

Original Contributions.

CHRISTIAN PRIESTS.

BY M. R. LEMERT.

The above title is selected to represent all in Christ—the sanctified, typified by the Jewish priests, who, together with their kings, and prophets were the sanctified of the first covenant. This subject has already been partially considered; but being eminently practical, some further thought will be given it. Unquestionably it is profound, and while I take pen and venture to speak of it, I claim not to have mastered it; but am still earnestly investigating and learning. It has surface truths, upon which my mind is settled, together with some more abstruse. Then the apostles Peter and Paul have thrown much light upon it. The scheme of redemption is in it, the divine side and the human. Christ the High Priest of our profession was at once the victim, the altar and the priest; he passed into the heavens, the most holy place with his own blood and made an atonement for us, made salvation possible.

But my object is to obtain the aid afforded by the service of the priests in the holy place, to understand the duties of Christian priests in the church. The Jewish priests had much legitimate work to do outside of the holy place, none of which is now under consideration. As they typified the saints, and the holy place the church, we select this part of their service for present consideration. Their ordination to the priesthood called sanctification and consecration, typified one ordination to the same office, called also sanctification, which was accomplished in one baptism, the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, and the reception of the Holy Spirit. After being thus sanctified—set apart as priests to God, service in the church is both an obligation and a privilege. But what service is to be done as indicated by the types in the holy place? In it were three pieces of furniture, the golden altar, candlestick and table, by which were typified three classes of duties, to God, to the church and to self. The golden altar was placed back by the veil, which separated the holy place from the most holy, the church from heaven, near the mercy seat, the abode of God, only the veil between. Upon this altar incense was burned by the priests, the fire obtained out side of the

holy place, from the altar of burnt-offerings. This service was called drawing near to God, being the nearest approach to the mercy seat. The smoke from the burning incense ascended to God, causing him to smell a sweet smell. This service typifies duty to God in the church, prayer, praise, adoration, thanksgiving and confession. That these may ascend to God as sweet incense, fire must be obtained from the altar of burnt offerings, the heart must be warmed with love and gratitude by the sufferings and death of Christ, which is worshiping in spirit and in truth. All these acts composing duty to God, are lip service issuing from loving hearts, typified by burning incense, altar services.

The next piece of furniture to the left of the entrance, was the golden candlestick with seven lamps, by which the room was made light and kept so night and day. As the word of the Lord is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, and as the entrance of this word gives light, these burning lamps typified edifying the church by the word of the Lord. But the oil was put into the lamps and they were lit by Aaron, the high priest, who typified Christ and his work, then if keeping the room light typified edifying the church, it would seem that this work belonged to Christ, not to the saints, though Paul evidently enjoined this work upon them—"edify one another even as ye do," "he that prophesyeth edifieth the church." How is this? The lamps received and contained the oil, type of the Spirit, its burning gave the light; the saints receive and contain the Holy Spirit given by Christ our High Priest, and speaking the words of the Spirit, whether obtained immediately or through the medium of the written word enlightens edifies. It is thus seen through the types that the work of edifying is general, as all receive the Holy Spirit, antitype of the oil for burning and giving light, the difference between then and now being this only. Then the Scriptures not being written, each was qualified for the work of edifying by spiritual gifts. "The manifestation of the Spirit was given to each for the profit of all," now having the word written, each must by studying obtain the aid then given by the Spirit. The work of edifying a priestly work consists of teaching, reminding, exhorting, warning, entreating and comforting, social, what we owe one to another. There is still

another class of duties—to self.

In the holy place to the right hand stood the table of showbread, always loaded with bread to be eaten in the holy place by the priests, type of the spiritual food provided for the saints, including the Lord's supper, "I have fed you with milk," "Desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby." It is the duty of the sanctified to feast upon the word of the Lord, when presented by those edifying the church, whether spoken, read or sung. Of these three classes of duties in the church assembled, two of them, the altar service which is strictly worshiping God, and edifying, are done by the lips—organs of speech, "Through him," Christ one High Priest "let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of lips which make confession to his name." (Rev. Ver. Heb. 13:15.) These things being indisputable, think of the nature of the act and of the consequences involved in silencing half of these heaven constituted priests, in the church. Two classes of duties out of three, growing out of their office as priests, they are thus prohibited from discharging by those without authority only as authority is usurped. They are God's priests obtained at great cost and set to work by him because he needed and desired their service. This priesthood including its service is established in the government of Christ, and to continue unchanged while he our High Priest over the house of God serves as such in heaven, till he return to bless his people, without sin unto salvation. Happy that servant who shall then be found in the faithful discharge of assigned duties—glory and honor shall then be his with the trials and sorrows of the past all together. Brethren, be faithful, the coming of the Lord draws nigh.

(To be Continued)

Report.

VERMONT, ILL.,

Jan. 18, 1884.

Dear Bro. Floyd:

I have just returned home from a meeting at Pleasant View, Ill. Had a good meeting. Preached five discourses to crowded houses, good attention and fine interest. Two angels (Mr. and Mrs. Angel) united with the church. The church is in good working order. May the Lord bless them. I go to Colchester, Ill., to-morrow.

JOS. B. ROYAL.

Correspondence.

Letter from Bro. T. F. Campbell,

SPRINGFIELD, MO.,

Jan. 16, 1884.

Dear Herald:

The heaviest snow for years is now on the ground, though the weather is not extremely cold. "The beautiful snow" has no charms for me. I greatly prefer a sunny clime, or even the "mists" of Oregon with verdant valleys and mountains clad in evergreens. Yet I reconcile myself to the situation, finding work to do for the Master. The snow creates want amongst the poor, increasing the demand for aid, and giving opportunity to those upon whom God has bestowed wealth to cultivate the spirit of charity. There are however very few objects of charity in this favored land. If love and gratitude to God were to keep pace with the wealth and prosperity of a country, this people ought to be exceedingly religious. The extension of railroads and increase of facilities of transportation are opening up vast areas of productive land in this north-west Missouri hitherto regarded as unprofitable for want of markets. Old towns are taking on new life, and new villages are springing up along the lines of railroad, giving a general boom throughout the country. Nor have we any just cause to complain of the religious status. The congregations throughout the country seem to be keeping pace with the increase of population. In this city of sixteen or seventeen thousand inhabitants, all the leading denominations are represented, having each a good house of worship and a preacher of fair talents and liberal attainments. Our ministers' weekly meetings are attended by all the preachers of the city except the Catholic and the Episcopal. The special claim of each of these separately to be the only true, universal, Catholic church, forbids their recognition of any other organization as a church of Christ. Nor can their pastors, claiming apostolic succession to the ministry, associate ecclesiastically with those to whom they deny this honor. The number who, both among professors of Christianity and nonprofessors, laugh at such arrogance and pride of place, is steadily increasing with the spread of knowledge and advance of civilization. The world and church alike have been, in their ignorance