

that day—that glorious Millennial morning—that glorious resurrection morning when the kingdom would be established, and when the blessings of the Lord would be conferred first

upon his faithful, as shown in the parables, and that subsequently all the families of the earth should be blessed through that kingdom.—Matt. 25:1-30; Luke 19:11-127.

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CONVENTIONS ACROSS THE SEA

COMPLETION OF THE EDITOR'S TOUR

DEAR WATCH TOWER READERS:—At Edinburgh was our last stop in Scotland, our next convention having been arranged for Liverpool, England. On our arrival we were met by six representatives of the local church, who greeted us warmly in the name of our King, and made us comfortable. After a refreshing sleep we were ready for the convention sessions of Saturday and Sunday (May 16, 17)—five well-attended sessions, beginning with 300 and ending with 600, and averaging 400. Of these, probably 80 were friends from cities we did not have the time to visit—some of them coming considerable distances. Our topics were the same as at other points, except that on Sunday afternoon we had a Question and Answer meeting, lasting from 3 to 5. A free luncheon was served between the afternoon and evening sessions on both days, and was enjoyed by about 150. It is our hope that some good was accomplished by this convention also; that some who came from curiosity were deeply interested; that some already established were encouraged to “press on;” that some partially convinced were helped to full conviction respecting the great divine plan and the grand privilege of participating in it—now, in sufferings and reproaches, and hereafter in glorious services in the kingdom; and that some of those already clear in the truth were encouraged and more firmly established, and incited more than ever to “lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us [in some, one weakness; and in others, another],” and to “run with patience the race that is set before us in the gospel.” If kind words and fervent wishes and earnest hand-shakes speak of love and zeal, then surely we had abundant testimony of the devotion of the Liverpool church. The next morning thirty gathered at the depot, leaving other concerns in order to bid us a final adieu and to urge that we come again before long. Again, as we parted, the song-prayer was lifted heavenward—“God be with you till we meet again!”

Our next appointment was Birmingham, where we arrived about noon, and were met and welcomed at the depot by representatives of the local church. We could stay but the one day here; but had two sessions—3 to 5 and 7 to 9. At the afternoon session we spoke of the oneness of the church, the body of Christ, and the terms of our relationship to our Head; and saw that in no sense are we gathered to men or organizations, but to the Lord himself. “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” “They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” About 20 WATCH TOWER readers from outside cities attended. After a free luncheon, in which 55 participated, came the evening session—more particularly for the public—the topic being, “The Oath-bound Covenant.” Next morning we bade final farewells and resumed our journey.

Manchester was our next appointment. We reached there by noon and at 2:30 p. m. began another happy convention, in the usual Salford meeting room. The attendance (about 125) represented the deeply interested of that vicinity and of neighboring towns. The closest attention was given us while we endeavored to stir up the pure minds of all, by pointing out the oneness of the church as the members of Christ's body, and that we must all be “beheaded”—must all lose our own headship and self-will, in order that we may be acceptable as members of Christ's body, over which he is the only Lord and Head, and his will the only law or control. A free luncheon was then served—participated in most joyously by about 100. Then came our public meeting in the Town Hall, 6:30 to 8:45. Here a very intelligent audience of about 500 gave close attention for nearly three times as long as is their custom. We trust that some received the lesson of “The Oath-bound Covenant” into good and honest hearts, and that thus started, they will begin to read and to study the literature, without which there is little hope for full development under the blessings and privileges of the Lord's people in this “harvest” time.

The next day we had three sessions. At 11 a. m. and 3 p. m. we addressed the church on the necessity for putting on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand in this evil day. We pictured the race-course, called attention to its various degrees of progress in the fulfilling of the law of the new creation—namely, love. Our evening session at 6:30 was again a public one in the “Pendleton Town Hall.” Again we had the intelligent audience of the previous night, and again they gave closest attention till 8:40, when we were obliged to

close with prayer, without taking time for a closing hymn, and to hasten to our train, connecting with the steamer for Dublin, Ireland. But the audience was loth to leave even then, and, while we put on our wraps to leave, stood singing:

Before the train started, fully sixty of the friends had gathered around our “carriage” door. For the third and fourth (and, by some of them, for the sixth) time our hand was clasped in a fervent good-bye, and the hymn-prayer went up from all our hearts, as with bared heads we unitedly sang:

“Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love.”

Dublin was reached in due course—May 21st. Our first meeting was a public one the same evening, 8 to 9:40, in Rotunda Hall. Our audiences were very attentive, though less enthusiastic than those of England and Scotland—owing, no doubt, to the fact that “present truth” is newer there, has been less studied and is less clearly comprehended. Our first topic was “The Oath-bound Promise,” and it is our hope that some of the dear people who listened so intently may be awakened to the necessity of studying the divine plan as set forth in MILLENNIAL DAWN. Some so resolved, and made the start the same evening, as we happen to know.

Friday's meetings were held in the same place, from 4 to 6 and 8 to 10. Some interest was awakened, but how much or how deep, who can say? We are hopeful, however, of the future work here—especially if the city can be systematically colporteurd.

We hope that two or three of the brethren will see their privilege and undertake the work. We know of no service open to so many of the Lord's people and offering such abundant return of sheaves, as well as of joy to the reapers.

Saturday morning started us for Belfast, where an evening meeting with an interested group of fifteen was enjoyed. Our hearts burned with love for the Lord and for the brethren, as we called to mind that “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant.” (Psa. 25:14) We noted also the words, “None of the wicked shall understand,” remarking the impossibility of interesting such in present truth; and that any once sanctified and blest are sure to lose their interest in the deep things of God if they “return to their wallowing in the mire” of sin. We called attention to the fact that murderers and criminals in general profess faith in the eternal torment doctrine, and have mostly been trained to it from infancy, while we who know the Lord, his plan of mercy and love, are constrained, not to license and sin, but, reversely, to copy the divine character.

Sunday's public meetings in Belfast were from 3 to 5 and from 7 to 9:15. The interest, indicated by the close attention given for lengthy sessions, was excellent. Here we parted company with Brothers Hemery (the London representatives, who joined our party at Glasgow) and Henningses, who returned to London via Liverpool, where the latter met Sister H. on her arrival from America. The Editor took ship next morning for Glasgow, bidding good-bye on the wharf to six very earnest brethren, who assured us of their full consecration to the Lord and the truth, and their intention to serve it henceforth with renewed energy. They urged us to return, as the Lord's providence might lead, and wished us to remember them to those of like precious faith in America. Our duties required but a brief stay in Glasgow, and we took the night train for London, en route for Germany, etc.

At London we parted company with Brother Hemery and were joined by Sister Henningses from the U. S. A. She brought us the kind greetings of the Buffalo and the New York City churches, which were greatly appreciated.

About 65 of the London friends had gathered at the railway station to bid us a final adieu—too many to gain admission to the train platform, so we bade them “Good-bye” in the station, where we joined them in the well-known verse:

“Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above!”

The scene was one long to be remembered, for our hearts felt the meaning of every word we uttered. In answer to

queries we again promised to return whenever the Lord's providences seem so to direct.

A rail journey to the sea, a night on the boat and then seven hours by rail, brought us to Elberfeld, Germany—already decided upon as the most appropriate location for the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society's branch for Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, etc. We made this selection because of the character of the population—religious and independent. Our contact with the people has seemed to confirm this.

Our first attention was given to searching for suitable apartments. We obtained from a renting agency the addresses of eight places, and on going to the first of these we felt that the Lord's providence had directed us to it; and after looking at the others we felt convinced of this and rented it. It has a large room, suitable for meetings, with three smaller rooms connected, suitable for light housekeeping, one of which can be made into one with the large room (by opening four large doors) should this ever become necessary. It would thus accommodate 150 persons. There is also a basement for the storage of tons of tracts, DAWNS, etc. The location is fine—near the postoffice and railway station, and with an electric car service to every part of the city. And, an important item, the rent is cheap.

The next day we met with the dear friends of Barmen-Elberfeld and vicinity. In the afternoon we had a social and question meeting with the deeply interested numbering about 35. In the evening we had a public meeting, attended by about 100, of whom probably one-half were in sympathy with present truth, and the remainder their friends who are inquiring. We spoke on "The Oath-bound Covenant," endeavoring to stimulate the faith of all in that promise, and urging all to lay firm hold of the great promise and to seek earnestly to make their calling and election sure to a membership in the church, the body of Christ—the seed of Abraham that is so soon to engage in the grand work of blessing all the families of the earth, distributing the divine favors legally secured by the sacrifice of God's dear Son, our Lord.

After a night's rest we arose at 5 a. m. and took an early train for Mülhausen (in company with three brethren, also bound for Zürich). We arrived at 5 p. m. and received a hearty greeting at the station. Being thus refreshed in spirit, and subsequently with substantials, we were pleased to address fifty brethren and friends from 8:15 to 10:15—speaking, as at the previous place, on the Oath-bound Promise, which cannot fail, and which means so much to us, the church, and also to the world.

At noon on the next day (May 30) we left for Basle, Switzerland, where during three hours between trains we made the personal acquaintance of the brethren there, and sought to encourage them to run the heavenly race with patience. Our arrival at Zürich was late at night, but a dozen of the brethren awaited us at the depot and gave us hearty greetings, which we as heartily reciprocated. Our stay of two days at Zürich was interesting and, we trust, not without profit. We got personally acquainted with 170, previously known only through correspondence, mostly Swiss, but a goodly number from France and Germany, besides two from Hungary and two from Italy.

Our stop at Thun was only a short one, but gave us the acquaintance of still others of the household of faith. Here we parted company with Brother and Sister Henninges, who returned to Elberfeld and the new work there, while we hastened on—stopping at Neuchatel, Switzerland, between trains. Here the friends, as per previous arrangement, met us at the depot and escorted us to a nearby park, where we had a twenty-five minutes talk, through two interpreters, on the things pertaining to the kingdom. Two of the fourteen present were Germans.

By appointment with Brother Hemery, the Society's British representative, we stopped two days in London—not to meet the church, but to seek a new location for the Society's London office. The matter is not yet settled, but the splendid prospects for the work in Great Britain appeal to us strongly for a more central location than the one which has served us so well for the past three years. We are looking for the leadings of divine providence in this matter and will report on it later.

Our return journey was by the same splendid steamer in which we went away,—the "New York." The Lord furnished an opportunity for the distribution of tracts, and also for a Sunday afternoon service (in the second cabin)—as a result of which we hope for the garnering of at least two grains of "wheat." On board was a polite minister of the Episcopal church, but conversation revealed the fact that, like the one we met when outward bound, he is not a Christian—not a believer in the fall and, consequently, not a believer in the redemption from the "curse," or condemnation, of the fall—not a believer

in the atonement. The evidences multiply that the falling mentioned by the prophet is well advanced: "A thousand shall fall at thy side." Evidently the leaders of Christian sentiment and ceremony have already fallen from the faith.

We were amazed at the lack of interest in religious themes amongst the passengers. An extensive library on board was well patronized for works of fiction, but no one seemed to care for religious matters—especially amongst the upper class. They have lost their fear of eternal torment, and neither have, nor seek, anything to take its place. The rejection of "hell" means to them a rejection of absolute faith in the Bible as God's inspired Word. (What a great injury that unscriptural theory has worked!) They satisfy the cravings of their minds with morality and forms of godliness. We are glad that it is so, rather than the reverse,—that they should be steeped in immorality and ungodly practices. But how we long for ability to open the eyes of their understanding, that they might rejoice with us in the divine "plan of the ages" and in the love toward God which it inspires! Thank God the powers of darkness will soon be scattered by the glories of the Millennial morning, when many of these fine, noble people will see out of obscurity, and rejoice to avail themselves of the restitution privileges then prevailing!

As our vessel reached its dock we were greeted by thirteen of the dear friends of the New York church—first with waving handkerchiefs and hats, and later with fervent hand-clasps. The busiest afternoon of the week was sacrificed to do honor to the cause we represent. The Lord, we are sure, will reward their love. (Heb. 6:10) One dear brother remarked, "Brother Russell, we remembered you in prayer every day; and I believe it was so with the dear friends everywhere. I am confident that no pilgrimage ever made was accompanied by so many prayers." We answered that we had greatly enjoyed and been encouraged by the thought that at least 20,000 of God's people were thus remembering us almost daily.

As we neared Pittsburgh on Sunday morning, two of the brethren boarded our train at an outer station to be first to welcome us home, and later at the depot we were cordially welcomed by a delegation from the Allegheny church. One of these dear brethren had come all the way from Canada to participate in this greeting. We were escorted to the large sitting room of the Bible House (Allegheny). Entering, we found the office-workers gathered—each with a red rose on his bosom, emblematic of Christian love. After greetings, a rose was pinned to our coat lapel, too, and then the entire company joined in a hymn of welcome composed for the occasion, after which one of our number rendered our united acknowledgments and thanks to God.

Notwithstanding the fact that it rained, and that it was generally expected that we would not arrive until Monday, and a reception had been arranged for Monday night, the Bible House Chapel was full (about 300) for our usual Sunday afternoon service. For this occasion, and for the Monday night reception, many of the dear friends had sent in floral offerings, and the Chapel platform was resplendent as never before with roses and lilies and ferns. At first our "bump" of economy was disposed to chide our dear friends for their generosity, and to say, "Wherefore this waste! The money represented in these flowers might have been better spent in publishing tracts, etc., to assist our poor blinded brethren." But we remembered that it was Judas, and not our Lord, who voiced those sentiments. So we accepted all as done unto him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood (Eph. 4:2), and said not one word to mar the joy of the dear company, who, after our discourse on Isaiah 55:8-11, pressed our hand, assuring us of their joy in welcoming us home. We assured them that, although we had met and become personally interested in many dear brethren and sisters on foreign shores, our heart was proportionately enlarged, so that it meant no diminution of our love for the dear saints in America, and, in an especial sense, the church at Allegheny.

Monday night's reception brought together a splendid company of the Lord's consecrated children—adorned with the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit, "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great value." (1 Pet. 3:4) Quite a number came from surrounding cities and towns—and more flowers came, too; "alabaster boxes" of sweet odor to the Lord, because really rendered unto him, and to us merely because he had been pleased to use us as his mouthpiece in proclaiming his great plan of the ages in this his due time for revealing it. It is not possible to describe the pleasures of our fellowship in Christ that evening, and we will not try. But it is safe to say that with all the secret of joy was in the Lord's great plan and in what we can see of its prosperity.

Faithfully, your brother and servant in the Lord,

CHARLES T. RUSSELL.

"GROW IN GRACE"

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."—2 Pet. 3:17, 18.

There is a touching tenderness in the epistles of the aged Apostle Peter to the household of faith, showing that, while he realized that the time of his departure was drawing nigh (2 Pet. 1:14; John 21:18, 19), his solicitude for the growth and development of the church was increasing. Accordingly, he writes two general epistles, not so much to advance new truth, as to call to remembrance truths already learned and fully received (2 Pet. 1:12-15), and to counsel all to faithfulness and to growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In the preceding verses he has been calling to mind some of these truths, and he recognizes the fact that those addressed are already established in them; but, in view of his knowledge that false teachers would arise to pervert the truth, he counsels special watchfulness against being led away from their present steadfastness by the error of the wicked. That this counsel of the Apostle has a special fitness to the church in the last days, our days, and was evidently so designed by the spirit of God, is clear from verse 3—"There shall come in the last days scoffers," etc.

Let us observe the manner in which the Apostle would have us guard against being led away by the error of the wicked. Is it by a careful investigation of all the claims which every new false prophet that arises may intrude upon our attention, thus giving heed to every seducing spirit (1 Tim. 4:1)? No: that would be quite contrary to the teaching of "our beloved brother Paul," to whom Peter so affectionately refers, and whom he so fully endorses; for Paul had given no uncertain counsel on this subject; saying, "Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker;" and "I entreat you, brethren, to mark those who are making factions and laying snares contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them; for they that are such are not in subjection to our anointed Lord, but to their own appetite [for honor and praise among men, as great teachers—1 Tim. 1:6, 7]; and by kind and complimentary words they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. . . . I wish you to be wise with respect to that which is good, and harmless with respect to that which is evil."—2 Tim. 2:16, 17; Rom. 16:17-19.

Peter felt the force of Paul's wise and earnest counsel, and with emphasis re-echoed the same sentiments. To give heed to such seducing doctrines, contrary to the doctrine which we have already received from the Lord and the apostles, argues a lack of faith in those doctrines. Such a one is not *established* in the faith. And indeed there are those—and such is the general sentiment among the teachers of false doctrine—who think that it is not either necessary or advisable to be established in the faith. To be established is to be a bigot, is the idea they advance. And so it is, if one is so unfair in mind as to accept and tenaciously hold that which he has never proved either by sound logic or Bible authority. But he is not an unreasoning bigot who, in simple faith, on the authority of God, accepts the Word of God. And such, and only such, as do so are established in the truth. The difference between the strong and steadfast Christian and a bigot is that the one is established in the truth, while the other is established in error. The former knows the truth, and the truth has made him free from all doubts and misgivings, and from all desire to delve into the muddy pool of human speculations. To all such Paul says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught [by us, the apostles], abounding therein with thanksgiving."—But, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."—Col. 2:6-8.

With these sentiments of "our beloved brother Paul," Peter's counsel is in fullest harmony, his advice being, not to waste valuable time in investigating "the errors of the wicked;" but, on the contrary, to endeavor the more earnestly to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," who is the way, the truth and the life. The more thorough our knowledge of the Lord and the more intimate our acquaintance with him, the more secure we are in our own steadfastness.

But what is it to grow in grace? It is to grow in favor with

the Lord through an intimate personal acquaintance and fellowship of spirit with him. It implies, first, a knowledge and recognition on our part of our redemption through his precious blood and a personal faith in and dependence upon all the promises of the Father made to us through him, and then an intimate communion with him in our daily life of prayer, and of observation of his will and obedience to it. If such be our constant attitude of mind and heart, there must be a constant ripening of the fruits of the spirit, rendering us more and more pleasing and acceptable to our Lord. A sense of the divine acceptance and favor is given to us from day to day in increasing measure, in fulfilment of that blessed promise of our Lord, "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."—John 14:23.

This, as nearly as words can express it, is what it is to grow in grace; but the full and blessed understanding of it is best appreciated by those who from day to day walk with God in faith and obedience and love.

To grow thus in grace and not grow in knowledge is impossible; for the very object of such communion is to build us up in a more perfect knowledge and acquaintance with the Lord—to bring us into closer fellowship with the divine plan, and to give us the privilege of being "workers together with him" in executing that plan. If, therefore, we love and obey the Lord and desire to grow in his favor, his written Word is our daily meditation and study; and thus we grow in knowledge: not, however, by finding out each year that what we learned last year was false, but by adding to what we learned last year, by putting on more and more of the armor of God until we realize its glorious completeness in the full discernment of the divine plan of the ages. We are then ready to do valiant service for the cause of truth in withstanding the encroachment of error (Eph. 6:10-13), being established, strengthened and settled in the faith (1 Pet. 5:10). But even to those thus established in the faith there is abundant opportunity to grow in knowledge; for while they will see nothing new or different in outline or design, they will be continually charmed and cheered with newly discovered lines of harmony and beauty in the divine drawings of the wonderful plan of the ages. As pupils we may ever study the master workmanship of the divine Architect.

Our beloved brother Peter, zealous for our growth in knowledge, endeavors to inspire us thereto, by calling our attention to the wonderful events and the close proximity of the day of the Lord; saying,—

"The day of the Lord will come as a thief [unobserved by the world], in the which the heavens [present ecclesiastical powers] shall pass away with a great noise [tumult and confusion], and the elements [the various parties and sects composing it, split and torn by discordant views] shall melt with fervent heat [the heat of public discussion and investigation]: the earth also [society as at present organized under civil and ecclesiastical authority] and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (destroyed) in the strife and friction caused by increasing knowledge combined with selfishness. This will not be a literal fire, but, as described by the prophets, the fire of divine jealousy—(Zeph. 1:18; 3:8; 2 Pet. 3:10). Already the noise and tumult, which shall thus eventuate in world-wide anarchy, are distinctly heard in every nation; for the day of the Lord has indeed begun, and the heat of human passion is growing more and more intense daily, and the great time of trouble is very near.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved [seeing that present arrangements and institutions shall all go down], what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens [the present ruling powers] shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" Let us indeed lay to heart this solemn question, for we stand in the very presence of the Judge of all the earth. These words, while addressed to God's people eighteen centuries ago, and serving a purpose for good all along down this Gospel age, are specially meant by the spirit for us, who are living in this very day of God.

"Nevertheless, we [we who have come into covenant relationship with the Lord—we, unlike the rest of the world, know

of the divine plan and], according to his promise, look for new heavens [the kingdom of God—to be established in power and great glory] and a new earth [a new organization of society under the rulership of Christ and his glorified bride, the church] wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Blessed assurance! how favored are we above the people of the world who have not this knowledge!

“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” (2 Pet. 3:11-14) And Jude (24) reminds us that the Lord, in whose grace and knowledge Peter desires us to grow, “is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” Amen.

UNFAVORABLE ANSWERS TO PRAYER

1 SAM. 8:1-10.—JULY 5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only.”—1 Sam. 7:3.

The International Lesson course now turns again to the Old Testament. Six months ago we considered the child Samuel, his parentage, training, acceptance with God, etc. The present lesson takes up the thread of history in Samuel's old age. There is not a suggestion anywhere of disloyalty to the Lord or to the people of Israel on the part of this great prophet Samuel; the Lord's love and favor continued with him to the very close of his life and made it useful to the very end. As he advanced in years, and as the nation of Israel advanced in numbers, it seemed a proper thing that, in addition to the court of justice presided over by the prophet, there should be another court, especially on the southern boundary of Palestine, at Beersheba; and having sons, it was but natural that the prophet should expect of them considerable ability, discretion, wisdom and integrity in serving the Lord and his people according to the example which he had set them. Where could he expect to find more competent assistant judges for service in Beersheba than his own sons?

We perceive that integrity of character, although transmissible to a certain degree, cannot be fully relied upon in the children, however noble and God-fearing the parent. The heart, the will, of each individual, is independent; training may indicate to it the proper course, but full consecration to the Lord is essential to the full, ripe development of character. Samuel's integrity is shown by the fact that when it was proven to him that his sons were guilty of accepting bribes to pervert justice, he promptly removed them from their positions of influence. Doubtless he had in mind the course of his predecessor, Eli, who was too lax in his dealings with his own sons, and thus permitted great calamities to come upon them and upon the people. The nobility and integrity of Samuel's course, which so commends itself to all lovers of righteousness, was no doubt to some extent guided by the lessons of the Lord exemplified in Eli's case. Certain it is that Samuel continued in the divine favor to the end of his course.

As we have already seen, there were elders, or judges, in all the tribes, whose business it was to conduct and adjudicate the smaller matters of the people of their own tribe. It was probable, therefore, that only the larger questions were brought before Samuel and his sons, who constituted, we might say, a kind of superior court—Samuel, as a prophet and judge of divine appointment, representing the Lord. The government of Israel was different from that of every other government in the world. God was their real King, and in his providences, according to the covenant he had made with them, he supervised their affairs—whether by permitting them to go into temporary captivity to their enemies, because of sins and unfaithfulness to him, or by prospering the nation and delivering them and guiding their efforts favorably when living in obedience to him. Under the judgeship of Samuel they had no king, no emperor, no one except the Lord, to hold an autocratic position, and whose word would be law—the judges raised up for them from time to time being providentially guided by the Lord. The government was not a republic in the present day understanding of that term. The people did not choose their own head, or president, or judge; they merely looked for the leadings of divine providence and accepted such judges as the Lord raised up for them. Their condition was a most happy one in many respects: how much better to have the Lord's providential guidance in all our affairs than to trust in our own wisdom or in the wisdom of some other man or some royal family!

As the Elders of Israel perceived that the sons of Samuel were not to be relied upon to follow in the steps of their father, and to be faithful and impartial judges, seeking to know and to judge amongst the people according to the divine will, they became fearful; they forgot—or perhaps never fully recognized—that God was their real Judge, their King, and that Samuel was only his representative and mouthpiece. They forgot that although Samuel was growing old, the Lord was “the same yesterday, today and forever,” unchangeable, and able to raise up for them, in his own due time, a judge of the

kind best suited to their necessities. The anxious Elders of Israel consulted together and concluded that they would feel better satisfied if they were permanently tied up to some autocratic ruler—if they became the servants of some one of their number, and permitted his family in a line of succession to be their masters, their kings. Doubtless, too, they did not realize that, personally and nationally, they were on a higher plane than the nations around them that had kings; they felt, on the contrary, that they were “out of style;” and, as people are very apt to do, they concluded that the majority must be right, and probably felt somewhat ashamed to speak of their tribes as a nation without a king, without a master, without a visible lord, claiming allegiance merely to the invisible Jehovah. Kitto tells us of a somewhat similar sentiment springing up amongst the Dutch when the latter had a republican form of government:

“When the English and Dutch were plotting for power and influence in the East, the English, in order to damage their rivals, industriously circulated the dangerous secret that the Dutch had no king. The oriental mind was puzzled and perplexed by the indication of a condition so utterly beyond the scope of its experience and comprehension. The Dutch, alarmed for the effect of this slur upon their respectability, stoutly repelled the charge as an infamous calumny,—affirming that they had a very great king, and exalted, for the nonce, their Stadt to the higher rank.”

Influenced by this servility to custom, the Elders of Israel brought their petition, or prayer, to Samuel that he, as God's representative, would anoint for them a king—a special ruler over them, and make them as a whole a nation of servants to one of their own nation. It is hard for us to sympathize with such ignoble sentiments, such prayers for their own degradation. Samuel seems to have viewed the matter from this standpoint, and perhaps also regarded it as a personal slight to himself. However, he very properly took the matter to the Lord in prayer. It was not for him to decide what and how—he was merely the Lord's mouthpiece and representative to speak to the Israelites in the name of the Lord whatever message he should receive. Ah, how grand it would be if the whole world could be under such a rule,—heavenly wisdom directing, and incorruptible earthly judges communicating and enforcing the divine message and law! And this, the Scriptures inform us, is what will come to pass eventually, the Lord's declaration being, “I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning.” (Isa. 1:26) However, before that grand condition—of which the Jewish law-givers and judges were merely the crudest types—can be realized, it will be necessary for the great King Immanuel to take his great power and reign and subdue all things unto himself. Then, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power”—they will be ready to hearken to the voice of the Lord through those whom he will eventually appoint and recognize as his mouthpieces.

The Lord's answer to Samuel was that the prayer or petition of the people through their elders would be granted; but directed that he should, nevertheless, explain to them what this answer to their prayers, this fulfilment of their desires, would mean—that it would mean the surrender of their liberties and rights; that the rule of a king would be more or less despotic, tyrannical and selfish; that their sons and daughters would be taken to be servants in various capacities; that a large portion of their substance would be taken as taxes for the support of royalty, and that they would be subject to the whims of these masters whom they were desiring, whose pride and ambition would some time lead to rivalries and warfare, in which the whole people, as their servants, would suffer with them.

The elders heard all this delineation of the unwisdom of their course, but were, nevertheless, well satisfied to make the experiment—they wanted to be like the nations around them. How strong is the influence of imitation in all mankind! how necessary that all should have before their minds true standards, true ideals of greatness of liberty or of righteousness,—

of that which is really advantageous! Herein the Lord's people have his wisdom, his spirit—have a standpoint of observation superior to that of others, and possess the spirit of a sound mind proportionate to their education in the school of Christ. He has an education in the school of the Lord which gives him a finer acumen in respect to all the things of this present time, which seem comparatively insignificant to him in comparison with the things of the future—the eternal things. As the Apostle says, "He that is spiritual judgeth [understandeth] all things, yet he himself is judged [understood] of no man."—1 Cor. 2:15.

The Lord pointed out that the people were not rejecting Samuel, but were rejecting him. Indeed, that they had not rejected Samuel was evident from the fact that they come to him with the request. It was their lack of faith in the Lord that led them to fear what would happen after Samuel should die, or when his usefulness should become impaired through old age. The Lord points out that this had been the attitude of Israel from the first—"all the works that they have done since I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherein they have forsaken me and served other gods,—so do they also unto thee." They, of course, forsook Samuel as their judge; for the king whom he would anoint would be the judge instead. But the discredit to Samuel was nothing in comparison to their discrediting and rejecting the One whom he represented.

The Lord's people of today may draw from these incidents a valuable lesson in connection with the divine supervision of spiritual Israel. The Lord organized the church very much along the same lines as he organized natural Israel. He is the head of the church—the guide and director and instructor of the church. He guarantees that all things shall work together for good to those who love him and follow his guidance. For a time the Lord's people were content with such leadership as he raised up for them in his own way, content that the Lord should direct through the leaders of Zion and that no man should be called lord, or master, or king. For a time spiritual Israel looked only for such instructors, lawgivers, judges, teachers and assistants in the spiritual way as the Lord in his providences raised up for them. But, by and by, there came a time when they said, Let us make us a king—let us have a head in the Christian church such as there is in all the heathen religions around us. The Lord had already pointed out to his people a great Leader by whom he had made them free; that they all were brethren, and that only one as Lord and Master; that they should recognize no man as lord, and should recognize each other only as servants; and that the one who served most thoroughly—through the Lord's supervision—was to be esteemed as raised up and provided by divine providence for the service, and to be esteemed in proportion to his humility and loyalty to the Lord and his Word.

The spirit of subserviency and the desire to have a head, led, first, to a division amongst the Lord's people into two classes called clergy and laity, a division not recognized nor sanctioned in the Word of the Lord; and, secondly, amongst the clergy it led to the exaltation of some, called archbishops, to the position of lordship over districts; and, thirdly, it led to the choice amongst the archbishops of one to be a chief, or pope; and ultimately it led to this chief being considered infallible and a divinely appointed king over spiritual Israel. As there were some better and some worse amongst the kings of natural Israel, so there were some better and some worse amongst the popes who ruled in spiritual Israel for centuries. Finally, as there was a split in the kingdom of Israel between the ten tribes and the two tribes, so there came in time a split in spiritual Israel nominal, and Protestantism arose, no longer recognizing the popes as kings in spiritual Israel. However, the spirit of subserviency being still present, and the spirit of liberty wherewith Christ had made his people free being still lacking, the Reformation movement led to the appointment and recognition of numerous petty kingdoms in spiritual Israel—the Lutheran house and the Episcopal house and the Presbyterian house and the Methodist house, etc., etc., with their various ecclesiastical princes and potentates, doctors of divinity, etc.—lording it over God's heritage.—1 Pet. 5:3.

It is time for the establishment of the true kingdom—it is just at hand. It is time for the gathering of the elect out of every quarter, every district of this figurative Babylon in which the Lord's people are captives to these devices of Satan; it is time for a reassertion of the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free; it is time that the Lord's people should recognize him as their only King and Director; it is time for them to hear the words, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2:22); it is time for the Lord's people to realize that the Lord is entirely competent to conduct his own work in the way most pleasing to himself, and most advantageous to those

who are truly his; it is time for them to look to the Lord to see what agents, what channels of truth, what ministries of service in spiritual Israel he has provided or is providing. When we come to realize the situation, we find that all this matter of recognizing popes, cardinals, bishops, doctors of divinity, etc., is contrary to the divine arrangement—in direct antagonism to the same; but that, nevertheless, it has not hindered, and will not be permitted to hinder, the accomplishment of the Lord's work and the gathering of the true Israelites, the elect, the precious, the Lord's jewels, out of nominal Israel. This work of the Lord is going gradually on, regardless of what the people in general may do.

We have considered this lesson under the head of "Unfavorable Answers to Prayer," because it furnishes an excellent illustration along this line. What might have been the condition of Israel had they not prayed for a king, we cannot know particularly; but we can know, on the strength of the Lord's Word, that it would have been more favorable to them if they had been in a condition of heart which would have led them to thank God for his care, and to rejoice in him as their King, and to have made no such petition for an earthly monarch as is here recorded. The Lord through the Prophet Hosea (13:9-11) intimates that the answer of this prayer for a king was disadvantageous to the nation; saying, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help. I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath." The king whom the Lord intends to give to Israel and to the world is Messiah. In due time the Lord will set his king upon his holy hill Zion; the law shall go forth from Mount Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; in his day the righteous shall flourish and evil doers shall be cut off. The Lord took away the kings of Israel when the people went into captivity to Babylon; there have been no independent kings of their nation since. Today, after centuries of experience without a king of their own, and under various kings of various nations, they are probably in a better condition of heart than ever before to receive the great blessing which God intends to bring to them first amongst the nations of the world. The prophet declares of them respecting Messiah's kingdom, that they shall be ready to hail it and shall say, "This is our God, we have waited for him and he will save us." They certainly had serious experiences, not only under their own kings, but under all the kings of the earth; they certainly should be glad that the time shall again come when the Lord will be king over them—and over all the earth; when he shall restore to them a system of lawgivers and judges, and bless all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham,—Messiah and his bride, the overcomers of spiritual Israel.—Gal. 3:16, 29.

What we thus see exemplified on a large and national scale we may see exemplified in a small way closer to us. How many of us in our ignorance and blindness have at some time in life prayed for the various systems of bondage, for the various sects of Christendom, and labored, too, for their upbuilding, only to find ourselves injured spiritually by that which we prayed for and labored for. We asked amiss, as did the Elders of Israel, while, instead, our hearts as well as theirs should have inquired continually for the ways of the Lord, for his leadings, not asking to have him favor and bless that which we ignorantly and mistakenly supposed to be for his glory and our own good. Let us learn to pray aright, as well as to labor and to hope aright; and in order so to do let us be swift to hear, slow to speak, swift to hearken to the Word of the Lord and to the lesson which he has already given us, and to his method of instructing us and guiding us and blessing us. Let us be slow to tell him what our preferences are; indeed, let us seek to attain that development of Christian character which will permit us always not to seek our own wills, but the will and way of our Father in heaven.

The same principle will apply in the more private affairs of our daily lives. Several parents have told us, with aching hearts, of prayers answered which subsequently they could have wished never answered; they have told us of companions and children on their deathbeds for whose lives they had prayed with importunity and without either the words or the sentiment, Thy will be done, and how the Lord answered those prayers, and what terrible evils had come to them through the answers. All cases may not be alike, but the properly exercised and heart-developed children of God should expect to attain to the place where all of their prayers are answered, and answered in the best possible way, and most satisfactorily, because the Lord's Word dwells in them richly. They would not ask amiss—would not ask anything contrary to the divine will and providences; but rather, trusting to the divine wisdom, their prayer would be, "Lord, thy will, not mine, be done."

CHOOSING A KING

1 SAM. 10:17-27.—JULY 12.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"The Lord is our king; he will save us."—Isa. 33:22.

Although the people of Israel were self-willed in the matter of desiring a king like the nations about them, it is to their credit that they desired the Lord, through his prophet Samuel, to make the selection of the one who should fill the office. Undoubtedly, however, men of the various tribes were ambitious for the office. To suppose otherwise would be to disregard our knowledge of and experience with human nature. If the petty offices of ward and town politics are eagerly sought and almost fought for at the primaries and polls today, what wire pulling might we not expect if it were determined that a king should be chosen? We fear that a contrast between the people of Christendom and the Israelites on this subject would result unfavorably to the former. In all the countries constituting "Christendom" how few there are who, when choosing their officers, give any consideration whatever to the Lord's choice for the position! Even when we think of the choice of ministers in the denominations of the church nominal, we find the contrast rather unfavorable; for the choice of a bishop or minister is indeed, apparently, very rarely referred to the Lord exclusively, with the desire to have his will and his choice, and none other, selected.

Guided by the Lord, Saul, a young man from an influential family, of the tribe of Benjamin, was anointed to be king. He was brought to the prophet for the anointing by a peculiar train of circumstances. His father owned a valuable herd of asses which strayed away, and Saul, after seeking them in vain, appealed to the prophet for assistance in locating them, and thus he showed his confidence in God, and in Samuel as his prophet. Nothing is recorded respecting the young man's interest in religious matters up to this time; but he is mentioned favorably as a "goodly" young man. After his anointing he kept the matter secret with becoming modesty, waiting for the Lord's plan to develop more fully and to bring him ultimately into prominence before the nation. It is quite probable that this secretiveness was at the instigation of Samuel.

In due time Samuel sent word to the Elders of Israel to meet him at Mizpeh (watch-tower), and upon their arrival the matters of this lesson followed. Samuel rehearsed to them the Lord's favor as it had been with them during the previous centuries, beginning with their miraculous deliverance from Egypt. He impressed upon them the fact that all of the Lord's care over them had been for their good; that no king could have done them better service than their great King; and that no government could have been more to their happiness than that they had enjoyed and which they were now rejecting in their request for a king, which petition the Lord had determined to grant. In harmony with this they had assembled—not all the people, but representatives from all the tribes and from the various families of each tribe. Ignoring the anointing of Saul already accomplished, Samuel proceeded to cast lots, that the people might thus know that the choice to be made was the Lord's choice and not Samuel's. It was the custom at that time to have the high priest's ephod in use on such occasions, and a pocket in the ephod was made the receptacle for slips of paper, or sometimes for the precious stones representing the different tribes and families. First, a choice was made amongst the tribes to determine in which one would be found the man whom the Lord had chosen to become their king. Doubtless the princes of the tribe of Ephraim remembered the good promises prophetically given by Jacob respecting them, and probably thought that the Lord's choice would fall upon their tribe. The princes of Manasseh may also have remembered the good promises respecting their tribe, and may not have been without hope respecting the lot. The men of Judah, unquestionably, would call to mind the promise that a lawgiver should come from Judah, and would have strong hopes respecting the result of the lot. But when the lot was cast, when the hand pulled forth from the ephod pocket the stone representing the tribe of Benjamin, the matter was decided, and in general the people bowed to the Lord's decision. Next, the leading families, or clans, of the tribe of Benjamin were representatively placed in the ephod, and the hand drew forth as the Lord's choice the name representing the family of Matri; and again, the various members of the family of Matri were representatively placed in the ephod bag, and the hand drew forth the name of Saul, the son of Kish. Thus was publicly demonstrated the Lord's choice, which the prophet and Saul himself already knew. We can imagine the stir and commotion to find the man thus chosen to be the king, respecting whom but few of the people seemed to have the slightest knowledge. They sought him everywhere, but could not find him, and again the inspired oracle was sought to indicate whether he would be found, and where. The Lord's answer was that he

had hidden himself amongst the stuff—the baggage which, as was the custom, was probably piled up, surrounding the camp as a barricade. Saul evidently had full confidence in the Lord's foreknowledge and that the lots drawn would confirm the prophet's declaration to him and his anointing. The modesty which led him to hide and, to some extent, to shrink from the honor to be conferred, is very gratifying to all right-minded people. Would that we could see more of this modesty amongst the chief ones of this world and also amongst the chief ones of nominal spiritual Israel! We should each mark the beauty of such humble-mindedness, and seek to cultivate the same quality in our own hearts and lives—however different this may make us from the majority of the world.

When Saul stood amongst the people he was head and shoulders above them, probably seven feet tall. His natural qualities would thus appeal strongly to the people of his time, who even in picturing their rulers represented them as many times larger than the average man. Then Samuel introduced him, saying, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?" and the responsive shout of the people was, "God save the king!" or literally, Lord, let the king live—the usual greeting to their kings.

We are reminded of the fact that God is now about to establish a kingdom in the world and is choosing a king. The Millennial kingdom might not be necessary in the form in which it will be introduced, were the people in the right attitude of heart to desire and to obey the divine will; but they prefer to have the laws of righteousness enforced rather than voluntarily to submit themselves to the Lord. In due time they shall have a king, Immanuel—like Saul in some respects, but very unlike him in others. The Lord is now selecting this King Immanuel. He is passing by the great tribes, the prominent people, and choosing the little and the humble—not many great, not many wise, not many learned has God chosen, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:26-28) The selection is going on in the sight of all the people. They will be witnesses, when all the steps of the election of God have been taken, that the choice is the Lord's without peradventure; and yet the Lord foreknew his choice in advance of this public selection. He foreknew Jesus as the head of the church, the head of the great king; he anointed him in advance "with the oil of gladness above his fellows," to be king; yet, so far as the people in general are concerned, they know not the Lord's anointed—the matter is kept secret for a time. The members of the body of Christ must all be like the head. As the Apostle declares, God has predestinated that every one who shall become a member of that body shall be "conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29) By and by, when the outward election is complete, when the world shall come properly to feel its need for a great king, search will be made to find the Lord's Anointed, and he will be found at his second advent. "The desire of all nations shall come"; the Christ of God will be the desired one of all nations. (The name Saul, singularly enough, signifies Desired.) As the men of Israel gave a shout when they recognized Saul's stateliness, so the world of mankind will shout for joy when they shall realize the presence of the Christ of God, the great King, their deliverer from Satan, from misrule, from every enemy—the Lord who "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet—the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Not only shall it be true that the Lord's Anointed One shall be head and shoulders above all others, "the chiefest amongst ten thousand, the one altogether lovely," but it should also be true to a considerable extent that all those who are intimately associated with the members of the body of Christ in the present life—before he is proclaimed king of the whole world—should be able to recognize the largeness and grandeur of character in those whom the Lord is choosing for this place of honor in the affairs of men. They should be able to take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus, should see their largeness of heart, their moral heights—should discern in them the spirit of a sound mind.

The record is that a band of Israelites, a body-guard, at once attached themselves to Saul—men "whose hearts God had touched." They were touched with the realization that the Lord had made this choice, and with the desire to be in accord with the Lord and to support the divine will as it concerned the chosen one, and to cooperate therewith. This is a proper lesson to all of the Lord's people now. It is because we see Jesus to be the Father's choice that we unite ourselves to him; because we see the Father's character manifested in him that we leave all to follow him. Similarly, if we lend our aid, our support to any human being in connection with the divine plan

and service, it should be simply upon this ground—not merely a personal magnetism or favoritism, but because our hearts are touched by the Lord with a realization of the leader being of his appointment. Nevertheless, we shall find ourselves co-laboring in a manner most useful and most helpful in the Lord's service; coworkers with God and coworkers with all who are his servants under his appointments. So, doubtless, it will be in the future when the great king complete has taken the reins of government; the best of mankind will flock to him, anxious to know and to do his will and to be in full accord with him as the representative of the heavenly Father and his kingdom.

The expression "Sons of Belial" signifies children of the devil, or wicked persons—persons out of harmony with God and not submissive to his arrangements and selections. There are also such in the present time, who are speaking evil directly or indirectly of such members of the body of Christ as they have contact with; being out of sympathy with the Lord they are out of sympathy with all of his arrangements. Their influence either in the nominal church or out of it is, therefore, against the true interests of the Lord's cause. There will be such in the Millennial age when the kingdom shall have been established, and of these the Lord speaks in the parable, "Those who would not have me to reign over them." Again they are mentioned by the Apostle (Acts 3:23) saying, "It shall come to pass that the soul who will not obey that prophet shall be cut off from amongst the people." However, we may be sure that they will not be cut off until they have had a full exhibition of the divine power and mercy;—only such as resist after all these opportunities and privileges will be counted worthy of the second death.

Very shortly after Saul's appointment to the kingdom he had opportunity to show his ability in delivering the people, for a neighboring king advanced upon Israel with a considerable army. Saul gathered his troops from the various tribes,

to the number of 330,000 men, and totally routed Nahash and his army of the Ammonites. This victory cemented the hearts of the people of Israel to their king, and they in their loyalty demanded the execution of the sons of Belial who had spoken against him; but the nobility of King Saul is shown in his refusal to accede to this suggestion, and his saying, "There shall not a man be put to death today." So when the power of the glorious king of the Millennial age shall be manifested in the routing of the enemies of righteousness, the general sentiment of the world toward him will be loyalty, and then he will have an opportunity of showing his mercy and forbearance toward those who during the darkness of the present time have spoken evil of him and sought to oppose his kingdom. The declaration shall then go forth that none shall die the second death on account of Adamic weaknesses, blindness and insubordination;—that none shall die the second death except as the result of personal and wilful sin after having been brought to a knowledge of the truth.

Our Golden Text is one the sentiments of which should be deeply impressed upon the hearts of all the Lord's people. The world may cry out, saying, "We have no king but Cæsar," but the Lord's people, the Israelites indeed, will feel the reverse of this,—that "the Lord is our king." In harmony with his command, we will honor earthly kings and obey earthly laws in every particular in which they do not conflict with the divine law; but, nevertheless, above earthly kings, our esteem, homage and obedience must be to him whom the Lord hath appointed, King Immanuel. If he be enthroned in our hearts it will be comparatively easy for us to be loyal to him in our conduct and in our words, wherever we may be. If we deny him, he will also deny us; but if we confess him he will also confess us before the Father and the holy angels—he will save us ultimately through us as his church, his body, he will, according to the original promise, bless all the families of the earth which we, with him, will then inherit.—Gal. 3:29.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

GOD'S PROVIDENCE OVER THE WORLD

Question.—I have recently lost a friend by death, and notice that your teaching seems to be that the Lord's providential care is over the consecrated ones. Am I to get the thought that God had no providential care over the interests of my friend?

Answer.—"His tender mercies are over all his works." (Psa. 145:9) Hence, in a certain sense, God's providential care attaches to every creature.

"The whole creation is his charge,
But saints are his peculiar care."

When thinking of your friend, consider him as one of the many children of Adam whom God so loved as to give for them his only begotten Son. The redemption price has been paid by our Lord, and the time of deliverance draws near. When it shall have arrived, all the families of the earth will receive a blessing at the hands of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. Viewing the matter from this standpoint, there is no human creature that is not a subject of divine providence and care. In speaking of God's providences being over only the consecrated, we referred to his special providences of this Gospel age in respect to the calling and election of the church, the body of Christ. Divine providence deals with this class alone in this Gospel age, favoring them by the call and by the adversities which will polish and fit them as jewels for the kingdom. For these, all things shall work together for good, because they love God in an especial sense—better than they love self or family or houses or lands—yea, better than their own lives.

WHO ARE OUR BRETHREN?

Question.—What should be our attitude toward professing Christians of the various denominations who give evidence of but slight knowledge of the truth, and but slight appreciation of the ransom? Should we consider them brethren in Christ? and should we fellowship them as such? or should we treat them as heathen men and publicans?

Answer.—All who profess love to the Lord Jesus Christ and have faith in him as their Savior—even though their

knowledge of his redemptive work be but limited and vague—and whose general conduct is noted as indicating their desire to walk after the spirit and not after the flesh, should be considered and treated as brethren. But when we use the word "brother" we are to remember that amongst believers there are two classes of brethren: (1) Those who have merely pledged themselves to the Lord for a reformation of life, and who are to some extent trusting in the Savior; and (2) those who have gone on and who have consecrated their lives even unto death, and have been begotten as new creatures by the holy spirit. These are brethren of a different order; the first were typified in the Levites, the last in the priests. Both are our brethren, and both should be treated courteously, kindly, helpfully; but it would be impossible to fellowship the first class in the same manner or degree that we would fellowship the second class. In considering the church, only the latter should be counted, because the church is the body of Christ, the Royal Priesthood. Only the latter, therefore, should be expected to participate in the Memorials of the Lord's death, and the pledge of consecration to be dead with him. It is to the first of these classes of brethren (typified by the Levites) that the Apostle addressed the exhortation, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices," etc. (Rom. 12:1) Those who follow this exhortation and make the sacrificial consecration, thereby become brethren on the highest plane of the spirit, and thus become members of the highest degree of fellowship as members of the body of the anointed one.

Knowledge is to be highly esteemed in the church, and to be regarded as an evidence of progress, of growth; for none can grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might—in grace—unless he grows also in knowledge. We properly esteem most highly those whose love for the Lord and for his truth are evidenced by zeal in the study of his Word, and whose favor with God is evidenced by their being guided more and more into the deep things of God. Nevertheless, as in the earthly family we love and care for the babes and immature, so also in the household of faith the little ones and the dwarfs are to be cared for and loved and helped that they may grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

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