

Communications.

Our Troubles.

NUMBER XXVI.

We have said that the attitude of the body in prayer, was one of the untaught questions, that had gendered strife. But it may be in this, we were mistaken. We are fallible and fallibility is subject to err. We can however say without any apprehension of erring, that if Jesus ever gave a lesson upon the attitude of the body in prayer, it was in favor of standing. Hear Him: "And Jesus answering saith unto them. Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." Mark. xi. 22-25. When Jesus said to his disciples, "when ye stand praying, forgive," He came nearer defining the attitude of prayer than in any lesson ever taught upon that subject, so far as the record shows, and indicates standing. If it had been the will of the Savior, that we should fall upon the ground or kneel upon our knees, in prayer, then his language would be susceptible of interpretation, that we could be blessed, without forgiving those, who had sinned against us, when we prayed kneeling or on our faces; but when we pray standing we must forgive those who had trespassed against us, of our Father who is in heaven, would not forgive us the sins we have committed against him. But our God is gracious, and forgives when we come to him in faith, whether we be on our face, our knees or our feet, if our heart is right in his sight. But we must forgive those who have sinned against us, or we will not be forgiven in any posture; for when Christ taught his disciples to pray, He said, "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." When we go to God in prayer, we do not as bondsmen, for he has made us free. We do not go as culprits, for he has pardoned us. We do not go as aliens for he has accepted us as citizens. Nor do we go as slaves, for he has made us sons and daughters and heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

From this standpoint, it would seem that when we would speak to our Father in the name of our elder brother, we should arise. Yet we know that he has heard and will hear us, when we speak to him on our knees. If the author of the Christian religion, had intended that the body should be in any one position when we pray, he would have specified that position, and not left us to guess what would be obedience. Our feelings should never guide us to disobey the love of God. But in the absence of law it may often be best, that our feelings produced by good judgment, should direct our actions. Paul says, "For when the gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law, written on their hearts their conscience also bearing witness and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." Rom. ii. 14, 15. A Christian then, instructed to do anything and not told how he should do it, must exercise his best judgment, which will produce in him a good conscience and a right feeling by which he should be governed; but only in the absence of law. When I go to God laden with sorrow, I feel like falling prostrate before him, and pour-

ing forth the soul's desires. When I approach him in the closet, in a family or a social capacity, my feelings admonish me to kneel at the feet of Jesus. But when in the midst of a mixed multitude, I go to God to reverence, adore and call upon him, for his blessing, my judgment, heart and will admonish me to arise, with uplifted hands and in this reverential attitude offer my devotions to Deity. He has promised and I can go to him in faith. In a mixed assembly, we can only have uniformity and order when we pray, by adopting the standing attitude. Our God is a God of order and seeketh such to worship him. But while the ordinances of God, do not define the attitude of the body in prayer, they do specify other things essential to our acceptance at the mercy seat. The ordinances of God require that we must be in Christ that we must have implicit faith, that we forgive all who have trespassed against us, that we make our petition in simple language, that we do not vainly repeat our prayers to God and that we should be in earnest when we pray. The most important place of prayer is the closet, after the door is shut, so we can pray to him, who alone can help us, in secret, with the promise that he will reward us openly. Prayer makes the darkened clouds with draw;

Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw,
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above.

HENRY THOMAS.

Oakland, April 10, 1878.

Divine Origin of Christianity Demonstrated.

BY E. F. AMES.

NUMBER IV.

We closed our last number with a brief narrative of the history of our country, and promised by the application of four marks therein enumerated to prove the facts stated true beyond a cavil.

And for the sake of argument and illustration, let us suppose the skeptic to rise up and say that he does not believe what I have stated regarding the history of America, as respects it once being British territory, and the inhabitants British subjects; the rebellion, the war, the Declaration of Independence, the formation of the present constitution, and United States Government, and of General Washington, etc., etc., and demands of me to prove my statement. Now, as to the colonies once being British territory, and their inhabitants being once British subjects, there are many monuments and actions kept up in memory of the facts stated, which were established and commenced at the time. Said facts are said to have transpired, which make them true, unless we suppose a universal deception of the senses of our fathers, who lived at that time, and were participants and actors in the events narrated. Plymouth Rock is an imperishable monument of the landing of the May Flower in Cape Cod harbor, in December, 1620. That event has been constantly commemorated from that day to this, first by the pilgrims themselves celebrating regularly the anniversary of their coming, which has been kept up constantly by their children. They have kept sacredly a copy of the compact they drew up in the cabin of the May Flower, before landing, by which they agreed to enact just and equal laws. They have filed away among the archives of Massachusetts the original charter from the English government given the colony, defining their powers and describing their boundary, and also a copy of their colonial laws, and several other monuments and institutions, such as the first governor's mansion, the Elm tree at Boston, etc., etc., all standing as unimpeachable witnesses to the fact.

Now, to suppose that the puritans would meet in their places of worship on every recurring 21st day of Decem-

ber and solemnly sing Psalms, and praise God as they did, and do yet, in commemoration of nothing, instead of commemorating the fact of their landing at Plymouth, as they do, would be to do violence to common sense and commit an unpardonable moral offense against intelligent mankind. It would be equally impossible to suppose that the people of Massachusetts could be deceived regarding their original charter, their colonial laws, Governor Winthrop's Mansion, or the Elm tree. Because, there could be no time or period in their history when any of these things could have been fraudulently imposed upon them. There must have been universal deception, or collusion of the people, if these things are not what they purport to be, and can any sane man suppose this to have been the case?

The same rule of evidence and testimony will apply as regards other facts stated, touching the history of our country. For instance, the Bunker Hill monument, and the act of celebrating annually the battle of Bunker Hill, prove the fact of that battle, unless we again suppose they erected that grand superstructure, at great pains and expense to something that never occurred, and kept in memory that something, by the meaningless formality of meeting every once a year, and speechifying and toasting an event that never occurred. The same argument applies regarding the Declaration of Independence. There stands the very hall in which the memorable instrument was adopted, and signed, and the belfry, and the same identical bell that pealed forth the first notes proclaiming American freedom. These are never perishing witnesses to the fact, a living monument in testimony of the truth that the Declaration of Independence is in truth what it purports to be, that it was convened and adopted at the time and place, and by the representatives of the people of the colonies, as is declared in the instrument itself. And the action of the people on each recurring 4th of July, gathering themselves together, and recounting the historical events of the Declaration, &c., familiar to every school-boy, make up the testimony and prove the case beyond a cavil or doubt. It is not possible that such a thing could be a fraud and false, unless the whole nation could be deceived. The story of the Declaration could not have been invented and palmed off on three millions of people. Whenever that instrument was adopted the people must have known whether the things rehearsed in it were true or false, whether they were subjects of Great Britain, whether the king had committed the many tyrannies and usurpations therein enumerated, whether they were at war with the parent government or not, etc.

Again, the adoption of our present constitution is another fact which can be established without the aid of oral testimony. It sets out in the preamble with the assertion that "We the people of the United States . . . do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America." So it says it was the work of the people themselves. If it were a lie the people would know it; they, the people, would know whether they, the people, did ordain and declare the said instrument as the constitution for the United States of America. If they did not so ordain it, it would never have been the paramount law of the country. They did ordain it, as is evinced by the numerous institutions, forms and practices now in daily use all over the land, which that instrument creates and demands. It could never have been forged and come into use against the knowledge and consent of the people, because the instrument itself and the machinery of government under it, all depend upon the free consent and will of the people, and hence could not be a forgery or a fraud.

And again, the same class of proof

rises up and bears record to the fact of there having been a Gen. George Washington. The same four rules or marks unite in corroboration of the fact.

Now, at the risk of being a little tedious, let us apply our four rules to the above facts in general, and see how they hold out, for this is the crucible in which we must refine the truth and purge out falsehood.

1. Are the facts such as our outward senses can judge of? They are. The coming of the May Flower, the landing at Plymouth Rock, the charter of the king to the people of the colonies, the colonial laws, the revolutionary war, and battles, etc., are all things of which the human senses can take cognizance.

2. Were these facts performed publicly in the presence of witnesses? They were.

3. Are there public monuments and actions kept up in memory of these facts? There are.

And 4. Were these monuments and actions established and commenced at the time of such facts? They were, or within the memory of the age contemporaneous with the facts. So then, these facts are true, unless we suppose a universal deception or collusion of the people. For, as I have repeatedly stated, whenever, or wherever the above four marks meet, touching any fact, it is impossible such fact be false, unless we suppose a universal deception of the human senses, or a universal agreement to deceive succeeding generations, either conclusion of which is impossible. The same reason holds, with regard to the books of Moses, or of the New Testament, and must hold with regard to every book which contains matters of fact accompanied by the above mentioned four marks, for these marks together secure mankind from imposition with regard to any false facts, as well in after ages, as at the time when it was said to be done.

Now, let us take up some familiar instances of the Bible, and compare them with the structure above created, of the historical material of United States. In the book of Josh. iv. 6, it is stated that the reason why the twelve stones were set up at Gilgal was that when the children of Israel, in after ages, should ask their meaning, it should be told them chap. iv. 20-22. And the thing in memory of which they were set up, the passage over Jordan, was such as could not possibly have been imposed on the people at the time when it was said to be done; it was not less miraculous, yet still more unassailable by the petty cavils of infidel sophistry than their passage through the Red Sea. Now, let us suppose that there never was any such thing as that passage over Jordan; that the stones at Gilgal had been set up on some unknown occasion; and that some designing man, in an after age, invested this book of Joshua himself, and adduced this pile of stones as a testimony of its truth, would not everybody say to him, "We know this pile of stones very well, but we never before heard of this reason for it, nor of this book of Joshua. Where has it lain concealed all this while? and where and how came you, after so long a period, to find it? Besides it affirms that this passage over Jordan was solemnly directed to be taught our children from age to age; and, to that end, that they were always to be instructed in the meaning of this particular monument; but we were never taught it ourselves when we were children, nor did we teach it to our children. And it is not probable that such an emphatic ordinance should have been forgotten during the continuance of so remarkable a pile of stones, set up expressly for the purpose of preserving its remembrance."

If then, for reasons already shown, the leading events and facts of the early history of our country, cannot

be false, so neither can the miraculous passage over Jordan of the children of Israel be false. As well say that our Declaration of Independence, Independence Hall, Bunker Hill monument, Washington's monument, and even the origin of our own constitution are all mere sham; that the actions and observances which we celebrate in memory of what we actually know are untrue, to make us forget what we have regularly commemorated, and make us believe that we have kept such and such institutions with reference to something which we never heard of before; that is, that we knew something before we knew it, as to say that the stonage at Gilgal was an imposition upon the Jews and false and did not represent their miraculous passage over Jordan, unless we fall back upon the same miserable subterfuge of deception and collusion, or adopt the views of Taylor's Diegeses, and doubt thereof ever having been a nation of Jews, with their illustrious leaders, lawgivers and prophets, who have kept to this day so credibly, the books containing an account of their eventful history with as much care as we keep in memory the fame of our illustrious leaders, captains and statesmen.

Live for Something.

BY MRS. J. H. DUTLER.

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Yes, live for something worthy of life—its capabilities and opportunities for noble deeds and achievements. In the order of Providence life's ministry is indeed lofty and sublime. Every man, every woman, and every child has his or her assignment in the duties and responsibilities of daily life. We are in the world to make the world better; to lift it up to higher levels of enjoyment and progress; to make its hearts and homes brighter and happier by devoting to our fellows our best thought, activities and influences. It is the motto of every true heart and the genius of every noble life that "no man liveth to himself"—lives chiefly for his own selfish good. It is a law of our intellectual and moral being that we promote our own real happiness in the exact proportion we contribute to the comfort and enjoyment of others. Nothing worthy of the name of happiness is possible in the experience of those who live only for themselves, all oblivious for the welfare of their fellows. That only is the true philosophy which recognizes and works out the principle in daily action that "life was lent for noble duties, not for selfishness, not to be whiled away in aimless dreams, but to improve ourselves and serve mankind." But to live for something involves the necessity of an intelligent and definite plan of action. More than splendid dreaming, or even magnificent resolves is necessary to success in the objects and ambitions of life. Men come to the best results in every department of labor only as they thoughtfully plan and earnestly toil in given directions. Those who have made money, acquired learning, won fame, or wielded power in the world, have always, in every age, and among all people, done so by embodying a well defined purpose in earnest action.

The reason thousands fail in their work in life, is the want of a definite plan in laying out their energies; they work hard for nothing, because there is no actual result possible to their mode of action. Then let us live for something definite and practical. Take hold of our duties with a method and a will, and they must yield to us and become the ministers of our own happiness and that of others. Nothing within the reach of the possible can withstand the man, woman or child who is intelligently and determinedly bent on success.

A great action is always preceded by a great purpose. What can be done and is worth doing, do with dis-