

the body of the "more than conquerors." These will ultimately come off conquerors and attain the plane of spirit being to which they were begotten at the time of their consecration. These will be the "virgin companions" of the bride, serving in the temple.

(c) A third class, described by St. Paul as falling away and counting the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an ordinary thing and despising the great favor and privilege of sanctification through justification. These are described also by St. Peter as "the sow returned to her wallowing in the mire"—as turned from spiritual hopes and promises to earthly. These, once counted members of the body of Christ, will die the second death, as brute beasts.

GIFTS AND SACRIFICES FOR SIN

Question.—What is signified by the words of the Apostle that our Lord was ordained to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin?

Answer.—From the Scriptures it is evident that during the Millennial age the world of mankind will be privileged to offer themselves to God as gifts, but not as sacrifices. Hence, during the Millennial age, part of the work of the great High Priest will be to accept these gifts and to make them acceptable to God through his own merit and rights as the Melchizedek Priest. We can, however, apply this text very properly to the present time. The Apostle puts the word gifts first. We may, therefore, look to see whether there is not some way in which the High Priest offers gifts now. Surely our Lord's consecration of his own life was a gift on His part. The Father accepted that gift and ultimately permitted our Lord's gift to constitute a sin-offering for others. Likewise, throughout this Gospel age, the "brethren" are invited to present their bodies living sacrifices—to give themselves to God.—Rom. 12:1, 2.

When we thus make a present of ourselves to God, we are not making a sin-offering to God; for this we could not do. But the divine arrangement for accepting our gift is

that each gift will be acceptable through the merit of Christ; and that then, later on, these gifts will, according to the same divine arrangement, constitute the great sin-offering which the High Priest gives for the world. Thus the High Priest is ordained to make the ultimate offering of that gift as the sin-offering for the world.

Amongst those who served in the office of typical high priest, says the Apostle, the uniform custom was that they should offer both gifts and sacrifices to God. Hence, he proceeds to point out that Jesus, as the Antitype of those priests, must have something to offer. He also must offer both gifts and sacrifices, in order to fulfil his priesthood. He presented himself without spot unto God; and, by virtue of that presentation, he is a sin-offering unto God; and, through his merit, he makes the same true of his church, who voluntarily give themselves to God.

SHOWS HOW MERIT OF RANSOM IS APPLIED

Question.—Is there anything connected with the Atonement Day sacrifices which corresponds to the ransom? If so, what?

Answer.—The word ransom would more properly be rendered ransom-price, corresponding price. On the Day of Atonement no type of the ransom-price is given us, but rather a type of the sin-offering, showing particularly how that ransom-price will be made applicable. If we scrutinize this Atonement day type, however, we shall find that which points to the ransom, in the killing of the bullock; for the whole matter depended upon the killing of the bullock. The goat could not be killed first. The bullock must first be killed and the blood applied in the Most Holy before anything could be done with the goat. Hence, all that was done, not only with the Lord's goat, but also with the scapegoat, was based on the death of the bullock. So if we look for anything that might correspond to the ransom-price in the day of atonement sacrifices, we shall see that the death of the goat was not necessary, but all depended on the bullock.

O! TO BE WILLING!

Oh! to be willing, willing,
Thy will to do day by day,
Obedient, humble and loving—
O help me, dear Savior, I pray.
Willing that thou mightest use me,
As forth with glad tidings I go,
That all who are hung'ring and thirsting
God's mystery now may know.

Oh! to be willing, willing,
Just to be led by thy hand;
'A messenger at the gateway,
Only waiting for thy command;'
Filled with thy spirit and ready
The message to tell at thy will;
'Willing shouldst thou not require me,
In silence to wait on thee still.'

Oh! to be willing, willing,
Whate'er the task may be,
To do it as thou didst, dear Jesus,
That the world thy spirit may see.
Rather be willing, willing,
That Jehovah on earth be praised,
To surrender all earthly blessings
And walk the appointed ways.

Oh! to be willing, willing,
Each step to salvation to take,
To suffer with thee in "the Holy,"
And gladly all sacrifice make.
To walk in the way with rejoicing,
My lamp trimmed and well filled with oil.
And I'll soon hear the voice of the Bridegroom
Saying, "Enter and cease from thy toil."

DR. AGNES HAVILAND.

"IS MANKIND ADVANCING?"

[FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.]

"In a book of the above title Mrs. John Martin administers a stiff rebuke to the pride and self-confidence of our age. She feels, and she argues with great skill, that humanity is not advancing in any real sense. 'The world today,' she remarks, 'is convinced that it is making rapid progress. In western Europe and in America increased wealth production, democratic institutions, free education, free thought, the opening of opportunities in new countries, the acceleration of travel and communication, have combined to produce upon our generation an exhilarating sense of expansion, of liberation, of growing power.' But this impression, it seems, is an illusion. We have not really progressed. Mrs. Martin likens modern civilization to a runaway locomotive going at tremendous speed on a wrong track. 'We have lost our way,' she says; and adds: 'Man may have risen from the ape; also the ape may be a degenerate man. Men are headed ape-ward quite as frequently as angel-ward. Time runs an elevator which goes both ways, down as well as up.'

"'What is progress?' asks Mrs. Martin at the outset of her argument. She replies: 'The word progress should, I believe, be exclusively used to express a rise in human

capacity, the development of higher orders of human beings. Thus restricted, it remains, as it should, a strictly qualitative, never a quantitative, term. Improved conditions conduce to progress, and are necessary to progress, but may exist without producing progress. Progress is something more than improvement. Progress means movement forward.' This definition leads on to a wonderful picture:

"'Looking back along the line of history, we can see that we (mankind) have been traveling a long, long road whose winding way, rising and falling century after century, we can trace back for a few thousand years until it enters a trackless desert and fades utterly from our view in the mists of antiquity. Immediately behind the spot where we now stand there seems to lie a downward slope; that is to say, we seem to have been ascending since the eighteenth, the seventeenth, yes, part of the sixteenth centuries. But the Elizabethan era and the period of the Renaissance in Italy do not lie below us. Life was very full and splendid then; man had climbed to a higher point of outlook than that upon which we now act out our little day. Behind those centuries the way becomes obscure; it seems to pass through deep and

silent forests, over dim, somnolent plains, in shadowy twilights and through deserted wastes, until it falls away into a wide, cold swamp, noisome, dark, terrible, abounding in reptiles and the horrid monsters of sick dreams.

"Beyond this death-bound stillness of the dark ages, the road ascends again into the upper air. Birds are singing, the sunlight touches the grain fields; the bustle of human life appears, troops of soldiery in glittering armor, citizens in gorgeous raiment, all the pomp and pageantry of the triumphant Roman Empire. Behind Rome the road drops away again suddenly, a deep, sharp drop into a valley, beyond which it begins to rise once more and, becoming steeper and steeper, it lifts our gaze to the very mountain top, where among the clouds against the deep blue sky, swept by fresh breezes, enthroned amid snow-white temples, gleaming in the golden sunshine, Greek civilization sits upon the pinnacle of human greatness."

"Having formulated her definition of progress and expressed her conception of the human zenith, Mrs. Martin goes on to ask by what method we may set about to measure the degree of progress existing in any age. She answers this question in the spirit of Huxley's statement: 'The advance of mankind has everywhere depended upon the production of men of genius.' It is by the number and caliber of its men of genius, she holds, that any epoch must be tested.

"In the realm of practical science and pure thought, Aristotle and Plato are probably the two greatest intellects the world has ever known. 'Aristotle,' says Hegel, 'was a genius beside whom no age has an equal to place'; while Emerson exclaims: 'Compare Plato with other men. How many ages have gone by and he remains unapproached!' 'Have we, in modern times,' Mrs. Martin inquires, 'any thinkers who can compare with these ancient Greeks? Kant may be cited, and Darwin and Herbert Spencer; but are they as great as Plato and Aristotle? Very few would seriously maintain that Plato and Aristotle have ever been equaled, much less surpassed.

"Greek sculpture, by almost universal consent, is unexcelled. The work of Phidias has no rival unless it be the work of Michael Angelo. Greek poetic genius finds transcendent expression in Homer, one of the four or five greatest figures in the world's literature, and the dramas of Sophocles, Euripides and Æschylus take their place with the dramas of Shakespeare. Dante, of the thirteenth century, and Goethe, of the eighteenth century, have no peers today. The great story-tellers,' Mrs. Martin reminds us, 'appeared, as was fitting, in the childhood of the race. The writers of the Old Testament were delightful raconteurs. Ruth is the most lovely of idyls, the stories of Adam and Eve, Joseph and his brethren, Moses and Pharaoh's daughter, Samson and Delilah, are unsurpassable as tales, while the story of the Exodus and the adventures of the children of Israel in the wilderness are told with unending charm and epic fire. As for animal stories, fables, etc., Æsop, writing seven centuries before Christ, has never been surpassed for point and brevity as well as for practical common sense. Boccaccio (1313) and Cervantes (1547) can hardly be said to have been outdone by any of the countless numbers of story-tellers who in our day are pouring out such a flood of fiction that one is sometimes almost led to believe that the world is entering upon its second childhood."

"Coming next to men of action and statesmen, Mrs. Martin names four as being of the first rank, namely, Alexander, Caesar and Pericles, who lived before Christ, and Napoleon, who belongs to the nineteenth century. 'We may say,' she continues, 'that there seem to have been in history about thirty-five men of absolutely first rank. These are Raphael, Michael Angelo, Phidias, Ictinus, Homer, Shakespeare, Demosthenes, Goethe, Æschylus, Beethoven, Aristotle, Newton, Euclid, Plato, Dante, Kant, Saint Paul, Pericles, Darwin, Moses, Cicero, Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, Jesus, Buddha, Confucius, Mahomet, Socrates, Columbus, Thucydides, Hipparchus, Hippocrates, Hannibal, Washington.' If Cicero, Thucydides, Hipparchus, Hippocrates, Hannibal, Columbus, Washington and Darwin be omitted from this list, as possibly not measuring up to the first rank, we have twenty-seven names. 'Of these twenty-seven men of transcendent genius,' Mrs. Martin comments, 'eleven were produced by one small district. Ten of them were brought forth by one small city about the size of Fall River, Mass., or Paterson, N. J. The little city of Athens produced in a few years more men of consummate genius than did all the millions of inhabitants of China, Arabia, India, Palestine, Rome, Carthage and all of Europe breeding for two thousand years!'

"But surely, it will be objected, genius is not the only standard of progress. Mankind, though it may not produce today the equals of the intellectual prodigies of the past, is nevertheless advancing in industrial and scientific efficiency, in moral insight, in democratic culture. Mrs. Martin meets this objection in a series of chapters.

"The fact that we have more things than we ever had before and can go to more places and 'get there' more rapidly, is not necessarily, she contends, a sign of progress. 'I detest,' she quotes Herbert Spencer as saying, 'that conception of social progress which presents as its aim increase of population, growth of wealth, spread of commerce. In this ideal of human existence there is contemplated quantity only, and not quality. Instead of an immense amount of life of low type, I would far sooner see half the amount of life of a high type. A prosperity which is exhibited in board of trade tables, year by year increasing their totals, is, to a large extent, not a prosperity at all, but adversity.' In spite of all our wealth, the blight of poverty, with its accompanying sickness, suffering, crime, insanity and vice, continues. The social disease manifested in 'atrophy and hypertrophy,' in 'extremities bleeding at the bottom, bloating at the top, decay in both,' is a portent of the modern world. It was not known in Athens. 'Improvements in machinery,' Mrs. Martin continues, 'have rendered the lot of the workers in some respects harder than before. Machinery,' she says, 'is the great disappointment of the modern world. We have quadruple-expansion engines which have a thirty-seven thousand horse-power, but they have not rendered less arduous the labor of coal miners. The sewing-machine was hailed as the deliverer of the sewing woman, but since its invention the sweating system has spread. The digging of the Suez canal brought India four thousand miles nearer to Europe, but India remains as miserable and poverty-stricken as before. Ocean freight rates on wheat from England to the United States have dropped to one-third in thirty-five years, but twelve millions of people, it is reported, remain in that country on the verge of starvation.' The argument proceeds:

"Many modern inventions, instead of being sources of pride, should be occasions to us of the deepest humiliation, and others are only suggestive of the varied misery whose existence demanded their invention. Thus ingenious firearms witness to burglary and need of self-defense and the sleepless hatred between men; varieties of medicine indicate new varieties of disease, while surgery points to the failure of the whole science of medicine, even as charities reveal the depth of national poverty and the breakdown of the national economies; the police force marks the extent of national crime; insane asylums, prisons, tell their own story, as do the mountains of false hair, legs, arms, and the annual consumption in the United States alone of twenty millions of false teeth!"

"The real point at issue, as Mrs. Martin sees it, is summed up in the question: Is it possible to point to the modern world and say, 'Here are men of a more developed type, more intelligent, healthier, more moral, and made so by our vast improvements in the material conditions of life?' She herself does not see how this question can be answered in the affirmative. In her eyes, modern civilization is a Frankenstein that already threatens to destroy its makers. Very much of our modern activity appeals to her as 'sound and fury signifying nothing.' As she puts it:

"The enormous number of inventions which are daily rendering the mechanism of our existence more complex may be roughly divided into four classes, those whose purpose is:

"1. To make more things.

"2. To get there more quickly, or to communicate more quickly.

"3. To kill men faster.

"4. To alleviate suffering.

"These, then, would appear to be the leading ideals of our age. To have more things; to get there quickly; to kill men rapidly; and to save pain.

"There is one element common to the first three classes of invention—they are designed to save time. The mammoth reaper which mows a county in a few days, the express train with its sixty miles an hour, the marine cable bringing an answer from the antipodes in a few minutes, the machine guns which cut down an army like a field of timothy, or the torpedo-boats which sink a navy—down to the latest egg-beater and corkscrew, are all designed to save time. We may almost say that the whole aim of man's ingenuity, embodied in thousands upon thousands of contrivances, has been directed toward the one sole object of saving time. His railroads, trolleys, canals, tunnels, cables, elevators, bicycles, automobiles, etc., are all for the purpose of enabling him to save time in getting there. His telegraphs, telephones, etc., are devised in order to save time in sending

messages. His myriad machines are invented for the purpose of saving time in producing more things. His Gatling guns, torpedoes, automatic firing rifles, etc., are designed to save time in killing men. . . .

“And what is the result?”

“The result is that men have less time now than they have ever had since the world began.”

“Mrs. Martin is equally emphatic in denying any substantial moral progress. In the matter of ethical theory, she agrees with Buckle in feeling that advance has not only not taken place, but is not possible. To do good to others; to sacrifice for their benefit your own wishes; to love your neighbor as yourself; to forgive your enemies; to restrain your passions; to honor your parents; to respect those who are set over you—these and a few others, according to Buckle, are the sole essentials of morals, and they have been known for thousands of years. In the matter of moral practice, can it be contended that our present age is supreme? On the contrary, Mrs. Martin avers, we are not as honest, as temperate, as just, as brave, or as public-spirited as the ancient Greeks.

“When she comes to the question of the diffusion of intelligence, she is still skeptical. Even granting that we have today a far larger number of good, average intelligences than in the past, can this fact be said to constitute progress in any real sense? Mrs. Martin replies:

“Progress concerns itself only with quality; it means the increased power of human faculty, not the mere numerical increase of human beings.

“This is perfectly clear if one reflects a moment upon what took place in the past, during the march from the anthropoid age up to, say, Shakespeare. Suppose at any step of this ascent it had been asserted that to multiply the species in its then stage would be progress; suppose, for instance, that a community of apes, being fairly well fed and merrily engaged in pelting one another with cocoanuts in the forest primeval, should have decided that the multiplication of apes in this (to them) satisfactory condition should be esteemed progress. Obviously they would have been mistaken. Progress meant moving toward Shakespeare, and progress could not take place until the anthropoid ape passed up into a higher species. This is as true of our stage as it has been of any previous one.”

“Genuine progress, in Mrs. Martin’s sense of the word, takes place when certain individuals emerge from the common level and establish a higher standard of human capacity and excellence. The problem of progress is therefore synonymous with the problem of producing great men. She says:

“The ideal aim of society is the production of men of genius, because it is through the activities of these that mankind acquires the means of its highest development and the satisfaction of its deepest needs. A society adopting such an end as its goal would find all grades of labor falling each into its just and honorable place, being each contributive, inasmuch as in it lay, to the attainment of the consciously realized common end.

“The ideal of democracy is a horizontal society, but every day is demonstrating more and more clearly that this ideal is unattainable because in the nature of things impossible. Society is not horizontal; it is perpendicular. It is not flat like the sea; it grows upward like a tree toward the light. The Greek method of trying to discover justice and apply it to society, on the hypothesis that society was perpendicular (that is, naturally disposed in sections one above the other like a tree), might have led to success. It is becoming increasingly evident that our efforts to achieve justice, based upon the false hypothesis that society is level like the sea, can never solve our problems. Justice is within the bounds of attainment to a society which realizes that it has at the heart of its life a common aim—to produce the fruit of the tree—and where each individual aims at fulfilling the function to which it is best adapted toward that common end.”

“This train of argument inevitably culminates in a plea for eugenics; but eugenics in its present stage holds out what Mrs. Martin can regard only as a somewhat desolating prospect. She declares in concluding:

“No more alluring prospect could be held up to the sorrowing and impatient lover of his kind than that propounded by the eugenicist. Think of breeding poets to order like Saint Andreasberg canaries, or Abraham Lincolns as required! Think of winning blue ribbons with lovely young girls and athletic boys bred and groomed for the show! Think of securing Rockefellers or Carnegies in one’s family at will, and thus successfully replenish the family coffers!

“Alas for the vanity of these hopes! Eugenics in its present amorphous condition, while it presents no end which seems to be unattainable, presents no beginning which seems to be feasible. Many decades must be passed in the bare effort to accustom men to the idea. Long, long years the deliberate improvement of human breeds must be discussed and dreamed of before it can be done. For this, which is the most stupendous task man has ever attempted, will need his all of intelligence, will, endurance, and foresight.”—*Current Literature*.

A PRACTICAL SELF-EXAMINATION ON LOVE

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.”—2 Cor. 13:5.

It seems impossible to describe love, this wonderful quality without which nothing is acceptable in the sight of God! The Apostle does not attempt to define love, but contents himself with giving us some of its manifestations. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it. The fact is that love, like life and light, is difficult to define; and our best endeavors to comprehend it are along the lines of its effects. It is of God; it is god-likeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts—supervising all the human attributes and seeking to control them. Where love is lacking, the results are more or less evil; where love is present, the results differ according to the degree of love, and are proportionately good.

In the Christian an outward manifestation of amiability, meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., is not sufficient, either in God’s sight or in his own. These graces must be produced by the spirit of love, filling and expanding within his own heart. Many of the graces of the Spirit are recognized by the unregenerate and are imitated as marks of good breeding, and in many cases are successfully worn as a cloak or mask, covering hearts and sentiments wholly antagonistic to the holy spirit of love.

The measure of our appreciation of divine love will be the measure of our zeal in conforming our characters to the divine pattern. A naturally rough, uncouth, depraved disposition may require a long time, after the grace of divine love enters the heart, before that grace is manifest in all the thoughts and words and acts of the outward man. Others, on the contrary, of more gentle birth and cultured training, may, without the grace of God within, have many of the outward refinements. None but him who reads the heart is competent, therefore, to judge as to who have and who have not received this grace, and of the degree of its development in their hearts; but each one may judge for himself, and each one begotten of this holy Spirit, love, should seek to let its light so shine out,

through all the avenues of communication with his fellow-creatures, as to glorify his Father in Heaven and “show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.”—1 Pet. 2:9.

Amongst the “gifts” of early Apostolic times, prophecy, or oratory, was one highly commended. Knowledge of the mysteries of God was also highly commended, and large faith was reckoned as being amongst the chief of Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and Love were absent, he would be nothing—a mere cipher—not a member of the new creation at all, since love is the very spirit of the begetting to the new nature.

What a wonderful test this is! The Apostle Paul counsels, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.” Let us each apply the test to himself: Whether I am something or nothing in God’s estimation is to be measured by my love for him, for his brethren, for his cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies, rather than by my knowledge, or fame, or oratory!

Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the holy Spirit of love; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the Spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought him. In the measure of character, therefore, we are to put Love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness to and acceptance with the Lord.

LOVE IS THE SECRET OF TRUE POLITENESS

Having given us such a conception of the importance of Love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not—how it operates and how it does not operate, or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself and inquire within:

Have I such a love, especially for the household of faith.

as leads me to suffer considerable and for a long time, and yet to be kind? Am I patient with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions? Am I patient even with those who are out of the way, realizing that the great adversary blinds the minds of the masses and remembering that this manifestation of love was very prominent in our Lord Jesus, who was patient with his opponents?

Am I kind in my methods, seeking to guard my manner and my tones, knowing that they have much to do with every affair of life? Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts? Do I think of and am I considerate of others? Do I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle in the home, in his place of business, in the Church—everywhere. In proportion as perfect love is attained the constant effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, like the thought which prompts them, full of patience and kindness. With the child of God these qualities are not to be mere outward adornments, they cannot be; on the contrary, they are fruits of the Spirit—growths from or results of having come into fellowship with God, having learned of him, received of his Spirit of holiness, of love.

Have I the love that "envieth not," the love that is generous, so that I can see others prosper and rejoice in their prosperity, even if, for a time, my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is true generosity, the very reverse of jealousy and envy, which spring from a perverted nature. The root of envy is selfishness; envy will not grow upon the root of love. Love rejoices with them that rejoice, in the prosperity of every good word and work, and in the advancement in Christian grace and in the divine service of all who are actuated by the divine Spirit.

Have I the love that is humble, that "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up"? the love that tends to modesty, that is not boastful not lifted up? Have I the love that would prompt to good deeds, not to be seen of men, but that would do the same if no one saw or knew but God only? that boasts neither of its knowledge nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift comes from the Father? And do I make return to him in love and service for every mercy? Boasting over self-esteem has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The spirit of the Lord is the spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate one's self, and not to think too highly of his character and attainments.

Have I the love which is courteous, "doth not behave itself unseemly"? Pride is the root out of which grows much of the unseemly conduct, impoliteness, so common to those who think themselves somebody, either intellectually or financially. Politeness has been defined as love in trifles; courtesy as love in little things. The secret of politeness is either surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have the heart-love which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the love which is unselfish, which "seeketh not her own" interests exclusively, which might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others? or have I, on the contrary, the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the conveniences, comfort and rights of others? To have love in this particular means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and will prefer rather to suffer a wrong than to do a wrong; to suffer an injustice than to do an injustice.

LOVE BEGINS AT HOME

Nothing in this signifies that one should neglect the caring for and providing in every way for those dependent upon him by the ties of nature, in order that he may do good to others. In every sense, "love begins at home." The proper thought, as we gather it is that men and women, possessed of the spirit of perfect love, would not think exclusively of their own interests in any of the affairs of life. Put into exercise, this element of Love would have a great influence upon all the affairs of life, inside as well as outside the home and family.

Have I the love which is good tempered, "not easily provoked" to anger—love that enables me to see both sides of a question, that gives me the spirit of a sound mind, which enables me to perceive that exasperation and violent anger are not only unbecoming but, worse than that, injurious to those toward whom they may be directed, and also injurious in their effect upon my own heart and body?

There may be times when love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and this might

come under the head of anger, using that word in a proper sense, in regard to a righteous indignation, exercised for a loving purpose, for doing good; but it should be exercised then only for a time. If justly angry we should see to it that we sin not either with our lips, or in our hearts, in which, at no time, may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments toward those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be easily provoked is to have a bad temper, fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offense. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of love; and whoever is on the Lord's side and seeking to be pleasing to him and to attain to an overcomer's position should jealously guard himself against this general besetment of our day. To whatever extent this disposition is fostered, or willingly harbored, or not fought against, it becomes an evidence of a deficiency and imperfection of our development in the holy Spirit of our Father, and of the deficiency of our likeness to our Lord Jesus, our Pattern.

Very few of the evidences of a wrong spirit receive from one's self as much kindness and as many excuses for their continuance as this one. But however much natural depravity and heredity and nervous disorders may tend toward this spirit of fretfulness, taciturnity and touchiness, every heart filled with the Lord's Spirit must oppose this disposition to evil in his flesh, and must wage a good warfare against it.

It will not do to say, "It is my way," for all the "ways" of the fallen nature are bad; and it is the business of the new creature to overcome the old nature in this as well as other works of the flesh and the devil. In few ways can we show to our friends and households more than in this the power of the grace of love. This grace, as it grows, should make every child of God sweet tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of love in the daily affairs of life.

LOVE THINKS NO EVIL

Have I the spirit of love which "thinketh no evil," which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults in others, not attributing to them evil motives? Have I the love which seeks always to interpret the conduct of others charitably, to make all possible allowance for errors in judgment rather than to impugn the motives of the heart? Perfect love is good intentioned itself; it prefers and so far as possible, endeavors to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not treasure up animosities and suspicions, nor manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs of evil intentions out of trivial affairs. "Faults are thick where love is thin" is a very wise proverb.

But where love passes over offenses and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this does not mean that love would treat evil-doers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper or even necessary to take some notice of the offenses to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested—nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible, doing all that could be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrong.

"LOVE REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY"

Have I the love that is sincere, that "rejoiceth not in iniquity [in-equity], but rejoiceth in the truth"? Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with right, and so out of harmony with the wrong, that I am grieved with evils wherever encountered and sympathize with all who fall into evil or who are beset with temptations? Am I so opposed to the wrong that I would not encourage it even if it brought advantage to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests?

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the holy Spirit, perfect love, should guard carefully this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness or goodness is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect "love rejoiceth not in iniquity" under any circumstances or conditions and would have no sympathy but only sorrow in the fall of another, even if it should mean his own advancement.

The love of God, which the Apostle here describes as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above all selfishness and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more distinctly discerned and always firmly adhered to at any cost. However profitable error might be, love could

take no part in it and could not desire the reward of evil. But it does take pleasure in the truth—truth upon every subject, and especially in the truth of divine revelation, however unpopular the truth may be; however much persecution its advocacy may involve; however much it may cost the loss of the friendship of this world and of those who are blinded by the god of this world. The spirit of love has such an affinity for the truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress or whatever may come against the truth or its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of him or ashamed of his Word; and of all such he declares that he will be ashamed when he comes to be glorified in his saints.

Have I the love that "beareth all things"? that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin and everything that is contrary to Love? that is both able and willing to endure, for the cause of God, reproaches, reproofs, insults, losses, misrepresentations and even death? "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith"—the very life and center of which faith is the holy Spirit of love for the Lord and for those that are His and, sympathetically, for the world. Perfect love can bear up under all circumstances and, by God's grace, bring us off conquerors and "more than conquerors through him that loved us."—1 John 5:4; Rom. 8:37.

LOVE IS NOT SUSPICIOUS

Have I the love that believeth all things? that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced so to do by indisputable evidences? that would rather believe good than evil about everybody? that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Perfect love is not suspicious, but is, on the contrary, disposed to be trustful. It

acts on the principle that it is better, if necessary, to be deceived a hundred times than to go through life soured by a suspicious mind—far better than to accuse or suspect even one person unjustly. This is the merciful disposition, as applied to thoughts; and of it the Master said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5:7) The unmerciful, evil-thinking mind is father to unmerciful conduct toward others.

Have I the love that "hopeth all things," that perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the love that "endureth all things," that continues to hope for the best in regard to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance? Perfect love is not easily discouraged. This is the secret of Love's perseverance: having learned of God, and having become a partaker of his holiness, it trusts in him and hopes undismayed for the fulfillment of his gracious covenant, however dark the immediate surroundings.

This hopeful element of love is one of the striking features in the perseverance of the saints, enabling them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Its hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offended, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged or put to flight, the spirit of love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. Love's hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the veil, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages.

Let us, Beloved, with all our getting, get love—not merely in word but in deed and in truth—the love whose roots are in the new heart, begotten in us by our heavenly Father's love, and exemplified in the words and deeds of our dear Redeemer. All else sought and gained will be but loss and dross unless, with all, we secure love!

DO NOTHING WHEREBY THY BROTHER STUMBLETH

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."—Rom. 14:21.

Very evidently the Apostle was not in these words endeavoring to put any bounds upon the liberties of God's people. Elsewhere he declares that the liberty of Christ makes us free. But he points out that while we have liberty to do things not sinful and not injurious to ourselves, yet it is part of our privilege and of our contract with the Lord to abstain from anything which would be injurious to others; and that we should seek to regulate our lives so as to be a help to others and not use our liberty merely for the flesh, for self-gratification. We are representatives of righteousness and should so deal with others, "Doing good unto all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith."—Gal. 6:10.

In this text the Apostle is not referring to a matter where there might be merely a difference of opinion as between meat and vegetable diet. Such a question each should decide for himself. If one finds a flesh diet injurious to him, he should abstain. If, on the contrary, he finds that flesh diet is beneficial to him, he should use it. The Apostle's thought in connection with the eating of meat was in reference to religious convictions. In his time it was the custom for people to eat meat which had been offered to idols. No Jew would care to eat such meat. With a Christian it would be different. He would understand that it did not affect the meat to wave it before wooden idols, etc. Yet the Apostle goes on to show that to some it would seem a crime to eat meat that had been offered to an idol.

The Apostle's thought is that our conscience is the most important thing we have to deal with and should always be obeyed. The brother who would violate some one's conscience by eating the meat would be stumbling and harming that person. Thus a stronger brother would injure a weaker brother. And this was what the Apostle meant. In the case of a brother who could not see as clearly as we, not only should we not seek to break down his conscience, but we should not permit even our influence to break it down.

It would be very proper for us in the case of a weak brother to explain the matter from our standpoint. This would not be seeking to break down his conscience, but to educate it. Then, if he should eat such meat with impunity—without the disapprobation of his conscience—we have thus made him a strong brother rather than a weak one; and this should be to his advantage. The Apostle urges that we should be on the lookout for the interests of the brethren.

SELF-DENIAL IN THE INTEREST OF OTHERS

St. Paul here is evidently laying down a broad principle of self-denial in the interest of others—a principle which applies primarily to the church, but also to the world. He applies

this principle, not merely to religion and to eating meat offered to idols, but he extends the matter, saying, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

There might be some weak brother to whom wine might be a great temptation, a snare. The Apostle urges that, while there is nothing in the Scripture to forbid the use of wine, and while he really recommended it to Timothy, whose stomach was weak, nevertheless, our liberties should be limited by the surroundings. We know that wine was used much more than now, and is much more used in Europe than in this country; nevertheless, we know that the effect of alcohol is much more hurtful to the nerves of people now, because the race is so much weaker than in our Lord's day.

When there was no particular danger along this line our Lord and the Apostles seem to have used these things with moderation. They also counseled moderation—"Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31); and we should not use our liberty in any way that would stumble a brother in any sense of the word. God's people are to have love, to be willing to sacrifice self-gratification in the interest of others.

So far as we are able to discern, intoxication is one of the most terrible evils scourging our race at the present time. Many are so weak through the fall, by heredity, that they are totally unable to resist the influence of intoxicants. Is it too much to ask of those who have consecrated their lives to the Lord, to righteousness and to the blessing of others, that they should deny themselves in this matter, and thus lay down some liberties and privileges in the interest of the brethren, and of the world in general?

Similar arguments might be used respecting the use of tobacco, cards and the various implements which the adversary uses in luring mankind into sin. The whole, be it noted, is the argument of love. In proportion as we grow in the graces of our Lord, in his spirit of love, we shall be glad, not only to put away all filthiness of the flesh for our own sakes, thus to be more like the Lord, but also, at the instance of love, we shall desire to put away from us everything that might have an evil influence upon others, whatever we might consider our personal liberties to be in respect to them.

Another illustration of this principle would be in the observance of Sunday. The Jews thought it wrong even to build a fire on the Sabbath; and any one who was found picking up sticks on that day was stoned to death. We do not consider it wrong to do on Sunday whatever might be done on

other days. But would it be wise to use this liberty? Our conduct might have an injurious effect upon others and so discount all that we could say to them along religious lines. They would say: "These people are not good. They do not keep God's holy day." They would not understand.

It would be well for us to keep Sunday more particularly than any other people in the world. In fact, we very likely keep it better than others; and this is right. This error of Christendom has worked good for us. We can have a day full of spiritual enjoyment. If the world understood it as we do there would be no Sunday to keep. On our part we would be very glad if there could be three or four Sundays in a week. In fact, with us, every day should be Sunday. We are seeking to serve God, the main object of life being to preach the Gospel, and to enjoy the "good tidings"—the message of God's Word.

Our relationship to God is that of the new creation, a heart relationship; and the blessing which the Lord gives us is as newly begotten children—not along lines of the flesh, but along the lines of the spiritual and of heart development, which shall ultimately be perfected in the resurrection.

True, whom the Son makes free "shall be free indeed" (John 8:36), and we should all seek to "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Gal. 5:1); but it is also true that we should be on guard lest we use our liberty in such a manner as to stumble others weaker than ourselves, not able to use the liberty of Christ discriminatingly, sometimes through lack of knowledge.

The liberty wherewith Christ makes free may be viewed from two standpoints; if it gives us liberty to eat without restraint, in a manner that the Jews were not at liberty to eat, it gives us liberty also to abstain; and whoever has the Spirit of Christ and is seeking to follow in his steps has already covenanted with the Lord to use his liberty, not in the promotion of his fleshly desires, ambitions and appetites, but in self-sacrifice, following in the footsteps of the Master, seeking to lay down his life, even, on behalf of the brethren—for their assistance. How different are these two uses of liberty! Its selfish use—as well as the selfish use of knowledge—would mean self-gratification, regardless of the interests of others; the loving use would prompt to self-sacrifice in the interests of others.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR BROTHER

Knowledge does not necessarily mean a great growth in spirituality. A mite of soap will make a very large air bubble; and so a comparatively little knowledge might puff one up greatly, without any solidity of character. There is, therefore, great advantage in measuring one's self by growth in love rather than by growth merely in knowledge—though, of course, to be great in both knowledge and love would be the ideal condition. The Apostle inculcates this same lesson, asserting, "Though I have all knowledge and have not love I am nothing."

Knowledge without love would be an injury; and to consider it otherwise would imply that real knowledge has not yet been secured; but to the contrary of this the same Apostle says, "If any man love God, the same is known of him." (1 Cor. 13:2; 8:3) We might have a great deal of knowledge and yet not know God and not be known or recognized by him; but no one can have a large development of true love in his character without personally knowing the Lord and having obtained the spirit of love through fellowship with him. Hence

the getting of love is sure to build us up substantially (thus avoiding the inflation of pride) in all the various graces of the Spirit, including meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, knowledge, wisdom from above and the spirit of a sound mind.

Love, after securing knowledge and liberty, will look about to see what effect the use of liberty might have upon others; and will perceive that by reason of differing mental conditions—perceptions, reasoning faculties, etc.—all could not have exactly the same standpoint of knowledge and appreciation of principles. Love, therefore, would forbid the use of knowledge and liberty if it perceived that their exercise might work injury to another.

EVERY VIOLATION OF CONSCIENCE WRONG

But why? What principle is involved that would make it incumbent upon one whose conscience is clear to consider the conscience of another? Why not let the person of a weak conscience take care of his own conscience, and eat or abstain from eating as he felt disposed? The Apostle explains that this would be right—if it were possible; but that the person of weaker mind, feebleness of reasoning powers, is likely to be weaker in every respect and, hence, more susceptible to the leadings of others, into paths which his conscience could not approve, because of his weaker reasoning powers or inferior knowledge.

One might, without violation of conscience, eat meat that had been offered to idols, or even sit at a feast in an idol temple, without injury to his conscience; but the other feeling that such a course was wrong, might endeavor to follow the example of his stronger brother, and thus might violate his conscience, which would make the act a sin to him.

Every violation of conscience, whether the thing itself be right or wrong, is a step in the direction of wilful sin. It is a downward course, leading further and further away from the communion and fellowship of the Lord, and into grosser transgressions of conscience and, hence, possibly leading to the second death. Thus the Apostle presents the matter: "And through thy knowledge shall the weak one perish—the brother for whom Christ died?" The question is not, Would it be a sin to eat the meat offered to idols? but, Would it be a sin against the spirit of love, the law of the new creation, to do anything which could reasonably prove a cause of stumbling to our brother, not only to the brethren in Christ, the church, but even to a fellow-creature according to the flesh?—for Christ died for the sins of the whole world.

Let us take our stand with the Lord and determine that, in regard to using our liberties in any manner that might do injury to others, we will refuse so to use them; and will rather sacrifice them for the benefit of others, even as our Master, our Redeemer, gave all that he had. Let us adopt the words of the Apostle and determine once for all that anything that would injure a brother we will not do—any liberty of ours, however reasonable in itself, that would work our brother's injury, that liberty we will not exercise; we will surrender it in his interest; we will sacrifice it; we will to that extent lay down our life for him.

"Thus sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh forevermore, that I make not my brother to stumble."—1 Cor. 8:13, R. V.

LORD'S GOAT AND SCAPE-GOAT

We have already shown in "Tabernacle Shadows of the Better Sacrifices" that Israel's "day of atonement" of old typified this Gospel age and the blessings to follow—in the Millennium; that now is the sacrificing time—from Jesus' baptism until His second advent in glory, and that then will come the time for the general application of the merit of the antitypical "better sacrifices" to mankind under the New Covenant. And we have also seen that the faithful Sacrificer (Head and body) will be the great antitypical Mediator between God and mankind in general.

Our readers have fully in mind also that the call of this age is for sacrificers only—to follow our Redeemer's footsteps of self-denial, even unto death. This was our Lord's proposal: "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it." (Matt. 10:39) St. Paul reiterated and expounded this saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God," for "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him."—Rom. 12:1; 2 Tim. 2:12.

APOSTLE SHOWS TYPE AND ANTITYPE MOST BEAUTIFULLY
St. Paul directly associates the sufferings of the Church

with the sufferings of the Redeemer, and both with the "better sacrifices" of the day of atonement. He says, pointing back to the type, "Let us go to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach." (Heb. 13:11-15) Here the Apostle refers to the fact that as our Lord Jesus fulfilled the antitype of the "bullock," we should fulfil the antitype of the "Lord's goat" of the day of atonement. As the "bullock" was slain, so our Lord fulfilled that feature by the consecration of his life to death at his baptism. As the "bullock's" body (except the fat and the blood) was then dragged outside the camp and burned, so our Lord suffered shame, ignominy, destruction of the flesh, to accomplish the antitype.

Likewise we, who have accepted the call of this age ("gather together my saints unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice"), should fulfil the antitype of the Lord's goat. As the body of that "Lord's goat" passed through the same experiences as those of the "bullock," so we should, like our Lord, first make a full covenant of sacrifice and then fulfill the burning of the flesh of the Lord's goat by suffering shame, ignominy and revilings, even unto death. Only those who thus suffer with the Redeemer for righteousness

sake will reign with him as the royal priesthood of the Millennium.

SCAPE-GOAT CLASS FAIL TO BEAR "HIS REPROACH"

The "scape-goat" shows a class which, after making consecration and being accepted and spirit-begotten, refuse or neglect to "go to him outside the camp bearing his reproach"—even unto death. This class does not repudiate the Redeemer, nor "the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified." As the "scape-goat" remained tied at the door of the Tabernacle, so these in antitype remain loyal, outwardly, to their consecration, but bound—as the Apostle declares, "who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage."

The Lord will "deliver" these, however, but not to the glory, honor and immortality which he will bestow upon the class antityping the Lord's goat. Their deliverance will mean tribulations, which will test their loyalty by forcing them into the "wilderness" of sorrow, disappointment, separation. They may suffer just as much tribulation as the Lord's goat class as they go unto death. The difference is that one class endures willingly, voluntarily, joyfully, while the other endures under compulsion of circumstances; or, failing so to endure, is cut off in the second death, and is not represented in the experiences of either of those goats.

Some erroneously think of the two goats as representing two different classes from start to finish. Not so; they represent the finished classes only—those who "sin wilfully" (Heb. 6:4-8 and 10:26, 27) being entirely ignored, because they fail entirely and go into the second death.

THE END OF THE RACE FULLY REVEALS OUR POSITION

Until the finish it may not be known where any of those consecrated to sacrifice may terminate their race. "Ye are called in one hope of your calling"—the hope that we may be of the Lord's goat class. Some for a time may appear to be fulfilling the part of the Lord's goat, but later they may "become weary and faint in their minds" and seem to fulfil the experiences typified in the scape-goat; yet eventually they may allow pride or some other form of selfishness to quench the holy Spirit whereby they were sealed and may be dropped entirely from the favor of God and treated as his enemies—and be destroyed in the second death.

NCBILITY CONQUERS MEANNESS

Nehemiah 6.—DECEMBER 10.

"The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"—Psa. 27:1.

After many difficulties Nehemiah's work had almost reached success when a great wail of distress went out. The poor Jews had been giving all of their time to the repairing of the walls and had thus cut off their income from other sources. In their zeal they went into debt in mortgages on their property. When the tax collectors came and the interest became due they were unable to meet these and so, destitution staring them in the face, a great wail went up. Disasters spread rapidly and a food riot was barely averted.

Nehemiah looked into the matter and found that the wealthy Jews had advanced money to their poor neighbors on mortgages at exorbitant interest rates, and they were thus profiting by the calamities of their brethren. He called them together and had a plain but kind talk with them respecting the brotherly obligations required by the law—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He gave them a practical exemplification of his good exhortations. The wealthy Jews were abashed. They acknowledged the injustice of their course and rectified matters. Here we see the power of noble character and good example in its influence upon others. As custom and example foster unjust methods and usage makes right in the minds of many, so likewise examples of justice are powerful in opposition to wrong. Thus every Christian owes it to himself and to God and the principles of righteousness which he represents, not only to take the proper stand, but also to let this stand for righteousness be known to others as reproofs of unrighteousness.

TREACHERY AND SLANDER IN OPPOSITION

No sooner had the prevailing difficulties been successfully combated than a new foe arose. The outside enemies, perceiving that the wall was about finished, and that only the hanging of the gates remained to complete the defenses of Jerusalem, tried new tactics. They professed a desire to reconsider the whole matter—to meet with Nehemiah for discussions of their business and fresh examination of his papers of authority from the King. But he replied that his work was a great one, very important, and that he could not take time for discussion. He had time to discuss with his brethren; he had time to show them as the people of God the right and

On the other hand, many are so slow of development, so slow to be quickened by the Lord's Spirit to sacrifice for the truth or for righteousness' sake, that it may for years appear as though they would belong to the "scape-goat" class. Yet later some of these receive the light of truth more clearly and by their noble self-sacrifices apparently show that they finish the race as members of the Lord's goat class.

Nothing is determined or fixed in respect to any of us until our tests have all been passed. St. Paul, after having sacrificed much, after having experienced many sufferings of Christ as a tentative member of the Lord's goat class, and even after being honored of the Lord as a special mouthpiece, wrote: "I keep my body under (in subjection to the new will and its consecration to sacrifice), lest after having preached to others I myself might be a castaway."—1 Corinthians 9:27.

Brethren, the Lord's goat's experiences are the type of what the Lord would have fulfilled in us if we would attain the crown of glory, the honor and the immortality promised to the faithful—the bride class. There will indeed be a secondary class of "virgins" who foolishly hold back from sacrificing their little all, and who consequently will fail to become members of the bride of the Lamb. These, after demonstrating an inferior loyalty, will follow the bride into scenes of glory as her honored servants. (Psalm 45:14.) These are represented in the scape-goat.

If any reader realizes that he has not been zealously and voluntarily suffering with his Savior, laying down time and strength, reputation and life in his service he is realizing his danger of being counted in as one of the scape-goat class, or worse. Such should quickly arouse himself or herself and appeal in prayer to the Master for grace and faith to walk in his steps of voluntary sacrifice. He should also seek to "arm himself with the same mind" that the Lord had by studying afresh the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God's Word. He should at once "Lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset (whichever weakness may be his special besetment) and run with patience the race set before him" in the gospel—the narrow way. He should indeed, Look unto Jesus, the Author of our faith, who is also to be the finisher of it. He should consider him lest he be weak and faint in his mind and thus fail to be an overcomer.—Heb. 12:1-3.

wrong of each important question, but he had no time to dispute about outside matters while his important mission was unfinished.

There is a lesson in this for Christians. We should always have time to discuss God's Word and His love with the brethren. We should always have time to give to everyone that asks a reason for the hope that is in us. But surely while important interests of God's cause are needing our attention we have no time to give to discussing outside questions which St. Paul denominates "science falsely so called." We are to have the same mind on the subject as St. Paul expressed, saying, "I have determined to know nothing amongst you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Anything relating to Jesus as God's anointed Son, the Messiah, or anything relating to his crucifixion and the hopes built thereon, St. Paul was ready to discuss at any time. The defense of this cause and subject was his special business in life. Although he was well educated and well informed on topics of general interest, he acted as though he were ignorant of those things that he might give all his influence and time to the one paramount matter—to the cause for which he was an ambassador.

Four times the outsiders sought to converse with Nehemiah; four times he declined, not only because of the importance of the work he was doing, but because additionally he perceived that they were merely urging this as a pretext for the conference which was to be held in a village twenty miles from Jerusalem on neutral ground, and during Nehemiah's absence they might overpower the garrison of Israel and destroy the work already accomplished, or they might do him violence at the conference, or both.

EVIL SPEAKING AND SLANDER

Finally, the enemies resorted to the usual weapons of slander. They did not charge directly that Nehemiah sought to make himself king of the Jews, with Jerusalem its capital, and that he was secretly employing men to speak favorably for him amongst the people, but in an open letter sent declared that these things were commonly reported amongst all the people—they were "common gossip;" and by way of giving personality and force the letter added, "And Gesham saith

that thou and the Jews think to rebel, for which cause thou buildest the wall; and that thou desirest to be their king."

This message was sent by Sanballat in a complimentary way as though he were a friend and hoped to save Nehemiah from trouble with the king, and he still urged him to come to the counsel which was to be held for his interest. Nehemiah's answer was quite to the point: "There are no such things done as thou sayest; thou feignest them out of thine own heart." The object evidently was to alarm the Jews and to thus discourage the completion of their work.

How cruel are the multitudinous methods of slander! How contrary they are to everything that is right, not to mention the highest of all standards, Christian love! Nevertheless, how frequently God's people are ensnared by the spirit of slander. How grievous are the wrongs thus accomplished; how unbearable is the injustice inflicted; how dreadful are the responsibilities incurred! Assuredly those who lend their lips to slander are correspondingly opening their hearts to the adversary. Not only is evil speaking condemned in the Scrip-

tures but also by all noble men and women, even though heathen. Even when Nehemiah's life was threatened, his consciousness of loyalty to God and of divine guidance kept him without fear. We close by quoting the poem, "Three Gates of Gold":—

"If you are tempted to reveal
A tale someone to you has told
About another, let it pass,
Before you speak, three gates of gold—

"Three narrow gates—First, 'Is it true?'
Then, 'Is it needful?' In your mind
Give the truthful answer. And the next
Is last and narrowest, 'Is it kind?'

"And if, to reach your lips at last
It passes through these gateways three,
Then you may tell the tale, nor fear
What the result of speech may be."

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

LIFE RIGHTS WERE NEEDED

Question.—Could Christ become the Everlasting Father to the world if he did not have earthly life-rights at his disposal?

Answer.—If our Lord Jesus did not possess the right to earthly life as an asset, in order to give that right to Adam and his race during the Millennial reign, then he could not properly be spoken of as the Father of that race. He could not regenerate the race unless he had a life to give, an earthly life.

WE ARE "IN CHRIST A SWEET SAVOR TO GOD"

Question.—Should the sweet incense burned by the high priest, and which represented the perfections of the man Jesus, be understood as having been offered also by the members of the body of the high priest, the under priests? If so, how was this shown?

Answer.—Since there is nothing in the account in Leviticus that says that the incense was offered a second time, it is rather improbable that it was offered twice. And yet the thought is there that the sacrifice of the church, made acceptable by the Atonement effected through Jesus' death, must continue to be presented until death, that these members might eventually be received into glory. "As our Lord was, so are we, in the world." As he was rendering obedience day by day, so are we rendering obedience day by day. As the spirit of loving zeal was demonstrated in his case, so in our case; otherwise we should not be permitted to be members of that body.

So we might say that the incense which he offered up, in a certain sense and to a certain degree, represented the whole church, which is his body; for in harmony with the divine intention, before the foundation of the world, he was to be the Forerunner, the Representative and the Advocate of those who would be accepted as his members. Hence, in offering up his own perfections, he was offering up that which would, by imputation, be our perfection, as his members.

In view of the fact that nothing was said about offering the incense the second time, and since we do not go into the Holy as individuals, but as members of his body, we are safe

in saying that we are, "in Christ, a sweet savor to God," though a bad savor to the world. "Be ye, therefore, followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor." "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ." (Eph. 5:1, 2; 2 Cor. 2:15; Rev. 8:3, 4.) "Therefore, let us offer the sacrifices of praise to God continually"; "for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."—Heb. 13:15, 16.

ALL IN THE COURT IN FAVOR WITH GOD

Question.—Could any one be in the Court condition without being in God's favor?

Answer.—The Court of the Tabernacle represented a condition of divine favor. But the Tabernacle represented divine favor in a still higher sense and degree.

In the present time the Court represents the condition of all those who, exercising faith in God, are approaching nearer and nearer to him and his service. Such are in favor with God because of their spirit of loyalty to him, which leads them to go on step by step to know and to do his perfect will. God's perfect will respecting all those called in this age is that they shall present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to him through the imputed merit of their Advocate—their Redeemer. But if, after full opportunity to know and to do his will, these hold back and refuse to make a consecration, from that time onward theirs will be a backward course in which there will be less and less of divine favor, until they will be back again in the world. But even then God's purposes for them are generous, for they may share with mankind in general the gracious provisions of the New Covenant for the thousand years of Messiah's reign.

Those who make the covenant of sacrifice and thereby pass from the Court into the Holy enter into the highest favor with God, as children of God and joint-heirs with Jesus. But if, later, they fearfully hold back and neglect to complete their sacrifice, they may not remain in so close a fellowship, but will eventually be expelled into the Court. There they will, indeed, be in God's favor as the great company class, unless they entirely draw back, in which event their portion will be the second death.

EZRA'S BIBLE CLASS

Nehemiah 8.—DECEMBER 17.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."—Psa. 19:7.

Ezra apparently returned to Babylon, there to prosecute his study of the Law and his collating thereof. We next hear of him thirteen years after, again a prominent figure at Jerusalem. Nehemiah's work on the city wall and its gates was completed a week before the Jewish new year. That week was used for rest and refreshment, and on that day (about October 1st) a general convocation or public gathering took place in an open square just behind the temple. There a platform or pulpit was erected for Ezra who was the scribe or learned man of the occasion, who read to the people from morning until noon out of the Book of the law. It was read in sections; The priests and Levites commingled themselves with the people and explained to them the meaning of the various sections. The people, out of respect while the law was being read, stood, and then sat on the ground while it was being discussed.

It was an immense Bible class and aroused deep interest. As the people heard the words of the divine law, and realized

that they had failed to keep that law—even to the extent of their ability—they perceived the reason why the Lord had allowed various chastisements, captivities, etc., to come upon them. They perceived that such was His covenant with them; that obedience on their part was to be rewarded with blessings and prosperity, and disobedience with punishment, captivity, etc. The realization of sin brought sorrow and tears—the people wept sore.

Then Nehemiah, Ezra and others explained to the people, directly and through the Levites, that this was not a time for tears, but, on the contrary, a time for rejoicing. They were not only to remember the severity of God in punishing the wrongdoings of their fathers, but they were to remember also his mercies now returning to them, and especially to appreciate the fact that he had again sent to them the law, and thus indicated his willingness to receive them back again to his favor. They were reminded that the very law which foretold the punishments declared also God's mercy, and that when

they would repent he would forgive and restore them to his favor. Thus their tears were turned to smiles, their mourning to rejoicing.

Nehemiah's message was: "Go your way; eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions unto those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord; neither be ye grieved, for the Lord is your strength."

THEY READ THE LAW DISTINCTLY

The declaration is that they "caused the people to understand the law." There is evidently great need of just such instruction today. Nominal Spiritual Israel is in a dilapidated condition because of the lack in understanding God's Word. We seem to be in the time referred to by the Prophet, saying, "There shall be a famine in the land," saith the Lord, "not a famine for bread, neither a famine for water, but a famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord."—Amos 8:11.

Many imagine that they are familiar with the teachings of the Bible, when in reality they are familiar with one or another of the creeds of the darker past, all of which contain some truth with considerable error, we must all admit. Our great mistake has been in assuming that our confessions of faith and all of our creeds strongly and fully represent the Bible's teachings. This mistake has already been costly. Thousands of the most generous minds have been turned away from the Bible by the mistaken supposition that the creeds properly represent its teachings. Assured that they could no longer endorse any Christian creed as a whole, these bright minds have renounced them and the Bible as well.

The necessary thing to be done is to resume Bible study, and that without our creedal spectacles. Our forefathers who made our creeds participated more or less in persecutions of each other which we today entirely condemn. They were as honest, doubtless, as are we, but they had less light—they lived in a darker age. The belief that God is torturing thousands of millions of His creatures led some of our well-intentioned forefathers to torture one another in God's name, in a manner which we today cannot endorse as being either just or loving or Christlike.

Why then should we assume that those creeds are correct in all particulars? Should we not the rather see that if so

good a man as brother John Calvin committed so great a mistake as to sign the warrant which sent a brother Christian, Servetus, to the stake, this proves that there was something wrong with Calvin's theological ideas, which lie at the foundation of nearly all of our Protestant creeds?

With the wonderful Bibles which we possess today, found in nearly every Christian home, we should know more of its teachings than any of our forefathers could possibly have known. Not only has education aided in this respect, but our Bibles are conveniently formed, and we have study-aids, in the form of concordances, marginal references, etc. Is it not time to strive as Levites and spiritual Israelites to turn afresh to the Bible and instruct the people respecting its teachings?

We are not advocating merely the reading of so many chapters a day, or the committing of verses to memory, nor the ordinary Sunday School lessons. We advocate a reconstruction of our faith upon the basis of the Bible only. Surely if all of God's people could take from their minds their creed spectacles and study the Word afresh in its own light, a great blessing would speedily follow. The Bible students would soon become one with each other and with the Father, and with the Lord Jesus Christ—the one church of the living God mentioned in the Scriptures, with one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.

THE POWER OF THE DIVINE LAW

There is a power for good in the Word of God which can be found nowhere else. Higher criticism has much responsibility in connection with the growing lawlessness of the world. "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul"—transforming the being. The higher critics in all of our colleges and seminaries are doing a terribly destructive work, in comparison to which the work of Voltaire, Thomas Paine and Robert Ingersoll were as nothing. It is safe to say that three-fourths of all the graduates of all colleges within the last thirty years have been unbelievers in the Bible, and that their influence has been used persistently to undermine the faith of others. The errors which led them to infidelity are liable to influence others. The Bible itself is a study, and only what it teaches should be believed whether favorable to or contrary to our former creeds.

"WHAT DOES IT MEAN?"

1 PETER 4:12, 19.

"It does not matter what it means, poor heart,
The dear Lord knows, to hear it is your part;
Nor think some strange thing happens unto you
Which he would not allow so if he knew.
He does know. In his all-wise fatherhood
He knows it, and allows it for your good.
He is not hard; you do not think he is
When in the dark you find your hand in his;
When it was light you tried to walk alone,
And thought the strength he gave you all your own.

"You did not ask what that last blessing meant;
Just smiled and took it, satisfied, content.
You did not think it strange. You thought he knew
And planned the sweet surprise which came to you.
Tried one, then do you take life's sweet and good,
Yet cannot trust that tender Fatherhood,
But think it makes mistakes whene'er it sends
Some hindrance which your eager haste offends?

"Or when he lets the wicked plot you harm,
And stir a whirlwind when you seek a calm,

You think it strange, this trial swift and keen,
And in your weakness ask, 'What does it mean?'

"I think the language of God's heart would read:
'I love my child, I note his slightest need;
I long to prosper him in all his ways,
To give him quiet nights and peaceful days,
But if I do, he'll lose himself from me,
My outstretched hand he will not wait to see;
I'll place a hindering wall before his feet;
There he will wait, and there we two will meet.

"I do it not in wrath for broken laws,
Or wilful disobedience, but because
I want him nearer, and I cannot wait
For him to come, for he might wander late.
My child will wonder, will not understand,
Still half in doubt he'll clasp my outstretched hand;
But when at last upon my heart he leans
He will have ceased to wonder what it means.' "

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

My Dear Pastor:—

I have just returned home, enjoying eight days at the convention. This convention was to me a great spiritual uplift, and I write to say that while I have never been in opposition to the vow, yet had never seen the necessity of making it my own until September 4, when present at the morning prayer, praise and testimony meeting. I ask your prayers that I may be able by God's grace to keep it until I stand complete in Him.

Yours in Christ,

THEODORE ANDERSON.

Dear Brother Russell:—

Inclosed you will find something I have copied from Oliver Spencer Halstead's book. Thought you might like it for THE TOWER.

F. BENNER.

"The Rev. Dr. Theodore Clapp, in his autobiography, says he had preached, at New Orleans, a zealous sermon for endless punishment; that after the sermon Judge W., who, says

he, was an eminent scholar and had studied for the ministry but relinquished his purpose because he could not find the doctrine of endless punishment and kindred dogmas, asked him to make out a list of texts in the Hebrew and Greek on which he relied for the doctrine. The Doctor then gives a detailed account of his studies in search of texts to give to the Judge.

"He began his study with the Old Testament in the Hebrew, and prosecuted it during that and the succeeding year, and yet was unable to find therein so much as an allusion to any suffering after death; that in the dictionary of the Hebrew language he could not discern a word signifying a place of punishment in a future state; that he could not find a single text in any form of phraseology which holds out threats of retribution beyond the grave; that to his utter astonishment it turned out that Orthodox critics of the greatest celebrity were perfectly familiar with these facts.