

fully study the New Testament. Much of the modern preaching is so dark and mysterious, that it has confused thousands of good and honest people and helped to drive them into infidelity.

3. When a man came into the church in that day, he came in for life, and expected to make Christianity the chief business of his life. He laid upon the altar of God as it were his all. His time, his talents and his life, from that time onward were to be devoted to God. There was no holding back of anything or turning back when trials came. They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods and counted not their own lives dear unto them. So completely were many of the first Christians possessed with the spirit of their divine master, that they gave all of their means to his cause. All of the apostles and thousands of others willingly suffered martyrdom for the blessed cause they had espoused. What a contrast between many church members now and the early Christians! How hard it is very often to keep them in the church, and when it comes to working for the church and giving of their means to support the gospel, how reluctantly they do it! Some of them think it almost too much of a sacrifice to attend meeting twice on Lord's day, and will often take offence at the smallest provocation, and talk about leaving the church.

4. Christianity was an every-day matter with ancient Christians. They were "living epistles" every day, "known and read of all men." "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and in fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayer." When the Jerusalem church was scattered abroad on account of the persecution, they did not become discouraged as many now do, and say there is no use of making any more effort; but "they went everywhere preaching the word." It is not to be supposed that they all became public proclaimers of the gospel. Such was not intended. But they went as "living epistles," telling the story of the cross to all who would listen. And better than all they let Christ shine out in their lives.

In conclusion then, what is now needed on the part of the church is a going back, not to Campbell or Wesley or Luther, (grand men as they were) but back beyond them and beyond the dark ages to the order of things established by

Christ and his twelve ambassadors eighteen hundred years ago. What is now needed, in order to convert the world, is a complete restoration of the ancient church in its faith and in its practice. M.

LONGFACEDNESS.

Longfacedness, while not expressly mentioned in the Bible by name, is most certainly set forth in principle, and is an important factor in practical Christianity that should not be overlooked. Neither is the principle revealed in the Scriptures in order to encourage the custom of some Christians, and other people too, in always wearing long faces; but that just the opposite, to a large extent, may be true. Hence, while the Bible requires that the women "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety," neither the women nor the men are once told to adorn themselves with longfacedness. Some people mistake longfacedness for piety. This might be a safer rule if it did not happen that a great many people wear the long faces without the piety. We surely think that piety is a necessary element of Christianity, but we do not believe that longfacedness as manifested on the part of some good people is any more essential to a godly life than the long face of a Kentucky mule. On the contrary, we believe that it is a positive hindrance to spirituality and Christian growth. The "sobriety" of the New Testament and the longfacedness of which we speak are not synonymous terms by any means. Sobriety means rather the steady and earnest course of Christian conduct accompanied with and animated by that degree of joy and cheerfulness incident to every child of God who fully understands himself. The opposite of this, or melancholy with all its fearful and depressing consequences is what we here denominate longfacedness. We have known some parents to object to their children uniting with the church because they were too "funny," by which they meant simply cheerfulness of disposition. The perverted idea that Christianity is to make walking mummies out of men and women, especially the young, has had its influence in keeping people from accepting Christ. We heard a minister insist once in a sermon that Christ never laughed, and therefore young people should abstain from the sinful habit! How

he learned this he did not tell us. If he argued from the silence of the Scriptures, he might also conclude on the same principle that singing is sinful, for we are not told that our Savior ever engaged in song. If the absence of laughter is to be accepted as conclusive evidence of piety, then some one might argue with a good degree of seriousness that the cats and the dogs are on a par in this respect with some long faced people.

We would not have any one think we here advocate frivolity or irreverence in religious matters, for such a thing can not be tolerated for a moment. We are only contending for that peace of mind, that cheerfulness of disposition and that joy of the soul which the Bible everywhere makes so prominent on the part of Christians. God has given to man the happy faculty of laughter; and as this is not destroyed in his conversion, we naturally conclude that it may be exercised on proper occasions and within the limits of sound discretion. Those who were converted to Christ in primitive times, went on their way rejoicing. Christians should be the most happy people on earth. They have greater reason for being joyful than any one else. Cheerfulness is a twin sister of a sound body and a peaceful mind, while it is thought every sigh is only another link dropped from the chain of man's temporal existence. Then we say, as much as lieth in you, rejoice evermore.

SAUL'S JEALOUSY.

The death of Goliath ended the life of David as a shepherd; honors crowded thick upon him; Saul kept him in his court, set him over his men of war and the narrative adds, David acted wisely and went whithersoever Saul sent him. The refrain of the women as the army returned from the conflict in the valley of Elah aroused the slumbering jealousy of Saul, for he recognized the possibility that this youth, so quickly made popular, might be the coming king who should take away the succession from his own son Jonathan. From the time that suspicion and envy entered his heart, till his death, there was confusion and every evil work in the policy of king Saul. He might well have apostrophized, as did one concerning him, "O jealousy, thou ugliest fiend of hell! Thy healthful venom preys on my vitals, turns the deadly hue of my

fresh cheek to haggard sallowness, and drinks my spirit up!" The young warrior was brought the more into notice through Saul's attempts to remove him from the conspicuous place he attained in the court. They only served to turn all hearts to David and to bring into more prominence for our meditation the covenant of friendship between David and the king's son. Jonathan never wavered in his allegiance to the king, nor in his duty to his father, but his life was bound up in the life of David who returned his love, and had Jonathan lived, would have, no doubt, kept him next himself upon the throne of Israel. Where upon the same page can be found such another contrast of love and hate! We are shocked to see Saul's admiration of David one day, changed to the intensest hatred on the next, and shudder when Saul turns an evil eye upon the youth, saying, "What can he have more but the kingdom?" Woven close to the green thread of Saul's jealousy comes the scarlet thread of love which made Jonathan brave his father's anger, and risk his own life for the friend he loved.

The beauty of such a love makes the conduct of Saul the more hideous from contrast. And yet a great pity comes into our hearts for Saul though he had tried to deceive the Lord, and had been cast off, for we remember how grand he looked when first chosen and how well he ruled. When envy entered his soul, beauty and truth fled, while every evil thing followed in its train. * * *

GOOD BOOKS.

We have received from the publishers two books to which we wish to call the special attention of the brotherhood; hence we transfer our brief notice of them to our editorial pages. The first, from John Burns, St. Louis, Mo., is entitled "The Missouri Christian Lectures," delivered at Independence, Mo., July, 1883. The book contains 204 pages bound in cloth; and the following is the contents: Introduction, by Isaac Errett; Address of welcome, by Prof. E. A. Higgason; The two revelations, by A. B. Jones; The origin and growth of free thought, by J. W. Monser; Value of metaphysical study and its relation to religious thought, by A. C. Hill; Preachers' methods, by Prof. J. W. McGarvey; Inspiration by Isaac Errett. Here is much solid food