, in Tipton county, said church belonging to the Mississippi River Association. The writer has visited every church in that Association, except one, and found them to be generally sound in the doctrine of God our Saviour, renouncing all the men-made institutions not authorized in the Scriptures. Yours in love of truth, I hope,

Tullahoma, Tenn.

ALDRIDGE BROWN.

W. P. COX.

Our beloved brother, Deacon W. P. Cox, departed this life April 14, 1887, aged eighty-one years and eight months. Brother Cox was an unusually stout man, having been sick but little until a few months before his death, when he was afflicted with dropsy, from which he suffered greatly until God, in his mercy, relieved him by death. It was the privilege of the writer to visit him a short time before his death, just after he had passed through a terrible paroxysm of pain, and he said to me that he thought his time had come, and he felt perfectly resigned, as he felt an assurance that the change would be a happy one for him. Brother Cox was received into the fellowship of the church at Rock Springs, Morgan county, Ga., October 21, 1842, and was baptized by Elder G. W. Malcom, where he remained a member until April 14, 1849, and was dismissed by letter, he having moved near Mt. Paron Church, in Walton county, Ga., where he put in his letter and remained an orderly and useful member until his death. Soon after he became a member of Mt. Paron, he was chosen and ordained to the office of deacon, in which office "he purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith." As pastor of his church I was often with him, and can truly say that I was much comforted and benefitted by his counsel and example. Our relations were always pleasant. Few can say as he could in truth, viz.: That during all his long years of membership, near a half century, he never missed more than three conferences, never letting business interfere with his duty to God and his brethren. May the Lord enable us all to imitate his example. The writer preached his funeral at his home at the time of his burial, to one of the largest concourses of people that I have ever seen at a burial, from 2 Cor. v., 1. Brother Cox was a kind husband, an affectionate father, an exemplary Christian and citizen, an uncompromising lover of the truth, always striving for the things that make for peace, and will be greatly missed by us all; yet we feel our loss is his gain, therefore we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God who does all things well. We tender our sympathies to the beloved family, and commend them to God, who is able to keep and sustain them. We have but hinted at his virtues, but as you request short notices, will close, with the hope that when we die we may die as he did, in the triumphs of the faith of Jesus.

Your brother, M. F. HURST.

MRS. MINNIE FARLEY.

Our dear daughter, Mrs. MINNIE FARLEY, wife of J. M. Farley, died at their home in Monroe county, Ga., June 2, 1887, in her eighteenth year. She lived eleven miles from us, and at the time of her sickness we had five cases of measles at home, so that I did not get to see her till the day she died. She told me that she had some evidence of a hope in Jesus for several years, but since her sickness the precious Saviour had been very near to her, and spoke of a brightness above anything ever before seen by her. I never had seen such a bright countenance, and her voice was strong and mind clear. After telling us how she wished to be buried, she

said she would die before night, which was true. I had thought I never could bear to see one of my children die, but here I was made to pass through the scene, not knowing whether my tears were of joy or sorrow. I tried to pray for my children at home to recover; my oldest daughter was very low, and we did not know which would die first. She had told me of a precious hope in Jesus, and how she longed for rest, but said she was none too good to suffer, and was willing to wait the appointed time.

I desire this notice published in the MESSENGER, and to have a copy of the same sent me. We have many friends and relatives in South Georgia, and would like for them to know of our bereavement. Her earthly remains were laid in the Milner cemetery. I hope you may have the spirit of prayer for her heart-stricken husband, who says that he feels that he cannot overcome the shock. Excuse me for thus troubling you, and pray for us in our afflictions. Mrs. M. J. MARTIN.

MARY J. WILSON.

MARY J. WILSON, consort of Stanley Wilson, died at their home in Johnson county, Ga., December 12, 1886. Sister Wilson was born November 30, 1847, being at her death thirty-nine years and twelve days old. She was a grand-daughter of the lamented Elder Isaac Norris, and daughter of A. G. and Martha Townsend. She was married to Stanley Wilson March 30, 1870. After her marriage she was greatly afflicted not able at times to perform her household duties, which threw a hard burden on her good husband. She was a kind and affectionate wife and mother and bore her afflictions with fortitude and Christian resignation, and has left a heart-stricken companion, seven little children, an aged mother, four brothers, five sisters and a host of friends and relatives to mourn their loss and rejoice in their hope of her acceptance with God. She gained a good hope through faith in Jesus and gave to Providence church a reason of that hope and was received into fellowship of said church and baptized by the unworthy writer on the 3d of August, 1878. She was a Primitive Baptist in truth and the servants of God were always welcomed to her house and well cared for. O brothers and sisters I hope that you will not forget her request that she wanted you all to meet her in heaven saying "Do not grieve for me for I am going to rest." She died away and then came to and asked her dear husband to sit by her which he did, and she then gave to him directions concerning her children and where to bury her and who to preach her funeral; and also requested him to see that her children were cared for, and for her people to meet her in heaven. O, the comfort that there is in this sister's dying testimony! I will say my dear bereaved brother, "trust in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

Her funeral was preached on the fifth Sunday in May by Elder J. N. Smith and the unworthy writer; what I say unto one I say unto all, to watch and pray; and to be ye also ready, etc. Farewell.

HENRY MEEKS.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 10. BUTLER, GA., OCTOBER, 1887. Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER THOMAS BARTON.

Elder Barton was born Sept. 10, 1787. The place of his nativity I am not able to state, but think it was in the vicinity of Washington city. His conviction as a sinner in the sight of God was sudden almost as lightning, and also as effectual. He told me that he was in the ball-room, engaged in the festivities of the dance, when he was shocked and astounded by a sense of the divine presence and his own guilty condition, and all further interest in the amusements of the hour was at once ended. This was in early youth. And to a man of his uncommonly lively social disposition and flow of animal spirits, the change must have been indeed wonderful. But the current of his whole after life was changed. His own experience afforded him an answer always to arguments as to preaching being the means of the conviction and conversion of sinners. It was not the means in his case; he had not been hearing any preaching. He said he never had



become acquainted with an instance of such pungent exercises and deep distress as his own. As in Paul's case, it was comparable to a crucifixion; yet he was always very tender and forbearing towards those whose experience was gradual, and who were drawn mainly by the cords of love.

His baptism appears to have been in the year 1810, and his ordination two years later. He would then have been in his twenty-fifth year. He probably commenced preaching almost immediately after his admission to the church.

Brother Barton does not appear to have ever been allured by the flattering pretensions of the various societies and institutions that were gotten up as auxiliaries to the church. He lived before them, saw their rise and progress, and was present when they finally were scourged out of the temple. In the early years of his ministry he attended a school in Philadelphia for a time—a school which seems to have been designed to better qualify and fit young preachers for their work. He told me that in this he had acted upon the advice of others, and he was free to say that the schooling obtained there had been of no real benefit to him as a gospel preacher. As far as I could learn, his connection was always with sound, orderly churches. Among the ministry round about him, there were some to whom he became very much attached. Indeed, it was his disposition to form very strong attachments, and particularly in the ministry. With some of these, in whom he had much confidence, and with whom he had taken sweet counsel, he was compelled afterwards to part company. "They went out from us." I think it was one among the sorest trials of his life; yet the sorrow was not for his own sake, but for theirs. His conversational powers were rather extraordinary; an inexhaustible fund of humor, of wit, of anecdote, of apt and striking metaphor seemed to be always accessible. His manner of preach-

ing was not what is called declamatory, but rather illustrative. His figures and similes would oftentimes amuse, but at the same time they would instruct. Their effect was solemn conviction. As you looked upon his rather sad and serious countenance you would hardly suspect that he could be so animated and amusing in conversation, or that he could so charm and captivate in his preaching. His forte seemed to be to instruct and establish, rather than to gather in, yet to the children he was certainly one of those *fathers* of which we have not many. He told me that he had not baptized as many as some others, but that he had baptized *too many*. He was pastor of a Baptist church in Washington City for a time, but I think not very long. He traveled much over rough, rocky and mountainous districts in Maryland and Pennsylvania, on horseback, preaching for small, destitute churches, at private houses, and any and all places where there was a door opened. He said that he was weakly and frail, and thought that his time here would be short, and he wanted to preach all he possibly could while he was able. He shrank from no hardship, no exposure to winter storms and snows, but went every where, and at all seasons, preaching the word. In 1824 he accepted a call from the London Tract Church, one of the churches of the Delaware Association. At the session of the Baltimore Association, in the spring of, I think, 1831, he suggested to some of the brethren the propriety of a convention of some of the neighboring churches and ministers, to have some consultation as to what was to be done. The Baptists had become a divided house; professed ministers came to our general meetings with another doctrine; human means and the efforts of men were urged in the stead of the work of the Holy Spirit. The brethren of the church at Black Rock invited a convention in accordance with the above proposition, to be held with them. Although it was only designed

at first as a somewhat local affair, when it was published it was responded to by messengers from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. The same cause that prompted the call, existed almost wherever the name of Baptist was known. A general response followed. An address was drawn up and unanimously adopted and published, planting themselves firmly and immovably upon the faith and practice of the fathers. It was unanimously signed, but the signers have now all laid aside their armor.

Elder Barton was polished in his manners, graceful in his appearance, with considerable native eloquence about him. The New School division seemed disposed to claim in part, at least to persuade themselves, that he was not as hard as the rest, and that they would be very willing to have him with them. On one occasion one of their young divinity students sent him a challenge to hold a public debate with him. He sent him answer to "Tarry at Jericho until his beard was grown." At another time they appointed him a *Director* in one of their pet institutions, and sent him a commission. He returned answer that if he had any *directions* to give it would be in the words of Jehu, 2 Kings, ix. 34: "Go see now this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter."

It is proper here to state that he never used lightness nor indulged in jesting, nor did anything fall from his lips in the stand that was beneath the solemnity and dignity of the place. Soon after his settlement with the church at London Tract, Rock Springs and Welsh Tract were added to his charge, which arrangement continued without interruption until he was called hence. His connection with these churches, counting from his first settlement at London Tract, was about forty-six years. No schism, discord or division ever occurred during his connection with them. Although his charge was so extensive, yet he continued to travel much, supplying

the destitute and attending annual meetings and Associations. The apostolic practice was his model, and he was always consistent. He never hired himself out to preach. Although in his earlier years he was surrounded with the practice of asking and receiving pecuniary stipulations, even among Baptists, the price of his services was never valued with dollars and cents. He went forth nothing doubting, and returned saying that he had lacked nothing. He was accustomed to saying that the Lord had only promised him *bread and water*, but that he had fared much better than that. The whole period of his ministry embraced nearly sixty years. It might with great propriety be said of him that "He finished his course with joy, and the ministry that he had received." It was a favorite sentiment with him: "When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." He died peacefully, surrounded by loving brethren and a devoted family, in the triumphs of faith, in the eighty-third year of his age.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

"The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."—1 Cor. iv, 20.

Dear Brethren:—Having in my former letter dwelt somewhat at length upon the phrase, "the kingdom of God," I desire now to present some thoughts upon the concluding expression, "is not in word, but in power." It is not needful to recount the circumstances under which these words were written, as I alluded to them in my former letter. Paul in substance said here, the eloquence, the subtle reasoning, the letter of the word which these men who trouble you may possess is nothing to me, but I will know their spirit. Have they the power of the Holy Ghost in their ministry? And then for a reason of this course which he would pursue he quotes a truth which is of general application in the kingdom of God, "for the kingdom of God is not in

word, but in power." The kingdom of God makes no display, boasts not of what it will accomplish, sounds no trumpet before it, uses no priestly robes, no gemmed and glittering crowns, needs not cathedrals filled with scent of incense and "dim religious light," and depends not on eloquence and languishing music for success and progress in the world. Men-made churches use these things, and thus confess that the power of the kingdom of God is not in them. They make proselytes, but this involves no change of heart. It only proves that the church has outbid the world at her own auction, and has become more worldly than the world itself. But the kingdom of God needs not such things for her success. She comes in power, bringing life and healing and comfort to the poor, sick and suffering.

In reference to the preaching of the gospel itself, this principle is most blessedly true. I am reminded of Elijah in the mount of God. The strong wind, the earthquake, the fire passed him by, but the voice of his God was not in these. Soon he heard a still, small voice, and this he recognized, and communed with his God. So it may be with the preaching of the Word. One may have power like the wind to sway and bend the masses of men by his eloquence; another may be able to stir up and shake to their very centre the hearts of men as an earthquake, and still another may speak with words that burn, and yet the listening, waiting child of God listens in vain for the sound of his God in it all. And when all is past and all the natural feelings of his heart have ceased from their excitement wherein he found no joy in the Lord, then he hears a still, small voice and is comforted. To him the word has come in power, perhaps through a broken word from some ignorant brother or sister, so that God and not man gets all the glory. I once heard of a talented, eloquent minister preaching upon a certain occasion. After he was done a poor unlearned brother arose and bore his testi-

mony to the goodness of the Lord. Some strangers of note were present, and the minister felt rather ashamed of the ignorant brother. Some time afterwards he was approached by a stranger, who introduced himself by saying that he had heard him preach upon the occasion named above, and that the service had done him great good. "Indeed," said the minister, feeling much gratified; "What part of the sermon helped you so much?" "Oh, it was not the sermon, though that was good, but what was said by a poor ignorant man after you were done," was the reply. And I recall in my childhood, how that one night after preaching at my father's house an old man, feeble in body and voice, talked a while, and his words stand out in my memory, filled with richer blessings than the best sermon that I ever heard. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."

But while this is the special application which Paul makes of the text, yet its application is as broad as the kingdom itself, and so I desire to present some further reflections in other directions. As all that we can know of the kingdom of heaven is what we experience of it, I desire to speak of it in that way. And, first, "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," in quickening sinners dead in sin into divine life. The Holy Spirit does not offer life to the dead, but gives it; just as Jesus raised Lazarus from the grave, so does the Divine Spirit quicken and raise the dead sinner to walk in newness of life. The child of God is not a mere galvanized corpse, made to look more than act as though it were alive; but *he is alive*, alive unto God. Jesus said, "The hour is coming, and *now* is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." And then he said, "The hour is coming when all they that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." Again Jesus said, "Whosoever believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," etc. And our God has expressly declared that his word shall

be like the snow and the rain which he sends forth to water the earth and cause it to bring forth fruit, it shall not return unto him void, etc. This work of quickening the dead sinner lies at the very beginning of our life in the kingdom of heaven. Life must precede all action, feeling or thought, in every case either natural or spiritual. When men are born into this natural world, or when they are quickened into natural life, "the work is not in word, but in power." The God of nature speaks and it is done, commanded and it stands fast. So is it in the kingdom of heaven. This lower life is just like the spiritual life in this that God gives both as a sovereign, and we are passive in receiving; and in both he speaks and it is done. This work is also compared to a "creation," "a new creation," the believer is called "a new creature." "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." What a sublime sentence! It preceded day and night, light and darkness, even the chaos expressed in the words, "and the earth was without form, and void and darkness was on the face of the deep." It preceded all exhibition of life, whether plant or animal life. And so in this new creation, the creation itself is an act of Almighty power, and from it springs up all spiritual light, heat and motion. As well then might the world have refused to be, as well could Adam have said, "I will not exist," before he was formed of dust of the ground, as can a sinner say, I will not be a new creature; I will not exist in the kingdom of heaven. No! The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. From this life there can be no falling away. If a man has professed better things under any excitement or influence that has in any way appealed to his natural feelings, as soon as the power that has been moulding him is withdrawn he will resolve back into his original state. But if the work be God's work it is done forever, and spite of many failures and falls will go on unto perfection.

None but God can perform this work upon the dead sinner. But, thank God, he does perform it and Lazarus comes forth, though it may be hampered and bound with grave clothes. What utter folly then is the theory of those, no doubt sincere but misguided, brethren who deny that the dead sinner is made alive and born from above into the everlasting kingdom of God. It is Lazarus who was dead, but is alive again. It is the lost who is found. And our God does this that men should fear before him, and his work is never in vain.

Again, the thought occurs to me that the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power, in convincing the living man of his sins. All men will in a sense confess that they are sinners. They believe it theoretically, but not so as that they grieve over it. They may say in words that they are all sinners, but it gives them no concern. It is as though a little child should be told that he and all around him have the leprosy, when he never saw a case of leprosy and knows not how horrible a disease it is. But when the disease shall develop itself upon him then he will not make light of it, but will mourn. The child of God does not believe in total depravity as a mere sentiment, a mere theory, but as an awful fact in his own life. By the Spirit he is so convinced of sin that he can no longer feel secure, but is condemned and cast out as evil. He not only is unclean, but is compelled to cry: Unclean! unclean! Such a soul cannot put away the burden from him. If this truth had come to him only in word he could easily drown the thought or lay it aside by bending his mind in other ways. If it were but in word then he could with proper effort satisfy his conscience, even as did Saul of Tarsus, and like him imagine himself so good as to be at liberty to persecute others. This same Paul afterwards said of his former step, "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived." The real kingdom of God had never come

to him before, but now it had come, not in word, but in power. Every child of God that reads this can bear testimony out of his own experience to the difference when this work of real conviction was fastened upon his heart. It came with power, it came to remain, and he was humbled and abased. All the preaching he had ever heard, all the reading of the Scriptures he had ever done had left him as it had found him. But now a new force has entered into his life and he must yield to it. Surely he must confess this new power that he feels must be of God. Like the penitent thief, he is convinced of the justice of his condemnation, and like Paul, "Behold, he prayeth."

Once more, "the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," in the revelation of Christ to the soul as the one Saviour and Friend. There are thousands to-day who believe and teach that all that saving faith amounts to is, that a man should read the Scriptures and believe them so thoroughly as to act upon them just as I should believe any one who had brought me a message that I was appointed to an office under the government, and then proceed to act upon it. They say the Bible declares such and such things, believe what it says and all is well. But this is not the kingdom of God. This sort of belief is not the faith of that kingdom. In that kingdom the word of God, the word of the Scriptures, is applied with living power by the Spirit. It comes "not in word, but in power." This that follows has been the experience of millions. In their conviction they have longed for deliverance. They have read the Scriptures again and again, hoping for a word of comfort, but have found none. They have listened to preaching, and have asked the prayers of saints, but all in vain. To them the kingdom of heaven had come in none of these things. But bye and bye they read or heard the same word, and it came with wonderful power, and all their darkness fled away. They had found the king-

dom of God in light and joy. This is a real experience of thousands to-day. On the other hand we have visited and conversed with souls in deep trouble, we have tried to comfort them, and have spoken true words, words that have been as a cordial to our own souls, but they have not been comforted. The kingdom of God had not come to them. It might be that afterwards it should come in some word of ours, but not then. Its coming would be known, for it will come like the lighting to the soul, and the darkness will be illumined, and it will be seen that no human power was working here.

Again, the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power, in bearing its fruit in the life of the believer. In the early days we see its power in turning Paul to the wisdom of the just and his feet to walk in paths of righteousness. And in one place he speaks of murders, adulteries and drunkenness, and then says to his brethren, "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the spirit of God." And again Paul said, "*Sin* shall not have dominion over you because ye are not under the law but under grace." And in exact agreement with this last text, though expressed after the manner of John rather than Paul, are these words, "Whosoever (not whatsoever) is born of God *doth not* commit sin; he cannot sin because he is born of God." Which is John's way of saying, that sin cannot reign in or over him. The design of our election and calling is that we should be holy and without blame before our God in love. The word can only point out the road, but imparts no desire for it nor strength to walk in it. But when the kingdom of God really comes we see at once repentance for sins that are past and the face set Zionward. Such a man feels to be still a sinner, and realizes a warfare within and without. But as a little girl once said, when as she was

being examined for church membership she was asked what difference she saw in herself, "Then I was a sinner, running after sin as hard as I could, now I am a sinner running away from sin as fast as I can." As the kingdom of God comes to a poor sinner it makes him a partaker of the divine nature. Christ is formed in him the hope of glory, the love of God and his neighbor is shed abroad in his heart, and he hates sin, even his own sins, and loves and strives after righteousness. And this work cannot be undone. The warfare may sometimes be against him, but in the end grace shall conquer, and the victory of holiness shall be sure. And one evidence of the victory of holiness is that we are given repentance for our sins.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is not in word, but in power, when it comforts the mourner and strengthens the man to endure all trials and to face all enemies, even the last and most dreadful foe, death, with calmness and confidence. Human reasonings and infidel philosophies can never avail when the deep waters come in unto the soul. How cold and chilling and full of mockery they are when the soul needs help! But a living Saviour presented in the gospel has been the joy of millions when called to endure loss and reproach for Christ's sake. In this precious hope Paul could say, "I am now ready to be offered, for the time of my departure is at hand." Of late it has been said to me by some who have been drinking a very bitter cup, "It was only through grace that I could bear it." "Had not the word of the Lord been my stay, what could I have done?" said another. These are living testimonies of people that I know. Words, words of ours, even the words of the Bible, though in themselves all true, have no power, but when the Spirit of God has made them live and filled them with power, then indeed we are strengthened, and out of the midst of the fire can sing praises to God.

And, so in the resurrection and final glory it shall be seen that the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Jesus arose by the power of God. The very body in which he had suffered, moved, was crucified and died, was raised. And so the very body in which we live, move, enjoy, suffer, speak, and act, and DIE, shall in like manner be raised—raised and changed. The kingdom of God contemplates this as its final fruition. And if the Spirit of the Lord be in us our God will also quicken our mortal bodies by the Spirit that dwells within us. If the scriptures prove that there is salvation for a sinner at all, they prove that the body is saved also. If the Bible does not state the resurrection of the body, how can language be said to mean anything? And what language could be put together that would say it, if the language of the Bible does not?

And the completion of the whole matter is that then shall “we see as we are seen.” “Then shall we be like him for we shall see him as he is.”

How good and gracious a thing it is that we have such a heavenly kingdom revealed as being ours. Oh, may God grant us to add to our faith, virtue, and every heavenly fruit, that so an abundant entrance be administered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus.

I remain your brother in the hope of the gospel.

Reisterstown, Md.

F. A. CHICK.

Not less, perhaps, than twenty thousand hearts will be gladdened by the precious letter of Brother Chick.—R.

Dear Brother Respass:—It seems to me to be desirable, with all the opportunities we have for correspondence throughout the denomination, that whatever is wanting should be set in order in all the churches, and that the general practice of the churches should not only be sustained by scripture, but be harmonious. I was many years ago present at a meeting of another

denomination, where some candidates offered, and after some questions and answers, they were formally received into membership, and then led to the water and baptized afterwards. I was not only surprised, but shocked; so that the impression has remained upon my mind ever since. I thought that the non-professing world would know better than that. I have been no less surprised and shocked to see, occasionally, accounts published in some of our Southern and Western papers of members being taken into some of the Baptist churches in that same way. The accounts certainly read as if such was the case; and if no such transactions have taken place, I would like to be corrected. It has been understood and accepted uniformly by all consistent Baptists, that the Primitive churches were composed of baptized believers. Receiving folks formally into the church and giving the right hand of fellowship with the expectation that they will be baptized afterwards, certainly is disorder. I think it must result from want of thought, or of the attention of the church being called to the subject. If candidates could properly be members of a gospel church at all before being baptized, we might suppose they might remain so indefinitely afterward. The way that is marked out for the believer is a straight way, and the church should make straight paths for the footsteps of her children.

There is another point of order on my mind to which I might as well call attention now, and that is the *ordaining of deacons*. If we have examples and instructions in scripture warranting the observance of that ceremony as it is observed by some churches, and if men are not qualified to serve, and properly constituted deacons without being ordained, we all ought to know it, and all ought to observe it; and so good gospel order be observed and maintained with uniformity throughout the denomination. That it has not been the universal or even the general practice of the

churches to call a council and ordain their deacons, is perhaps generally known. And yet some of the churches go on ordaining, and others simply appoint or elect them, and the ordinations are published in our papers without calling forth a word of note or comment. It is not an unimportant matter, about which each church is at liberty to pursue her own course, and no disorder involved. And I presume it is not regarded by any of our churches as a trifling matter, or one about which we are without sufficient directions. I judge the churches are conscientious about it, and whether following the traditions of the fathers, or being guided by inspired revelation, each have been fully persuaded of the propriety of their own course.

While calling attention to the subject, I may be expected to *show mine opinion*, and give some reason therefor. I will say, in the first place, that throughout the range of my personal acquaintance, the practice of ordaining deacons in the manner in which ministers are ordained, is not general, although some few churches still adhere to it. The custom prevailed formerly more than it does now, one after another of the churches ceasing to call councils, or invite assistance, but simply appointing or electing deacons as they do other church officers. For my own part, I have sanctioned this latter course. I am aware that the seven (who are understood to have been deacons) were publicly set apart to this official work; but the same reasons existed for it then that have always existed for the ordination of ministers. The church was not divided into separate organizations, but all the thousands of members scattered in different countries were one church, and the deacons were the common property of the whole, and expected to serve anywhere and everywhere throughout the church's bounds. It is a valid and sufficient reason for the ordination of ministers in the presence, and with the concurrence of a general council of brethren, be-

cause they are the common property of all the churches and will be expected to serve as such. The same reason would hold good in regard to deacons. But when members are organized into a distinct church, and when the duties of an officer are entirely local and confined to that church of which he is the appointed officer, I judge that the church herself is fully competent to the appointment, and that an appointment by her is valid. After distinct churches were organized, we have explicit directions and instructions with regard to ordaining elders, but though deacons are spoken of frequently, and their qualifications for the office fully described, yet no mention in any instance is made of ordaining them.

I suggest these reflections to the consideration of the brethren. It still remains to be true according to the Proverb: "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."

Yours to serve in the gospel,

State Road, Del.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

REMARKS.—It is the custom in this section to receive members when they tell their experiences to the church, by giving the right hand of fellowship, before baptism; and very often after baptism. But the latter practice is not so common as the former. It is a good custom to give the right hand of fellowship, and would be good both before and after baptism. And we think it ought to be given after baptism, if possible. But there is no command or example in the scriptures of giving it upon the reception of a member into the church at any time. Giving it before baptism only signifies Christian fellowship.—R.

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.—Matt. xviii. 12.

The greater part of that (xviii.) chapter of Matthew relates to discipline, and our Saviour's teaching there is so pointed and plain that if we possess the spirit of it there is no occasion of our stumbling at his words. In the verse quoted above he supposes a case which meets the judgment of every rational man. Men understand the interest they feel in their flock, and by such a figure our Saviour would impress our minds with his special

care for his sheep. How comforting this should be to us. The case supposed plainly implies the liability of our Lord's sheep to go astray, but notwithstanding they may stray he is not content to lose one per cent. of them, no not one of a thousand. He will seek them not only in the plains, but also in the craggy and difficult mountains. But how does he now seek them? He is not here in the flesh as he once was, but in Spirit he dwells in his churches and in all the churches labors, endeavoring to reclaim the wandering; it is Christ seeking his sheep, provided they proceed in harmony with his word. Churches, as well as individuals, are liable to err, and if any think otherwise, they are already far gone astray. What should we think of a church that would cut off a member without an endeavor to heal? We could not suppose that such proceedings were Christ seeking his sheep. Then as Christ in his word will not tolerate the cutting off of an individual member without an endeavor to heal, what should we think of a church that would assume, without an effort to reclaim, and without the concurrent judgment of neighboring churches, to discard or cut off a whole church? From the less to the greater is a scriptural way of arguing, and proves very strongly, and hence we may justly infer that our Lord's care for one in a hundred of his sheep clearly implies that he has a greater care for a greater number. Hence, as it would be rebellion against Christ to cut off one member without an endeavor to heal we may justly infer that it would be high-handed rebellion to assume to cut off or to discard a whole church without an endeavor to reclaim. Whole churches are liable to err, as has previously been considered, but simply the erring of churches does not destroy them. For then the church at Corinth, and five of the seven churches of Asia, and all the churches of Galatia, would have been destroyed, for those churches erred grossly, as Bible

(2)

readers know. But they were not destroyed, nor was there an objection raised against their gospel administration during the prevalence of those disorders; inspiration thought it enough to reprove their disorders, and that was done. Now such things were written for our instruction, and oh that Baptists of this age might learn from such examples. What right has any man or church to say that a church ceases to be a church simply because it may be in disorder? God in his word has not said such things, neither has any man speaking by his Spirit. Some have questioned the right of one church to deal or to labor with another, but I can see no foundation in the scriptures for such doubts. For our Lord commands to "Withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly."—2 Thess. v. 6. I suppose it will be granted that whole churches may walk disorderly, and when they do, are not orderly walking churches commanded, as quoted above, to withdraw from such disorderly walking bodies? That word "every" in the above quotation being an indefinite term, will apply to a single individual or to a whole church, just as well, as I conclude. But our Lord's disciplinary teaching in general, and our text in particular, shows that there must be an effort to reclaim before withdrawal. Therefore it is clear to my mind that as individuals cannot deal with a church, it therefore devolves upon churches. But as churches are equals, it would appear an impropriety for one individual church to withdraw from another, even after she had labored and failed to reclaim, much less without such labor. It would evidently be an assumption for one brother to attempt to discard and depose another without the concurrent judgment and action of his church.

So I conclude that in withdrawing from a church the concurrent judgment and official action of two or three churches is necessary to be had. Furthermore, after two or three churches have been associated together in

laboring, and in withdrawing from a church, it is not then their province to pronounce that no church from which they have withdrawn. For who can know in advance whether a merciful God will destroy the visibility of that church, or grant her repentance unto the "acknowledging of the truth?" Certainly after such gospel steps have been taken, and a church withdrawn from by sister churches, no official administrations (if any) of that church could be valid until (if ever) she was restored to fellowship. Nor is there any gospel ground to invalidate the official gospel administrations of churches and ministers until they have been formally and gosselly deposed. I know the Bible will not tolerate the confounding of the gospel acts of churches and ministers with their disorders in advance of an exercise of discipline against them. The Bible prescribes the manner in which churches and ministers are empowered to officiate, and the Bible as clearly prescribes the manner in which they may be deposed when it becomes necessary, viz.: by the faithful exercise of discipline.

As many of our people have erred, and in many places become divided into factions, how very diligent we should be in throwing out every hindering obstacle that may be in the way of their returning and becoming united again with their people upon gospel principles. Not only should we be willing to receive them when they have repented for their sins, but we should admonish them to repent, laboring with meekness to show them their errors for which they should repent. If such was our course it would indeed look like Christ seeking his sheep, and in fact, it would be. If our brethren do go astray we are forbidden to "count them as enemies," and commanded to "admonish them as brethren." (See 2 Thess. iii., 15.) May the Lord have compassion upon his people of this age, teaching us to understand the order of his house, and working in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure."

JOHN ROWE.

“I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.”—Zeph. iii.

This poor people have grounds to trust in the name of the Lord, for Paul says (Rom., vi. 6) knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him (Christ); yes, the child of God has been brought with supplication and sorrow into death, (no power) and can now see sin in its true character, that he is a sinner in his nature; can see a fountain of holiness afar off, and none to put him in; all his powers gone, and can go no further. Here he dies to all his works; all his hope is gone. Here he dies to sin—here he is crucified with Christ, and has learned that the wages of sin is death, and the gift of God is eternal life. To understand the death and resurrection of Jesus, we must feel his death working life in us. Does not this people have cause to trust in the name of the Lord? they who deny self and are dead to self and the law, having laid aside their own judgment, and have no hope for heaven only by being led to God by his Spirit? He alone gives a hungering for the true bread of eternal life, of which he that eats shall live forever. Then with joy one says: “Eat, oh friends! drink, oh beloved!” The man of God must deny self or he cannot be his (Jesus’) disciple; if self still believes, he is a moral agent; he does not deny self, and cannot follow Jesus; for self has nothing in it that is good. Then why look to self? Let us try self in the shape of moral agency, and let moral agency fix our mind, heart and affections upon God, peace, love and holiness, without wavering, for an hour, and if we fail in this let us, as did Peter, say, “Thou, Lord, hast the words of eternal life; I leave all for thee.” The moral agent cannot have the great warfare between the flesh and the Spirit spoken of by Paul, who says, “For that which I do I allow not.” Ah, but why not moral agency step in and always perform that which is good? And “the good I would I do not.” Now, if moral agency cannot do that

much for a good man, what can it do for such as I? Oh! let us heed the word of the Master—*leave all*, ALL for his sake. One said at a certain time, “Master, where dwellest thou?” and may this be the cry from the heart of every mourner in Zion, and may they hear the answer of peace, “Come and see.” What a blessing to an inquiring and contrite heart! ’Tis heaven, indeed, to rest here! Now turn to 2 Kings, iv. 12, and find the Shunammite spoken of; also in Songs, vi. 13: “What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.” Here is a lively figure of the two spirits or minds in the Christian; one mind is longing and thirsting for the truth of God, and to be at his feet in prayer and thanksgiving to be his true servant; the other mind it of the flesh and the world, and all corrupt, evil, surmising foolish thoughts and anger, and the worst of all is pride, wanting to exalt self. These enemies cause a daily warfare with the man of God. He feels he is so unworthy and so unholy, giving him sore trouble that his groanings cannot utter. Now, dear friends and neighbors, you greatly mistake us as a people; you say we are selfish, and hard-hearted, and opposed to much good (religious good), and even say we believe we will be saved, even to do as we will. Now I can speak for all true Primitive Baptists; we don’t want to do evil, but we find a law in our members warring against the law of our minds and bringing us into captivity to sin. Now you can see us a tender and loving-hearted people if one comes to us in contrition of heart and tells us of all the way the Lord has led him; and that he was dead but now alive; has been to the end of his strength. And Jesus calls this joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. He tells us of a secret work in us that the vulture’s eye can’t see; a joy that but few learn, that Jesus is a full Saviour. The Lord told Israel to build him an altar of rough stones, and not to raise a tool upon it, “lest you pollute

it." It was to be of rough stones, and if moral agency had been the builder he would have sent these rough stones to the polishers' schools and had them to nicely fit in moral agency; but the Lord would have the glory of polishing these rough stones (sinners). A beautiful figure, as was the leper; the leprosy, while in spots and scabs was pronounced by the priest to be unclean, and the leper must stay without the camp seven days longer, being unclean; but at the end of the next seven days the leprosy had spread all over the man, not a spot left uncovered, and strange it is to the world this leper is now pronounced clean by the priest. And why is he now pronounced clean, being polluted and all over leprous? And now he comes into the camp an equal with his brethren. Let us unlock the mystery; the poor, sin-sick soul in Zion finds, by sore experience, he is as the leper, totally depraved, no strength, and now he has to drop self, deny self, and as long as self is dropped moral agency cannot move. If self dies, he must die. Now see with what joy and peace of soul encumbered, following close at Jesus' feet! Now to you who think us to be a strange people, bear with us until you find out what we are and where we are; yea, keep down your hard speeches until you come and see where we dwell, and then you will exclaim as did Ruth, "Your God shall be my God." Then it is you can feel the joy in heaven over one sinner who leaves all for Jesus, and can see why God has, in all ages of the world, kept his church hidden from the world, and not numbered them with the world; they must and will let alone the institutions of men; they hear the voice within, "follow me," and the voice of the angel to righteous Lot, "Tarry not in all the plains." In these plains some of the dear people of God stop; there is all beauty to nature's eye, and there we forget our experience and seem to be swallowed up by the wisdom of this world; but the word and Spirit still say "tarry not in all the

plains; come out of her my people that you be not partaker of her plagues.”

Dear brethren, what I have written here is a part of the exhortation that has been in my heart for the hungry, thirsty and heavy laden for some time past. It has been a sweet burthen to my heart, but now how to perform it? I dare not get before my Master, he must lead. Blessed be his name he opens up the way; deny self, be at Jesus' feet, love not the praise of men, take no glory to self, speak Jesus' words, and not mine own, the glory must be to God. One of old, Uzza, put forth his hand to steady the Ark of God and was smitten dead. He assumed to and did do what God did not command him to do; and if I write for vainglory contrary to the word of God, my brethren will condemn me. God forbid it, and open our eyes and hearts to the truth of God.

Oglesby, Texas.

W. A. HALBROOK.

EXPERIENCE.

Dear Brother Respass:—I have had a name among Primitive Baptists now about one year, having been received and baptized by them on the third Sunday of June, 1885, and I have been asked by some of the brethren to write my experience, and I believe that I promised to try to do so; but have never felt that I could tell anything that would be of any benefit to any one, so have neglected it until now; not that I feel that I have anything to write yet more than the experience of a poor, frail and ignorant sinner, saved by grace, I hope; but if not saved by grace, forever and inevitably lost, world without end. But some how I feel that I want to write a part of my experience, peradventure God may sanctify it to the comfort of some of the family, and I pray that God may direct my mind and

pen that nothing may be written that will give offence to any of the household of faith, or that will not give honor and glory to God.

I was born in September, 1845, my father and mother were Methodists, and so were my grand-parents on my mother's side, and I have no recollection of ever seeing either of my father's parents; thus all who know anything of Methodist practices know what were my early teachings. I do not think that I was sprinkled in infancy, but I reckon that I was schooled like other Methodist children. I know that when quite young I was taught to know the catechism, and to kneel at my mother's knee every night before going to bed and repeat what most people call the Lord's Prayer. I was also taught that God loved good little boys and hated bad ones, and if I would be a good boy that God would take me to heaven when I died to live with himself, but if I was not good that he would send me to hell where I would burn forever in a lake of fire and brimstone, and when I called for water the devil would give me red hot melted lead to drink.

My brother, was not that enough to make any boy want to be good? But alas! if that had been true and God had judged like man, long ere this good day I would have been burning in that lake and drinking the hot lead, for I cannot now go back to anything that I have ever done for which God should have spared my life for one minute, but to the contrary, many things for which it appears to me justice would have sentenced me to endless death. But thanks be to God, who is rich in mercy, I am yet spared. Growing up under such teaching and in such a family, and believing, as all other children do, that my parents were right, and the best people in the world (I would not have any one think that I am saying that my parents were not Christians, for I hope they were, and I believe there are many Christians in the world who are not Primitive Baptists),

and taking into consideration that my father's house was rather a favorite resort for Methodist preachers, is it anything strange that I grew up believing the Methodist to be the church and right? Being taught that after I was twelve years old that I then became accountable for my sins—my parents before—and knowing that I was not what I thought Christians were or ought to be, though not understanding the condemnation of sin, I thought that by going to the mourners' bench during the protracted meetings and praying, and have others pray for me, I would soon be all right; but as I did not get religion the preachers would advise me to join the church, telling me that if I would join the church would help me on to God, and that in the very act of joining I might receive the blessing; but I loved to dance so well that I did not want to deprive myself of that pleasure merely for the sake of being a member of the church, especially as I thought I was about as good as anybody anyhow. But after a while, after I was grown and married, it pleased God, I trust, to show me (that with all my efforts to do good, and indeed in the face of all my boasted frankness and goodness, and belief that at some future time, when I got ready, I would get religion, join the church, and go to heaven) that I was a sinner vile and justly condemned, and that if I received justice I would be doomed to endless torment, and now in reality I felt that something must be done or I was lost. So I began to try to find a way of escape, and at first tried to fall on the Universal platform, arguing that God had made me, and that as I was a creature of his he would not damn me to eternal punishment, and I would also try to believe that all punishment for sin was in this (time) world; but ere long I was shown that that would not do, and that I was arguing against hell only in an effort to escape hell. Next I tried to be a Spiritualist. There was a gentleman who lived near me who was a Spiritualist, and he

would have mediums, as they were called, to visit him, and in fact two or three of his family claimed to be mediums. I used to attend their circles, as they called them, and would sit at the table and with the rest put my hands thereon, and we would make the table rap. But I hope that God showed me that that too was false and only an effort on my part to escape justice, so then I was left without anything to cling to, and my condition continually growing worse. I found myself a sinner without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world. When I would read the Bible in the hope of finding something to comfort me, I found condemnation instead, and so I felt that I was lost without any chance of salvation; for I verily believed that I must do something good to bring myself into favor with God, and I had found that all I did was sinful, and if I tried to pray it seemed that my prayers would rise no higher than my head, and that God would curse me for even the effort to pray, or to speak his holy name with such sin-polluted lips. I felt that the day of grace was passed with me, and that mine was an isolated case which the mercy of God could not reach, for I did not think God could show mercy at the expense of justice, and I could not see how he could be just and the justifier of such a wretch as I was. But as a drowning man will catch at a straw, so was I disposed to try everything, for I was in a condition that I did not feel that I could give up; and there was a protracted meeting going on near where I was living, and I thought that while the waters were troubled I had better go down, I might get in and be healed. So I went. I would go to the mourners' bench at each opportunity and ask those whom I looked upon as Christians to pray for me; but instead of getting better it appeared to me that I got worse. The people would tell me to give up everything and come to Christ, and I thought I was doing all I could to do that, but I didn't know how to get to Christ nor to believe

in him. But one night, when it seemed that everything was shrouded in Egyptian darkness, and all hope was lost, and when it seemed that I was forsaken by God and men, and that I must die and sink down to hell at last, there appeared to me a narrow streak of light and a small, still voice seemed to whisper, "Can you not believe in Christ who left an exalted abode at the right hand of God and came to earth to suffer and die for *you*," and the answer was given me, "I can, I will, I do believe." (I say it was given, for I had been trying to say just that for a long time and could not.) Right there and then my feelings were such as I have never been able to describe. I felt that all that burden was gone, and instead of mourning I had joy unspeakable and full of glory; I felt that I wanted to praise God with all my soul, might and strength. I also felt then that I wanted to join the church and live the rest of my life with the people of God. Believing as I did that the Methodists were that people, I united with them at the first opportunity, and had a little water poured on my head, which they called baptism, and which I had before believed was as good baptism as any, and would argue that it was not the putting away the filth of the flesh but an answer of a good conscience before God; but now I found that it was not an answer of a good conscience, for I could not feel that I had been baptized. Again, when I began to search the Discipline for the rules of the church and the articles of faith I soon found that it would not harmonize with my own experience, nor with my understanding of the Scriptures, so I was soon satisfied that for the church of Christ I must look somewhere else, and having never known anything of Primitive Baptists I began looking to the Missionaries for the church. I knew that they claimed to be the church, and that the old Hardshells had slabbed off from them. So I asked for their articles of faith and found them to be what I thought, and still think, right in the

main. I thought sure enough they must be the church. So in October of 1876, I think it was, I went to them and received what I then believed to be proper baptism, and lived on being satisfied that I had membership in the church of Christ, though often made to sorrow because I thought the church had departed so far from the old landmarks which their articles so plainly pointed out. One of their articles says, "We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God and the only rule of faith and practice." And I found so much in the practice of Missionary Baptists that I could not find in the Scriptures, that I was often made to think the church had gone far astray.

All I knew of Primitive Baptists was what was told me by their enemies, for I never heard one preach until some time in the year 1878. Old Brother Hubbard preached one night at a neighbor's house and I went to hear him, and was much pleased with his preaching, because I believed it was every word truth. During the year 1879 I was licensed to preach, but I did not feel that I was fit for a preacher, and not until I felt I had received many and sore chastisements would I attempt it, though I had been made to feel that that same still, small voice that had spoken so comfortably to me before had said, "You must preach." In the fall of 1881 I was ordained and called to serve as a pastor in 1882, and on the third Sunday in March of that year, while trying to preach about the ordinances and the church, I was shown that I did not belong to the church and that the denomination to which I belonged had left off one of the ordinances, and the Primitive Baptists were pointed out as the church. I then become dissatisfied with my baptism again, because I do not think that baptism makes the church right, but the church makes the baptism right. Then baptism without proper authority is no better than baptism without the proper mode. But

from some cause, I cannot tell what, I went for three years suffering unspeakable troubles.

I moved into the vicinity of Mars Hill church, Calhoun county, Ga., at the beginning of 1883 and attended nearly all the services there, and I felt I could see that there was the church, and about the same time I began reading the GOSPEL MESSENGER and could see that in every part of the country Primitive Baptists were the same, and O, how I did want to be with them, but there were some things held me back. Among the rest were the objections of my mother. It seemed that she was willing that I should be with the Missionaries, but she did not want me to join the despised Hardshells, although she said they were the best people in the world. So I went on until Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1885, in rebellion, then I went to the church and told them a part of what I have written, and perhaps some things that I have not written, and they received me into their fellowship, and on the next morning I was baptized by Eld. W. T. Everitt, and there I found that answer of a clear conscience before God that I had sought before. Some might ask if there was a difference in my feelings then and when I was immersed by a Missionary preacher, and I answer there was, but I cannot describe it. But, brethren, the only thing I have had to regret since then is my own unworthiness.

But I will close this scribble and submit it to your judgment. If you see proper publish it, if not consign it to the waste basket and all will be well. I have not written just as I expected when I began.

Your little brother in Christ I hope,

E. S. WARD.

Brother Ward is now an humble Primitive Baptist minister, thanks be unto the Lord!—R.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, WM. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

NEITHER ADD TO NOR DIMINISH FROM.

For I testify unto every man that hearth the words of the prophecy of this book : If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book ; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book.—Rev. xxii., 18, 19.

As promised in the June number of the MESSENGER, we will now try to say something upon the above text in compliance with the request of Brother J. W. Lupton, of North Carolina.

According to the views and conceptions which we entertain concerning the holy word of God, there is such a sacred purity in it that we cannot approach the careful consideration of any text, save with awe and reverence, as well as with fear and trembling. But there is a most precious promise of God that “unto this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.” Who is he that will not stand with trembling anxiety, waiting for the authority and power that is in the holy word of God? At the rebuke and power of his word, nations, earth and heaven tremble.—Job, xxvi, 14. “Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Mighty God of Jacob.” “At his rebuke the pillars of heaven tremble.” Why should we not then, as poor mortal worms, tremble at his word? And were it not that this Mighty God of Jacob graciously condescends, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to speak words of comfort, and put strength in his trembling ones, none could stand before him. But he says, “Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word.”—Isa., lxvi. 5. It is the living children of God who fear and tremble and wait for his word. It is to them, in a special sense, the

Lord is pleased to speak the life-giving command, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word." To them the word of the Lord is powerful; it is full of majesty, wisdom and glory. It is holy and pure; they receive, rejoice and hope in his word. Hence there is to them something dreadful in the thought of adding to, or taking from, the "words of the prophecy of this book," which Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, has testified by his angel in the churches.

It will be seen in the very front of this book of Revelations that it is by the highest authority known in heaven or earth; a "revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him." This revelation the servant and apostle of Jesus was commanded to "write in a book" and send it to the seven churches in Asia, to be testified in the churches by the Spirit and by the preaching of the gospel, till the end of time. And not only to the churches in their various localities, as they are manifested in their visible, organized form, but also to any man that hath an ear, the command of God is, "Let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." Jesus, therefore, the Son of God, the alpha and omega, "testifies to every man that *heareth* the words of the prophecy of this book, that if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Is not this a fearful warning to all the children of God who linger in Babylon among those who reject the commandments of God and substitute the doctrines and commandments of men?

If any man who has an ear to hear spiritual things, and spiritual teachings, will carefully read the 9th, 11th, 16th and 18th chapters of this Book of Revelations, and see the fearful plagues that our God will pour out upon anti-Christ and upon all those anti-Christian sects and denominations included in the name of "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," which are preached and practiced in

the name of worship, he will certainly see something of what is included in the dreadful warning against him who shall be identified with those who add to, or teach for doctrines, the commandments of men. May the Lord grant unto all who have an ear to hear the words of the prophecy of this book, that they may heed the voice of God from heaven, saying: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sin, and that ye receive not of her *plagues*, for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."—Rev. xviii., 4. From the plain declaration of the above text, it will be seen that those of the children of God who are identified with any anti-Christian sect are regarded as *partakers* of their sins in doctrine and practice, and as a consequence they must receive of those dreadful plagues that are written in this book. "What! know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."—1 Cor. vi. 16. In a religious sense, all anti-Christian sects and denominations are termed harlots in the Scriptures, and especially in the Book of Revelations. They all have sprung, directly or indirectly, from the same distinguished mother, the Church of Rome, who is represented as a woman sitting on a scarlot colored beast, and with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication by a union of church and state, and the inhabitants of the earth, whose religious principles and practice are of earthly origin, have all been made drunk by the delicious wine or doctrine of her fornication. This wonderful woman, whose daughters are all harlots, is identified in the "prophecy of this book" as being extremely wealthy and attractive—"decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abomination and filthiness of her fornications."—Rev., xvii. 4.

We have abundant reason to believe, both from ob-

servation and the testimony of the Scriptures, that there are many of the Lord's people identified by religious profession with all the various religious sects, and whatever these religious sects have added to the word of God in doctrine or practice, each and every one who is born of God and identified with them, is a partaker of their evil deeds, and must, in the nature of things, be a partaker of the plagues which God has in store for them. For this reason the voice from heaven proclaims in every gospel sermon, "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you."—2 Cor., vi. 17. "Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." "If any come unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for him that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds," and must, therefore, be partaker of the plagues which the Lord will visit upon those who take from the things testified in the churches by our Lord in the prophecy of this sacred book.

But what has the Lord Jesus testified by his Spirit with regard to the salvation of sinners? In reference to this point is he not the First and the Last? Is it not all his work? Is there any defect in the atonement for his sins? Has not the atonement sufficient saving efficacy and virtue in and of itself to save a sinner from all sin? "O, yes," (say they who have added to the word) "the atonement is sufficient to save any sinner, and all sinners, if he or they will accept of the offers of salvation. Salvation is not secured absolutely by the blood of Christ to any sinner; but it is offered to all. All may accept it, or all may reject it." But is not this adding to the prophecy of this book? It is not adding to that which Jesus has testified by his Spirit to the churches? Does not the testimony of Jesus run in this way: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our

(3)

sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever?" Does not the heavenly host that surround the throne of God and the Lamb sing a new song, saying: "Thou art worthy to take the Book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and has 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 upon the earth."—Rev., v. 9. Shall we add to this testimony by saying that he hath loved us and will wash us from our sins by the merits of his own blood of atonement, if we will accept it or suffer him to do it? No, we dare not say it. "Every word of God is pure; he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him; *add thou not* unto his word, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar."—Prov., xxx. 6. And if we are found as a liar, we must take our part with liars and receive of their plagues.

But it is also written that if "any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." All who artfully suppress and mystify the gospel, or handle the word of God deceitfully, are guilty of taking away the words of the book of this prophecy. And if any man hath an ear to hear what the Spirit saith, is identified with anti-Christian principles by taking away the gospel force and meaning of the word of truth, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, that he shall no longer be remembered with the living children of God in a church relation. "God shall take away his part out of the holy city," or church, that he no longer shall have fellowship or be a partaker of the privileges, blessings and promises that belong to an obedient child of God.

But it may be thought that if God takes away the

part that any one has in the book of life as mentioned in this text, this would prove the doctrine of "falling from grace, or final apostacy," as some call it. Now, if the "book of life," as spoken of in this text, signifies the eternal life inheritance in Christ, including the writing of one's name in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world, and then God shall take all this away, then there would indeed be some force in the argument of falling from grace and eternal destruction and damnation of one for whom Christ died. But does it mean this? It surely does not, because the testimony of Christ cannot conflict with itself, and he hath said most positively: "My sheep hear my voice and I know them; 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."—John, x. 28. But we do know that many of the Lord's people err from the truth in doctrine or in practice, and thereby have many of the joys and comforts of their inheritance with the saints in light taken from them. When born of God of an incorruptible seed by the word that liveth and abideth forever, they then have a birthright privilege to the ordinances of the gospel and fellowship among the saints in the gospel church. And so long as they walk orderly and worthy of the vocation or profession which they have made, they are spiritually minded and have life and peace. They are represented as "Lively stones," not as mere dead, inactive material, built up a spiritual house, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. But let it be remembered that they can forfeit and lose this birthright privilege in the church. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die" to all these privileges of fellowship. "To be carnally minded *is* death"—death already—for a carnally-minded church member is dead to the church;

so far as usefulness is concerned. He takes nor feels no interest in its peace or prosperity any further than to advance his worldly views and interests. He will sacrifice the peace and fellowship of Christians and "his part" in the affections of his brethren and in assembling with them for worship, rather than sacrifice some little worldly interest, profit or glory. He is a *fruitless* branch, and the husbandman taketh it away from its connection with the healthy, fruitful branches of the vine. The branch, of *itself*, cannot bear fruit, except it abide in the vine, neither can the people of God, except they abide in the doctrine and order of Christ. Severed from our relation to Christ in the doctrine and order of his household, we are as fruitless as a branch would be if severed from the vine. Those Christians who have had their part taken away from the "holy city" or church, and are "cut assunder" from her communion and fellowship, have a "portion appointed them with hypocrites" and unbelievers, and there they wither away in their comforts with "weeping and gnashing of teeth."—Matt., xxiv. 51.—M.

REPLY TO J. S. McLEOD.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi. 33.

The Saviour addressed these words to his disciples who were born of God and called by grace to follow him, and so they apply to all who are thus born and called to the discipleship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word *but* in this verse shows that this injunction is to be observed in contradistinction from those things mentioned and forbidden in the foregoing part of this chapter. It is a lesson against worldly-mindedness and worldly care, and shows that God's children are the objects of his care, both in this life and that which is to come. He knows what things they have need of, and

has provided for all their creature wants as well as for their eternal welfare. The reasoning is that, if God has provided for the ravens their nest, and clothed the lilies of the field, he will assuredly feed and clothe his children, the objects of his everlasting love. Therefore it is to the full knowledge of his everlasting kingdom that the saints should aspire, nor suffer the cares and anxieties about food and raiment to interfere with their obedience to Christ, nor rob them of their interest in those higher and nobler benefits which belong to their peace and happiness in the kingdom of Christ in this life. They should seek this kingdom by obedience to its laws which are written in their hearts, and when this is done the kingdom is found, and the King who sits enthroned therein bestows a sense of his divine approbation, and the subject is happy in the Lord.

We hope that our dear friend McLeod will be led to the full enjoyment of the blessings and privileges of the kingdom of God, and that he will now become a follower of Christ and companion of those who patiently await the glorious appearing of the Lord.—H.

BRETHREN, please excuse us for calling your attention to the fact that some of you are due us for four, three, two and one years subscription, and that we are much in need of it. Please remember us, and relieve us of our trouble.

WE say again to subscribers that we correct all mistakes when notified of them.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

TIOPA, TEXAS, June 9, 1887.—*Dear Brother Respass:*—On last Sunday, 5th instant, we conveyed to the tomb our little babe, Abbie, aged 18 months, 11 days. The little fellow suffered immensely for four days with cholera infantum, and fell asleep. I know, dear brother, that his sufferings are over and he is supremely happy, but we miss him so much. My dear brother, it is so hard to say from the heart, “Thy will, O God, be done.” Pray for me that I may be fully reconciled and live up to all the duties that devolve upon me.

Our churches are lukewarm and have not that oneness of feeling and brotherly love that should exist among brethren. It is caused mainly from so many disorderly parties coming amongst us from different States. The Texas Baptists have been greatly imposed upon in that direction. Our little church remains in peace and is gradually growing in numbers, and I hope in strength. I hope ere long the Baptists in every quarter will cease strife; and preferring one another in honor,—live to the honor and glory of God and the advancement of his cause.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

W. H. LEDBETTER.

MADISONVILLE, TEXAS, August 22, 1887.—*Dear Brother Respass:*—Our Association passed off harmoniously and very pleasantly. Elders Pate, Wright, Bryant, May, Deavanport, White, Yarbrough, Bell, Miller, Maples and Eld. Little of Kentucky were in attendance. Besides the pleasure of hearing the able and comforting preaching we received seven new members, six of these by experience and baptism.

I have also returned from the meeting of the Little Flock Association at Maysfield, which was also a great feast to the saints. Elders Maples, Thomas, Harrell, Norman, Downing, “the cow boy,” Koen, Barrow, Pate, May and myself were in attendance. Surely this meeting, though no one joined the church, was a refreshing season, a time of love and visitation from on high. But it seems from what I heard, that there is a disaffecting spirit at work among some of the churches, whose object

seems to be *disorganization*. But I am glad to see the elders and brethren seem to be awake to the seductive and self-aggrandizing efforts of this enemy.

Yours in gospel bonds, J. C. DENTON.

COLUMBUS, GA., August 15, 1887.—*My Dear Pastor:*—Our annual meeting has passed, and we certainly had a feast of fat things. I do think the Lord was with us to own and bless his humble servant, our dear Brother Bussy, who preached for us three days, and seemed to be as full at the close of our meeting as at the beginning. Although he was weak in body, he was strong in spirit. He baptized four—my son Jimmie and my dear Ada, and Willie Britton and our step-mother. Dear brother, I do feel that I have much to be thankful for. O the Lord has greatly blessed me in giving me my children, and I do feel so thankful. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men! But, O, I am so unworthy of such blessings, I am so sinful; when I would do good evil is present with me. My dear brother, do pray for me. We communed and washed each other's feet, and I did feel that it was good to be there. We would have been so glad if you could have been with us. I am as ever your unworthy sister, and if a sister at all, one of the least.

F. A. LAND.

EMMET, ARK., 23d August, 1887.—*Dear Brother:*—I have just returned from a meeting at New Hope, Ark., at which place we have had, last year and this, many demonstrations of the precious visitation of our Lord, and received four last Saturday, making twenty-three since last fall. Affectionately,

B. L. LANDERS.

PLANT CITY, FLA., 31st July, 1887.—*Dear Brother:*—Elder F. A. Chick's reflections upon the Kingdom of God, in August number, page 377, also Elder D. Bartley's reflections on the Resurrection, June number, 1887, are good; so that it seems to me it would be doing violence to the truth not to receive their word as the truth. For Jesus is their witness that it is the truth; and also the apostles bear witness that they have the word; for John says, "Because greater is he that is in

you than he that is in the world," and if there be any who receive not their word as the truth, John says they are of the world, therefore speak they of the world and the world heareth them. John says we are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us, and hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. May the Lord bless and prosper you, both in spiritual and temporal things, as he sees you hath need. Your brother in Christ, I hope,

W. L. WIGGINS.

CLARENDON, N. C., 16th July, 1887.—*Dear Brother:*—Since I have been led and brought to see and connect myself with that much despised and evilly spoken of sect, the Old Baptists, I have had somewhat a trying time, as I had to leave all my family and former associates. But blessed be the God of our salvation, who I trust has given me the victory, I am sustained; the way is clear and I am getting along, both spiritually and temporally, amid all their prophecies. May the Lord bless you and enable you to yet do much in the vineyard. Yours, as I hope, in the Lord.

W. J. HUGHES.

ACTON, TEXAS, August 29, 1887.—*Dear Brother in Christ:*—The great Texas drouth has come to a close. The 28th and 29th days of August, 1887, will never be forgotten in this country by this generation. The creeks are out of banks for the first time in two years, or more. Hood county made a worse failure this year than last. But, my dear brother, we will not complain, as we can see, as we think, the hand of kind Providence in it all. THE GOSPEL MESSENGER and *Signs of Times* were great blessings to our people last fall and winter, for it was through these papers that the sad condition of our people was made known. And allow me, through your good MESSENGER, to tender my heartfelt gratitude to God's dear people, for the aid they kindly sent to our suffering brethren in the West. May God bless the dear editors and contributors of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Yours in love of the truth,

W. L. ROGERS.

BLACK ROCK, MD., 19th July, 1887.—*Dear Brother:*—When we are enabled by faith to trust in the Lord to supply all our daily wants, we can then see the vanity of laying up for ourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. Our Heavenly Father knows just what we need, and supplies us with such things as will be for our good and his own glory. Hence our blessed Saviour says: “Behold the fowls of the air, they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; yet Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.” Therefore he says we should take no thought, saying, “What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto us.” Dear brother, I do want to say it is a great satisfaction to me, as I grow older and less able to meet with the saints in all their meetings, to have the privilege of reading such precious good things as I find in some of our periodicals; but being somewhat opposed to what we sometimes term “puffing,” I will not undertake to say that the MESSENGER is the *only one* that publishes gospel truth, and to say that every expression or sentiment in any one of them is entirely correct, would be going too far, considering that we are all short-sighted mortals, and very liable to run into error when left to ourselves. So I hope the writers for the MESSENGER will bear with each others weakness and errors, and when any one undertakes to convince a brother of error, let it be done in meekness and love, and not in a harsh and censorious spirit, but with brotherly kindness and charity.

Yours in love,

JOHN P. KELLEY.

PRIMITIVE WESTERN UNION MEETING.—The Union meeting appointed for the churches of the late Primitive Western Association, at Flat Rock, Meriwether county, Ga., was but thinly attended, on account of the excessively rainy weather, fifth Sunday in July. There were but four churches represented by letter. On Friday Elders Redd and Lively preached, and so few being present, Elder Whatley thought it best to defer organization until Saturday, as probably more messengers would

assembly by that time. Saturday morning Elder W. L. Jordan and Elder Redd preached, and after forty minutes' intermission, assembled in the house, and Elder Whatley called the meeting to order and four letters were handed in, one from Baptist Rest, Campbell county, Ga., by her messenger, A. J. Phillips; one from Mt. Gilead, by her messengers, Elder W. L. Jordan and J. C. Attaway; and Emmaus, Troup county, Ga., by C. K. Bass, Reese Prather and J. P. Owens; Flat Rock messengers, D. M. York, H. Leverett and C. J. Reeves. Brother A. M. Keith was received as messenger from Providence; Brother A. Piper as messenger from Lebanon; Brother J. A. Thrash as messenger from Enon and Brother R. T. Strickland; Brother Scroggins from Emmaus, Coweta county; Brother J. C. Hardy from Flat Shoals; and Brethren J. Avery and J. F. Ferrell from Cedar Creek; making ten churches in all represented.

On motion, Elder W. L. Jordan was elected Moderator, and C. J. Reeves Clerk. All having a desire to meet again in Union meeting capacity, Brother Keith asked for the next meeting at Providence Church, and it was agreed that the next Union meeting of the churches of the late Primitive Western Association be held, if the Lord will, with Providence Church, Meriwether county, Ga., ten miles east of Hogansville, to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, where it is hoped to meet with all our sister churches in the bounds of the late Primitive Western, and also with corresponding brethren, and there and then hope for a more permanent organization. On motion, decided to have the minutes published in THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, and that Elder Lively be requested to assist Brother Reeves in preparing it for publication. Adjourned at 2 o'clock to hear Elder Lively preach; text 89th Psalm, 15th verse. Elder Redd was appointed to preach Sunday morning, followed by Elder Lively. Met Sunday morning at 9 o'clock, when a few appropriate remarks were made by Elder Whatley, and Elder Jordan announced that we were ready to hear the minutes read and adjourn. The minutes were read and confirmed, and the body adjourned.

W. L. JORDAN, *Moderator.*

C. J. REEVES, *Clerk.*

Elder Redd preached Sunday morning, followed by Elder Lively, and we were requested to say that it was a meeting long to be remembered; a feast of fat things; and we believe the Lord has visited and blessed his people in the Primitive Western Association. The meeting, though thinly attended, was pleasant and harmonious; and a Union meeting indeed, in which love and fellowship was universally manifested, and in which all felt thankful to the great Head of the Church for the great privilege conferred upon them. We felt it was good to be there.

PIRAWAY, N. C., July 5, 1887.—*Dear Brother Mitchell:*
—Though strangers in the flesh, I have often read your comforting editorials in the MESSENGER, and to me you do seem as a father in Israel, and as such I ask if you

would think it right for a Primitive Baptist brother who had never spoken publicly or taken any part in the public exercises in his own church, to go among, and take part with Arminian sects in their meetings and help them out in their Sabbath Schools? Should Primitive Baptists fellowship with such things? Is it obeying the command of God by his apostle, John, where it is written, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols?" Is it according to the commandment to the Church of God, to have "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them?" Is it not bidding them God speed, and thereby becoming a partaker of their evil deeds? I, myself, was once an Arminian and strongly allied to these things; but when it pleased God to take my feet out of the miry clay and set them upon the Rock Christ Jesus, I felt that it was not by works of righteousness that I had done, but according to God's mercy he had saved me. From that time till now I have been trying to serve the Lord, not through fear of everlasting torments, but as I hope from a principle of love to him, because he first loved me. But I do feel to fall far short of my duty, and know of a truth that in my flesh there dwells no good thing. Excuse bad writing and correct mistakes. Remember me at a throne of grace. A little sister, if indeed one at all.

E. C. HEWETT.

REPLY TO SISTER HEWETT.

We take about the same view of such cases as Sister Hewett does. Our Primitive Baptist brethren and churches should encourage and exhort one another daily in things lawful and right, and if they cannot exercise at home among their own brethren who watch over and care for them, it is not likely that they are prompted by the Spirit of Christ to go elsewhere and partake with those who serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but "by good words and fair speeches deceive the heads of the simple."—Rom., xvi. 18. Poor, fallen human nature is in harmony with all these unfruitful works of darkness, and as all Christians have that nature to contend with, they are at times easily decoyed into the snare of error. In Paul's day, some wished to make a fair show in the flesh, and be on a level with and as popular as other people, but it was "only lest they

should suffer persecution" by steadily adhering to the truth and living godly in Christ Jesus.—Gal., vi. 12. And on one occasion, when Christ taught the people, it is said "among the *chief* rulers many believed on him, but because of the *Pharisees* they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."—John, xii. 42. The flattering compliments and praise of men is much more congenial with the earthly nature of Christians, especially of "chief rulers," who have had high official positions in the world, than it is to have their names "cast out as evil for Christ's sake." Because of the *Pharisees* they did not openly confess Christ nor his doctrine. They feared the loss of their positions as *chief* rulers, therefore they courted the friendship of worldly religion, which is enmity to God. Official position, or a hungering after it, is a great snare to many of our brethren to modify, to dissemble or to affiliate with that which is highly esteemed among men, though it be an abomination in the sight of God. The Church of Christ in walking according to the doctrine and order of the gospel, and being prompted by the spirit and word of God, is as a "chaste virgin unto Christ." But when beguiled by the serpent and the mind becomes corrupted from the plain simplicity of the law of Christ, this "chaste virgin" becomes defiled with the world so that the blessed Lord reprimands and reproves her by saying, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity to God?"—James, iv. 4.—M.

OBITUARIES.

MRS. R. A. BROOKS

Was born August 3, 1844; married James Brooks in October, 1866; died in Bedford county, Tenn., April 27, 1886, beloved by all who knew her. Her maiden name was McCrary. She joined the Primitive Baptist church called New Hope, and was baptized by the writer the first Sunday in October, 1877, and remained a faithful and beloved member until death relieved her of all her sufferings here below, leaving her devoted husband and children in great distress to fight the battles of life without her presence and wise counsel and motherly zeal and tender love to cheer them on in the way. But such is life and its great trial. Sister Brooks was a great sufferer for many months before her death, which she bore with

meekness and humility, remaining quite cheerful till almost the last moment. I visited her but a short time before her death and found her quite feeble in body, but strong in faith and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and expressed her gratitude to the great and merciful God that her husband and oldest daughter had joined the church in her lifetime. "Now," she said, "my husband will take my little children to the meeting of my church, and O I want you ever to remember my family in your prayers." Sister Brooks was very learned in the Scriptures of eternal truth, and wise unto salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, and faithful in every good work. O may God bless her husband and children in my feeble yet earnest prayer.

J. E. FROST.

Shelbyville, Tenn., August 25th, 1887.

MARTHA ANN PENNINGTON.

Our dear mother, MARTHA ANN PENNINGTON, wife of Elder I. L. Pennington, was born 3d July, 1816, and died July 1, 1887—lived seventy-one years, less two days. Surely a faithful mother. She requested, before she died, that Brother W. J. Megee preach her funeral, which he did at her burial. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1856, and lived a faithful member up to her death. Her seat was always filled on her conference days, were she not providentially hindered. It seemed that the membership of her church esteemed her as their mother in Israel. Oh! how we miss her! Four of her sons are members of the Primitive Baptist Church, and the humble writer, feeling it his duty to care for his aged parents—mother not being able to keep house—he moved them to his house the first of June, to take care of them while they lived. Mother appeared to feel at home with us. She left five sons, one daughter and an aged husband, and a number of grand children to mourn her loss; but we feel satisfied that our loss is her eternal gain. Can we not adopt the language of poor old Job and say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Brethren and sisters, pray for us, that our faith may be centered in Christ. Yours in hope of eternal life.

ED. PENNINGTON.

JOHN BARNFIELD.

JOHN BARNFIELD was born March 8, 1811, in Wilson county, Tenn., and received a hope at the age of 22, joined the Primitive Baptists at Cedar Creek and was baptized by Eld. John Borum. Brother Barnfield moved to Illinois, Hamilton county, joined the Primitive Baptists at Ruff meeting house and remained a member of that church twenty years; then moved back to Wilson county, Tenn., in 1855, and to Macon county, Tenn., and united with Testament church. He was licensed by Testament church about the year 1859 to exercise his gift in a public way, and again moved to Wilson county and united with Cedar Creek about the year 1873. He then moved to Sumner county, Tenn., united with East Station Camp church, then moved back to Wilson county, Tenn., and united with Round Lick church, where he remained in fellowship to his death. He moved to Macon county, Tenn., but did not move his

membership. He died in Macon county July 18, 1887, at his son's, Eld. John A. Barnfield, at the age of 76 years. Brother Barnfield was naturally blind eight years. He married twice, and leaves five children of his first wife, and leaves his second wife a widow, but no children by her. He was sick twenty-one days, and bore his affliction with great patience, and was rational till the last, and talked about his glorious and bright prospect of meeting his Saviour in that eternal home. He went in peace. Though naturally blind, his hope, his spiritual sight, and his salvation was clear to him and not a cloud to dim his view. He had overcome all enemies through Jesus. Dear old brother, sleep till Jesus calls for you; then you shall come forth all glorious; then all that heaven is and heaven means is yours. Dear children, weep not, your father is done suffering; look to Jesus and pray to him for preparation to meet him in heaven. I wish to drop a word to his bereaved widow. You must soon follow your departed husband; you are growing old and you can't stay long on earth; you have seen the sun often rise in the east and set in the west, and how is it with you about the Son of righteousness? Has that light shined in your heart and given you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ? If so, show your faith by your works. May God bless the bereaved family. Farewell. MILES F. WEST.

ELDER JAMES B. HAMILTON

Died at the residence of his son, A. J. Hamilton, in Macon Co., Ga., May 13, 1887, aged eighty-six years, eight months and twenty days. He was born and raised in South Carolina, and came to Georgia at the age of nineteen and lived for some time in Bibb county, Ga., and moved from there to Crawford county, where he lived several years; and from there came to Taylor county, Ga., where the principal portion of his life was spent. He received a hope in Christ at about the age of twenty-five, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Union, Crawford county, Ga., between the age of twenty-five and thirty, and was baptized by Elder Asa Bell, and commenced preaching in 1835; preached his first sermon in May, of the same year. He was the husband of four wives and the father of twenty-three children, thirteen of whom are living. His life was one of many sore trials and afflictions, having had fourteen deaths in his family during his life—four wives and ten children. His death was caused from lung disease, which he had been troubled with for a number of years. When the summons of death came he closed his eyes and passed away without a struggle. Not even those who were watching over him detected the hand of death until his spirit had taken its flight.

We hope to meet him beyond the river,
Where the surges cease to roll,
There in all the bright forever,
Sorrow ne'er shall press the soul.

His loving daughter,

MRS. S.

Brother Hamilton was, at his death, much the oldest minister belonging to our—the Upatoie—Association. He was a meek man, of gentle disposition, and a sincere Primitive Baptist; and lived a spotless life, and died in the love and fellowship of his brethren. It is no doubt far better with him now than when struggling with sin here.—R.

MRS. RHODA S. HOLLIS.

Mrs. RHODA S. HOLLIS was born in Baldwin county, Ga., August 17, 1815; died in Taylor county, Ga., June 20, 1887, in the sixty-second year of her age, from dropsy of the heart. She was married to Joseph Hollis in early life, with whom she lived until his death, and remained a widow until her death. She was the mother of nine children, four sons and five daughters. She obtained a good hope through faith in Christ, and joined the church some years before the split. She was a devoted Christian, and as faithful companion and mother as I ever knew. Being left a widow with small children, she had some hard trials in life, but never faltered or murmured, but overcome them one by one by skillful and judicious management and never-tiring energy, and raised her family in high respectability. She had a feeling heart, kind hand and kind word for everybody, and I do not know one who was more highly esteemed by a large circle of friends, than the deceased. Her house was always open as her heart, for all her friends; and as for enemies, she had none, for I never heard aught said against her by anybody. She suffered much for some years previous to her death, with great patience. She was not confined many days in her last illness; and from her dying testimony, as well as many years of orderly and pious life, I have no doubt but she fell asleep in Jesus, to awake in his likeness. Then her children, grandchildren, relatives and friends cannot weep as those who have no hope.

J. G. MURRAY.

REUBEN ELIZA MATHEWS.

Our darling little niece, the daughter of J. N. and R. L. Mathews, aged eight years, seven months and twenty-one days, after an illness of about ten days, it pleased the Lord to permit her soul to take its flight to the spirit land, between two and three o'clock on the morning of the 7th of April, 1887. To know little RUBY was to love her, for she was a bright, affectionate and most promising child. The Lord that gave has taken away; all praise to his holy name. We believe the Lord knows best, although it is hard to bear.

Our little darling is asleep
Upon her Saviour's breast;
Ah! father and mother, sister
And brothers, do not weep.

Thomas County, Ga.

ONE WHO LOVED HER.

MARTHA ALICE FINLEY.

Our dear daughter, MARTHA ALICE FINLEY, died July 9, 1887, in the Insane Asylum, at Tuscaloosa, Ala., aged twenty-nine years, eleven months and twenty-eight days. During childhood, and up to about five years since, none more intelligent or sprightly than our daughter. In her school-girl days, she was a peer to any class-mate, and until her mind, from some unknown cause, commenced waning, she was indeed a light to our humble home. We yielded to the advice of friends nearly three years ago to submit her to the care of Dr. Bryce, of the Insane hospital, under whose supervision she continued, with apparently little change mentally,

till stricken down with lung trouble that terminated her earthly existence. But amid the keen anguish with which our poor hearts are now bowed over the demise of our last living daughter, the reflection that she is now well, in her right mind and with our blessed Lord in heaven, affords no little comfort, even in this sore bereavment. Her death was so sudden we could not even be present in her last hours, but we have the comforting assurance of Dr. Bryce that "she passed quietly away, without pain or suffering." Thus our eldest child, and as already said last surviving daughter, has gone; aye, gone to unite with the millions who have washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb, leaving a poor, disconsolate mother, afflicted father and brothers soon to follow. Alice was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Mount Pisgah, and prior to her mental troubles, loved to go to meeting, read the Bible and our GOSPEL MESSENGER; and in the columns of the latter of which we ask the good brethren editors to give this publicity of her death.

"The once loved form now cold and dead,
Each mournful thought employs;
And nature weeps, her comforts fled,
And withered all her joys.

"Hope looks beyond the bounds of time,
When, what we now deplore
Shall rise in full immortal prime
And bloom to fade no more."

In great tribulation,
Fredonia, Ala.

WILLIAM P. FINLEY,
EMMALINE M. FINLEY.

S. AND M. ROWE.

Sadly I record the death of LOVIE, our 14-month-old boy, who died the 22d of June, 1886. Lovie was the most devoted child I ever saw, and the idol of my heart. I loved him as only a mother can love, and so now grieve for him as only a mother can. But it is a source of joy to my grieved heart to know that my boy to-day is in the realms of everlasting light and life. And I feel as though in departing he tenderly whispered:

"Cease here longer to detain me,
Fondest mother, bowed in woe;
Now thy kind caresses pain me;—
Mother, mother, let me go!

Also, on the 1st of September following, died our infant daughter at four weeks old. O, Lord, in our hearts, when sorrows and griefs abound, let thy goodness and comforting grace much more abound!

Their mother, SALLIE M. ROWE.

MRS. EMMA TATUM.

EMMA was the daughter of Brother S. G. and Sister Henrietta Higgins. She was born December 31, 1865, and died July 8, 1887. She joined the church of Christ at Mount Hickory, Chambers county, Ala., when but a girl, and lived a devoted Christian life without a spot upon her Christian character. She lived and died firm in the faith of Jesus. She bore her severe sickness of ten days without a murmur, and fell asleep perfectly happy in the arms of her blessed Jesus. Her husband (Mr. Tatum) who

lived with her, and his parents and their family, who lived near her during the three years of their married life, are almost silent for want of language to express their tenderness and high esteem for one they regarded as being so perfect. Her father's family with many friends and relatives do mourn our loss, yet rejoice in the pleasing view of meeting her on high. She leaves two little children for which we pray.

J. T. SATTERWHITE.

J. G. DUMAS.

Departed this life on the 8th instant, at the home of his parents, Monroe county, Ga., Mr. J. G. DUMAS, son of B. W. and Lizzie Dumas, and grandson of Elder Edmund Dumas, born October 2, 1866. He professed, on the 21st of June last, to have a hope in Christ, offered himself and was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Ramah, and was baptized on the 22d by Elder T. J. Head. He was a cherished son, who seemed never happier than when doing service to his parents and sisters, who looked upon him as their stay and the "light of the household." He felt the symptoms of disease preying upon him for nearly two years, but suffered intensely with throat affection during the last two weeks of his life; yet he bore his afflictions with the utmost patience and fortitude. He expressed himself to his many friends as willing to die and go to his Jesus, "For," said he, "the Lord will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy." May those who are left to mourn learn with silent resignation, that God knoweth what is best, and doeth all things well. Dear mother,

There are many mounds, where the hopes of earth
Are laid 'neath the tear-wet mold,
And the light that has paled at your stricken hearthstone,
Has been joy to the Upper Fold.

And may you be blest, in climbing the hill,
Till you reach the pearly portals,
Where, with raptured tongue you may meet your son,
In shining robes immortal.

MILLIE DUMAS.

WILLIAM HENRY AND HERMON F. DILBON.

WILLIAM HENRY DILBON was born May 1, 1874, and departed this life March 2, 1886. Little Willie, as we always called him, was never healthy, which seemed to bind us more closely to him. During his last sickness he suffered a great deal, but he bore it almost without a murmur. May the fond parents ever be reconciled to the dealing of the Master, and feel as Job did, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

HERMON FLOURNOY DILBON, infant son of Elder T. J. and Anna R. Dilbon, born January 24, 1886, died March 27, 1886. Truly his stay on earth was but short, and it was hard to give him up, but he is gone to rest in the arms of Jesus. Yours to serve,
E. W. DILBON.

(4)

MRS. ELIZABETH H. MOTON.

Died at her home in Monroe county, Miss., January 14, 1887, Mrs. ELIZABETH H. MOTON, my youngest daughter. She was born December 26, 1838(?). In her childhood she was humble, obedient, dutiful and truthful. In her 18th year the Lord by his spirit brought her to see her lost and ruined state. She then was made to weep, lament and cry for mercy until God was pleased to reveal himself to her the fairest among ten thousand, and one altogether lovely. She then wanted to walk as he directed, that she might live to his honor and glory who had done so great things for her, so he led her to the Primitive Baptist church at Mount Hebron, where he enabled her to give the reason of her hope, whereupon she was received into the Christian fellowship and full communion of the church, where she lived an humble and devoted member until it pleased our heavenly Father to take her home away from this troublesome world. She had very poor health for a long time, and she often said she was waiting for a summons to go home. Death had no terrors for her, but her children and husband would be lonely without her. The neighbors were very kind to her, especially two good sisters who waited on her to the last, and did all they could to make her comfortable. She leaves a husband and five children, three brothers and many relatives and friends to mourn her loss, and I, her father, know our separation will not be long, and I hope I can say with truthfulness and sincere heart, "Thy will, O Father, and not mine, be done."

As ever your brother in hope of a better life,

Caledonia, Miss.

S. C. JOHNSON.

LEMMIE COY EGGER.

Also publish the death of Brother O. F. and Sister Mattie Egger's little child. It was a sad and terrible death. The little children were playing, and a tree fell on one of them and crushed the life out and mangled its little body terribly. O how sad for the fond parents for their darling little Lemmie Coy to be taken away so suddenly. We know that the all wise God knows best when to gather the flowers of his own planting and take them to himself, in what way he pleases; but O how our hearts mourn for our loved ones when taken away from us, especially when taken in such a shocking way. Lemmie Coy Egger was born June 13, 1883; was killed October 26, 1886.

S. C. J.

DILLA LUNIA KING.

DILLA LUNIA KING was born January 11, 1886, and departed this life February 19, 1887, and her remains were interred at the cemetery at Ramah church, Pike county, Ala. And may we all express a word of sympathy for the bereaved father and mother, and their little Lunia's gain. She is at rest.

So the little babe has gone to rest,
To reign with God forever blest.

We could not wish it back again, but say, dear babe, with God remain.
Troy, Ala.

M. V. GIBSON.

E. D. CHILTON.

My beloved cousin, ELMORE CHILTON, was born August 25, 1858, and departed this life December 13, 1885; aged 27 years, 3 months and 18 days. He was killed on the railroad somewhere below Nashville, and had only been on the road three or four weeks. He was going down in the caboose to warm, and was knocked off and killed in passing a water tank. He was a young man of great promise. As a friend, he was generous, kind and true; as a brother and son, loving and dutiful. He was liked by all who knew him. If he ever had an enemy I never knew it. He never made any public profession of religion, yet his walk and deportment gave evidence of something about him that was above nature. I shall never forget the two last times I saw him at preaching. Brother Frost preached the first Sunday in November, and the Monday night following, before he was killed in December, and he paid such close attention and seemed so deeply interested in the sermon. On Sunday evening after coming back from church he said he was glad he went, for he heard the best sermon that day that he ever heard. On the same day while witnessing the solemn service of taking sacrament and washing feet I saw the tears roll down his cheeks, and I have ever since then believed he had a hope in Jesus. He leaves a father and mother, four brothers, six sisters and one half-sister, besides many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, which we believe is his eternal gain. May we all be prepared to meet the loved one around the throne of God, is my prayer.

Wartrace, Tenn.

SALLIE BRAMBLETT.

MRS. MARY A. HIGGINBOTHAM.

Sister MARY A. HIGGINBOTHAM, widow of the late Elder Hall Higginbotham, died at her home, Lutherville, Ga., April 18, 1887, in the 60th year of her age, leaving three children and numerous relatives and friends to mourn the loss. After the death of her first husband, T. W. Lasseter, she became (October, 1872,) the devoted wife of the lamented Elder Higginbotham. In September, 1860, she was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence, Meriwether county, Ga., and was baptized by Elder Emanuel Brittain. She here remained a pious, consistent and orderly member till her death, without a blot upon her moral or Christian character. Often has she been seen to shed tears of joy when hearing the glorious gospel of the Son of God preached. The above particulars are condensed from a note sent, August 1st, by Brother J. C. Norris.—M.

SUSAN JOHNSTON

Was born in North Carolina, date unknown; professed a hope and united with the Methodists. She became dissatisfied and joined the Primitive Baptists at Cedar Creek church, Wilson county, Tenn.; baptized by Eld. T. M. Lancaster. She intermarried with James Johnston, and bore to him four children, of whom three are dead, but one living. She was left a widow in 1855, and she lived the last twenty-two years of her life with

her son-in-law, Eld. John A. Barnfield, and died at his house in Macon county, Tenn., August 11, 1887. Sister Johnston suffered with that dreadful disease cancer. Eight years her sufferings were intense, but she bore her affliction with great patience. She was sensible of her departure, and said she was ready and anxious to go at the good Lord's time. About the last thirty-six hours of her life she talked considerably and enjoyed happy seasons. Her Saviour was present with her in six troubles, and when the seventh and last trouble came Jesus did not forsake her. Blessed Jesus! Just before she died she said, "Bless the Father!" and then fell asleep, as we believe, in Jesus. Yes, Sister Johnston is gone the way the righteous go. She went in peace, that blessed peace made her rejoice and praise her Saviour in her last hours of this life. O what a consolation to her living relatives. And to her only living child, your mother is now conquerer of all afflictions, trials and troubles of a sin-smitten world. Dear child, how does the matter stand with you, are you prepared to meet her on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance, where you will live with her, reign with her, and dwell with her forever? O come and let us go where there is no night, no sickness, no death, no parting, but life eternal, peace, health and pleasure forever more. O, blessed hope, that anchors in Jesus. O, Jesus, bring us off more than conquerors through thyself, thou that has loved us and given thyself for us, and has made us kings and priests, and we hope to reign with thee forever, world without end. Amen!

MILES, F. WEST.

Walnut Shade, Tenn.

MRS IDA S. ROWE

Was born in Chattahoochee county, Ga., November 4, 1865; died of measles in the city of Columbus, July 14, 1886, in the twentieth year of her age. She was married by the writer to Mr. J. R., youngest son of Elder J. Rowe, November 4, 1885, with whom she lived happily for a short time. She left Butler for Columbus a young and happy bride, with the love of a widowed mother, fond brothers, sisters, schoolmates and associates, all of whom are so soon to be shocked with the sad news that Ida is dead! She had never publicly professed a hope, but gave full satisfaction of a change of heart and a hope of heaven before her death, and was, therefore, fully resigned. What a comfort to mother, husband, brothers, sisters and friends. May grace abound unto you.

J. G. MURRAY.

ELLA E. GRIFFIN.

Miss ELLA E. GRIFFIN departed this life February 19, 1887. She was the daughter of James and Mary Griffin, and was born September 12, 1866, making her stay on earth twenty years, five months and seven days. She was a bright and loving girl, affectionate in disposition and kind to every one that she met, making many friends wherever she went. The writer did not see her in her last illness, but has been told she left a bright evidence of her acceptance with God, which gives us much comfort to feel that our dear friend is at rest in the arms of Jesus. It is hard to give her up, but our loss is her eternal gain. She leaves a father, mother, brothers, and sisters, besides a host of friends, to mourn her loss, and oh, may we all meet in that beautiful land on high.

Dawson, Ga.

FANNIE EVERITT.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 11. BUTLER, GA., NOVEMBER, 1887. Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER WILLIAM THOMAS.

I was born April 4th, 1821, in Jones county, Miss. My parents, Jno. C. and Sarah Thomas, moved to Jasper county, Miss., whilst I was small. I was reared there to manhood. My parents were Baptists, and in honor to their memory let me say here that they were as good people as I



have ever known, and their orderly walk and godly instruction often occur to me to this day, and is beneficial to me. I was brought up in a Methodist neighborhood, and in my eighteenth year I attended a protracted meeting of theirs, at which there was a great deal of noise. One night a preacher requested silence, saying he would address himself to the careless and unconcerned, and I said to a youth sitting by me, "let us listen to him; he is going to talk to us now." He said we "were liable to die at any moment; that we were exposed to the wrath of God; to hell and damnation," etc., and was eloquent on the subject. I thought if these things be so, I am in a desperate condition. I

found, after this, that I was in a more horrible condition than he, with all of his eloquence, had described me to be in. He told me that if I did not get religion I would *be lost*, but I found to my great distress that I was *already lost*. At this meeting was my first serious impression about death and a judgment to come, and I then commenced trying to do better, to appease the wrath of God so that He would not send me to that horrible place the preacher had described.

I was going to school at this time to a Methodist preacher, whom I thought a great deal of, by the name of Casady, and I thought I was a pretty good boy for some time, but I trust the Spirit illuminated my mind to see the corruption of my heart, and the purity of the great and good God whom I had sinned against. I felt that the very best of my thoughts and actions were sinful, because they proceeded from a corrupt fountain, and I could not see how it could be possible that as good and holy a being as God, could or would save such a vile and polluted a sinner as I. In my deep distress I often went to an old log in a hollow, some distance from the school-house—the bushes had grown up around it—to beg the Lord to have mercy upon me, and I often wished from the very depths of my soul, when there, that I could molder away as that old log, and be no more. One day when I had been to the old log and was returning to the school-house feeling, as I had for several days and nights, that my end on earth was near at hand, but that I would not cease to exist, but sink down, down, to destruction and woe forever and ever, and that justly, I fell on my face upon the ground; the length of time that I was in that position I have no means of ascertaining, it may have been very short and it may have been long, but this I know, while in that position it occurred to my mind that Jesus was the Saviour of sinners, and that He had done the work that it was impossible for them to do—the very work that I

had been trying to do, to satisfy Divine justice. I was rejoiced, and felt that the glory of God filled the whole earth. I knew so little about spiritual things (for I really believe that my mind was illuminated by the Holy Ghost), that I expected, when I got to the house, to find the teacher and all the children praising God for His goodness and mercy to the children of men, but to my astonishment I found the school going on as usual. I went to where one of the boys, about my age, was under a tree with his slate (the school-houses in those days were small), and undertook to tell him what a glorious work Jesus Christ had done for poor lost sinners. He continued to mark carelessly on his slate, and assent to what I was saying, but I saw he did not understand me, or feel it as I did, which astonished me. Not long after this I joined the Methodist Church by giving them my hand, to wait for a preacher to come to baptize me, whom I had heard say that he had rather baptize by immersion, though he thought an application of water would do.

Brethren, if I have ever been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, or been born again, I knew but very little of the kingdom into which I was born or translated when it was done; but I hope that I have grown some in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. But, brethren, let me say here, that I will not receive anything on the subject of religion unless it agrees with the principles embraced in my experience, of which I have given a part. I joined the Methodists because they were a live people, or I thought they were; they were doing a great deal more than the Baptists. What prompted them to be so religious I did not know, and will not discuss here. I felt that Jesus had done a great deal for poor sinners, and they ought to be very religious the little time they have to live. I am yet an advocate for good works, but will not allow any to be good, save

those God before ordained us to walk in; and the walking in them, and the not walking in them, will not entitle us to heaven and immortal glory, but is the answer of a good conscience toward God and man and the enjoyment of our spiritual life while we live in this world. I had a strong desire to know the truth and serve the Lord; and I thought that I would be willing to suffer anything, or forsake father and mother to maintain my religion. When I told my parents what I had done, after joining the Methodists, to my surprise father very calmly said he wanted me to do what I thought was right; also said that he thought if I would examine the Methodist doctrine and compare it with my experience, I would find that they would not agree. I had written what I hoped the Lord had done for me, and put it where father could get it, when I started to meeting to join the Methodists. In the meantime the school closed, and I read the Bible a great deal in those days. My prayer and whole soul's desire was to know the truth and do it. One day while plowing in oats, this scripture occurred to my mind: "Except you be converted and become as a little child, you can in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven." It then looked plain to me that the Old Baptist doctrine agreed exactly with this scripture, which teaches that except we are converted from the idea that we can do anything to assist in our salvation, and become as a little child, or feel and realize that we are as dependent upon God as a little child is upon its nurse. My experience agreed exactly with this scripture and the interpretation thereof. It looked so plain to me that I thought I could show it to our school teacher—the Methodist preacher—and we would both go and join the Baptists. I tried, but made as complete a failure as I did with the young man at school. The Baptist Church to which my parents belonged was about eight miles from our house. Father was going one day, in the spring of 1841, and

asked me if I would not like to go. I went. When the door of the church was opened, a little girl eleven years old, went up and told my feelings so exactly that I wanted to talk to the church, which I did, and was received, and baptized by Elder E. Y. Ferral the next day. The name of the church was Salem, in Jasper county, Miss.

August 24, 1843, I was married to Barbara Touchstone, and in the fall of 1846, we moved to Arkansas, Drew county. I put my church letter into a church called Pilgrim's Rest, Elder Stephen Berry, pastor. From the time I saw Jesus as the Saviour of sinners, I had been strongly impressed to talk to the people about the goodness and mercy of God to poor sinners and the obligations we are under to serve him, but I could not bear the idea of being called a preacher, that was too sacred a place for me to occupy, or name to be called by. One day, while in considerable distress on the subject, it occurred to my mind that all the brotherhood was commanded to pray with and for one another and exhort each other to love and good works. That was a considerable relief to my mind; and after this, when Brother Berry would ask me to open or close the services, I would go forward and exercise according to the impressions of my mind, and my mind was relieved. I was no preacher, and never expected to be, so I got along very well for awhile. One day I was not at meeting on Saturday; when I got there Sunday morning the clerk of the church handed me a paper stating that the church believed that God had called me to the work of ministry, and that they authorized me to preach the gospel wherever God in His Providence should cast my lot. When I read that paper, the date of which was October 28, 1849, I thought I never would open my mouth again in the way I had in the church, and I said so, and did not for twelve months. I will not attempt to describe my feelings during this time, but suffice it

to say that I became willing to occupy wherever the Lord orders, and say and do whatever he commands. Meantime Union Church was constituted in our neighborhood; the brethren frequently spoke of my ordination, but I would invariably tell them that I had all the liberty I wanted.

January 3, 1857, I was ordained to the full work of the ministry, by a presbytery called on by Union Church, composed of Elders Othniel Weaver and E. Y. Ferral. I was kindly received by the Primitive Baptists and the people generally wherever I went; and after all this, although the Lord had been so good and merciful to me, I turned back to the beggarly elements of the world, and in 1861-2 joined the Masonic fraternity—which is a good, moral, worldly institution—for which the church excluded me from her membership. I was just as blind to the sin that I had committed as if I had never been born again. You will remember this was during the war. I did not understand then that the scriptures are full and complete in reference to the faith and practice of the children of God, and that nothing is a good work unless commanded of the Lord; and that He has commanded us to come out from the world. Brethren, I was taught this important lesson by the reception of many stripes. Not long after my exclusion Union Church dissolved, and many of the members moved away. In 1863 I moved to Bosque county, Texas, and Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1864, I went to Little Flock Church, Bell county, Texas, Elder G. W. McDonald, pastor, and told them my condition, and that I wanted to get into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptists, showing them a corroborative statement made by Elders C. B. Landers and J. W. C. Robertson, of Arkansas, who were very well acquainted with me. I was received into the fellowship of Little Flock Church, and the church sent an order to the ex-clerk of old Union church for my ordination credentials,

(who then lived in Milam county, Texas,) which he had. They were delivered to me, and I yet have them. In the fall of 1865 I moved from Bosque county to Milam county, Texas, rented land near Mayfield, on Little River, and in 1866 New Providence Church was constituted, and I was in the organization. January, 1867, I bought a small piece of land on Knob Creek, Bell county, Texas, where I yet live, and cast my lot again with the brothers and sisters of Little Flock Church. I have tried to fill any place the brethren have seen proper to assign me, whether in the church or Association. I don't think I am egotistic when I say that I have been received with favor by all the Primitive Baptists and the people generally, with but few exceptions.

September 17, 1885, my wife died, leaving me alone, my youngest child being twenty-six years old, and having a home of his own. My oldest son and family are living with me now. We had eleven children born to us; five of them are now living, one daughter and four sons. Notwithstanding the constant and unabating kindness of my children, brethren and friends, I experience a loneliness which is indescribable and full of trouble.

Brethren and children, let me say in conclusion that my only hope for salvation, either eternal or temporal, is in the preserving power of God. O, that He may keep us all from all the errors of the present day, is my sincere prayer to the God of all grace. O Lord, save my children. Amen.

WM. THOMAS.

"Awake, awake, O, arm of the Lord, and put on strength; awake as in ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep, and that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?—Isa., li. 9, 10.

The above was submitted by Elder B. L. Landers, of Arkansas, and sent out to me by Elder Respass for exposition, which I attempt, without a waste of words expressive of my unfitness.

The above refers to the mighty works of the Lord in the deliverance of Israel as a nation from Egyptian bondage. Rahab signifies Egypt, and hence answers to that bondage, or the flesh; while the dragon, the spirit of evil, and answers to Pharioh—"him that held the power of death over them"—or the devil. The hope and comfort to be drawn, and that incited the prayer, is that the Lord who, of his own mercy and grace, done this greater and most marvelous work for Israel as a whole, recorded it on the face of ancient days as a pledge that, not only would He perform the same for each one of His, but also having done this greater, He would not forsake and fail in a less; that having destroyed him that held the power of eternal death over them, He would not fail to destroy him who held the power of timely death or sleep over them; or, as our apostle says, having justified them by his death; much more would he save them by his life.

The above as an invocation applies to the church as carnalized from long living after the flesh; or rather to that part so living till dead to the spirit and all spiritual things.

Does this prayer of the prophet apply to the church to-day? Are the churches about us gathering together with Christ in Zion, or are they scattering abroad to the flesh in the world? Are their weapons carnal, or spiritual? Are they striving for the unity of the spirit and the faith of the gospel, or for the mastery, and to disarm one another? Judging from the strife, variance, hatred, evil speaking, etc., together, from the almost exclusive use of carnal weapons, especially in some localities, I am constrained to believe it will apply to many. Churches, and individual disciples of Christ, must either in the spirit serve Christ, or in the flesh serve sin. Jesus has said, "He that is not *for* me is *against* me;" "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad;" "Ye cannot serve two masters." Then there

is no middle ground, no compromise point between; to serve Christ is to put on Christ and walk in the spirit. And this is to be dead or asleep to flesh and alive to Christ; and *vice versa*. But this supplication must spring from the heart of the "Living in Jesus alone," of whom there are always a few in every organized church having the gospel preached; for these are as the bands to preserve the whole intact; the retainers of divine life and light; the savor of life unto life, for whose sake the Lord will not remove the candlestick! Oh! I thank God for these living; that he *will not* leave himself without a witness, and that still we behold their face as the humble, patient face of a faithful old brother or two here and there; and the face of a meek, long-forbearing sister or two here and there! And so sure as they live they will bear this burden of prayer for the weakly and sickly, and sleepy and slain. For in proportion to their measure of the spirit will they sorrow and grieve for the sins of the body. And, but for whom, there were none on earth to watch and pray in their behalf. For their's is the same one spirit and spiritual concern for the whole body that moved the prophet to the foregoing, that as a garment has fallen from the shoulders of one generation of the living to another till now, and that stirred the heart of the lonely old prophet Jeremiah, in his time, to wish his head were a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night for the slain of the Lord's people—and slain by so vile a foe as their own fleshly lusts. Oh, then, that they would shake off this fatal lethargy and heed the gospel admonition, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light;" and thus alarmed, join the cry of the living, "Awake, O, arm of the Lord, and raise these slain."

Not that the arm of the Lord is asleep, literally, but delays to be out-stretched, (literally manifested), remains inactive, till the faith of the living shall be so

strengthened by Him, as that they can and will, from an undivided heart, as of one, lift this cry to the throne of God. Faith, in a sinner, is the arm of the Lord—their arm with which to appropriate all spiritual blessings. The Lord must give the strength to exercise this faith; hence, for the arm of the Lord to put on strength is to strengthen the faith of His people. And who knows but the burden is being weighted for our early uplifting? O, arm of the Lord, put on strength—give strength to our faith to plead for the sleepy and slain of thy people!

“But wherein do we sleep?” some may ask. Perhaps to remind them may awake them. Perhaps some of you have been led off, unawares, like those whom Paul addressed thus: “My little children, for whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you,” etc. This was to such little ones as would not, of themselves, have presumed upon a departure from the truth, much less led off into error; and yet, who were so credulous, so unsuspecting, as blinded by their personal love for their teacher, as to be led off unawares. And such pretended teachers or pastor as would, could, thus take advantage of the personal devotion of the weak and unstable as to lead them away from the *safe simplicity of the gospel*, so adapted to such, and that in order to accomplish a personal, selfish, evil end, contrary to the gospel, is the worst scourge, and plague, and pest the Lord ever permitted to afflict and destroy his people. How many divisions, schisms, and lasting wounds do you know due to such? Indeed, do you know any not traceable to such? For they do not only lead the little ones away from the truth, but also “zealously affect” them in a bad way—present and turn their minds in behalf of their own principles and position, assumed in order to attain to an evil, selfish end. And so dead to Christ, and so alive to the flesh are they, that they will not only take these tender members of Christ and shape

them into tools of evil—instruments of unrighteousness—but also, if necessary to the fulfillment of their evil designs, will finally sacrifice—exclude them from the church. And more, they will, if possible, exclude—have excluded, to my knowledge—the good and faithful old members who withstand them, and so stand as hindrances to the execution of their evil purposes. And thus become “murderers of fathers and mothers”—murdered, as killed to the visible church. Oh, arm of the Lord awake, and put on strength; delay not, and save thy lambs! Lo! wolves invade; the sheep of thy pasture are slain!

This should teach us not to follow any man, only as he follows Christ. We should love and serve our pastor, not in a spirit of rivalry, but simply because he loves and serves Christ. We should doubly honor him, yet never love him so blindly and trust him so implicitly as to permit him to zealously affect us, or lead us away from the safe simplicity of the gospel, whether as touching faith or practice, doctrine or discipline. We should do *all things as unto the Lord*. Then is our eye single, and our pastor will be pleased, if spiritual; if not, we need not care to please him; and this will prove him. Always remember it is CHRIST who died for you.

But, in following any man, have we followed the flesh? Is there a party spirit causing strife, variance, evil speaking, etc., and that as emulated by a spirit to devour among you? If so, “let him that thinketh he stands, take heed lest he fall.” One party, at least, is wrong. It is the flesh that sows the above; it is the devil that seeks to devour. If you have heretofore acted like children to let this or that brother, or even the pastor, shape your course, I pray you now, “acquit you like men”—like *men*, mind you, who are *personally* responsible—upon whom rests the sacred obligation to Jesus Christ, the only law-giver, of personal investigation and responsibility in all things pertaining to the

faith and order of God's house. And remember, what has been will be again.

The object of this teacher (?) at Galatia, who, it seems, had duped the little ones, and bewitched the larger, was to destroy Paul as a teacher and apostle, and build himself instead. But the Lord God, almighty and immutable, has said He will be with His own called ministers to the end of the world; and that no weapon formed against them shall prosper; therefore, take heed to your footing, lest you fall with a false teacher. Also says the apostle, "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses; that by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple," and avoid them, for they serve themselves, and not the Lord Jesus Christ.—Rom., xvi. 17.

There are some like those mentioned in Matt., xxiii., and Luke, xi., who pay tithes on mint, and anise, and cummin, and all manner of herbs, to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law; that is, they are great sticklers for all the outward forms, ceremonies, customs and traditions, etc., that constitute the visibility of the church, to the practical neglect of the living, spiritual principles of the gospel within. For instance, a church seeks the fellowship of another; the first and most important question is—not whether she is sound in the faith; not whether she manifests the life of Jesus in her mortal body—but, whether that mortal body has paid tithe in all manner of herbs, like herself; was she constituted upon the same principle, by the same hand, and according to the same forms, etc., like we? No little irregularity? And she has continued in the forms as to order and ordinances? Yes. Then she is received, though, in some one or more of her members, she denies the faith, the resurrection, the Trinity, the eternal Sonship, that Jesus has come in the flesh, etc. And she may practically neglect judgment, mercy, faith and love, just so she fights for the forms, etc. Another

church applies, but on close searching a little irregularity is found in the order or form in constituting, or in an ordination; though mindful of all the weightier matters of the law; she is denied. And the result is many good, faithful children of God are separated—divided—and most of them do not even know the cause. I know a dear, faithful sister who, years ago, left her church and county, and moved to another; years after she visited her aged mother and went to the church that first received her, as she told me with such an humble, thankful, yet sad and rejoicing heart, as that it was Communion time. But they told her, “You cannot eat with us.” Why? Not that she had “wronged any man, or defrauded any man, or corrupted any man,” but “your Association has dropped correspondence with ours.” A sister of that Association came to our church at Communion time; “She must not eat at the Lord’s table, not that she is excluded by his word, but, because our Association has dropped correspondence with her Association.” Oh, arm of the Lork, awake, and put on strength, and save us! How long shall ambitious preachers, striving for the mastery and vain-glory, build barriers between Thy table and Thy meek and humble poor, and break the sacred bonds of fellowship Thou hast established, binding them together as one, in One?

But are we not warned against false teachers? false apostles, who should even appear as an angel of light? How fair and pure and beautiful! How good their works, and fair their speeches. But there is absolutely nothing required of a child of God, in a religious sense, but FAITH and OBEDIENCE. Whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil. The last and best commandment of Moses or man, added to help us stand approved unto God, is against Christ, and scatters abroad to the flesh. “For we are the circumcision that worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no con-

fidence in the flesh." Then, wherefore and whereby those means by which churches are divided, and Christians separated?

But perhaps there are some who have not made what might be termed a "religious departure;" whose church is at peace, and who may therefore ask "wherein are we dead, seeing we have observed the ordinances, attend our regular meetings, love the brotherhood and pastor, visit the sick?" etc. These are all good, if done *in the spirit as unto the Lord*. But how can they be done in the spirit, if the every-day life and walk is after the flesh? To put on Christ is to put off the deeds of the flesh, and walk in the spirit. *In Christ*—the result of putting on Christ—the spirit reigns and rules alike on meeting days and working days, at home and abroad. In Christ, love is the law of the heart and mind, always and inevitably demonstrating, practically and otherwise, *peace and good will* to all men, in all things, at all times; the strongest factor in which is the spirit of forgiveness, followed closely by meekness, gentleness, and all long-sufferings.

Butler, Ga.

R. ANN PHILLIPS.

CHAPTER VII.—BAPTISM ASSURES RESURRECTION— "BURIED WITH HIM IN BAPTISM."

JESUS, our King and Law-giver, instituted and appointed BAPTISM and the SUPPER in his Gospel Kingdom as ordinances to be kept in the church, and administered by his ministers to his believing disciples, until he shall come again. Both these ordinances are *figures* having a definite and clear meaning; for they are the *form* of the doctrine of Christ. "Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."—Rom., vi. 18.

Now, what was the *doctrine* which Paul delivered to

his brethren? He answers: "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 again the third day, according to the Scriptures."—1 Cor., xv. 3, 4. In this doctrine of God our Saviour, three great facts are prominent: the *death* of Christ for our sins, his *burial*, and his *resurrection*. This is the glorious gospel—the glad tidings of salvation. It is our salvation; salvation from our sins. "Christ died for our sins," "and was raised again for our justification." This doctrine Paul preached, the brethren believed with their hearts unto righteousness, confessed with their mouth unto salvation, and obeyed from the heart.

But they obeyed the *form* of this doctrine; that is, the type, symbol, or figure of it. A figure is a picture, or shadow of a body or substance, but not the very thing itself. Yet, it must be a true pattern or copy of that which it represents, otherwise it is not a figure. Now, in the doctrine of the gospel we have, first, *death*; second, *burial*; third, *resurrection*. So then, the ordinance must truly represent these three solemn truths of the gospel of our salvation, and thus conform to the doctrine. Such a form of doctrine the brethren had obeyed. One of the ordinances must have in it the emblems of suffering and death for sin, and unto sin; the other must have in it the symbols of the burial and the resurrection of the dead one. The two ordinances, which our Lord ordained and gave to his twelve apostles for the church, have in them just this form; and in this we behold his divine goodness and wisdom. For, if the ordinances of the gospel were arbitrary appointments, which did not symbolize our salvation, or if they were uncertain and changeable in their form, their solemn and instructive meaning, divine comfort and promise would be lost to us, because we would not know why they were given, nor what given for. But

the Lord has ever taught the children of men by type, metaphor and symbol, showing facts by figure, and clothing truth with a suitable and expressive form. And so he made man in his own image, after his likeness, to make known his wisdom, power and glory in time and eternity.

God and Truth are eternal; and before time was born or the earth was formed, all worlds, beings and things were complete in the foreknowledge of the infinite Creator and Former of all things. But God was pleased to bring them into being, and manifest them in actual, visible form. His own glorious Son, who was in the form God, took upon him the form of servant, and was found in fashion as a man. The earth, sun, moon and stars all appear in the forms which God gave them, and so of the tabernacle in the wilderness, the kingdom of David, and the kingdom of the son of David. All things must be made according to the pattern formed by the Infinite Hand. The Lord's ordinances are plain and simple forms; yet full of meaning and instruction, unfolding volumes of divine truth, love and mercy. Let us consider them as embodying death, burial, and resurrection.

Dear Brethren Editors, the above is an extract from my work on Resurrection, which will be ready about October 20th. The book will make about 350 pages, large, new type, containing an introduction and twelve chapters, a lithographic picture of the writer; cloth binding, red edges, and will be sent, post paid, for 75 cents, which barely pays the cost of the work.

Money should be sent by draft, money order, postal note or registered letter, to me, at New Castle, Henry county, Ind. In love, your brother,

DAVID BARTLEY.

FURMAN, ALA., Sept. 2, 1887.

Dear Brother Respass:—In response to the request of many brethren, I wish to give a short sketch of my tours of preaching through the MESSENGER. The first tour was in Florida, in which I visited the churches in the Clay Bank, Chipola, San Pedro and the Suwanee Associations. There is a lot of precious old Baptists in Florida. We had many delightful meetings, and I saw a goodly number added to the churches. At Mt. Horeb seven were received by experience and baptism. Among them, of one family, were a father, mother and single daughter. There was also a sister who had been with the Missionaries a number of years—thirty-seven, I think. At Blue Spring Church I saw a sister who told me she was one hundred years old the 5th of last March. She walked a quarter of a mile to meeting that day, and seems quite strong in body and mind for one so old. Her name is Kiziah Williams. She was a Starling, and was born in Sampson county, N. C., twenty miles south of Fayetteville. She joined the church when about fifteen years old, and was baptized by Elder Fleet Cooper. It was greatly interesting to hear her talk of the past—far back in the by-gone days. She is the oldest person I ever saw. The next to it was a brother in my own State, whose funeral I was called upon to preach. He was in his ninety-seventh year when he died.

One noteworthy incident about the size of the families of some of our preachers in Florida attracted my attention. The wife of one is the mother of *seventeen* children, and nearly all of them living I believe. The Psalmist says “Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord:”—“Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.”—Ps., cxxvii. 3, 5.

I was in Florida from the 10th of March till the 6th of May. The outlook for the future prosperity and in-

(2)

crease of the churches in Florida is good. In some places where I traveled and preached I was told that I was the first traveling preacher that they have ever had among them. The Lord willing I expect to visit them again.

On the 21st of May I began my last tour at Troy, Ala., and filled my last appointment on last Sunday, the 28th of August, at Emmaus Church near Thomaston, Ga., covering a period of over three months that I was away from home. On the two tours together I visited nearly one hundred old Baptist Churches. The Associational bounds passed through on my last tour are the Conecuh River and Choctawhatchee in Alabama. And in Georgia the Harmony, Flint River, Union, Ocklockonee, Alpaha, Lower and Upper Canoochee, Upatoie; the reconstructed manifesto churches, and the Echeeconna. I kept no account of the number of miles traveled, nor of the number of times I preached, but most of the traveling was done by private conveyance, and taking both tours together it seems to me that I must have traveled at least six hundred miles by private conveyance. I feel to hope and believe that the Lord was with me all the way through, and He was manifestly present in the meetings. I kept no account of the number I saw added to the churches, but there was quite a number when taken altogether on both tours. It is a little singular that every time I dreamed of fishing I would soon after see some additions to the church. Was that a sign from the Lord to me, or was it a mere coincident? Who can tell? I have received letters from brethren in different localities stating that others have come in since my visit to them. All of which is comforting news, especially to me, because I greatly fear sometimes that I am not sent of the Lord to engage in this great and important work of devoting my entire time to traveling and preaching. And my heart aches to know whether the Lord has laid the necessity

of such work on me. One thing I know, whether it be of the Lord or not, and that is, there is no peace of mind—no satisfaction to me only when I am engaged in traveling and preaching. This has not always been the case. I wish our churches would give their closest attention to this subject, and give official sanction and endorsement to such as they believe, from the evidences in that direction, have been specially gifted of the Lord and required of Him to do the work of an evangelist. Before Paul and Barnabas went out fully recognized as evangelists, they were set apart and separated from the rest of teachers, to and for this work, by an official act of the church. Why is such an all important duty as this now so sadly neglected by the church? It seems to me that the day is fast approaching when the church, for her own protection, will be compelled to take this matter in hand to save her from impositions; to save her from men of corrupt minds, who have not the prosperity and welfare of Zion at heart, and who, if not publicly, are privately engaged in sowing the seeds of discord among brethren. Perhaps, without a single exception, all the great and sore troubles among the people of God started from a corrupt, heretical preacher. Whom has the Lord called out and sent forth? is the question that should engage the earnest attention of our churches.

I arrived at home safely on the 29th of August and found all well. In all of my tours the Lord has been especially merciful and good to my family. To Him be all the praise for His great goodness to us. To those who have so kindly remembered my family in my absence, not only in their prayers, but in ministering to their temporal necessities, I feel the deepest gratitude. The Lord be praised for such kindness to them. To brethren everywhere I wish to say, that it matters but little to me what becomes of me as far as this world is concerned in temporal things, but

I have the deepest concern for the welfare of my family. I want to see them prosper. And as long as I feel compelled to give up all to travel and preach continually, remember my loved ones at home and pray for me that the Lord may be with me; that He may make me more and more useful to his people, and enable me to preach the gospel in its purity. All the people of God whom I met on my tours have a warm place in my heart, and I hold them in grateful remembrance. And most tenderly do I remember those bowed down and distressed in their minds, and who so earnestly requested to be remembered at a throne of grace for themselves, their wayward children, or husbands; and for the sin distressed ones my heart goes out to them in the deepest sympathy and love. May the Lord speedily and most abundantly bless them all.

In a few days, the Lord willing, I will go to Water Valley, Mississippi, to begin a tour there already made up and waiting for me up to the 4th Sunday in this month. With love and good will to all I am unworthily yours in the Lord.

J. H. PURIFOY.

EXPERIENCE.

Dear Brother Rowe:—At your request while here with us, I will try to give you a short sketch of my experience. I have often felt impressed to write it for publication, but being so poor at composition, and feeling my unworthiness so much, I have failed to write, and it is with much fear and trembling that I make the attempt. I had often thought of death, and what would become of me if I should die; but I was young, and loved the pleasures of the world; loved gay company, and was fond of dancing, and would think when I got older I would do better, having heard preachers say any one could get religion; and often went to the mourner's bench, but I do not know whether I thought I could get

religion by going or not, but other young people went, and I went with them. The preachers would come and sit down by us, and tell us we ought to join the church; that we would never get religion until we did, and though young as I was, I did not think any one should join the church to get religion; but they would beg and try to scare us into the church. The first serious thoughts I think I ever had was in 1872 or '73; I then lived about seven miles from the church. I was spending the night with my aunt, a good old Primitive Baptist, and we sat up late. After going to bed, (I do not know whether it was a dream or not, but it did not seem like I had been asleep), I thought we were all at the church, and the first thing I knew I went and shook hands with the preacher, and was talking to him, and when I got through talking to him, a good many shook hands with me, and all seemed to be rejoicing, and the preacher poured something into a cup, and gave it to me, telling me to take it and drink; that it was the blood of Christ. I called to my aunt and asked her if she was asleep, and she said she had not been asleep. I then told her what I had dreamed, if indeed it was a dream, and she said she thought it was a good one, and hoped it would come to pass. I thought much about it and it began to trouble me. I tried not to think about it, but the more I tried the more it troubled me. I went on in this condition until 1875, my troubles increasing, but did not know what was the matter with me. I began reading the Bible, but did not find anything that eased my troubles. I sometimes tried to pray, but it seemed my prayers would rise no higher than my head. I would go to preaching, and hear the preachers tell of the blessed Saviour and his precious promises, but I could not think they were for me, and would go home troubled more, if possible, than before. The more I read the Bible, and the more I tried to pray, the worse I got, so I concluded it was no use; I had done all I

could, and could find no relief. I soon found what the preachers, or so-called preachers, said would not suit my case, for if any poor soul ever tried to get religion I tried with all my might. My sins rose before me like mountains; but I would read the Bible diligently, and go to some secret place and try to beg the Lord for mercy, and the very breathings of my soul were, "Lord, be merciful to me, a poor, lost and ruined sinner," and gladly would I have exchanged places with the beasts of the fields, or the birds of the air, and could with the poet say :

"O, woe is me that I was born,
Or after death have being."

When I read the Bible, everything I read seemed to condemn me. One day I was reading the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. v.: Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted; blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled; but I could not claim any of those precious promises for my poor sin-sick soul. I even felt it to be a sin for my polluted lips to call upon His dear name, but I had no one else to go to, and if He cast my soul to hell, I would go calling on His dear name, knowing it would be just; but O, the thoughts of my future if the All-wise God should forever cast me off! My burden was so great! One day while at my domestic work, still begging the Lord for mercy, it seemed that something said to me, "go read the 515th hymn," and I went into the house and got the book and began reading it, and read on down to the 3d verse, which reads thus:

"And of this happy number,
I hope that I am one,
And Jesus soon will finish
The work he has begun."

It filled me so full that I fell down on my knees and cried out, "O Lord, is it possible that I am of this

happy number?" I do not know how long I was there begging the Lord to have mercy on me, a poor, vile sinner. I went on in this condition until 1876, and was always so glad to be with those I thought to be Christians, and hear them talk, and often wanted to ask them to pray for me, but I thought they knew what a great sinner I was, and that they would not wish to trouble themselves to ask the Lord to have mercy on me; for I felt myself to be such a sinner that I thought every one else knew; but sometimes I felt like if some Christian would pray for me, surely the Lord would hear them; for I was such a vile sinner I thought he would not hear my poor, imperfect prayers. I sometimes asked some of the members to pray for me, when I went to preaching, and heard the preachers sometimes tell their experience, and when some would join the church, in telling their troubles and trials some of them would tell my feelings as well as I could have told them myself, until they told where they were delivered of their great burden of guilt and sin, and the Saviour was sweet to their soul, and they could claim him as their Saviour; but, alas! I could not go with them there, for I was still bowed down with grief; my burden was grievous to be borne, and if a poor mortal ever begged for mercy and relief it was me. The fourth Saturday in August there was one joined the church, and baptized Sunday morning, and oh, I thought if I could go into the water as he did, I would have given worlds, but I could not. Elder Gresham preached from a text that day that I had intended to ask him to preach from, but had not done so, which can be found in Mark, xii. 4. It was, I thought, the best sermon I had ever heard, but still it did not ease my mind. After going home from preaching it seemed my burden was greater than ever: I felt like I did not have a friend in heaven or on earth; I do not suppose a poor condemned criminal could have felt any worse than I did, for I thought that God had

already condemned me, and I should be banished from His presence forever. Oh! what agony! but still I knew if he sent my soul to hell His righteous law approved it well. I got the Bible and tried to read, but could not; I would go and try to pray, but it seemed my prayer went no higher than my head. I came back into the house and went to bed, but not to sleep; the very breathings of my soul were, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner; Lord, save or I perish; I had no thought of ever seeing the sun rise again, for I was sure I was going to die; I thought I would call my dear husband and tell him I was going to die, but did not wake him up; I raised my eyes to heaven, as I thought, for the last time, when my Saviour was presented to my view, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely; my burden was gone; I felt so happy! I could claim Jesus as my Saviour, and it was all I could do to keep from shouting aloud. I could exclaim with the Psalmist: Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me bless and praise his holy name. My troubles were all gone, and I was perfectly happy; and the sweetest and most beautiful singing I ever heard was then, when my Saviour and God relieved me of my burden, and spake peace unto my soul; it seemed to be right over me, where my precious Saviour was revealed to me the song was:

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

And it is so, for His name *is* sweet; He soothes our sorrow, and heals our wounds, and drives away our fears; at least it was the case with me; my fears were all gone and then I thought I never would see any more trouble. It was after 2 o'clock before I could ever go to sleep. When I woke next morning, everything looked more beautiful, I thought, than I had ever seen it before. The little birds sang more sweetly; all nature

seemed praising God; the sun seemed to shine more brilliantly than ever before; and my soul could praise him for his goodness and mercy to me, a poor, vile sinner. I felt like I wanted to tell everybody what a dear Saviour I had found, and as I remarked above, I thought that I would never see any more trouble; but it was not long before doubts and fears began troubling me. I wanted to go to the church, but was afraid to go, for fear I might be deceived, and might deceive the church, which I did not wish to do. I would read the Bible and try to ask the Lord to show me my duty. I desired above all things to be baptized, and to do my Father's will, and what to do I knew not, for sin was mixed with all I did. I thought surely I was deceived. I attended an Association in September, 1876, in Wilkinson county, Ga., on Sunday morning. Elder Gresham preached from a text I gave him; it was from 1 Peter, ii., 2-10, and O, what a sermon he preached; he told my experience much better than I could have told it myself, and I thought surely I could not be deceived, if such a beloved minister of Christ, one called and qualified of God, had been such a vile sinner as I. Still I was fearful of being deceived. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1877, I got the Bible before going to preaching, and thought I would see if I could find anything that would make my duty plain; the first passage of scripture I saw was, "Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins." I went to preaching, but had no notion of joining the church; at conference the door of the church was opened and there was a sister went forward, and still I thought I would not go, but the first thing I knew I was there, and I hardly know how I got there. The sister told what the Lord had done for her poor soul, and I then, as best I could, related a portion of what is written, and to my great joy was received, although I had no idea that I would be. We were met by a large crowd at the creek on Sunday morning and

there followed the example of our dear Lord and Master, and was buried by Elder Gresham in the liquid grave. Oh, how happy I felt! I thought then my troubles were all over; but alas! I soon found sin was mixed with all I did. We repaired to the church, and after preaching, we had Communion and feet-washing, and oh, how happy I was, to be permitted to sit with the dear children of God, and with them eat our dear Lord's supper, and wash the dear saint's feet. And oh, dear Brother Rowe, I have many times met with the dear children of God around the Communion Table with much fear and trembling, begging the dear Lord to make me worthy to be with them, one so unworthy as I feel myself to be; for his blessed word says, He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, and oh, what an awful sentence; and I do so often fear that that sentence will be passed on me. The Lord knoweth our hearts, and oh, that I could live a better life than I do, and keep his commandments, which are holy, just and good, but when I would do good, evil is present with me. I often fear, after all, it has been a delusion and I am deceived, and have deceived the dear children of God. I beg and pray to our Father if I am deceived to undeceive me. Surely if I am a child of God I would not be so vile and sinful as I am, and almost ready to give up in despair; when those sweet and comforting words will come with much power, "My grace is sufficient for thee," I am made to rejoice in God my Saviour, and think then I will doubt no more. I can look back on my past life, and can see the Lord has been merciful, and has greatly blessed me from the earliest of my life until the present time, and O, how ungrateful and unthankful I seem at times; so hard-hearted and rebellious against my God, who has done so much for my poor soul. O, that I could never commit another sin! O, that our God may give me more faith, and enable me to put all my trust

in him, and give him all the praise, for he is worthy of all praise and honor. He is Lord of lords and King of kings, bless and praise his holy name. Although, at times, my hope is so small, yet I would not exchange it for ten thousand such worlds as this; "Although the world may think it strange, I would not with the world exchange." I am often made to wonder why I was made to hear his voice and enter, whilst others make a wretched choice, and rather starve than come. Dear brother, I have many sore troubles, trials and conflicts to pass through, but still I know that our God is able to deliver me out of them all; he is a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knoweth them that trust in him. Dear brother, I feel that he has been with me in my greatest troubles, and has enabled me to bear them. O, that I could love and praise him as I ought, and be made to feel my dependence on him more and more, for without him we can do nothing; for in us, that is in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing.

Brother Rowe, I have had a name with God's dear children eight years, but oh, how unworthy I feel to be, but what a great pleasure it is to meet with them and be in their company. If I am a child of God it is nothing I have done, or could do; it is by the grace of God I am what I am. If you think this worthy a place in THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, or that it would be profitable to any of God's dear children, or if you think it an experience of grace, do with it as you think best. Dear brother, I desire the prayers of all God's dear children.

Your little sister, if one at all, the least of all.

SALLIE L. JACKSON.

Bremond, Robertson Co., Texas.

Sister Jackson departed this life 12th March, 1886. See obituary in June MESSENGER, 1886.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, Wm. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,EDITORS.

RECEIVING THE ATONEMENT WITH JOY.

A brother in Arkansas requests that we say a few things upon the following text, (viz:)—“We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”—Rom., v. 11.

Everything the saints of God have and all that they enjoy as Christians, is a gracious gift to them through the merits of our Lord Jesus. It is therefore well said by the apostle that “We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” and that it is by Him we have received the atonement.

Among the things necessary to the eternal salvation of fallen sinners there is nothing of greater importance than an atonement for their sins. It removes the curse of the law against the transgressor and brings him into loving communion and favor with God. It magnifies and sustains the dignity of God’s holy law by rendering full and complete satisfaction to all its just and righteous demands. It brings reconciliation between God and man and opens up a way by which all the blessings of salvation through Christ can freely flow to His chosen people. No marvel then that it should be written by one who had experienced some of the blessed fruits of salvation that “We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” To joy in God through Jesus is to joy in Him through the merits of His mediatorial character and mediatorial work. It is to joy in God for what Jesus has done for us and in us, and for the relation that we sustain to Him and He to us, so that He is not ashamed to call us His brethren. To joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ is to joy that we are heirs of God through Christ to an inherit-

ance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away like earthly things, but is reserved in heaven for all who are kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed in the last time. It is not only by our Lord Jesus Christ that there is an atonement made for sin and for sinners, but it is also by Him that we receive and rejoice in all that He has done. All our qualifications for the joyful reception of the atonement must come from Him. Through Him we joy in God and by Him we receive the atonement. It is all of Him and boasting is excluded, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith. Much is said in this day about the “offers of salvation” which God is making to sinners on certain terms; and it is said they can comply with the terms and be saved or they can reject the terms and be lost forever. Thus it is, according to this popular theory, the whole of a sinner’s eternal salvation turns upon the pivot of his own works. And thus it is, and thus it must be, that one who is so deluded as to believe that he has received the atonement for his sins through his own works, or by his own voluntary natural will, can never come into fellowship with the saints of God whose experience binds them always to give thanks unto God and joy in Him through Jesus, by whom they have received the atonement. The people of God are as dependent for the will, the desire and the faith to receive the atonement in joy and love as they are for the atonement itself. And surely no sane man would argue that an atonement for sin was ever brought about by the will, the works or suggestions of men or angels. God, the Father, saves us and calls 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, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”—2 Tim., i. 9.

Poor fallen sinners and deluded self-righteous men may deem it quite sufficient for them to offer to God a few of their formal prayers—a few promises of doing better in the future than they have done in the past, but they have no conception of an atonement through the merits of Christ; nor do they know anything of joying in God through our Lord Jesus or of experimentally receiving the atonement by His gracious work. He is both the “Author and finisher of our faith.”—Heb., xii. By Him we believe in God who raised Him from the dead that our faith and hope might be in God.—1 Pet., i.

To receive the atonement by our Lord Jesus is to be quickened by the spirit of God that raised Jesus from the dead. It is to be born of an incorruptible seed by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever. It is to be made a partaker of the divine nature by which we are enabled to see and feel the pollutions of our evil heart. It is to groan under a sense of guilt and condemnation and feel that we are indeed without hope, without God and without Christ in the world, and without any hope of salvation by anything we can do for ourselves. It is to see and feel the justice of our condemnation before God, and suddenly and unexpectedly to find relief by a revelation to faith that Christ Jesus has carried our sorrows, sins and guilt, and that He has borne the curse and died for us and for our sins, and that God, the Father, is well pleased with what Jesus has done for us and accepts it as satisfactory for us, as fully and as freely as if we had been able to have paid the whole debt for ourselves. “By Him we have now received the atonement.” The debt is paid; the penal demands of the law are canceled, the curse removed and a joyful sinner set free. We die with Christ in our own individual experience, and in the order of our development and manifestation as children of God we suffer as members of Christ’s body.

under the same law and the same wrath that He suffered, and thus we are brought experimentally to know the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering because we are made conformable unto His death in our very first experience and convictions for sin. By our Lord Jesus Christ we receive the atonement as His gracious gift. We can not possibly have any claims on Him for it, or for the benefits flowing from it. God, the Father, accepts the payment or atonement at the hand of Jesus for His chosen people because he is their surety, but they can not claim release from the curse of the law till it comes to them as the gift of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Our blessed Jesus holds all in His own hand and can justly claim that the prisoner go free from the penalty of the law which he has satisfied, but this release and freedom must come to the poor captive soul as a gift by grace, for which he had no claim or merit. The atonement is received by us because Christ is "exalted by the right hand of God to be a Prince and Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel." Acts.

We say to Brother L. M. Cook, at whose request the above is written, that we purpose, if the Lord will, at some future time to write a series of articles on the atonement.—M.

ESTHER.—THIRD CHAPTER.

Haman thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had shown him the people of Mordecai; wherefore he sought to destroy all the Jews in the whole kingdom of Abasuerus. In the first month of the twelfth year of King Abasuerus, they cast pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day and from month to month, to the twelfth month. And Haman said unto King Abasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

SIBBOLETH AND SHIBBOLETH.—Judges, XII.

Haman, like Mordecai, was a foreigner. In many respects he was so alike the Jews that none save a Jew

could have told the difference between them. A great majority of thinking men in this day, to say nothing of the multitude, know no difference between the so-called churches, but suppose them in all essential things about the same. They suppose the Primitive Baptist about the same as the Arminian Baptist, except they think that the Primitives are poorer, more ignorant, fewer and more stingy and selfish. Indeed the Methodist Church has published it through her Book Concern that "thousands of us are notorious drunkards, and whose ignorance and immorality are a disgrace to the Christian name," etc., (Dr. Summer's works). To all, save the Jews, Haman no doubt seemed not only as good a man as Mordecai, but far superior in goodness and in every other respect. Christ only could detect the venality and hypocrisy of the Pharisees; but to the multitude, the devoted Pharisee seemed a much better man than even Christ himself. They paraded their goodness and sounded a trumpet before them, and gave alms with one hand, while with the other they laid burdens upon the people, and fleeced the poor, and devoured widows' houses, as they do now. There were, doubtless, some of them sincere men, as Paul was in his false religion, seeking to live perfectly after the manner of the law, that the Messiah might come. Christ did not, by any means, come up to their ideas of perfection; they charged him with being a wine bibber and glutton, and a friend and associate of bad men; and a violator of the Sabbath, because he healed a cripple on the Sabbath day; showing that with all their ostentatious prayers and alms, they hated Christ for relieving one whom they could not relieve, and whose relief gave them no honor; and that with all their zeal for God and affected love for man, they cared less for a suffering fellow-creature than they did for an ox, or a sheep. Now is such religion as that a blessing to mankind, or a curse? a religion that grinds the faces

of the poor; that loads suffering humanity with burdens; that panders to pride, greed, gambling, wealth, extortion and excess; that makes begging honorable, placing a premium upon idleness and extravagance, and that drains the country of millions of dollars to be wasted upon fanatical adventurers into foreign countries, called missionaries! No wonder that many thinking men look upon such Christianity as a humbug, and take refuge in infidelity.

We read, not long since, an editorial item in the *Christian Index*, the Armenian Baptist organ of this State, headed, *It Goes on the Sabbath*, illustrating the teaching of that denomination on the subject of Sabbath keeping; and it seemed to us to be very much like the belief of the Pharisees in Christ's day:

"An active and earnest young minister was told of a miller who had, with unusual profaneness, repelled every effort made to influence him on the subject of religion. Among other sinful practices he usually kept his mill—the most striking object in the hamlet—going on the Sabbath. The minister determined to make an effort to convince him of the sinfulness of his practice. The next time he wanted flour he went himself to order it. 'A fine mill, this,' said the minister, 'one of the most complete I have ever seen.' This was the truth; the miller had heard it a thousand times before, and never doubted the fact. Still, he was gratified by this new testimony, and his feelings were conciliated towards the minister. 'Unfortunately there is one defect in it,' continued the minister, 'and a very serious defect, too.' 'What is that?' carelessly inquired the miller. 'A defect likely to counterbalance all its advantages.' 'Eh!' replied the miller; 'what is it?' 'A defect that is likely to ruin the mill, and will no doubt one day destroy the owner.' 'What is it!' exclaimed the miller, impatiently; 'can't you say it at once?' 'It goes on the Sabbath,' replied the minister in a firm and solemn tone of admonition. The man was convinced; and we trust those faithful words of that good minister were blessed to his conversion. Friends, how do you spend your Sabbaths?"

The teaching in that extract is, that running his mill on the Sabbath would be the probable cause of his damnation, and that stopping it on the Sabbath would be the means of his salvation. Now we would, no doubt, be charged with being very wicked by that "good minister" for refusing to bow to such Phariseeism as that; would be charged as being a Sabbath breaker

(3)

because we refused to put Sabbath keeping in place of Christ's atonement and the work of the Holy Spirit. That poor miller, if he was converted, and no doubt he was from grinding on Sunday, was as far from Christ, if not further, after his conversion than before. (Matt. xxi.) He must have believed, if he believed the "good minister," that stopping his mill on Sunday would save him. But the Primitive Baptists keep Sunday because it is an ordinance of man; and it is a good law for man and beast, for saint and sinner. All working animals, as well as laboring men and women, need one day's rest in seven. If a Primitive Baptist should make a habit of working on Sunday the church would exclude him if he did not quit it. But we would be far from teaching or even insinuating such doctrine as that keeping Sunday would be the means of saving the soul; as far as we would from teaching that any other work of man would save him. To such doctrine we dare not bow, though it be the command of the king or the law to reverence it, yet, in the spirit in which it is kept by Haman and his followers, we dare not keep it. We should think that a miller who had no religion to speak of, only on Sunday, would be in danger of making up his lost toll during the other days of the week; and that he would be very much as the man out of whom the unclean spirits would go on Saturday night, and into whom they would re-enter Monday morning, as into a house swept and prepared for them.—Matt. xii. Perhaps we shouldn't mention it, but we wonder if it never once occurred to that "good minister" to stop his own mill from running on the Sabbath. His Sunday work was paid for as well as his Monday work. We have no doubt that with many of them, if the pay was stopped their Sabbath mills would grind no more.

Haman's religion was of that kind that elevated him in the world, and such as the world loved. And so near of kin is a letter faith to a God given faith, that

the distinction is about the distinction between Sibboleth and Shibboleth—one to be detected only by a Jew or a spiritual man, and not always by him, especially when in spiritual childhood. Haman, like Mordecai, was an exile; he could tell, like the Jews, of the country and home he had given up for the land of his adoption and the service of the king; and he could tell much more; he could tell of the great estate to which he had arrived by his own exertions, until his seat was set above all the princes that were with him. And Mordecai and the Jews had also given up their country to become strangers in a strange land, but how different the spirit in which they did it from the spirit in which Haman did it! Haman, no doubt had prayed, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner;" and Mordecai had prayed in the same words; but Haman's spirit was the spirit of the Pharisee who boasted in his prayer of his goodness, whilst Mordecai cried in penitence and shame, as the Publican did. That is the difference to-day; and though the same words may be used, and the same forms and ceremonies be observed, yet they are as different as heaven and earth, and light and darkness, as Jew and Amalekite, as flesh and spirit, and grace and works. Haman's religion elevated and honored him, but the religion of Mordecai and the Jews humbled them and glorified God. Haman could boast of giving up his country, but Mordecai could not; to Mordecai, his exile was a witness of his sins; to Haman, his exile was a witness of his own goodness; to the Jews it was *all* grace, and to Haman it was all works. Though Haman will lug in grace as he will lug in sin in praying the publican's or sinner's prayer, it is not because he feels to be a penitent sinner, but because he thinks the confession of sin is a good work for which God will reward him; whilst Mordecai confesses sin from necessity, and feels worthy of condemnation for it, yet cries for mercy. Mercy humbles Mordecai because he knows it is of

grace, and nothing but grace, and hence he will not bow to Haman; he can't do it in heart, even if he would, let the consequences be what they may. Haman knows nothing of grace; there is nothing in his experience but his own works.

But Haman was a man of great ability; a bright and shining light, and one whose fame and goodness overshadowed the highest and best in the king's empire. And that a foreigner should attain such pre-eminence in an empire so great, attested ability of the highest order; not only the highest order of religious eminence, but with it was combined the highest order of mental culture and ability. And that Mordecai, a Jew, a member of a despised and subjugated race, a people seemingly to the world under the wrath of God, who had been stripped, and peeled, and forsaken, and impoverished, and who were wanderers and desolate, should refuse reverence to Haman, whom the king honored, and whom his noblest princes and greatest men revered, was an act of such unparalleled audacity as to fill Haman with astonishment and indignation, as much as it would fill the wise and cultured theologians of the present day with indignation for a few despised and uncultivated Primitive Baptists to refuse reverence to their religious learning, wealth and numbers; and as it filled the Rabbis with indignation that Christ, the unschooled carpenter, should set their learning and theology at naught.

THE LYING SPIRIT.

In the same spirit, therefore, in which the Jews and Gentiles crucified Christ, Haman set about the work of destroying the Jews. Haman thought scorn to lay his hands on Mordecai alone, especially as he was nothing but a Jew. He was too lofty for so little a thing as the destruction of only one poor Jew; and too wise for it; for he knew that other Mordecais would arise if this one be destroyed, and that therefore the only effectual

thing to be done was to exterminate the whole Jewish race. Haman was a strong man, as well as a wise one; he had convictions, even if they were false; and his religion, though false, was not of the namby pamby kind of the present day; he was no religious dude, but a man, even if he was a bad one. He knew that it could not be of both works and grace, and that one or the other must fall. He knew that works made him what he was, as well as Mordecai knew that he was what he was by grace, and that these two could not live under and serve the king in the same spirit. He was not a Fullerite Baptist, who believed in both systems, and that the Bible teaches both works and grace, and that these diametrically opposite doctrines are both true! And yet they say that they believe the Bible is inspired and of God! We must believe that Haman had more faith in God than that. Haman went to work inspired by hatred of Mordecai and the Jews, and not by love for the king or kingdom. The same spirit has inspired the persecutions of the church through all ages. Rivulets of blood have been shed in the name of Christ by those professing to love and serve him, but who have always in heart been enemies to God and man.

Haman matured his plans; he was a far-seeing man, and did not propose attempting a thing and failing in it; he did not build without first counting up the cost. He was a whole year casting lots to obtain a favorable augury against the Jews. He was preparing the public for the destruction of the Jews, and making it popular with the people, as demagogues in these days do through the newspapers when they are seeking to spoil the commonwealth to enrich themselves. Like Ahab, Haman set out to get an answer favorable to his designs, nor would he heed any unpropitious augury or prophesy. Ahab sought the subjugation of Ramath Giliad, and Jehosaphat was persuaded into it with him, and they took counsel of the Lord as to whether they

would succeed or not. That is, they took counsel of the prophets who spake in the name of the Lord, and that all the prophets professed to do, both false and true prophets, as they do now. There were about 400 false prophets, and they were unanimous in prophesying to Ahab as he wished; they encouraged him to go against Ramath Gilead and that the Lord would deliver it into his hands. And not only did they prophesy favorably to Ahab, but Zedekiah, the chief false prophet, invented the means by which the great work should be accomplished. He made great horns of iron, saying, "With these shalt thou push Syria until thou consume them." It was a great work, and one in which the Lord would bless Ahab; it would add much revenue and honor to him and his kingdom. It was a work much like the mission work of false religion; by its means the world was soon to be converted to God, and the Millenium ushered in. There is hardly any estimating the power of false religion. When it has grown with their growth, men adhere to it as they do to the habits of a life-time. It, like the crook made in the limb of the apple tree when a twig, cannot be straightened without breaking. Nothing short of God's grace can deliver one from the lying spirit of false religion. The sacrifices its votaries will and have made are almost incredible. "If the Jesuit was wanted at Bagdad, he was toiling through the desert with the next caravan. If his ministry was needed in some country where his life was more insecure than that of a wolf—where it was a crime to harbor him—he went without remonstrance or hesitation to his doom. When, in our time, a new and terrible pestilence passed round the globe; when, in some great cities fear had dissolved all the ties that hold society together, when the clergy had forsaken their flocks, when the strongest natural affections had yielded to the love of life, even then the Jesuit was found by the pallet which the pastor, physician and nurse, father and

mother had deserted, bending over infected lips to catch the faint accents of confession, holding up to the last to the expiring penitent the image of the expiring Redeemer. But there is no doubt but that the ardent church spirit that made the Jesuit regardless of his ease, liberty and life, made him also regardless of truth and mercy; that no means which promoted the interest of his religion or church, seemed to him unlawful. It is alleged that in the most atrocious plots recorded in history, his agency could be distinctly traced; that constant only to his order, he was in some countries the most dangerous enemy of freedom, and in others the most dangerous enemy of order. He labored to reduce the world under the laws of his church; but he done so be relaxing her laws to suit the temper of the world. Instead of toiling to elevate human nature to the standard fixed by Divine precept, he lowered the standard until it was beneath the average level of human nature. He gloried in multitudes of converts baptized in remote regions, but it was believed that the facts of the gospel had been concealed from them, (of which we have not a particle of doubt). It was not strange that people of all ranks crowded to the confessionals in the Jesuit temples, for none went discontented away. If he had to deal with one truly devout, he spoke in the saintly tones of the primitive fathers; but with that large part of mankind who had religion enough to make them uneasy when they do wrong, and not religion enough to keep them from doing wrong, he followed a different system. In his books of casuistry were to be found doctrines consolatory to transgressors of every class. There the bankrupt was taught how he might, without sin, secrete his goods from his creditors; the servant was taught he might, without sin, run off with his master's silver. The Italians were glad to learn that they might shoot at their enemies from behind hedges. To deceit was given a license sufficient to destroy the

whole value of human contracts and human testimony. In truth, if society continued to hold together, if life and property enjoyed any security, it was because common sense and common humanity restrained men from doing what the Jesuits assured them that they might, with a safe conscience do." See Hassel's Church History, pp. 514 and 515.

Under the influence of this lying religious spirit, the heart is hardened and the conscience seared; it robs a man of even natural love and compassion, so that the Levite and priest can pass unconcernedly by a fellow-creature and brother lying stripped and half dead by the wayside.—Luke x. It destroys fraternal love, so that the thrifty elder son becomes enraged with his father because he had compassion upon his own erring and penitent brother.—Luke xv. The self-righteous Pharisee can look with a heart of stone at the weeping Magdalene kissing the feet of Jesus (Luke vi.); he can give in charity, but in his ostentatious giving "there is no fraternity;" but he condemned Jesus because he fraternized, for their good, with publicans and sinners.—Luke xv. He can weep over the heathens, and compass sea and land to proselyte them, and see the dogs lick the sores of a starving brother at his own gate.—Matt. xxxiii. and Luke xvi. He can build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous whom his fathers slew, and persecute living prophets for teaching the same the dead prophets did.—Matt. xxiii. He tithes mint, anise and cummin, and omits the law, judgment, mercy and faith.—Matt. xxiii. He strains at a gnat—a little unclean thing—and swallows a camel—a big unclean thing. He condemns Christ for not keeping his traditions, and violates the law of God by his traditions.—Mark vii. He seeks honor of men, to be called Rabbi, and to have the chief seat; he prays at the street corners to be seen of men, and in secret devours widows' houses. His conscience is so seared

under the influence of this lying spirit, that more than forty of them can make a conspiracy with the chief priests and elders to possess themselves, by lying, of Paul's person, and then murder him.—Acts xxiii. The same spirit will impress men again to do what it then did, when the time ripens for it; but it has its seasons, nor will it come before its time; when the fig tree putteth forth leaves summer is nigh. Three years of Christ's teaching brought on his crucifixion; and such teachings as his, to such people as he taught, will bring as it has brought in the past, thousands of his people to the stake. Haman's work against the Jews ripened in twelve months. Hatred inspired their zeal, and they got drunk and drunker with fanaticism; and the more they drank the more they thirsted and the more they could drink, until in their *delirium* they saw what they wanted, and what they never could have seen in sobriety. Like Belshazzar, when his princes, wives and concubines had made themselves drunk with the wine of Babylon, drained from the golden vessels of the temple of Jerusalem, they praised the gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, stone and wood. "They had a great outpouring." In this sort of preparation Haman went before the king; he went with a lie in his mouth against the Jews. It was none the less a lie because there was truth mixed with it; the wine that Belshazzar drank was none the less the wine of Babylon because it was drained from the golden vessels of God's temple. It was mixed with truth to make the lie more effective. *There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom: that was true, as the king knew; and their laws are diverse from all people; and that was true in a religious or spiritual sense, but not in the sense designed by Haman; neither keep they the king's laws; that was also false in spirit; as false as the charge was against Christ in violating the spirit of the Sabbatical law in doing good on*

the Sabbath day; *therefore, it is not for the king's profit to suffer them*, which was false in every sense. The same sort of falsehoods are told on Primitive Baptists; that we oppose morality and favor ignorance and immorality; and the same was told on Christ, that he was a glutton, drunkard, the prince of devils, and an enemy to civil government. Can we bow to and reverence such religion as that in bidding it God speed in any sense?—R.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

CARROLLTON, GA., August 30, 1887.—*Dear Bro. Mitchell:*—I feel inclined to write you briefly the pleasant condition of the Primitive Baptists in this part of Georgia. The Lord has been good to us poor dust worms all through the journey of life, but this is especially and more abundantly manifested and enjoyed of late in bringing into the church many precious members and stirring up Christians to their duty who had long seemed to be almost dormant.

I seldom visit or hear from a meeting of late in this part of the country but what I witness or hear of from one to four persons coming to the church and telling what great things the Lord has done for them. At our union meeting at Little Vine, second Sunday in August, two were received, and on the third Sunday four were received at Poplar Springs.

Friday before fourth Sunday in August was set apart to meet at Holly Springs to ordain a preacher and three deacons. There were six ordained ministers present, three licensed preachers and ten deacons, besides other visiting members and a large concourse of spectators. The deacons were readily ordained, but there being a doubt in the mind of the presbytery as to the legality of setting a man apart to the pastoral work of the ministry unless some church besides the church where his membership is (which already has satisfactory supply) should call for his pastoral services, it was decided by the presbytery not to ordain him at present, for no other reason save that no church had called for his ordination.

And here, Dear Brother Mitchell, I request your

views as to the propriety or impropriety of ordaining in such cases. I once assisted in ordaining a man before any church had specially called for his ordination; neither was his pastoral services ever afterwards called for by any church, and he finally fell in with the Missionary Baptists. Another one of the presbytery had once assisted in a similar case with similar results in the end, and so we hesitated in this case and did not ordain the brother.

But I must pass from this to tell you that in conference on Saturday a strange lady came forward with sacred boldness, yet possessing a meek and harmless expression, apparently fearing nothing but her God, and began to tell the church of the sorrows and conviction for sin through which she had passed, speaking in a clear and distinct manner so that the whole church and congregation could distinctly hear, and to whom all gave special attention; but when she came to speak of the great mercy of God in her deliverance, she broke down for a moment and the greater part of the congregation also became as "little children" with soft and humble hearts. Though she was a stranger in the flesh she was at once acknowledged as a sister in the spirit and heartily received into the fellowship of the church by over one hundred brethren and sisters present. Next morning her husband came forward at the water and another lady also, both of whom were received. And here, Brother Mitchell, I will state that I learn that the first and strange lady who came forward is a relative of yours. Her name is Mrs. Henry Lee Burton, daughter of James and Elizabeth Payne, of Chambers County, Ala. Her father died in the late war about 1864.

After baptism had been administered we assembled at the house to feast on the rich things of the gospel of Christ as preached to us by Elder Enoch Phillips, and to partake of the bread and wine in remembrance of our dear Redeemer, and also to wash one another's feet as commanded by our blessed Lord, who, Himself set the example as recorded in the 13th chapter of John. And we felt that surely the Lord was there to give His children a feast of love, causing their souls to rejoice in God, their Savior. Many, also of the congregation were melted to tears, saying to the brethren "Pray for

us." Remember me in my afflictions, as I am in very poor health and confined at home much of the time this summer.

If you think the above would be of any comfort to Christians, correct and publish, otherwise cast aside. My feelings at present are such that I can find comfort in almost everything.

GEO. M. HOLCOMBE.

REPLY—How blessed it is to be so subdued by grace that we can "find comfort in everything!" But it is generally through much tribulation, trial, affliction and sorrow that we are prepared to appreciate the Lord's help, or the triumphs of His grace over our sins.

Elder Holcombe's letter has come to us as cold water to a thirsty soul, and as good news from a far country. It tells of the Lord's doings towards the children of men, and it is marvelous in our eyes. It shows us how the grace of God reigns in the hearts of his people to make them of one heart and one soul, and dwell together in unity. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" It is *there* the Lord has commanded his blessing to rest, and it is *there* it brings forth its heavenly fruits of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness and brotherly kindness. And, oh what a sweet fragrance of Christ flows out from this garden of the Lord! All the rich and "chief spices" of the love of God in Christ, the atonement for sin, redemption by the blood of Jesus, with all the gifts and graces of the spirit, which are shed abroad in the heart, cause every little plant of grace to bud and grow and thrive until the united fragrance of these plants are like an "orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits of camphor, spikenard, saffron, calamus, cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes."—Song iv. 13.

But while we rejoice with our brethren who rejoice in the Lord's work in and among the churches in Carroll County, Ga., we can but "Weep also with those who weep" over the desolations of Zion in some other parts of the state, where we hear of "wars and fightings, debates, back-bitings, strife, contentions and other evil works." Let us remember, brethren, that the Holy Ghost hath said by the apostle, "If ye bite and

devour one another take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

Many things spring up to our remembrance of years long past when Elder Holcombe speaks in his letter of the "strange lady" which was received and baptized, being our relative in the flesh. Her father, James L. Payne, is our nephew and lost his life in the war. The poor boy had but little remembrance of either father or mother as they both died when he was but a child, leaving six children in poverty and want to battle their way as best they could in the world. For some years it fell to our lot to care for poor James. Finally he grew up and married a worthy lady, Elizabeth Sanders, daughter of Brother Jordan Sanders, long since dead. May the Lord grant unto this once "strange lady" and her husband that they may no longer be as "strangers and foreigners to the Lord's people, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of faith."

But as our dear Brother Holcombe specially asks an expression from us to the propriety or impropriety of a presbytery of ministers declining the ordination of a preacher for the alone reason that no church save the one of which he is a member had called for his ordination, we will briefly say that on this point we may differ a little with some of our brethren; though, on our part, it is not a difference of such magnitude as to mar fellowship or weaken christian confidence in our brethren.

A prudent caution in doing the work of the Lord is certainly commendable; specially in a work of such vast importance to the peace, growth, edification and comfort of the church, as ordaining a man to officiate in all the functions of the gospel ministry. And while we fear that there has been too much carelessness on this point both by churches and presbytery, so that many have been set apart by ordination that never should have been; yet, when it is an admitted fact that there is *no other* objection than the absence of a call by some other church for his ordination than the one of which he is a member, we can not see that only reason is of itself sufficient to prevent his ordination. All the obstacles against ordination should be such as the scriptures interpose; and if the word of the Lord does not present any opposing barrier it would be a grave

responsibility for a presbytery of ministers to set up any of its own.

It certainly is important to have the concurrent judgment of sister churches in every official act of each church; but even if several churches were to request the ordination of a minister and the church of which he is a member, knowing all the surroundings, should not deem it proper to have him ordained, she certainly has the right, and it is her duty to refuse the request. And if it is her right and duty to refuse for scriptural reasons, then we conclude for the same reasons she may have a brother set apart by ordination even without a call for his pastoral services by any other church. But no church should call for the ordination of one of her members to the pastoral work of the ministry unless she is fully satisfied to accept of his services in that capacity herself; that is, if such church is, or should be without a pastor.

The distinctive marks of qualifications or disqualifications given in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, are an infallible guide to the church and presbytery as to who should be set apart and who should be rejected. And a church where a brother in the ministry has been raised up, or has long been a member, certainly ought to be a better judge of the home standing, disciplinary ability, general upright character, the extent and usefulness of his preaching gift, than other churches who may have only a very limited acquaintance in any of these essential particulars. The caution given in the New Testament to "Lay hands suddenly on no man; neither be partaker of other men's sins," shows that much care is to be used lest some one should be set apart that ought not to be; but if there is no objection save that mentioned by Elder Holcombe, the writer would hesitate to assume such responsibility.

When the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth, the guide and teacher of the church said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, whereunto *I have called them,*" did the church at Antioch refuse on the ground that no other church had requested it or called for their services?—See Acts xiii. 1, 4.

M.

WINCHESTER, KY., Sept. 3.—*Dear Brother Respass:—*

I am sorry to hear of your afflictions. Nevertheless, the Lord knows best how to afflict us, and we could bear it much better if we could only receive it as coming from him. In this world we will be much cast down, and often made to wonder that we are not destroyed, and but for the grace and mercy of God, we would be. Truly we have the sentence of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves. What a blessing that we are made to trust alone in the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is there everlasting strength. North District Association passed off very pleasantly last week, only one visiting preacher from a distance, Elder J. H. Oliphant, from Indiana. I was appointed to preach on the stand Sunday. When it came my time I began to talk a little, when chill after chill came over my feelings, until darkness covered my mind. In this we can't see as God sees, yet what he appoints is best. May the Lord bless you, my dear brother, and give you grace and strength according to thy day.

J. J. GILBERT.

COLUMBUS, GA., 13th Sept., 1887.—*Dear Bro. Respass:* Is it not strange that we are made to rejoice in the very deepest of our bereavements? I was made glad to see my dear little boy's suffering ended; I knew he was free from sin and temptation. I was made glad even last night to know the Lord had been mindful of the last one of my children, only eleven years old. I will try to tell you what he said in his own words, as near as I can: He said it come to him since Ernest died, that his sins were all gone, and that he is going to heaven. He said before that time, for about six months, he had been bothered, so much so that he felt like he had rather be dead. I asked him if he felt like he was better or worse than any one else, and he replied that he just felt mean. I asked him where he was when he first felt so good, and he said he was in the house, and stated that he started to tell me, but he didn't know why he didn't. He says he feels good all the time; that he loved the Lord. I asked him how he felt about God's people, and he said he loved to hear them talk, and the singing in church did sound so sweet last Saturday. I suppose by that it sounded differ-

ent to him to what it ever had before. Dear brother, pray for our resignation, for if I know my heart's desire it is to be resigned. Your sister in the Lord I hope,
S. W. RODGERS.

We baptized the above little brother into the fellowship of the Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church on 9th October, 1887, together with three others, one another little boy fourteen years old, making twelve added by baptism to the above church during the present year.—R.

OBITUARIES.

FANNIE KATE NALL,

Infant daughter of Z. T. and Maggie Nall, died near Grantville, Ga., on Sept. 20, 1887, aged one year, three and one-half months. She suffered intensely for a few days with cholera infantum, when death ended her sufferings. O! that the Lord would comfort the bereaved and sorrow-stricken parents. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be His holy name.

JOHN N. HURST.

ERNEST RODGERS.

Our dear little boy departed this life Aug. 16, 1887. He was born March 26, 1881. On Thursday evening before he died on Tuesday, he went to the calf pasture after the calves as he usually did, and stuck a piece of hog weed in his foot between his big toe and the one next to it. I dressed it as I usually do such places, not thinking it was so dangerous. It run on several days, doing very well as I thought, but Tuesday morning about 3 o'clock he awoke crying, but before we could get to him his poor little jaws were locked and his head all drawn back with meningitis. Our family physician was called as quick as possible; but alas, it was too late. In defiance of medical skill and anxious care of relatives and friends, about sixteen hours filled his cup of sufferings and his spirit took its flight to God, who gave it. The morning before he died his papa was sitting by his bed and he pulled him down to him and hugged and kissed him. He dearly loved his papa. When I saw we would have to give him up I bowed down, but could not ask the Lord not to take him; I could not utter the words, "but oh, Lord! is it for my sins? Forgive my sins. Lord, thou knowest best; he is thine; thou hast only loaned him to me." He also had spasms of the bowels, which was his greatest pain; he was conscious to the last. He was a bright and promising little fellow. His earthly remains were interred in the cemetery at Mt. Moriah church in Muscogee county, near Columbus, Ga. Elder Bussey met us at the church and spoke very comforting words from Cor. xv. 1. Dear brother pray for us that we may be patient in tribulations, ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. May the good Lord help us is my prayer.

S. W. RODGERS.

Columbus, Ga.

MRS. ELLA ROSETTA BARROW.

SISTER ELLA ROSETTA BARROW was born in Jefferson County, Illinois, Sept. 11, 1858, and was the daughter of Joseph Dunlap and Margaret A. Moore. In October, 1871, her parents moved to Kansas, and in March, 1873, they moved to Caldwell County, Texas. Here she became acquainted with and married my brother, Napoleon Barrow, in the winter of 1880, in his twentieth year. They lived together a little over seven years and had a family of four children born unto them, the last two being twins, a son and daughter—the two older ones being daughters. The good Lord saw fit to call her away in about twenty hours after her twins were born, February 25, 1887, aged 28 years, 5 months and 14 days. She professed to have received a hope in Christ at the age of about 15, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church, known as Friendship, in Bell County, Texas, and was baptized by the unworthy writer in the summer of 1880. Her husband being a member of Little Hope Church, Williamson County, Texas, moved his membership also to Friendship Church. From thence they moved in 1881 to Caldwell County, Texas, and united with Bethel Church of the Providence Association. In or about the year 1885 there arose a trouble between the brethren of the Providence Association, nearly all the membership denying the covenant made by the Father with the Son, and the eternity of the Son, and the doctrine of the Trinity, and saying that election was not eternal, but a time work, &c. After several long and some sharp contentions, seeing that reconciliation was impossible, and knowing that two could not walk together unless they be agreed, in obedience to the command, "He that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject." And finding also several disorders in acts of discipline, and the scriptures saying "to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly," she and her husband accordingly, with a great many others, withdrew from them and united with Plumb Creek Church, Caldwell County, Texas, by relation, in 1885. They again moved to Hamilton County, Texas, and drew their letters from Plumb Creek Church, but she never had the pleasure of uniting with the church militant any more, but we hope she is now with the church triumphant. In the house where she died, before her remains were moved to the place of interment, the writer spoke, as we hope, to the comfort of the friends and relatives, from the following scriptures.—1st Cor. xv. 27, 28.

N. B.

DEACON WILLIAM BEAN

Died at his home in Johnson County, Texas, of congestion of the bowels, May 2, 1887, in his 74th year. He and his dear wife, whose maiden name was Balard, were baptized into the fellowship of the Sweatens Cove Church of Primitive Baptists by Elder Samuel Bean in Marion County, Tennessee, in 1857.

In 1862 he moved to Georgia and remained there until the war closed. He had two sons in the war that went down with the lost cause—one of whom was a Primitive Baptist. Out of nine children born unto Brother

(4)

Bean—four sons and five daughters—four of them united with the Old Baptists. In 1869 he moved, with his family, to Texas, and after a few years united with Village Creek Church, was ordained deacon of this church and was a faithful member up to the time of his death. Our dear brother served his community as justice of the peace for a number of years to the satisfaction of the people so far as I know. Thus another beloved father in Israel is taken away to that glorious rest above, for he said to his aged companion, I am not afraid to die. O Lord, comfort the bereaved.

W. T. ROGRES.

Acton, Texas, Aug. 29, 1887.

RANSOM KIRBY.

RANSOM KIRBY was born in the state of Virginia, April 5, 1786, and died July 24, 1883. The days of his pilgrimage on earth was 97 years, 3 months and 19 days. Brother Kirby united with the Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church at Gilead, in the state of Virginia, and was baptized by Elder Dabney Duncan, sixty-five or seventy years ago, (the exact time I could not ascertain) previous to his death, and remained a firm and consistent Baptist all through the great conflict with the modern mission system, and when the division came, he remained with the Primitive Order and continued steadfast in the doctrine and practice as taught in the New Testament, until death freed him from all the taunts and jeers of the enemies of the doctrine of God, our Savior. Owing to his advanced age, his mind became somewhat impaired; but on the subject of the Bible and salvation by grace, his mind seemed to be clear. Thus we see though the outer man grows weaker by reason of age and infirmity, the inner or new man remains strong and active. Doubtless the old Father in Israel had his "uprisings and downittings" during his long pilgrimage on earth; but he now rests from all his toils and cares, and that old body, the seat of pain and disease, is awaiting the final summons, when all the sleeping nations of the dead will come forth, and that body that now molders in the dust will rise triumphantly and be like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which thought should be, and is a consolation to all the dear saints of God. Though we suffer in this life we shall reign with him in glory.

Yours in love,

WM. R. AVERY.

Corn House, Ala., Sept. 1, 1887.

MRS. SALLIE FANNIE GILLESPIE.

This, my most dear and precious niece, was the only daughter of my only sister, Mrs. Fannie Farley and her husband, James Wesley Farley, consequently she was almost an idol in the family. Surely death was never more unwelcome than when on the 10th of August, 1887, about 1 o'clock p. m. he laid his icy hand upon the precious form of our child and claimed her body for the tomb.

For six weeks we did all we could to drive dyspepsia from her system but nothing we did caused her to retain her food, consequently she starved to death in the midst of plenty.

The sweet continued patience with which she bore her excruciating sufferings told in unmistakable language that she was a child of God or heir of heaven, although she had never made a public confession of a hope in Jesus. More than two years ago when she was, as we thought, nearing the valley of the shadow of death with this same disease, she told me of her hope in God as her Saviour, but she was so afraid that she was mistaken. But I know the fruit which she has borne since in her quiet, modest, unassuming walk never grew in nature's garden. Nothing but the sweet spirit of grace in the heart could have illuminated her beautiful face with such peaceful heavenly smiles as so frequently played there the last two days of her life. More than once in those two days she said in answer to her mother's inquiry of "How do you feel, daughter?" "I feel so good, mama." Mysterious Providence, this, to take Sallie just in the early dawn of womanhood from her poor afflicted parents, both of whom are seemingly so near the close of life's journey. May Jacob's God sustain them and make them submissively bow and pass under the rod. Oh, may He, the great "I Am," sanctify this seemingly untimely death to the good of the five affectionate brothers and the grief-stricken husband. Oh, may each one of them carry their burdened hearts in prayer to God and find comfort in believing that God, our Heavenly Father, doeth all things well. Sallie was born the 18th of December, 1864; was married the 17th of November, 1881, to P. M. Gillespie; died the 10th of August, 1887.

Her last end was peace;
How calm and gentle her exit;
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary, worn-out minds expire so soft.

SUE LAWLER.

Brownsboro, Ala., Sept. 5, 1887.

DEACON CALVIN WOODARD.

My father-in-law, Brother CALVIN WOODARD, died at his home, six miles east of Wilson, N. C., August 20, 1887. He was born near the same place November 3, 1827. His parents, William and Elizabeth Woodard, were Primitive Baptists, and were remarkable for their extraordinary Christian virtues. He received a hope in Christ about 1860, and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at White Oak, in Wilson county, N. C., May 25, 1870. He was soon after baptized, made deacon and clerk of his church, and has the most of the time since, served in that double capacity, as well as being treasurer a part of the time. His occupation was that of a farmer. He was a most industrious, humble, truthful, honest, temperate, moral, self-controlled, fearless, gentle, kind and self-denying man, a live and zealous church member, a living epistle of Christ, known and read of all men, adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things. He was ready, at all times, to engage in any kind of useful labor. People outside as well as inside of the church, had the greatest confidence in him. He was a most earnest opponent of the use of alcoholic drinks. I have been astonished at the control which grace

had given him of his spirit in the sorest trials. He feared God and had nothing else to fear. He tenderly sympathized with, and generously ministered of his worldly substance to the needy and afflicted, making his house the home of many destitute and suffering ones, and taking care of his aged pastor the last four and a half years of his own life. His Bible and his church, the preaching of the word, the singing of spiritual songs, the company of his brethren and the name and cause of Christ, were exceedingly precious to him. I think that I have never seen in any other person, such burning zeal for the purity of the Church of Christ. In this respect, he continually reminded me of his eminent namesake, John Calvin. I esteem it a rich and rare privilege to have been intimately acquainted with such a man. Such a Christian life is an unanswerable refutation of all the infidelity in the world; and in the solemn contemplation of such true nobility, every selfish and sordid spirit should stand abashed.

I was blessed to spend the last two months of his life at his house, during my summer vacation. I can never forget those happy, golden days. We were together a great deal of the time at his home, and on the road, and at church meetings, where we went twice a week. His conversation breathed the spirit of heaven. We sang spiritual songs repeatedly together, especially over and over again those two beautiful and appropriate hymns, "An alien from God and a stranger to grace," and "Lord, before we leave Thy temple." Little did I suppose that "the days of my" dear father's and brother's "exile" from the home of the redeemed had so nearly "passed away," and he would so soon be called from the scenes of earth to "dwell forever in the presence of his Saviour," to "reign in glory, praising God with all his heart," "exploring the depths of the Divine love," and in "an eternal Sabbath adoring" his Divine Redeemer. While I was attending the Country Line Association, near Ruffin, N. C., he was stung by a very poisonous spider on Friday, August 19th, and died the next day, about thirty hours afterwards, being in dreadful pain about half an hour, and then unconscious to the end. He could not be induced to take a stimulant in time to do him any good. The appointed hour of his departure had come. On August 21st his remains were buried in the town cemetery of Wilson, in the presence of a large gathering of people. He leaves a widow and six children who, while feeling that their loss is irreparable, are assured that he is at rest. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

—Rev. xiv., 13.

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

Wilson, N. C., Aug. 31, 1887.

ELDER WILLIAM HUSSEY

Was born in October, 1796, and raised in Marion District, S. C. He was married to Elizabeth Carter in 1819, with whom he spent the remainder of his life, which terminated in 1875. He joined the Baptist Church in 1825, and began his ministry in the following year. He is remembered by those who knew him as having been sound and consistent in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and upright in christian deportment.

His wife, Sister Elizabeth Hussey, remained a widow until she was likewise discharged from the duties of mortal life to rest with the dead in Christ, which event took place on the 23d day of August, 1887. She was true and faithful to the end, and died in the triumph of faith at the mature age of 90 or 91 years. She was indeed a mother in Israel, and is greatly missed by the church at Beulah, of which she was a much beloved member.

M.

J. Woodall

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

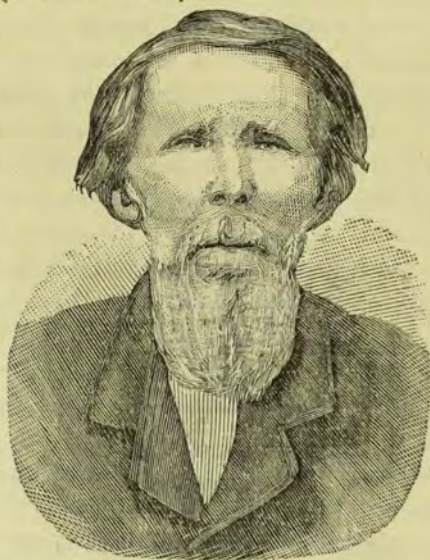
Devoted to the Primitive Baptist Cause.

No. 12. BUTLER, GA., DECEMBER, 1887. Vol. 9

BIOGRAPHICAL.

ELDER JOHN A. DAVIS.

He was born in Bullock county, Ga., 12th Oct., 1812. In speaking of himself he said his mother was a member of the Baptist Church as early as he could remember, and that he often went to meeting with her when he was a little boy; and that she died when he was quite small, and his father about four years after she did, leaving him and two brothers and



a sister to scuffle with an unfriendly world; and as he was the youngest, he had to beat about the best he could to live. And in which time he got into great distress and verily thought he should die; and was in so much trouble about his condition as a sinner that he would fall down between his plow handles to pray, but could get no relief. At other times he went to the woods to pray, but still with no relief to his poor, distressed soul. In this way he passed many sleepless

nights, rolling from side to side of his bed, until finally he concluded he had committed the unpardonable sin; and that hence there was no chance for him, though for everybody else. "One night I went to bed with the prayer that the Lord would relieve me in a dream, and after a long time I got asleep and dreamed some one spoke to me saying: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, and I awoke rejoicing, and got up and went out into the road, up towards the meeting house, my mind being upon it; but whilst there the enemy of souls began to preach to me, saying I was deceived, for I had nothing but a dream, and the church would not have a dream, and would not, therefore, have me if I should offer myself; and then the world will not have you, and you'll be miserable. So I tried to throw away my dream and went into the midst of the merry world; but let me go where I would, that dream went with me, Thou shalt worship the Lord, etc.; and I have not got shut of that dream to this day. I will now relate the worst thing that I ever did, and that was to try to dance before two lovely members of the Baptist Church; for I loved them dearly, and when I got to myself I was so sorry I had done so; but all that did not remove the dream from me. I went on in this way seven years; and then came the darkest time I had ever had; and I felt so miserable that it seemed to me a sin for me to try to pray and hunger for mercy, for there was none for me; but I could not help it, and was constrained to try one more time, and the last time; and it being night, I went off a distance from the house and fell down on the ground; how I know not, and whether I prayed I know not, but I got up and went back to the house, and in the yard, as quick as thought, these words came to me: Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done, and not mine; and then and there, brethren and sisters, I was made willing for the will of God to be done. And in the fall of 1839 I carried this same

dream to Upper Black Creek, a distance of fifteen miles, and offered myself at the water on Sunday morning, and was received and baptized by Elder Wm. Moore. On my return home it was somehow impressed on my mind that I had a work to do, but what it was I could not think. But suffice it to say that after years of trials and tossings, I began to try, in a feeble way, to speak in the name of the Lord." He commenced preaching in 1855, and was ordained in 1859 by Elders John G. Williams, Andrew Kicklighter and Nathan Robbers, at Lower Black Creek, Bryant county, Ga. He was married to Drusilla Sikes, 28th June, 1840, by whom he had twelve children, seven of whom are dead. He married the second time to Mary A. Thompson, 23d October, 1881. He departed this life 16th June, 1887.

The unworthy writer had been acquainted with Bro. Davis for twenty-four years, and does not feel able to utter half the praise he was entitled to; and his good qualities were many, and to God be all the praise for a life in Brother Davis without a spot in any respect. He was a member of the church forty-nine years, and a minister thirty-three years. He was a plain, straightforward preacher of the simple Gospel of Christ, sound and faithful, meek and sincere. At the time of his death he was a member of Fellowship Church, Bullock county, Ga. The writer visited him during his last sickness, and he said that he should never get up, but that he wanted the will of God to be done. He suffered a great deal with typhoid fever for seventeen days, and was kindly, patiently and unremittingly attended night and day by his beloved wife; and may God bless her and her children. He was buried at Lower Black Creek, Elder Jas. H. Smith speaking on the solemn occasion from John, xiv. 14, and may it be sanctified to all.

U. M. BRANNEN.

Dear Brother Respass:—I this year attended the annual session of the Corresponding Meeting of Virginia. Although the location of this Meeting is not very distant from me, I have never before attended any of its sessions. It is not called an association, although, in all essential particulars, it is one, and, practically, most of the objects had in associations are carried out. There had been some objections raised against constituted associations as an organization without scriptural authority, and this arrangement was gone into to secure all the benefits of correspondence with the brethren of other sections, and avoid whatever could be regarded as unauthorized. Among other things, the publishing of statistics in the minutes had been objected to, and was discarded. Gradually, however, they have drifted into the more general practice of associations, and very little difference will now be seen, either in the conduct of the Meeting or the minutes thereof as published.

At the place appointed this year stands a large and commodious meeting house, in a clean and beautiful grove of timber. A house that would seat six or seven hundred people was of little avail in a congregation of five thousand. A stand was erected in the grove, and seats arranged for as many as it was at all likely could hear what was said. The church with which the session was held meets near Manasses (a place of note in war times), in Prince William county, Va. The place is about thirty-five miles southwest of Washington City. Ten churches are embraced in this arrangement, and includes a membership of about 440. The annual sessions are held the third week in August, commencing Wednesday, and bolding three days. The peculiar feature of this associational meeting, so far as this section of the country is concerned, is the immense concourse of people that attend. And, then, it is not a *picnic*, a fair, or anything contrived to attract the

world. No racing, drinking, or other frolicking, but a solemn and orderly meeting for worship. The entire time is devoted to preaching the word, and the accompanying services of prayer and praise. On the part of those who conducted the exercises I observed, with particular satisfaction, a prevailing desire for the preservation of harmony and fellowship throughout our borders. The labors were characterized by that unity which is in the spirit and by a consciousness of its value, and the importance of preserving it.

The word was proclaimed with power and in demonstration of the Spirit, but, at the same time, with meekness and an evident sense of dependence. There has, generally, of late, whenever I have attended, been less disposition than formerly to take such extreme grounds as to encounter objections, or to agitate disputed topics. The quiet and unwearied attention and evident interest in plain, faithful gospel preaching on the part of such multitudes, day after day, impressed upon my mind the fact, that the ears of many are being turned away from *fables* to give heed unto those who are preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God. Years ago there was quite a turning away from the truth, that the eyes might behold every form of vanity that Satan and the world could devise. There is reason to hope, I think, that some, at least, have wearied in spending their money for that which is not bread, and their labor for that which satisfieth not.

There are five resident ordained preachers connected with this Corresponding Association, and there were seven in attendance from abroad. We beheld, as we cannot always do, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; and a general response seemed to be, "Good is the word of the Lord that thou hast spoken." Yours, in the gospel,

State Road, Del.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

ELECTION.

It ought to be admitted by Christians that God knew even before he made the world who would be saved and who would not, and that those who are saved are saved as the result of sufficient grace; and that everybody would be saved if sufficient grace were dispensed* to all. For if salvation is of grace, and the Holy Ghost says it is, of course no one could need any more of it than a sufficiency; and since it is true that some are not saved we are bound to conclude that God saw fit not to dispense it to them, while to others he did. How do I know? Why, because their salvation is proof of it. But is God unjust not to give to all this abundant grace? No; he is not under obligation to give it to any one; for if he is, then of course he owes it, so it would not be grace at all, but a debt; it is purely his own, and he has a right to do what he will with his own. But some say what would be sufficient for one might not for another. Well, even if that be true, God is aware of it, and it is reasonable to suppose that if God designs to save two persons, one somewhat pliable and the other very obstinate, that he will send or use more power in the one case than in the other, if more is needed; or else it would seem foolish to use any at all. Why should he use what he himself knows would be insufficient? Let us illustrate: A farmer has a horse and a sheep in the mire, the horse is in one ditch, the sheep in another; so he sends servants to get them out. If he sends one man to rescue the sheep, of course he will send more to rescue the horse. But some say grace is sufficient to save all if they will all co-operate; and if sinners will not co-operate they ought to be lost. Well, I know we ought to be damned, considered as sinners. We will not deny that, but we know that a farmer will not leave a highly prized horse in a ditch simply because the horse will not work with him or assist him to get him

out. If the servants were to return and say, "The horse was sullen and heedless, as he would not assist us, but worked against us all the while," now don't any reasonable man know that the farmer would send more hands and fetch the horse home; for it would reflect on his character as a farmer and an intelligent man not to do it. And if a farmer will do so much for a mere horse, will not God do as much for his predestinated sons? Who would dispute it? Now, as it is true that there are some of Adam's race in the mire of sin whom God has not taken out, the conclusion is they are not his, hence he says ye believe not because ye are not my sheep. No one ought to conclude that we could become his by believing we are his if we were not his prior to our believing it, no more than I could become the son of Elder Mitchell by believing myself to be his son. If I were to believe it I should believe a lie. Facts are facts, independent of belief or unbelief. It is true that all who believe in Christ are his elect, as all trees that bear good fruit are good trees, but as good fruit is an evidence of a good tree and not the cause, so faith is an evidence and not a cause of my being one of the predestinated.—Rom. viii, 29.

Kinston, N. C.

I. J. TAYLOR.

EXPERIENCE.

I reckon the first serious impression on the subject of religion was brought about by the death of a beloved sister, who died in her seventeenth year. I saw that the young died as well as the old, and the thought presented itself, if it had been me, what would have been my condition? for I felt that I was a sinner. I began to seek God in the pardon of my sins, but in a short time I was taken sick and brought very low, and I thought that God was going to take my life because I was such a great sinner. One night while I was ex-

pected to die—whether asleep or awake I cannot tell—it appeared that the world was on fire, and that time was at an end, and that my sins were the cause; and the question, was I willing to meet my Judge? and somehow it was presented to my mind that Jesus would save me, and I became resigned and felt happy, and I began to improve from that night. I was thirteen years old, and my mind was directed to the church, but there were no little boys there, and I thought when I got to be a man then I would go to the church. I was led off by evil, not having told any person but mother, who way lying sick in the same room, and who also died in a few days. I was young, and left without the watchful care of a mother, and became very wicked; yet whenever I was brought to serious meditation, my mind would run back to that time, and I wished that I had lived consistent; for it was only the sins that I had committed since that time that troubled me. In this state of mind I was persuaded to join the church in my twenty-second year, having trodden over my hope with grievous sins, so that I could not claim it; and after remaining a few years, I abandoned the church and the Lord let me wander. I tried to be a Universalist for some time, but by the grace of God, in the bereavement of my wife I was brought to conviction for my disobedience and rebellion; and after I had been made to feel God's sovereign power and justice in my condemnation, I hope I was made to feel his forgiving love and mercy; and I went back to the church and made confession and was restored. But shortly after there was a serious difficulty sprung with the pastor and the Flint River Association, in regard to the Articles of Faith which the pastor annulled and discarded. The Association pronounced him schismatic and heterodox, which tore the church all to pieces in strife and contention, and Christianity was almost extinct, and I became cold and worldly-minded, and was overtaken in intem-

perance, and suffered myself to be excluded. I could not ask them to forgive me. I remained out for ten years, and tried to disbelieve the evidences of Christianity, but during the late war I was sent to the hospital quite sick and came near dying, and I promised God if he would raise me to my health, and bring me home, I would go to the church and confess that salvation is of the Lord. This resolution was made in December, '64, but I never had strength or grace enough to carry it out until August, '67. I am a poor, wayward, backsliding, rebellious soul; I have all the time been wanting of patience and faith, and I feel that the principal cause of my failures has been from a mistaken view of what religion consisted in; and I was led into error by false teachers; I had been trained to believe that religion was all joy and peace, and when troubles, vexation and trials of any kind came on, I took them as evidences against religion. I had not been taught to believe that we must all go through fire to be refined and purified.

My membership has all the time been with the Missionary Baptist, until a few years back, when I made my request for dismissal, thinking that I could not remain there satisfied, as we did not agree in our faith; and it was a do and live system and the doctrine of grace very much neglected. Their ministers seemed to take the rule of government of the church by dictation, and the liberty of conscience was infringed on, as I thought. I left them on the grounds of Arminianism and liberty of conscience to give to their plans when I thought they agreed with divine teaching. The first thing that troubled me was a scripture in Matt. xxiii. 15, in regard to compassing sea and land to make one proselyte; the next, having to pay stated salaries for a pastor, or promise them before we could get an acceptable one to promise to serve us. But there being no other one near, and it being the church where my father, mother, brothers and sisters professed, and a church of

long standing—some 63 years old—I remained for some time in a dissatisfied state. After obtaining a letter of dismissal, I held it some fifteen months, when I offered myself for membership at Smyrna, near Forsyth, some twelve miles from me, the so-called Primitive Baptists, and have been with them three years and over. But I find trouble here, and I do not know at times, but what I have jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. I find Fatalism, or the absolute predestination of all things, and then, besides these, we have trouble in our church in regard to what it takes to constitute a legal ordination. All of these troubles have had a tendency to melt down my religious prejudice against denomination. But if I am anything, I am a Baptist without any prefix syllable—for I believe their Articles of Faith. It sprang out of the crucible of persecution and came forth pure. I would not change one line, word, or syllable—and the principles and doctrine have stood for centuries, and will stand unto the end of time, for they are of divine authority. And the Articles of Faith are not responsible for these vexed questions, for, according to Josephus, they were here with the Jews when Christ made his advent into the world. There were the Pharisees—which had the schools of the Prophet—and Scribes of the Law, which very fitly represent the denominations that hold to theological schools and other appliances, boards and missions, which they call auxiliaries or helps to the church, but which, according to my mind, virtually make merchandise of the church and the gospel. Then, there was a sect called Essenes, which held to absolute predestination of all things; and there were the Sadducees, the non-resurrectionists; and there were the two Seeders which said to the Saviour, we be Abraham's seed and were never in bondage—these are the Eternal Sons, etc.

I am persuaded that neither of the Baptists, Mission

nor Primitive, are what they were fifty years ago. The Mission Baptists acknowledge that. They say they have made improvement by adding on the schools and boards and other things. And I think that the Primitives might as well acknowledge that they have added on these vexed questions.

I have given a sketch of my life, covering fifty years, relating my religious trial. It is not done as a specimen Christianity, but as a specimen human depravity, and of the goodness and mercy of a great God, in the power of the grace of His gospel, in calling a poor sinner to repentance, like me. Yours, in hope,

Dames Ferry, Ga.

J. W. I. TAYLOR.

REMARKS.—Brother Taylor says he has been a Primitive Baptist only about three years, and it is not to be wondered at that he is tried and, at times, doubtful. He thinks they are not what they were fifty years ago—and in some respects they may not be. But if they are not, it is because they are sounder than they were then; for they had been so long allied with the disorders of the Arminian Baptists that it is not to be wondered at that more or less of it remained awhile with them. We need not expect peace all the time, for there must needs be heresies even in the church, says the apostle, in order that those approved of God may be made manifest.—1 Cor., xi. If we never had anything of the sort we could lay no claim to being the Church of Christ. Not only is it necessary that our faith be tried, but our patience, also, must be tried; and we would say to Brother Taylor to let patience have her perfect work, and not to cast away his confidence, and that in due time he shall reap if he faints not. The older we grow the more we are assured that the Primitive Baptists are the only true representatives of Christ's truth in the world, so that the truth is yet verified that the righteous shall hold in his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.—Job xvii. We confess with shame that there has been in places a tendency to usurp power by unauthorized bodies and individuals; that individuals have taken it upon themselves in their private character, and without church authority or dealing, to declare non-fellowship for their brethren. This is sinful and disorderly. No brother should do so, it is not following Christ, but setting him aside. It is the authority of the church that legalizes baptism, ordination, etc. See our editorial in December MESSENGER of 1886. But such disorders as these are soon purged out and order reigns again in Zion.—R

Another singular action of a sanctified Christian is, to choose the worst of sorrows before he will commit the least of sins.

EXPERIENCE.

Dear Brother Respass:—I have had a desire to write for a long time, one that I cannot get rid of, and maybe if I will write a few lines for the MESSENGER I will have more peace of mind. From a small boy up to the age of twenty-five, I did not hear a Primitive Baptist preach. I had been taught and believed that I could, by my good deeds, be saved. At about the age of twenty-five I heard the first Primitive Baptist preach to understand his doctrine. I was compelled to go to the Primitives' meetings to please my wife; she believed they were all right. I did not believe a word of their preaching, and said in my heart often, "I don't believe it, and I thank God I do not." I would not say a word against them in the presence of my wife. I attended their meetings for several years, almost every month. My wife did not belong to the church, and did not as long as she lived, but it was a second nature to her to attend the Primitive meetings on Sunday at least. In 1870 I became sad and sorrowful about my condition, and I prayed often when alone. About that time I heard a Primitive tell some things that Jesse Cox, of Tennessee, wrote in his book on the Revelations, that excited my curiosity, and in 1871 I bought one of Elder Cox's books, and I had not read through it before I was convinced that there was but one way, and that the Primitive Baptists were the people of God, and that all others were false. I continued to sorrow more at times than others, until in the spring of 1882 I became so burdened that I thought I was going to die. I thought I was the most wicked creature on earth, and that I deserved death, and that there was hope for everybody on earth but me. I did not believe there was any escape from hell for me, and I believed, too, that I justly deserved an endless hell. I thought, maybe, I had committed the unpardonable sin, but I could not

tell what it was to commit the unpardonable sin, but I saw my sins all the way back to childhood, and believed my sins, taken together, were unpardonable, and that a just God could not save me. I begged for mercy going to the field, at the plow handles, going to the house, on going to bed, on rising in the morning the first thing I thought of was my awful and ruined condition; the birds were singing, they were happy; cattle, horses and sheep were roaming over the prairie adjacent my little farm, bellowing, neighing and bleating, they were happy; all of God's creatures were happy but me. "Oh! wretched man that I was;" words cannot express the anguish of my troubled soul; no one can know the sorrow of my heart but those who have experienced the same. I read the Bible after supper. One night I read about the love of God, and I paused to think, and said in my mind I would be willing to die if I knew I had the love of God. I looked at my wife and two little boys; (they were all the world to me; I see them now, in my mind's eye, as vividly as I saw them that night; my wife was knitting, our little boys standing by her side;) to die and leave my wife and little boys in this uncharitable world, and a lien on the farm! Yes, yes, I would willingly die this night if I but knew I had the love of God, was the response of my troubled soul. I believed I was the greatest sinner on earth, and that the prayer I uttered was mingled with sin. I had heard others tell of their hope and of an instantaneous change, and a relief from a heavy burden, and I prayed for that kind of a change for two or three years, that I might not be mistaken in case I was changed. I had a stumbling-block, too, that seemed to haunt me everywhere I went. I was attending a protracted meeting when a boy about fifteen years old, and going to the mourners' bench every day I felt very serious and sorrowful. One morning, going to the meeting, I was riding in the rear of two young men, and they were

very lively and telling anecdotes; one of them told about an old negro that joined the church; he said the preacher asked the old negro how he felt when he got religion; the negro replied, with an oath, he felt like he had thrown down a big turn of lightwood knots. My mind was so wicked I could not keep from thinking of the old negro's experience; it haunted and tormented me to prove my wickedness.

I don't know when the burden left me—no, no, I cannot tell the day nor the place—I was alone in the field and I seemed to have waked up from a dream. My mind was no longer burdened; I knew that a change had come over me, and I said in my mind I never knew this way before; I never knew right from wrong before, and I will never do wrong any more; it is so much more pleasant to do right. I did not think I had learned anything more than the difference between right and wrong, and I wanted to tell everybody about it; I thought that I could convince them, too, that it was better to do right than wrong. My self-will was all gone, and I wished that the will of God might be done. All nature, all of God's creation was beautiful to me now; the fear of hell was no longer before my eyes; was no longer goading my conscience; I looked with wonder and admiration, that I had not known before, on a star-spangled and endless space, whose mysteries no man can know; the power to build no man can comprehend, and with an admiration I had not known in life. I thought of the judgment, but not with that dreadful horror of other days. I was not slow to find I was still a sinner; I had said and believed I would never sin again, but only a day or two passed before I found my wicked mind tempted and wandering after false and vain theories, and I prayed for deliverance; I hoped to be free from temptation and sin, and grieved and mourned from day to day over my past and present sins. I went to hear the Primitives preach, and one

Sunday the preacher told the evidences and said no others but those that were regenerated experienced what he preached. I thought I knew better; that I had experienced all he preached, and I knew I was a sinner; I believed the Primitives were without sin, and I wanted to be like them. One evening in May or June, 1883, I was thinking of my sinful condition, and I concluded I would never be any better in this world; that I would always be a sinner, and that night an angel—excuse me, an angel to me—came to my house. The next morning he told me all about my condition; he knew more about it than I did. He told me how it was that I must be a sinner as long as I lived in this world. Blessed hope! I was convinced and I believed; I have never forgotten that day; I rejoiced and wept all day. But few people know, Brother Respass, how to weep and rejoice at the same time. Yours in hope,

Cameron, Texas.

E. Y. TERRAL.

FROM BABYLON TO ZION.

I have been impressed for a long time to write, in part, my travel from Babylon to Zion: In 1879, I had my first impression to read the Bible in search of the doctrine of election and predestination. In July a deacon was ordained at a church near by, and after service one of my wife's uncles came to my house, and I asked him about the ordination, and he said that "that deacon answered some questions that he could not have answered." He said the presbytery asked him if he believed in the doctrine of election and predestination, and he answered "that he did." My wife's uncle said he would not have answered in any such a way. I replied, saying: "Why, is not that the faith of the Missionary Baptists?" and he said "he did not know; but he knew it was not his faith, and if so, he would be an old Hardshell, and be done with it." The above conversation deeply impressed me to read the Bible to

see if that Hardshell doctrine the world has always hated and rejected, was the Bible doctrine, or not; for at that time I, like all other Missionary Baptists, believed the Arminian theory of Salvation. But as I read the Bible I realized a light upon its precious teachings that I had never had before. Every chapter seemed to point out the doctrine I was in search of, and to my surprise and grief, condemned my Arminian theory. I continued to read, searching earnestly for the truth, until I was fully convinced that the doctrine held to by the Primitive Baptists was a Bible doctrine. But I thought it would never do to forsake my former faith and believe this old Hardshell doctrine, knowing that they were hated so much by the world, and "not being reckoned among the nations." I also, was their enemy, and felt that I could not embrace their doctrinal sentiments, consequently I resolved to read closely, to see if I could not find some scripture to support my former notions of salvation, and I found this scripture: "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men." Now I thought I could see how all men could be saved, if they would; and I searched for more testimony on this point, but alas, to my discomfort, I did not find it! I read the viii. chapter Romans; i. of Ephesians; xvii. of St. John, and the words of our Saviour, that "all that the Father hath given me shall come to me," besides many other texts, confirming the doctrine of God's electing love and salvation alone by grace. I found myself from the very depth of my heart embracing this precious doctrine, though despised by the world. It came to me, as I trust, "not in word only; but in power and much assurance," so I could not resist it. But I still thought it would never do to be a turn-coat, so I said if the reading of the Bible would lead me this way, I would lay it down; but it was suggested to my mind, "don't you profess to be a Christian?" I said "yes, I am a member of the church." "Well, are you

going to lay down and forsake the book that Jesus has given for the Christian's guide to satisfy some carnal motive of yours?" This exercise of mind brought me into earnest prayer for reconciliation to his will; and here I had a view of all his goodness to me through my past life, and especially the time, as I hope, he was precious to my soul, and I was so overwhelmed with his love to me, a poor sinner, that I said, "to forsake this book I cannot, for it is the word of God; but I will forsake everything but Jesus and his word." I now became established in the doctrine of election and predestination as being taught by Christ and his apostles. About this time I learned the Articles of Faith of the Missionary Baptists, and as I saw that in my change I had not varied from them, that I would go on and let no one know of my religious exercises; but, alas, I could not enjoy their preaching as I once did! It was no food to me, and I grew cold and indifferent towards my people; and as my love diminished towards the Missionaries, it grew towards the Old Baptist. My love for them grew rapidly, and I could not help it, though I tried with all the power I had. I thought that maybe my coldness and indifference towards my people was caused by a neglect of duty on my part; and having before this felt impressed to exercise in prayer, I resolved to engage with them in their prayer meetings and protracted meetings with a willing hand, hoping thereby to gain my former love for the church. I did so, but soon found discord among us, which again chilled my love more and more. I saw that they did not observe the laws of Christ, and I then thought if they would wash feet, that would suffice with me; so I spoke to some of them on the subject, and they seemed to agree with me; and I thought if they would do that, I could live with them very well satisfied. But when I mentioned the subject in Conference, I saw it was not going to take well with the church; one of the Deacons

(2)

arose and said: "We ought not to wash feet, because Elder Jesse Mercer said, in his day, that it was not necessary, and also said it ought not to be done." I got up and told him that what Jesse Mercer said did not change what God said about it; that Jesus said "we ought to wash one another's feet." The church then agreed that all who favored feet-washing could do so at their next meeting; but at the next meeting it was put off to the next, as that was their Communion season. And that day I shall never forget! Several days before the time of meeting some of the members came to me and asked me to decline that feet-washing notion of mine, claiming that the church was not willing to it. I told them I could not do that, for I thought it was right, and that I should contend for a strict observance of the commandments of Christ; so I made all necessary arrangements to wash feet at Union Church, Meriwether county, Ga., the fourth Sunday in September, 1883. Sunday morning, as I went to the church, another member came to me and asked me to decline, stating that there were some who would take their letters if this thing went on, and that our preacher says he is very sorry you ever said anything about it. A few days previous to this meeting, while in my field at work, I had some very serious thoughts about this matter that was troubling my brethren, and I felt in my soul that the time was near at hand when I would have to give up my love and fellowship for the Missionary Baptists. In this frame of mind I went into a secret place and prayed the Lord to direct the feet-washing to his glory and my good; and I have been able to feel since that the Lord did answer my prayer; for when I got to the church I found a great many of the members juggling, but did not suspect what about, but soon found they were making arrangements to stop feet-washing. They arranged that when the time for feet-washing came, for the preacher to give an opportunity

for all those who wanted to go out to do so, without a breach of order, and all who wished to engage in feet-washing, could make preparation and do so. When the pastor announced it, all the church and congregation left the house except five male members, two Old Baptists, and two or three young people. My grandfather, who is now dead, got up and said that the church had treated the matter with so much disrespect that he thought we had as well let the matter pass. So that killed the feet-washing, and all my efforts to regain my former love for them were a complete failure; and I do believe that the Lord directed that meeting to the killing of me to the Missionaries as a Church of Christ. I was now directed in my feelings to the Old Baptists, but how could I forsake my dear kindred in the flesh? This was the hardest struggle I met with. In my feelings I was brought into fellowship with Abraham when the Lord said, "Get thee out, Abraham, from among thy people and thy kindred, into a land I will show thee." I felt that I was directed to leave those people.

Two months after this I called for and received a letter of dismissal, but that did not help the cause much. I felt that I could fully adopt the sentiment of the 137th Psalm, "By the rivers of Babylon there we sit down. Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harp upon the willow in the midst thereof." I also felt I could in sincerity say, "We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; forsake her and let us go every one into his own country." About this time a rumor was circulated that I was going to unite with the Old Baptists, which brought against me some sharp rebukes from my kindred. They chided me severely, saying I would bring reproach upon my family, and this gave me so much trouble I felt that I was in a wilderness of despair. I cried, I prayed, O, why was this so with me! Why has the Lord brought this upon me! I sink in deep mire where there is no standing; I am come

into deep waters where the waters overflow me; I am weary of my crying. Amidst these deep troubles I was made to trust alone in the Lord; I had none else to look to. I was comforted by the words, "The Lord can work when none can hinder." In my troubled mind I often found myself among the Old Baptists telling my experience, realizing at the same time my unfitness to live with them, but notwithstanding my unworthiness my heart and affections were with them. I could not help loving them, they were my people, their God my God. But how could I get my consent to leave my dear father and mother and my own dear wife? I cannot describe the anguish of soul that I had during this trial of my faith. The words of Jesus came with power into my soul, "If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, wife, and children, brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." I was so completely overcome in my feelings that I counted all things lost for Christ; and could say farewell, dear father and mother and my precious wife; that I would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; and now I must forsake her for the Lord has brought forth my righteousness; I must in Zion declare the works of the Lord our God. The greatest comforts during the troubles above related were when I heard Old Baptists preach. Eld. A. B. Whatley preached one Sunday evening in our community from the text, "For the preaching of the cross is to them who perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." And my poor soul was edified in hearing the good tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. When Brother Whatley came down I could not help telling him he had preached the truth, and he said may be I am sent here to preach to you. I believed he was. I also heard Eld. W. M. Mitchell preach a sermon at Providence that was very comforting to me. I now became deeply interested to know whether the Old Bap-

tists was the true church of Christ or not; and about this time I had a dream that did much to relieve my mind on this subject. I dreamed I was going along the road, and from some cause, I do not know, I turned to the right and went through some fields, finding a great many obstacles in my way. I at length came to a house; a man was standing at the gate, also there was a large concourse of people assembled. I asked the man what were all these people doing here? He said they had met to decide which was the church, and I could go in and hear it if I chose. I went, and when I got to the door I saw preachers of all orders, among them was Brother Whatley. The moderator of the meeting was James Brown, a Missionary preacher. In a few minutes the moderator got up and said, "Let it be understood that the Primitive Baptist church is the only true church," and I said to myself that is what I think about it. And then I awoke, feeling satisfied that the Lord had showed me his church in this dream. I was now made willing to cast my lot with the Lord's people, but before doing so I felt it my duty to talk with my dear mother on the subject. Accordingly I went to see her and found her alone. I began by saying, "Ma, I reckon you have heard that I was going to join the Primitive Baptists?" She said, "Yes." I told her I had come to tell her all about it, and did tell her the whole story. I told her "I regretted very much to leave the Missionaries on account of my relatives; but remember, dear mother, if I forsake you it is for the sake of Jesus, and if I break your heart in your old age it is for his sake, and if I cast a reproach upon the family it is for Christ's sake, for I have been able to see that I must forsake all to be his disciple." She said to me, "If it is for the sake of Christ none of those things will be, no one will be disgraced. Now, my son, go, and God bless you, may he give you grace to do his will. I have said I would not see you baptized, but I can see it now, for I am satisfied." This gave me much comfort.

On Monday night before I offered myself to the church I felt I could adopt the saying of Ruth and cast my lot in with the Old Baptists, believing their God to be my God, their people my people, their blessings my blessings, their troubles my troubles, and when they die let me die. Yea, I will be more than willing to die, when the gospel they preach ceases to be the gospel of Christ. On the third day of May, 1884, I made application to Emmaus church, Troup county, Ga., and was received into Christian fellowship, and the next day was baptized by Brother A. B. Whatley, and in that obedience to the command of Christ received a rest that the world cannot give nor take away, but I am a tempest tossed sinner still, and if saved, saved by grace alone.

REES PRATHER.

Meriwether county, Ga.

EDITORIAL.

J. R. RESPESS, Wm. M. MITCHELL, AND J. E. W. HENDERSON,.....EDITORS.

CLOSE OF VOLUME NINE.

The Ninth Volume of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER will close with this number, and according to usual custom, its numerous readers will expect a few editorial remarks under the above heading. But what shall we write more than has already been written by many correspondents during the past year? Sin, ruin, misery and death continue to mark the progress of man upon the earth, in every age and in every part of the world. Nor need we hope that it will ever be otherwise, for our God has looked down from heaven and declared "they are all gone out of the way," and that "man, at his *best* state is altogether vanity."—Psa. xxxix. 5. But while it is true that sin is our ruin, and even the best state of human progress in arts, sciences or religion, affords no hope of eternal salvation, yet "God, who is rich in

mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ.”—Eph. ii. 4. Now is it possible that we shall ever get any further from God, or be any worse off, or more helpless than to be “dead in sin?” Yet, if the “great love” of the Great God has reached us in this wretched state of alienation and death, and if it has been so manifested to us that it can truthfully be said that “ye who were dead in sins, God hath quickened,” that is, he hath given you life, eternal life, by which you know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, will our condition ever be worse? Surely it will not. But in our reflections upon the closing volume of the MESSENGER, we are reminded not only of how speedily the closing year has passed away, but also how short our time now is upon earth. But though our stay here may be but a little while, and our time but short, we are thankful to God that we have not lost our care and anxiety for the peace and comfort of Christians, and we are made more fully to enter into the feelings and fellowship of the Apostle Peter, when he wrote his brethren, saying: “I will not be *negligent* to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them, and be established in the present truth; yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.” And not only did the apostle of Christ feel a fervent anxiety that the Lord’s people should remember the gracious dealings of the Lord with them, and remember the doctrine which had been preached to them, and by which they had so often been fed and comforted during his life and labors among them, but his fervent gospel love, care and anxiety extended to them even beyond the little time of his stay with them upon earth. “Moreover,” says he, “I will endeavor that ye may be able, after my

decease, to have these things always in remembrance." 2 Pet. i. 15. And though we cannot write anything but what you often have heard before, yet may it not be well to have the pure mind often stirred up by way of remembrance, that we may have the precious truth of God always in remembrance? And here we are reminded that were it not for our good as Christians, and for the glory of God, that we keep in memory the words and doctrine of our Lord Jesus, and the commandments of his apostles, would there ever have been such stress laid upon it, and such importance attached to it by those who have spoken in the name of the Lord? How forcibly has the Holy Ghost presented it when He saith by the apostle: "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."—Heb. ii. 1.

And, dear brethren, may we not learn from this that there is great liability and danger of the saints of God forgetting many useful things which they have had preached and written to them in the name of the Lord? And were it not that those things are exceedingly precious above all other things, why should it be written that "We ought to give the *more earnest* heed to the things which we have heard, lest *at any time* we should let them slip?" It is true there are other things—things of this mortal life—that claim, and should claim our earnest heed, but the things which we have heard of God concerning his Son, Jesus Christ, and concerning our salvation from sin by him, are eternal things, and therefore it is not only necessary that we give earnest heed to them as we do to earthly things, but that we give them the *more earnest* heed, because they are of far greater importance.

In all ages of the world, when the true worshippers of God have felt the most filled with the spirit of gratitude, praise and thanksgiving to God, they have then

been most mindful to encourage one another to remember the goodness and mercy of God to them. One of the ancient saints cries out: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O, my soul, and *forget not* all his benefits." How liable we are to forget all the mercies and benefits we have received of the Lord, and go to fretting and repining because our lot is such a hard one! But would it not be far more profitable to Christians, and much more in the line of their duty, to remember the loving kindness and tender mercies of the Lord toward them? And not only should each child of God remember individually all the way the Lord hath led him, but he should also remember Zion, the Church of the living God. David pours forth the feeling of his soul upon this subject after this manner: "If I forget thee, O, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."—Psa. cxxxvii. 6. Could we, as brethren and sisters in Christ, imbibe the spirit of the above text, and be animated by it in our relations to one another, and to the Church of God, how delightful would be our conversation and correspondence through THE GOSPEL MESSENGER! And we have reason to believe that a goodly number of our correspondents and readers do prefer the peace, comfort and joy of the Church of Christ above their greatest earthly joy. But still all are more or less subject to the reproof given by the inspired writer when he saith: "Ye have *forgotten* the exhortation that speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 6. How important, then, that we remember not only the joys and comforts the Lord hath given us, but also remember the wormwood and

the gall that has been given us to drink. O, how dreadfully bitter has been the cup that some have drank during the year that is now closing upon us! Can we ever forget those heavy, heart-rending sorrows? Among the thousands to whom the MESSENGER has come this year, some have had one trial and some another; but whatever has been the nature of it, the Lord has watched over us, and it is of his mercies that we are not consumed.

In the providence of God the publication of THE GOSPEL MESSENGER will be continued as formerly, and all who desire its circulation and usefulness are requested to assist by promptly renewing their subscription and by obtaining new subscribers, and sending their names, address and remittance.—M.

BLACK SPOTS, DEAD TREES, ETC.

Mr. E. M. Keeney, of Iowa, writes Elder Respass, under date of June 19th, requesting views of Jude, 12th verse. The duty and pleasure of answering the request is assigned to No. 3 of the staff, and he will now proceed to quote the text and give such views as may appear to him to be consistent and true. The text reads thus: "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots."

This is a figurative description of those men mentioned in the 4th verse, who had crept in unawares among the saints, and afterwards developed their real character by introducing and teaching their damnable heresies, contradicting the doctrine of God and of Christ. They were deep men, as indicated by wells; yea, deeply depraved and fallen from their innocent, created state in Adam, as wells are sunk below the surface of the

earth. They were, perhaps, also deep in point of intellect, and of well cultivated minds in the wisdom of the world; but they were graceless men, void of spiritual life and of heavenly wisdom. Some very deep wells are literally dry, and in that case, the deeper they are the more dangerous for the children. But in this place they are called clouds, which term is also applied to God's ministers; see Eccl. xi. 3; Psa. lxxvii. 17; Heb. xii. 1. By clouds, witnesses are meant; so those spoken of in the text were false witnesses; they had not the spirit of truth in them, and hence they stood opposed to the truth. They were black clouds, such as are often seen in our day, powerful in the terrors of the law, and often frighten the people into a nominal profession of Christianity. Any wind of doctrine will do for them, except the true doctrine of God our Saviour. Truly are they clouds without water, false witnesses, without authority from Christ to speak in his name, and without the knowledge of the truth; "going about to establish their own righteousness," etc.—Rom. x. 3. They are spots in the church among the children of God, because the church is of a different hue. They are darkness, while the church is the light of the world. They are corrupt by nature and by practice, and therefore defile whatever good thing they touch. When they get in among the children of God they feast, carnally, with them; not as the children do, they are not fed from the Lord's table, but the text says they feed themselves; they glory in themselves and in their own works, and subsist on the mere *name* of Christians, or empty profession of Christianity. Oh! what ugly spots they are in the church; what shameful reproach to the sacred name of Christianity.

They are trees, but not of the Lord's planting; they are not chosen trees, selected and planted in the Lord's garden by the wisdom and power of the Almighty Husbandman. No, they are the spontaneous produc-

tion of earthly soil; and Jesus said they shall be rooted up, every one of them! They bear fruit, but it is after their kind; the Saviour declared that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. They never accomplish what they aim at, nor what they enjoin upon others. Not only does their fruit wither and come short of the fruit of the Spirit, but it is withering in its effect and influence upon the church and people of God; they are not only corrupt, but also corrupters. Their fruit is without a germ that would produce fruit unto holiness; their fruit withereth without fruit. Dead trees—dead to the knowledge of God, and ignorant of God's righteousness—without the fruit of the Spirit, yet fruitful in the works of darkness, of sin and hypocrisy. "Twice dead;" dead to all intents and purposes, dead in sin, and dead to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. The nominal professor is dead in a two-fold sense: his profession is injurious both to the church and the world; both have reason to expect the good fruits of Christianity, and both are disappointed. He digs himself up by his profession out of the world, and can never take root in any other element; failing to exhibit the fruit of a living faith in Christ, he loses his influence for good as a man of the world; more is demanded than he can perform, and thus he brings reproach on the cause of Christ, and becomes a black spot on the fair name of Christianity, and strengthens the hand of infidelity.

If such trees could cut themselves down and leave the roots or earthly, sensual elements behind, and graft themselves into the good tree, they would then partake of the nature of the good stock, and their fruit would be good; but alas! they come in, roots and all, and being thus rooted up and identified with Christians by profession, their dry roots and dead branches are a painful incumbrance to the church.—H.

A question proposed: What do you more than others?

TIME TO CALL A HALT!

It does seem to us that brethren might be profited by a calm and affectionate interchange of thought one with another, even though they might differ on some points. But if each writer sets up his peculiar view of any point of doctrine as the standard of orthodoxy, and makes it a test of fellowship for any one to differ with him, then on the same principle he becomes a self-constituted tribunal, before which he censures, tries, condemns and expels members from church fellowship and communion at the Lord's table. One assumption of authority leads to another, and another, until, if not checked, there is no telling how much one may assume over the rights of others. When an individual member of the church, whether private member, deacon, preacher, or as editor of a paper for Christian correspondence, assumes the right to charge his brother with uttering blasphemy, or of upholding infidelity, or of slandering the church of God, and also assumes the right to declare non-fellowship and expel his brother from communion, without even stating one solitary sentence that has been spoken or written by such brother, it is high time for the church of God to pause and consider whether such an assumption of authority and dominion over its members will bear the scrutiny of God's word. The inspired man of God says: "But with me, it is a very small thing to be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self; for I know nothing by myself; yet, am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord." The Lord judge between thee and us, brother.—M.

PREDESTINATION.

We have been called upon for our views upon predestination, and give the following extract from Hassell's Church History as embodying our sentiments on that

doctrine, as well as those of the other editors of this magazine, if we understand them, and we think we do; and as the sentiment of probably nine-tenths of the Primitive Baptists of the United States.

“John Gill, the soundest, most learned and ablest Baptist theologian since the apostles; the author of a complete commentary on the Old and New Testaments, and of a complete Body of Divinity—the only man that ever hunted and drove out Arminianism from every verse in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation—says: Though God may be said in some senses, (for instance to bring about a great good or to punish other sin), to will sin, yet he wills it in a different way than he wills that which is good; he does not will to do it himself, nor to do it by others; but *permits* it to be done; and which is not a bare permission, but a voluntary permission, and is expressed by God’s giving up men to their own heart’s lusts and by suffering them to walk in their own sinful ways.—Psalm lxxxi. 12; Acts xiv. 16. He wills it not by his effective will, but by his *permissive* will, and cannot therefore be charged with being the author of sin. He neither commands sin, approves it nor persuades to it, nor tempts nor forces to it; but to the reverse, he forbids it, disapproves of it, dissuades from it, threatens punishment for it, yea even chastises his own people for it; and besides overrules it for great good and for his own glory. God hardens some men’s hearts as he did Pharaoh’s, and he wills to harden them, or he hardens them according to his decreeing will; whom he will he hardeneth, Rom. ix; this he does not by any positive act in infusing hardness and blindness into the hearts of men—which is contrary to his purity and holiness, and would make him the author of sin; but by *leaving* men to their natural blindness and hardness of heart; for the understanding is naturally darkened; and there is a natural blindness and hardness of heart through the corruption of nature and which is

increased by habits of sinning; men are in darkness and choose to walk in it, and therefore God, as he decreed, gives them up to their own wills and desires, and to Satan, the god of the world, whom they choose to follow and be led captive by, and who blinds their minds yet more and more, lest light should break in unto them.—Eph. iv; Ps. lxxxii; 2 Cor. iv. Also God may be said to harden and blind by withholding that grace which only can cure them of their hardness and blindness, and which he of his free favor gives to his chosen ones, Ezk. xxxvi, but is not obliged to give to any; and because he gives it not, he is said to hide as he determined to hide, the things of his grace from the wise and prudent, even because it seemed good (*and was good*) in his sight.”—Matt. xi. In reference to the fall of Adam, Gill says that, “God decreed it, but that the sin of eating the forbidden fruit was not owing to God, for he forbade it, was displeased with it and resented it in the highest degree; and that God *permitted* or *suffered* Adam to sin and fall; and that our first parents, with the full consent of their wills, and without any force upon them, took and ate the forbidden fruit.”—Hassell’s Church History, pp. 651,-2. We think these views substantially the same of the London Confession.

Now we cannot see why any Primitive Baptist should disfellowship his brother holding these views. But one brother who holds this view has been publicly charged with railing against the truth for expressing it, and has been disfellowshipped therefor by a brother, upon his own personal authority, and without any Gospel labor. We do not undertake to justify every word and expression used by a brother in preaching or writing, or to justify his manner of preaching; but the principle he is trying to set up and contend for is the main thing to look at. Many expressions have been used, and things said, that had better not have been said. One brother

said that the iron-bound doctrine of the predestination of all things could not be eaten by soft shell teeth, etc., implying that his brethren were soft shells. Another of great ability, and a beloved elder said, "God knows how to introduce sin into the world without being its author; and that the spiritually enlightened child of God hardly knows which should receive the greater degree of admiration, the remedy or the disease; for says the truly contrite and broken hearted sinner, whoever would have known the riches of God's grace, had it not been for the transgression?" Now we have no idea at all that this beloved brother designed to insinuate that the devil was as worthy of worship as God; but still it might be inferred from his writing that he hardly knew which most to admire, God or the devil, sin or holiness.

We have for the January, 1888, MESSENGER an able article upon this subject from Elder Hassell, which we trust will be oil upon the waters.—R.

OLIVE ASSOCIATION.

The fifth annual session of the Olive Association was held with the church at Hephzibah, Lee county, Ala., and after three days' interesting meeting, closed Sunday afternoon, October 16, '87.

This Association is composed of ten small churches, all of which were represented and brought in their letters, and by their messengers the cheering news of peace and love among them. The weather, though a little cool and windy, was clear and otherwise pleasant, but above all, the goodness of God was manifested in so ordering that a goodly number of correspondents and visiting brethren from other Associations were present, among whom were several able "Ministers of the New Testament—not of the letter, but of the spirit"—for of the ten sermons preached at the stand, all seemed to be in the spirit and power of the word of

God. Many hearts were comforted with the comfort which none but God can give, and which the world cannot take away. The next session of the Association is appointed to be held, if the Lord will, with the church at Sharon, Tallapoosa county, Ala., ten miles northwest of Notasulga, commencing Friday before third Sunday in October, 1888.—M.

ELDER MITCHELL will (D. V.) begin a series of articles in January, '88, MESSENGER, on the ATONEMENT, to be continued for several numbers; and all persons not now subscribers, but who expect to subscribe, should send in their names at once, so as to get the entire series of articles on that important subject, as it will no doubt be very valuable.

The new HYMN BOOK has not yet arrived, but will be sent out to all subscribers to whom they are due as soon as they come. Subscribers in arrears will please pay up. We NEED the money.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

BLOODWORTH, GA., October 22, 1887.—*Beloved Elder:* I wish to say through the MESSENGER that I returned home from my visit to North Carolina and found all well. I have a grateful remembrance of the hospitality, love and brotherly kindness shown me whilst in North Carolina. I feel that I went to the Master's brethren and into the house of my mother (the Jerusalem that is above), and that we were blessed to speak and hear of the riches of Jesus; and my heart was made to burn with the fire of heaven's love. I felt to seek the Lord with my whole heart, and was enabled with joyful lips to praise him. I pray God to shine more and more upon our path unto the perfect day. A. W. PATTERSON.

BETHPAGE, TENN., October 8, 1887.—*Dear Brother Res-
pess:*—I attended Round Lick Association and every-
thing was harmonious, both in business and preaching.
The visiting ministers were Elder Levi Evans, of the
Red River Association; Elders Nowlin and Barnfield,
of the Collins River, and Elder P. R. Busby and myself

(3)

from Stone's River. We had also a harmonious session at Nashville (the Stone's River Association) with twelve visiting ministers, viz: Elders Woodfin and Woods, of the Elk River; Elders Short, Lassiter, Deering and Markham, of the Fountain Creek; Elders Agee, Byers and Potter, of the Round Lick; Elders Evans, of the Red River; Elder Mullens, of the Cumberland, and Elder Barnfield, of the Collins River. Quite a number joined the church. I baptized one at Friendship at the last meeting and expect two more at the the next, and many more looked for. The Lord be praised!

J. W. REDDICK.

ELLAVILLE, FLA., October 15, 1887.—*Dear Brother Respass:*—I wish to say to Brother Rittenhouse that I am acquainted with the customs of five Associations—the San Pedro, Ocklocknee, Union, Suwannee and Mt. Enon—and it is the universal custom of these churches in receiving members to give them the right hand of fellowship upon their telling a satisfactory experience. I have never seen a member received any other way. And I have never known a deacon to fill that office except by ordination. We find no other rule laid down in the Scriptures, which we claim is the only rule of faith and practice. But if there should be a more legal way I would of course like to know it. I write simply for information, and not controversy; and if my views will not hold good by the Scriptures I would be thankful to any brother who would show me my error, for I feel it is very important that we follow the rule laid down in the Scriptures.

Yours in hope,

D. J. McMULLEN.

SEWARD, NEB., Oct. 11, 1887.—*Esteemed Brother:*—I have, as I stated in the beginning of this letter, just returned from a trip into the extreme western part of this State, after an absence of three weeks. Before starting from home, I had received some letters from persons in Gasper county, who had seen some of my letters in the MESSENGER, urging me to visit them. So I concluded to do so, hoping it was of the Lord's direction. When we (wife and self) reached there, we were met by friends that we never saw before, and did not

know, personally, an individual in that community. But I hope and believe we met quite a number of God's dear children who were anxiously desiring to hear the gospel of the Son of God preached, without the mixture of any of man's power in it. We tried, in our weak and stammering way, to preach Jesus unto them from Friday night until the next Monday, holding, in all, four services. We had not been there long until some said, as the Ethiopian eunuch did, "what doth hinder me to be baptized?" So on Monday, just before taking our leave of them, we did lead three willing subjects into the water, and in compliance with, as we understand, the commission of our heavenly Master, baptized them "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

I will just here state that among those that we met were Brother and Sister Jacob Bruce, formerly from Indiana, who lived among our Baptists there, who are sound in the faith and practice of the Primitive Baptists.

The names of the candidates that I baptized, in the presence of and by the hearty consent of Brother and Sister Bruce and my wife, were John S. Weaver, James V. Weaver and Sarah C. Weaver, his wife. When I was there, much interest was manifested and the meetings were well attended; just about the time we were leaving to take the cars on our Western trip, we were told that there were others that would probably desire baptism at our hand. If this should be the case, my advice to them is to form or constitute themselves into a church. I am of the opinion that one of the subjects that I did baptize has a travail of mind, and is seriously impressed that he has a work to do in speaking in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Now, Brother Respass, I submit to your judgment, and the readers of the MESSENGER, the propriety and authority we have of thus baptizing persons at so great a distance from an organized church. There is no church of our faith within a hundred miles of them. I gave them each a certificate or letter stating in brief some of the fundamental principles of our faith, commending them to all orderly Baptists, stating in it my standing in New Hope Church, Butler county, Neb., as a member and pastor. I desire to be right, and want

my acts scrutinized by the Church of Jesus Christ, feeling the full responsibility that rests upon me as a little servant in the body. Specially do I submit my conduct to the church where my membership is, and whose pastoral care I am solemnly in charge of.

Feeling to ask the prayers of God's people, I remain yours in hope.

JAMES M. TRUE.

ROGERS, TEXAS, 19th Oct., 1887. — *Elder E. Rittenhouse*—*Dear Brother in the Service of Christ*:—I feel it to be my duty, for the relief of mind, to let you know why the churches—as far as my acquaintance extends—receive members as they do. I was raised in Jasper county, Miss., joined the church there, lived in Drew county, Ark.; I am now living in Bell county, Texas; have associated with many Baptists wherever I lived, and it has been the universal practice of all the churches with which I have been associated, to give the right hand of fellowship to individuals when they told their experience, if all the church was satisfied it was the work of the Lord. The church does this to let the individual know that she is satisfied that they are regenerated, or born again, and that they should not only be baptized, but continue in well doing. Brother Rittenhouse, you know that a poor little child of God is often doubtful whether they have ever been born again or not—I say “poor little child of God,” because they all feel themselves to be the poorest and least of all the family of God, if one at all. Paul tells us to “salute the brethren,” and truly we feel that they are our brethren when they come to the church and tell us that the Lord found them in an horrible pit, and took them out of the mire and clay, and placed their feet upon a Rock, even Christ, as the foundation of all their hopes for salvation.

Brother Rittenhouse, I never heard of a Baptist Church appointing one of her members to act as deacon, without ordination, until I saw it in your communication in THE GOSPEL MESSENGER of the present month. We ordain a deacon not to give him the qualifications that are requisite for a deacon, but because he has the qualifications we ordain him to set him apart for the deacon's office. Yours to serve in the gospel,

WM. THOMAS.

O'NEAL'S MILLS, GA., Oct. 27, 1887.—*Dear Brethren and Sisters:*—You know it is the disposition of a child when they have anything good at home to want to tell their friends and relatives abroad, and that is why I so unceremoniously intrude on you at this time. I feel that we have something to rejoice over at home, and believing you, with all our brethren and friends abroad, will rejoice with us, we feel inclined to tell it to you. When I last wrote you, I, with six others, stood as excluded members of our church, Flat Shoals. I am happy to tell you that we all are restored to our former places, and it seems now that love flows from heart to heart, and from breast to breast, and we can truly say, "How pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." And we also feel that the clouds of adversity have served only to make the sunshine of prosperity more pleasant. Brother Jackson, of the Beulah Association, was chosen to serve the church for the year 1886. The church being in great confusion, he accepted very reluctantly, saying if he could do them no good he would try to do them no harm. He set to work to try to bring order out of confusion; the excluded members have been restored, he has baptized eleven, three have been received by letter and one restored. On our last meeting, which was second Sabbath of this month (October) and Saturday before, an aged brother, who had been excluded fifty years ago, and whose locks are white with the frosts of ninety years, came up under the head of Acknowledgements, and was restored to the church. After the business of the day was over, the congregation was dismissed and all gone out of doors, and some gone home, old Brother Allen Davidson expressed himself dissatisfied to go home without talking to the church. It was proposed to go back in the house, which was done; he came forward, related his experience, and was baptized on the following Sunday. He dated his experience back fifty years; he is over seventy now. It was a touching sight to see the old, gray-haired veterans embracing each other, and expressing their regrets at having lain out of the discharge of their duty so long. The church has unanimously chosen Brother Jackson for the ensuing year. And still another treat we had on the following Saturday and Sunday: Brethren Hardy and Cook, of the Yellow

River Association, preached at our church. They were on a preaching tour; were very welcome visitors with us, and we felt that we were benefitted by their visit.

I have told you, in a very imperfect way, some of the causes we have had to rejoice, and I dare say you will agree that we have had great cause to be thankful; at the same time we feel the danger of over joys, as we know that tranquil pleasures last the longest; for we are not fitted to bear long the burden of great joys. We desire an interest in the prayers of all saints.

NANNIE WHITE.

NEVADA, Mo., July 28, 1887.—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, etc.—1 Cor. xv. 47. The first man was made a living soul of the earth, and all his posterity had their standing in him; and as they were of the earth earthy, they were time beings, and as such, there is no law given them that can effect them in eternity. The second Adam was made a quickening spirit; (*made*, that is, the Eternal God was incarnated in the likeness of sinful flesh), and this is the record of God's Son—eternal life, and this life is in His Son; and the Son gives this life to as many of the earthy family as God gave Him who bought the field which contained the treasure upon which his eternal love was centered, that he should give eternal life unto them; for they were of the earth earthy, and as such cannot inherit the kingdom of God, being flesh and blood; they must be adopted, created anew in Christ. Hence this mortal body shall put on immortality, and bear the image of the heavenly; for as is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly. So the earthy man that sinned is renewed in the spirit of the mind, quickened, born again, created in Christ, and walks by faith, in hope, that as Christ's body rose, and after it many bodies of the saints, (even the hundred, forty and four thousand which are redeemed from the earth) and bear the image of the heavenly; so it is not the obedience of God's law to time creatures that causes them to bear the image of the heavenly, but it is according to God's eternal purpose in Christ, by his quicken-

ing, creative power, for his own name, honor and glory; hence it is not necessary that all the earthy creatures shall or should bear, or be created to the image of the heavenly. So God lost nothing in the fall of man, but het workmanship of his hand, (which was known unto him). Theological teachers tell the earthy man he can bear the image of the heavenly if he will do what God commands his saints to do; so I tell them they are time creatures, and are blessed in time according as they conduct themselves; but if they are saved in eternity, it will be alone by the merits of Christ; and that such will not bear the image of the earthy in eternity, but where there be prophecies they shall fail, tongues shall cease, and knowledge (earthy) shall vanish.

Yours, in hope of immortality, JACOB CLOUD.

OBITUARIES.

W. H. HEAD.

Mr. W. H. HEAD died at his home in Forsyth, Monroe county, Ga., September 7th, 1887. He was born in South Carolina, May 9th, 1829, and came to Georgia at an early age, where he has lived ever since. His first marriage was to Miss Martha Smith, by whom he has two daughters, and after her death, which occurred October 24th, 1855, he married the widow Adams, a daughter of Brother Wim Johnson. She had three Adams children, two boys and one girl. Since their marriage they have two children, a boy and girl, making in all seven, all of age and married. After the late war Mr. Head moved from Jasper county, where he was farming, to Forsyth, where he went into the mercantile business; in this, together with his farm, he was successful; he then went into the banking business in Forsyth, in which he continued until his death; he also once represented the county in the Legislature. Mr. Head was a man of great energy and good business qualifications; in his dealings I have always found him to be honest and truthful, hence his rise in the world and the accumulation of considerable wealth, can only be attributed to his energy, good judgment and promptness to business.

While Sister Head was a firm, uncompromising Primitive Baptist, yet Mr. Head never united himself to the church, but was a strong defender of the Primitive faith; and the Baptist always found a good and welcome home at his house; and, if necessary, he was always ready to help them in a pecuniary way. I have been made to notice his increased interest in preaching for the last two years, though I had no conversation with him on the subject, until after he was taken sick. He sent for me to come to see him, which I did, and he seemed very glad to see me, but I saw he was fatigued from talking, which the doctor requested him not to do. He said the "good Lord had been very good to him, but he had been so

disobedient ;” and while he did not think that he could get well, yet, if in his mercy he should see fit to raise him again, he felt resigned to take up his cross and to serve him the balance of his life. The many Christian admonitions he gave his family and friends around him was remarkable ; he talked of death as calmly as if he had been in good health, while the tears would drop from his eyes, and remarked, “that while all were asleep, in the dead hours of night, I have shed many, many tears, thinking of the goodness of the Lord to me and my disobedience to him ; but I know that he will do right with me, and my trust is in him.” “Amazing grace” and “My departure is at hand,” were his favorite songs, and seemed to be very comforting. I told him I thought it best for him not to talk any more just then and try to rest, and he remarked that perhaps it was, but he wanted me to come again when he could talk. The next day I called to see him again, and found him apparently much better. After talking about and arranging some of his worldly affairs, he said “the Lord had been very good to him in giving him a clear head to arrange his business, and he hoped satisfactory to all concerned ; that he had set that day to die, but now he did not think so, as he was feeling better. I now want you to read some and pray for me,” which I tried to do. I asked him some questions in reference to his hope. He said “that he had a little hope, which he would not take anything for, that God for Christ’s sake had forgiven his sins, but I have not done my duty.” I asked him if the preaching of Christ was not consoling to him ; he answered that it was, and that “at times when I have heard you preach you would tell my feelings so plain that I would have to bow my head upon the back of the seat to hide my tears.” I read some of the evidences of a Christian contained in the 5th chapter of Matthew, and commented on them as I read, in which he took part, and said it was very comforting, until we came down to where we are commanded to let our light shine, he said, “now I have not done that, and I would not say one word to deceive you ; my change has not been so sudden and plain as I have heard some express it, yet there is a change in my love for the church, and I hope in His mercy and grace.” I said that I did not think the change always came in the same way, and that the disobedience of the Christian could reach no farther than this world ; that when they sinned they had an advocate with the Father, Christ Jesus the righteous, and he remarked, “that is very consoling.” I left him seemingly very much comforted and he expressed but little more desire to get well, but seemed perfectly resigned to the will of the Lord. He continued to grow weaker until about 9 o’clock at night, of the 7th of September, and he was no more. His remains were deposited in the cemetery at Forsyth, there to await the morning of the resurrection. And now let me say to the dear bereaved ones, weep not as you would for those who have no hope, but remember the many Christian admonitions he gave you in his last hours. May God prepare each one of you to meet him again on the shores of eternal bliss, is the desire of yours,

D. G. McCOWEN.

Forsyth, Ga.

DANNIE ISOLA SHEHEE.

Died, on the 11th of August, last, at her father's house, in Taylor county, Ga., in her 26th year of age, of typhoid fever, Miss DANNIE ISOLA SHEHEE, the daughter of Daniel and Missouri Shehee. She was taken sick Saturday, 23d of July last, but so anxious was she to hear preaching—"Primitive Baptist, or gospel preaching," she said—that she was driven nine miles, to Bethel, Sunday, to hear Elder Murray, though Elder B. Stewart was her favorite preacher. She told me on her return in the evening, stopping a while at my house, that she was well paid.

Her mother tells me that about five years ago she became concerned about her soul's salvation; and that from unmistakable evidences, she had enjoyed a good hope through grace for many months. During her sickness she seemed concerned mostly about divine things, and her only regret seemed to be that she had not obeyed her Lord by being baptized. Indeed, her afflictions of heart and conscience in regard to this neglect, seemed far worse than those of body, although she suffered acutely a long while, which, however, she bore with great patience and resignation. One evening, on taking leave of her, she begged me to pray that the Lord *in mercy* would raise her up, so that she might obey him. But she finally seemed to become satisfied. She saw a bright vision spread at and near her *feet*, showing her that they were not far from the heavenly ground. Even after she knew she would die—indeed she had a presentiment before that she would die—but after this, she told her nurse where to tell her mother to have her buried, and described every article of clothing she wanted to be buried in. "Tell her to bury me in the suit of clothes I last heard the gospel in;" but she charged her not to tell her mother till after she was dead, as she did not want to distress her. During the last eight or ten days, she often sung the songs of Zion with much feeling. She often sung "O, for a closer walk with God," and "Approach my soul the mercy seat." And about two hours before she died she sung "The day is past and gone," with the chorus, "O, let us meet in heaven," till she came to that verse that ends, "So death will soon disrobe us all of what we are here possessed;" then she ceased, and lay silent and contemplative till the sun was about withdrawing his last golden rays, when she adjusted her body straight, folded her hands on her breast, and shut her eyes, and died as a little child, wearied at long play, falls asleep in his mother's arms.

I had not known her long; my husband being her mother's and her physician, I had often gone with him there, and soon learned to love her dearly as a true woman, a devoted child and sister, and a fearless defender and lover of the Primitive Baptist faith and doctrine.

Her true friend,

R. ANNA PHILLIPS.

Butler, Ga.

J. E. ROSS POWELL.

J. E. R. POWELL, son of Dr. J. R. Powell, died at his father's residence in Elmore county, Ala., May 9th, 1887, in the twenty-second year of his age. His sad death was caused by a violent lick on the head with a hoe in the hands of Jesse Fallin, breaking his skull, on May 7th, after which, for the two days that he survived, he was never again able to speak. The

cause of this violent blow being struck is not satisfactorily known. His sufferings were great, and he could neither eat nor drink. He was a youth of more than ordinary intelligence, and it was interesting to converse with him on almost any subject, especially upon the scriptures, and his delight in talking with Christian people, and his orderly life gave evidence that he was much concerned, and had been much in trouble of mind about his future state. He was a loving, dutiful and affectionate son and brother. It seems that he had some presentiment of his early and sad death, as he had told one of his sisters that he did not expect to live long, and that he would not die a natural death. There are many pieces of poetry composed by him, showing deep and comprehensive thought about his future state. He leaves a precious father and mother, five brothers and three sisters, besides many other relatives and friends to mourn. We greatly sympathize with them, and commend them to the sustaining grace of God. We have thus only hinted at a few of the many manly virtues of this noble-hearted youth, but as short notices are necessary, in order that all may have a place in the MESSENGER, we close.

Why, tender mother, flow thy tears?
 Why vent thy grief and sad complaints?
 Thy child is free from pain and fears
 In heaven, to dwell with risen saints.

J. F. SHARP.

W. S. TAYLOR

Was born May the 8th, 1804, married to Nancy Taylor January 18th, 1827, professed a hope in Christ in June, 1828, joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Enon, Bedford county, Tenn., November, 1828, and was ordained a deacon in September, 1840. In 1846, himself and several others obtained letters and constituted the church called Mt. Pleasant, in Rutherford county, Tenn., in which church he remained, a beloved and useful member, until death. He died Sept 14, 1887, aged eighty-three years, four months and six days. Few live to the great age that Brother Taylor did, and fewer still live as quietly and peaceably and so universally beloved. He was a husband in the true sense of the word, greatly devoted to his companion as well in her long period of affliction as in health; a devoted father and dearly loved by his children, who looked to him for wise counsel; and they never went and were turned away empty. As a citizen he was honorable and honored; as a Christian he had not aught against him; in the church his counsel was listened to with confidence. A volume might be written in his praise, if mention be made of all his noble qualities, without exaggeration. To his deeply afflicted companion I would say, weep not; your separation, dear sister, is only for a short time. Dear children, what shall I say to you? O, could you only appreciate your father's love for you, and his desire for your present and future happiness, it would be well with you all. That we all and you all may meet him in glory, let us pray. Lord help. Amen.

J. E. FROST.

JAMES HOWELL.

Deacon JAMES HOWELL was born February 13, 1812, and died Sept. 25, 1887, aged seventy-five years, seven months and twelve days. He was married near Fredonia, Ala., Sept. 23, 1841, to Miss Tabitha McKinnie, one of the most amiable among women, and daughter of Deacon Eli McKinnie, long since fallen asleep in Jesus. Elder Benjamin Lloyd officiated at the marriage. Accompanied by his companion, Brother Howell united with the Primitive Baptist church in 1847, and was baptized by Elder Josephus Barrow. The writer of this notice has been one of Brother Howell's immediate neighbors about thirty years, and is pretty well qualified to bear testimony that during that time, at least, the said brother lived a quiet and exemplary life. And while, perhaps, like most other men worthy of note, he may not have been wholly devoid of opposers, yet I dare say but few men ever lived in this lower world who had fewer enemies than he. In the demise of our brother, his surviving wife has indeed lost a kind husband, his children a doting father, the community a good neighbor, and the church an orderly member. The death of Brother Howell was not unexpected, as he had been in precarious health many weeks. But while we very naturally deplore the loss of such a man, yet we have the comforting assurance that his happy spirit now rests in the bosom of Jesus, in whom he so hopefully relied, even down to his last moments. And while condoling with the bereaved, we can but believe that this dispensation of Jehovah will result in the good of all. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away."

Fredonia, Ala.

W. P. F.

WILLIAM H. SWAN,

Eldest son of W. A. J. and N. B. Swan, (Sister N. B. S. is a daughter of the late Elder Wm. Taylor,) was born Sept. 22, 1866, and died of typhoid fever Oct. 23, 1886. Hop, as he was usually called, was a kind and dutiful son, ever ready, day or night, to render any assistance to his father or mother. For obedience to his parents, none ever excelled him. He was the pride of the family, and beloved by all his numerous friends. All that could be done by physicians and kind friends could not stay the ruthless hand of death. He was cut down just as he was entering manhood; yet the dark messenger of death grasped him in his icy arms and carried him away forever from his fond parents, brothers, sisters and friends. Oh! Death, how many hearts have been made sad by thy icy touch? How many fond parents have you robbed of their precious jewels? To the sorrowing parents, whose hearts are still bowed in deep sorrow for the loss of their darling son, console yourselves with the thought that while you sorrow he is basking in the sunshine of the everlasting love of God. While it is true Hop never made any public profession of Christianity, yet the beautiful and soul-cheering hymn that he sung with almost his last breath, should afford us the greatest consolation; for to sing "Jesus lover of my soul," one must have felt the power of God in the forgiveness of sins; and doubtless he is now enjoying the full

fruition of that love that we only have a foretaste while in this life. Our every desire should be, Not my will but thine be done, oh Lord. And may grace be given to enable you to bear up under this heavy stroke of an Allwise Providence.

Asleep in Jesus, oh, how sweet
To be for such a slumber mete,
With holy confidence to sing,
That death has lost his cruel sting.

Asleep in Jesus, peaceful sleep,
"From which none ever wake to weep;"
So dry your tears, your son is gone
To join the bright angelic throng.

October 12, 1887

W. R. AVERY.

GEORGE ERNEST CALDWELL,

Son of Brother I. H. and Sister N. L. Caldwell, died Aug. 7, 1887, aged one year and twenty-one days. This dear brother and sister have lost by death their three youngest, all and only sons, which seems to bear hard upon them. We would comfort them with the thought that their babe, the object of their affection, is blessed of the Lord.

Rome, Ga.

W. P. BRYAN.

JOHN CARTER

Died at the residence of I. W. Crosby, Bowie, Texas, Sept. 16, 1887, aged twenty years, seven months and thirteen days. He was born in Coffee county, Ala., near Elba; his father died when he was five years old, and he was taken by the family of Mr. Crosby, a relative of his, who came to Texas in 1877, and for fifteen years dear Johnnie has been as one of the family. His death was caused by wasting disease of the nervous system. In spite of the medical aid of the two best physicians in the West, and all the attention that could be given him by his friends, poor Johnnie was claimed by the hand of death, and is, we hope, at rest with Jesus. He never made an open profession of religion, but his talk and actions before death leads us to believe he is at rest where all is joy, peace and love. Farewell, Johnnie! while we meet no more on earth, I hope to meet you in that bright and shining world where parting will be no more.

Sleep on, dear one, ere long I'll meet you,
In that world so bright and fair;
With a smile I'll gladly greet you
When we join our right hands there.

R. A. CROSBY.

Z. CULLEY

Was born Nov. 3, 1803, died Sept. 6, 1887, aged eighty-three years, ten months and three days. Many years ago he was deeply impressed on the subject of the life beyond death; which is a great mystery to finite minds. Brother Culley was finally constrained by love to God and a desire to do his will and obey his word, to take up his cross and follow Jesus in baptism, and for this purpose united with Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church, Bedford county, Tenn., ten or twelve years ago, and lived a useful and loved member till death. Brother Culley was a great sufferer for many months, being afflicted with cancer on his face, but bore his afflictions with much fortitude. But they are all over, and he is now trying the realities of the future. O, could he speak back to those of his loved ones here, methink he would say, come on, dear friends, children, brethren and sisters, to this glorious home. O, heaven, sweet heaven, O, how I long to know more of thee; for there is rest in heaven for all who love God, and into that rest we trust our dear brother has now entered. Dear children, may you and all who love God, find that sweet rest, is my humble prayer. Yours truly.

J. E. FROST.

INDEX TO VOL. IX.

CORRESPONDENTS.

A	PAGE.	G	PAGE
Eld. Wm. R. Avery.....	100	Mrs. Mary C. Gray.....	336
Eld. Samuel Akers.....	203	Eld. J. J. Gilbert.....	574
Eld. A. V. Atkins.....	361		
J. B. Adams.....	364	H	
John H. Alderton.....	436	Eld. H. M. Higginbotham.....	1
C. W. Anderson.....	463	Joseph Holms.....	48
		Mrs. M. M. Hassell.....	50
B		Eld. Lee Hancks.....	69, 414
Eld. S. T. Bentley.....	48	J. G. Hendrickston.....	95
Mrs. Nancy Baird.....	96	E. C. Hewett.....	153, 519
Eld. H. Bussey.....	126	Eld. T. E. Harrison.....	157
Eld. T. J. Bazemore.....	155	J. A. Hughens.....	158
Geo. A. Bretz.....	169, 395	Eld. Wm. Hubbard.....	161
Samuel Bryant.....	196	Eld. L. H. Hardy.....	171
W. M. Barton.....	196	Eld. M. Hodges.....	202
Eld John Blackstone.....	217	E. T. Holligen.....	132
J. W. Britton.....	272	J. M. Hicks.....	286
Eld. D. Bartley.....	290, 542	Eld. W. A. Halbrook.....	492
Eld. Samuel Burnett.....	321	W. H. Hughes.....	516
J. R. Blakney.....	358	Eld. Geo. M. Holcombe.....	570
Eld. W. A. Bowden.....	373		
Eld. R. A. Biggs.....	388	J	
Eld. Thos. Barton's Biography	477	Vandelia E. Jones.....	98
U. M. Brannen.....	581	R. M. Jones.....	151
		R. A. Jackson.....	333
C		Mrs. N. B. Jackson.....	334
Eld. F. A. Chick.....	8, 120, 204 ^c	A. M. Jennings.....	358
	236, 377, 481	J. R. Jackson.....	410
Eld. Isaiah Clabaugh.....	44	Eld. W. L. Jordan.....	517
Eld. J. S. Collins.....	75, 338	Sallie L. Jackson.....	548
I. J. Carter.....	100		
John Cornett.....	463	K	
Jacob Cloud.....	618	A. M. Keith.....	7
		Eld. J. E. Knighten.....	357, 432
D		John P. Kelley.....	517
Eld. S. H. Durand.....	170		
Green W. Davis.....	324	L	
Eld. J. C. Denton.....	514	H. J. Lassatter.....	7
		Eld. B. L. Landers.....	117, 515
E		Eld. J. W. Load.....	182
Eld. W. T. Everett.....	103, 306	W. H. Ledbetter.....	514
Eld. Peter T. Everett.....	48, 99	F. A. Laird.....	515
F		M	
Z. A. Fowler.....	217	Julia McGraw.....	20
W. G. Floyd.....	273	Eld. Jas. Martindale.....	57
Eld. J. E. Frost.....	462	Eld. W. C. Mitchell.....	73, 405, 459

	PAGE.		PAGE
Mrs. Elizabeth McIntosh.....	302	S. W. Rodgers.....	576
Wm. E. McAlister.....	305	J. W. Reddick.....	613
Eld. H. R. McCoy.....	269	S	
J. T. Middlebrooks.....	356	Thos. H. Scott.....	66
W. C. Medill.....	356	D. B. Smith.....	97
E. L. Moore.....	364	J. W. Stowers.....	98
W. C. Martin.....	364	W. W. Sammons.....	198
Deacon Joel Mathews.....	383	Eld. Jeff Stringer.....	200
Eld. E. C. Mauldin.....	425	Mrs. Kate Swartout.....	326
D. J. McMullen.....	614	Eld. W. C. Simmons.....	405
N			
George Northcut.....	264	T	
Eld. T. M. Neal.....	304	Eld. G. W. Thomson.....	62
P			
J. G. Phillips.....	7	Eld. E. D. Thomas.....	114
V. D. Pendleton.....	96	Eld. W. N. Tharp.....	307
Eld. T. K. Pursley.....	109	Eld. Wm. Thomas.....	529, 616
Mrs. E. K. Pursley.....	113	I. J. Taylor.....	586
Eld. L. Potter.....	222	J. W. I. Taylor.....	587
Eld. M. C. Parker.....	154	E. Y. Terral.....	592
R. Anna Phillips.....	273, 535	James M. True.....	617
Eld. J. H. Purifoy.....	545	V	
Reese Prather.....	595	Mary A. Venable.....	360
A. W. Patterson.....	613	W	
R			
Eld. John Rowe.....	13, 280, 428, 492	Eld. A. B. Whatley.....	7
E. R.....	29	Eld. A. L. Woodson.....	49
Eld. J. W. Reddick.....	46	Eld. E. M. Walker.....	99
Eld. E. Rittenhouse.....	46, 63, 164, 295, 489, 584	Eld. Wm. R. Welborn.....	244
Mrs. S. A. Richards.....	155	Eld. Harvey Wright.....	306
R. R. Respass.....	196, 306	P. H. White.....	414
Eld. Lewis T. Ruffner.....	263	Stephen Woodward.....	461
W. L. Rodgers.....	516	Eld. E. S. Ward.....	499
		W. L. Wiggins.....	515
		Nannie White.....	617
		Y	
		Eld. H. T. Yarbrough.....	157

OBITUARIES.

A		R. Barton.....	421
Mrs. Mary M. and Ann Alderton.....	467	Mrs. Martha Brown.....	423
Mrs. Mary E. Alderton.....	470	Mrs. R. A. Brooks.....	520
B		John Barnfield.....	521
Mrs. Delia Ann Bartie.....	103	Mrs. Ella Rosetta Barrow.....	577
James Bridges.....	105	Deacon Wm. Bean.....	577
Mary G. Brown.....	106	C	
Rachel Bramblett.....	107	Jas. I. and L. S. Carter.....	159
Mrs. Isabel E. Bozeman.....	208	Mrs. E. Chisenhall.....	265
Mrs. N. E. Beebe.....	209	Wm. H. Cheser.....	315
Mrs. Elizabeth Brady.....	211	A. D. Crecelius.....	318
Mrs. J. H. Brim.....	308	Mrs. Marie E. Clark.....	367
Mrs. Mary Bragg.....	311	Deacon John Collins.....	370
Eld. Warren L. Battle.....	363	Lawler Crutcher.....	424
David L. Boaz.....	365	Robt. L. Curtis.....	471
J. N. Brady.....	370	Martha L. Coates.....	474
Eld. Samuel Bentley.....	355	W. P. Cox.....	475
		E. D. Chilton.....	527

	PAGE.
George Ernest Caldwell.....	624
John Carter.....	624
Z. Culley.....	624

D

Pinkney L. Draper.....	210
Mrs. Elizabeth Daughtey.....	215
Robert L. Durden.....	268
Mrs. Phebe Denney.....	313
Mrs. Sarah M. Davis.....	315
Wm. Daniel.....	367
Judge Hiram Dennis.....	416
Deacon C. M. Dodgen.....	420
Martha A. Durham.....	472
J. G. Dumas.....	525
W. H. and H. F. Dilbon.....	525

E

Mrs. Callie W. Early.....	56
John W. Estes.....	108
Mrs. Nancy Evans.....	368
Lemma C. Eggar.....	526

F

Mrs. Wm. Finley.....	366
Mrs. Minnie Farley.....	475
Martha Alice Finley.....	523

G

Nannie Glover.....	53
Mrs. Sarah Gibson.....	53
Edward L. Gibson.....	267
Ella E. Griffin.....	528
Mrs. Sallie F. Gillespie.....	578

H

E. H. Hall.....	54
Mary E. Hall.....	55
Carr Hart.....	56
A. J. Hardgrave.....	105
Mrs. Parmelia A. Hopson.....	214
Mrs. Sarah Hall.....	473
Mrs. Rhoda S. Hollis.....	523
Mrs. Mary A. Higgenbotham.....	527
Eld. Wm. Hussey.....	580
W. H. Head.....	619
Jas. Howell.....	623

I

Deacon Robert Ivey.....	158
Mrs. Emeline Ingram.....	472

J

Mrs. Mary J. Jackson.....	104
Mrs. Mary Ann Johnson.....	206
Mrs. Cassandra Jenkins.....	212
Mrs. Mary Ann Jackson, (Ga.).....	312
Deacon A. P. Johnston.....	320
Mrs. Matilda Jackson.....	371
Susan Johnston.....	527

K

	PAGE
Dilla Lunia King.....	526
Ransom Kirby.....	578

L

Reed Lassater.....	54
Mrs. Sarah Lanier.....	106
Ben L. Ledbetter.....	204
Jas. C. Lancaster.....	212
Bettie Clopton Lawler.....	216
Mrs. Lucy Frances Lord.....	364
Lucy Wheeler Lord.....	419

M

Elizabeth Morgan.....	55
Eld. Eli H. Milton.....	207
Mrs. O. G. Martin.....	266
Mrs. Alley McPeak.....	211
Mrs. Polly A. McGehee.....	316
Jesse Hardy Mitchell.....	365
Jeff T. McCoy.....	369
John C. McKenney.....	423
Frank B. Mitchell.....	469
Almah Naomi Meece.....	470
Viola Vientia Mattox.....	471
Reuben Elizabeth Matthews.....	523
Mrs. Elizabeth H. Morton.....	526

N

Fannie Kate Nall.....	576
-----------------------	-----

O

Mrs. Dicy O'Kelley.....	160
John Orr.....	204
Miss Micah F. Orr.....	367

P

W. H. Prather.....	51
Mary Phillips.....	104
Mrs. E. V. Pamplin.....	159
Mrs. M. D. Parker.....	208
M. E. Paulk.....	313
Mrs. Francis E. Pearson.....	314
Joseph H. Park.....	372
Mrs. Elizabeth Partridge.....	569
Martha A. Pennington.....	521
J. E. Ross Powell.....	621

R

Ernest Rodgers.....	576
---------------------	-----

S

Dannie Isola Shehee.....	621
Win. H. Swan.....	623

T

W. S. Taylor.....	522
-------------------	-----

W

Deacon Calvin Woodard.....	579
----------------------------	-----

EDITORIALS.

By R.—Esther's Feast, 36; Eld. J. H. Purifoy, 42; To Correspondents, 44; All Men Accountable to God, 82; Danger of Bad Habits, 84; Concubines, 86; Great Texas Drought, 95; In Office, 144; Due Time, 145; Review, 233; As Thy Days Thy Strength Shall Be; 254; Love Never Fails, 257; God Appoints Overseers, 259; Jacob and Esau, 346; On Baptism, 411; The Battle, 451; A Long-felt Want, 462; Sibboleth and Shibboleth, 559; The Lying Spirit, 564; Predestination, 609; Remarks on J. W. Taylor's Letter, 591.

By H.—Power of the Resurrection, 41; Refreshing Seasons 43; All Things Work Together, 76; Union Association, 143; Reply to Sister Underwood, 149; How is the Church the Body of Christ? 195; Words Fitly Spoken, 261; The End of the Matter, 344; Choosing a Subject, 400; Reply to Bro. Harris, 449; Reply to J. S. McLeod, 512; Black Spots, Dead Trees, etc., 606.

By M.—Introductory to Ninth Volume, 33; Gospel Order, 78; Weak and Strong, 89; Predestination, 137; Love to the Brotherhood, 191; Every Evil Work, 252; Reply to Eld. I. N. Vanmeter, 300; It is Christ that Died, 341; Reply to Bro. Jennings, 359; First be Reconciled to Thy Brother, 397; Things Earthly and Things Heavenly, 403; The Church, 439; Saving Souls—Paper Bullets do the Work, 445; Neither Add To nor Diminish From, 506; Reply to Sister Hewett, 519; Receiving the Atonement with Joy, 556; Reply to Eld. Holcombe, 572; Close of Volume Nine, 602; Time to Call a Halt, 609; Olive Association, 612.

cert bond
25% COTTON

X Per G676M v.9 228271

Gospel Messenger

X Per G676M v.9 228271

