

Communications.

Our Troubles.

NUMBER XII.

And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat, in due season; blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing." Luke xii, 42, 43.

The Savior commanded his disciples to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. If any Christian should be wise, prudent, true, pious, just and harmless, in all his thoughts, words and actions it should surely be the

PREACHER.

The Christian man, who enlists as a soldier of Christ, disavowing himself from the affairs of this world, devotes his time to preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, bearing the glad tidings of salvation to a lost and ruined world, pleading day and night with sinners, exhorting them to be reconciled to God, encouraging Christians to be faithful in the discharge of their duties to God, to their fellow men and to themselves, and uses his influence to elevate the standard of morality in the community, and labors to build up the church of God, and thus in the full sense of the word becomes a preacher; occupies a more exalted position in this world than king, prince or potentate, and in the world to come being able to stand the fiery test, will receive his wages and be crowned with an unfading crown of glory, which will not in a few years be removed from his head to coronate a successor, or trampled under the feet of a conqueror. When the true preacher, by the eye of faith, looks upward and beholds the many treasures awaiting him in heaven, laid up during his toils and sufferings as a preacher of the Gospel, and knows from the word of God and his own experience, that all earthly things are vain and vexatious. If it were not for the great desire he has to be instrumental in the salvation of sinners, he would desire to be in possession of them, and his fervent prayer would be, Father take me to my home in heaven. The preacher's position not only enables him to have great treasures in heaven, but it is one of great responsibility and solemnity. He surely will be to some extent responsible for the loss of the soul, who actuated by his advice, given from the sacred desk, under the pretension that he was called and qualified of God to preach, failed to obey God; and for that disobedience, was classed with those who were stationed on God's left hand, and received the sentence, depart ye accursed. Many of these poor souls, if they had been rightly instructed, would have obeyed the commandments, and instead of being wood, hay and stubble to be consumed by fire, would have been gold, silver and precious stones, and laid on the foundation of that building of God, that house not made with hands, eternally in the heavens. How solemn then must the preacher feel when he receives his credentials, when he enters the pulpit, and when he opens his mouth, to tell a waiting people, who are enquiring the way to heaven, what they must do to have their sins and iniquities, that are registered against them in the archives of heaven, blotted out, and what they must do to enable them in death to know that they have fought a good fight, obeyed the commandments, and that they will have a right to the tree of life over there. I tremble when I think of the great responsibility of the preacher, and how few seem to possess that solemnity that becomes the pulpit and should distinguish the ambassador of God.

Under heavenly regulations we have preachers enough on the Pacific coast, endowed with sufficient talents,

possessing the pity, energy and nobleness of soul, to plant and build up the church of God in every district, and I have faith enough in them to justify me in saying, they would do it, if they were supported to that extent, those who are interested are able to do, without depriving themselves or their families of the comforts of life. I would that I had faith enough in the preachers to enable me to say, we will do it, independent of that support, to which we are justly entitled. We will go and preach the Gospel, which is quick and powerful, and the power of God, unto salvation, in every town and district, until the inhabitants thereof yield implicit obedience thereto and the cause of Christ established therein. But my faith is weak. Oh ye of little faith.

HENRY THOMAS.

San Jose, Cal., Jan. 12, 1878.

How the Gospel of Christ has been Spread Since the Apostles' Days.

Bro. Stenley:

As we live in a day of progress and much is said and written, on how to spread the Gospel, I will give you a few thoughts for our paper. Many have the notion that the second commission, as given to the Apostles, is binding on the ministers of to-day. If so, I cannot see it. "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," &c, was given to the Apostles alone, and not to any other class of ministers. So also of the prophecy of Isaiah, as quoted by Paul in the 10th chapter of Romans. The preachers there spoken of were those, and those alone, that brought glad tidings of good things. I therefore take the position, that to apply the above Scriptures to any other class of ministers, is to wrest the Scriptures, as Peter in his 2d Epistle 3rd chapter, speaks of.

How then is the Gospel to be spread?

Answer. By the church. Paul, in 1 Tim. iii. 15, says the church is the "pillar and ground of the truth." Every member is in duty bound to do all in their power for the spread of the Gospel. Paul says to Timothy, "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

From these quotations we learn, first, that the church being the pillar and ground of the truth, are in duty bound to support it. 1st. By living lives of holiness. 2d. By letting their light shine before the world, that others, seeing their good works, may glorify our Father in heaven. 3d. By giving of their substance for the needy and for the spread of the Gospel. 4th. By holy conversation, that cannot be condemned. These duties devolve on all alike, according to their ability, male and female, and as we sow, so shall we reap. If we do these things we are sowing to the spirit. We are not to be unwise, but to understand what the will of the Lord is. See, the faithful men to which Timothy was to commit the word was to occupy the same relationship to the church that he did. Timothy was an evangelist, or to do the work of an evangelist, to set in order the things that were wanting in the church, and preach what he learned by study, as Paul tells him to study, to show himself a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. So likewise is the minister of the church to do, now, if he hopes for the true riches. Ministers of this class are the ones to do the work of spreading the Gospel now, and the church should see that they are engaged in the work.

There is much more that might be said on this subject, but I must close for the present.

Years in the one hope.

MARTIN PETERSON.

Send us a new subscriber.

Our Savior's Sympathy.

[An essay read at the social meeting in Monmouth, Jan. 31, 1878.]

BY MISS MARY CURCHILL.

Perhaps there are no two words in our language that express more than these, "Jesus wept." See him with his little band of faithful followers coming over from beyond Jordan, and hear Martha, as running out to meet him she says, "Master, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died."

Let us for a moment take in this scene; Jesus and his disciples not yet come into the village, Mary and Martha with the Jews gone out to meet him. Mary falling at the feet of Jesus and repeating the words of Martha, "Master, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died."

Hear these same Jews that had sought to stone him, saying one to another, "If this man opens the eyes of the blind, could he not have caused that Lazarus should not have died?" Then it was that "Jesus wept."

This same Jesus who, while he was on this earth, because he himself was so pure and good, and on account of the sins of the people, was persecuted and stoned, and finally crucified.

"Jesus wept." Think of an earthly parent all kind and good, weeping for the sins of a wayward child. What love, we say, must this parent have; and yet it is but feeble when compared with the love of Jesus. A love that is undying, unselfish, and that lasts, and will last throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

"Jesus wept." What volumes are herein contained? Who can speak these words lightly except indeed it be

"The people that dwell Where the light of the truth never shone, Where the anthems of praise never swell, And the love of the Lamb is unknown."

"Jesus wept." How often since the world began, has it been demonstrated that those who are nearest the right themselves are the most charitable to the shortcomings of others.

Jesus was perfect, and bore our sins without murmuring, and as we are to become "like him" we can lighten the sorrows of those around us for his sake, and finally be accounted worthy to enter in where "the many mansions be."

No Substitute for the Bible.

BY S. H. HEDRICK.

NUMBER II.

It is much easier to utter a sentence than to fully comprehend its scope, and analyse the numerous things connected with such a grand subject as the one placed at the head of these essays. It involves such a vast range of subjects, is fraught with the grandest of problems, whose depth will perhaps be fully understood only when God shall make all things new. This grand universe, standing forth as one grand unit, is nevertheless, composed of many particles, which of itself presents unnumberless subjects for our research and investigation. The life of many is largely occupied in exploring, classifying and investigating parts of its realm, and the most successful willingly confess that they have only partially succeeded in obtaining a knowledge of only a few things with which they have come in contact, and death calls them away when their work was only just begun. One of man's earliest lessons, confirms in every step of his progress in acquiring knowledge is, that he is not a Creator; but that other powers higher than any he possesses or any of the mighty phenomena he has beheld, has been exercised in bringing into existence this and other worlds with all their contents, all of which now stands forth with such coordination, adjustment and adaptation as to render it harmonious throughout, filling the heart of the explorer with high conceptions, admiration and comfort. He beholds the mineral kingdom, which

is composed, it is said, "by at least sixty-four different kinds of atoms" united together in the most exact and definite proportions, forming a problem truly for all ages and races of mankind to study.

While contemplating these elementary substances there comes up also the power of chemical action and affinities, with the many compounds arising therefrom. While all this is but the basis of the vegetable kingdom whose variety, if not scope, is more extensive and numerous. It also has its chain of coordination, cooperation, adjustment, independent to some extent, yet linked to the other; and law, order and reproduction proclaims the perfect harmony of each, and not less so of both combined. These again form the foundation of the animal kingdom, whose species and variety are so great as to furnish a problem, though a minor one, compared with the whole, which has amazed and perplexed the best minds of all ages.

Thus the universe, though composed of millions of atoms, occupied by innumerable species and endless varieties, is really but one grand universe perfect and harmonious, even in the most minute detail. Not only so, but under the mysterious influence of attractions, the earth and other planets, primary and secondary, are bound to the sun forming the solar system. Link after link connect system after system, until all are finally united, forming all into one system whose scope and power is but faintly perceived by the expression: "Grand, glorious, sublime and boundless universe."

How grand and glorious the fact, as declared by revelation and reason, that in addition to all this there is a universe and a system that is spiritual in its nature, and that the faculties of the human mind is aided by a Divine revelation, to know that the Creator of heaven and earth has also condescended to bless man with so many facilities for obtaining a knowledge of his works, so that to-day this age is blessed with all the discoveries of the past; the arts and sciences, the better knowledge, too, of revelation, and yet mankind is doubtless, still at work on the circumference of the grandest of problems, whose center is the end of all study and their consummation of all efforts. Not the least of problems is stated in a few questions: "What is man? From whence came he? and what is his future destiny?" In arriving at the answer to both the first and second questions, the world of mankind finds a problem indeed, and grasps eagerly at the history of man, as respects their races, their achievement in arts and sciences, aided by a survey of their cities and temples, their empires and civilizations, embracing their master pieces in the field of thought and moral life.

Confucius and Zoroaster, Abraham and Moses, John the Baptist and Jesus, Socrates and Paul, Howard and Washington, Luther and Wesley, and a host of the great and good of all ages, are prominent in history; but throw away the Bible and how much could you learn? How much could many of them have accomplished? Is reason or any other one thing alone sufficient to the great task? Are we not aided by revelation to look into this subject beyond the reach of any thing else? Does it not tell more satisfactory than any thing else possibly can, from whence man came, and what he is? yes, truly, and it also as nothing else can, enables us to look into his future abode. For ages past it has aided the world, and contributed much to aid it in its rapid advances in knowledge, giving such consolation to the faithful as is no where else to be found. It is as indispensable as the sun which lights up our earth. By its aid we are far along in the preparatory department of the life of the races of men, perhaps we might say in the intermediate with its lesson measurably

committed. Are we now ready to exalt reason and try to cut loose from this great light the revelation of the will of God, and set up any one of our approved systems of philosophy, and only receive as truth what we can explain and comprehend thereby, rejecting all else as false. This done, and the world is as impotent to the great task, with reason and all the arts and science, as deaf and dumb mutes are to fill the many business stations in life, or make desirable companions in the social circle.

Let us now avoid the other extreme, that of discarding reason to claim some inner light of spirit rappings, but cling to revelation to aid our reason and go forward. Resting here, we ask the reader to follow us to the end of these essays.

Evil of the Credit System.

In searching after the real cause of the hard times of which we hear so much, one cannot but see that a great many of the farmers, as well as the business men, have gone ruinously in debt, and that many of them are failing to make enough to pay their interest. We see this verified by the fact that there is a great deal of land being now pushed into market, and compelled to sell for what it will bring, to pay the incumbrance upon it. There is a cause of this, and I think it is the credit system, which, as a general thing is productive of more harm than good. During the war, when all kinds of produce were selling at the highest prices, land in this country suddenly went up from moderate to almost fabulous prices. A great many did not stop to study the future result of these unnatural advances in the value of commodities, nor did they think that the cause of the great rise would ever cease to exist, but they plunged into speculation as though they thought there would be no limit to the value of land, and that money would ever continue to flow into their hands just as they needed it.

Those who had accumulated a small sum of money invested in land, and went into debt about three times as much as they had to invest, and agreeing to pay very high rates of interest, expecting to make the money in the rise of the land. Men, too, bought large tracts of land who had nothing to pay down, but hoped—indeed believed—the continual rise of land in the market would help them. But there were men so infatuated as to think they have it in their power to bring the price of land up to any desired point, and that the government would be bound to furnish the money. These men, taking advantage of the credit system, purchased large tracts of land, for which they gave nothing as pay except their promises. But there came a change. The price of land reached its zenith, and they were left powerless and wonderfully in debt. Money ceased to flow so freely, taxes increased, and each year they found their burthen becoming greater, until after a short while those who had purchased land and paid nothing on it found that it would have to be sold, and with it all they had, to pay the debt, and then many times there would be a deficiency, and those who had invested what they had in land and gone in debt came out with nothing.

In matters of less importance men have taken advantage of the credit system in order to gratify their mania for speculation, and have been ruined by it. I have known men to buy up large lots of hogs, for which they knew they had not then to pay, but hoped to make it in the rise of prices and the growth of the hogs, and seeing their expectations disappointed were compelled to give up their all to pay the debt; while if it had not been for the credit system they could not have bought them. I have also seen young men just starting in life buy things of great cost which they did not actually need, simply because they could get them on time, and when the pay-day came they have been sold out entirely to pay their imprudent debts. The unusual amount of sheriff's sales of land and other property which people have seen take place in this country the past year to pay old debts will, it is hoped, open their eyes to the credit system, and they will come to acknowledge it an evil to be deprecated.—N. Y. Tribune.