

"Our Troubles."

BY J. P. MOORELL.

(Continued.)

"Notwithstanding, ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, as sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God." Phil. iv. 14-18.

Paul did not desire a gift; "I have all and abound; I am full, wanting nothing. What was it that he desired? I desire fruit, that may abound to your credit; not to me.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." 1 Tim. vi. 17-19.

Paul say, charge them that are rich in this world, to take care of their money and riches, put your money out at interest, or build fine houses and buy more land. No, not that, but that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, to give, laying up in store, what in this world? no, but in time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. Is eternal life connected with this communication or giving? It appears to be so. Then the brethren that have lands and money at interest, and give but little, or nothing, to the support of the cause of Christ, how will it go with them when they are called to render up their accounts to God, that has given them richly all these good things to enjoy; no excuse will be taken in that great day. The Lord will require a reason and you will have none.

I know that some will say, "Well, that preacher is after money, I won't give him anything." Well, if all the preachers were like I am, they don't want you to give them anything; but we do want to be paid for the services we have rendered you; that is all.

The church is a body, a company, of which you all, or we all are members, give it to the Lord, body, and not to the preacher, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased; the sacrifice is to the Lord and not to the preacher. Now suppose we do not give or bestow, is God well pleased with us? I do not care how often you may pray, or how well you may sing, or how solemn you may look, or how good you may feel if you have left undone a known duty, have refused to sacrifice a part of what you have to the cause of Christ, how will you stand in that great day. You can tell sinners what Christ said they must do to be saved. Do your mean what you say? O, yes. Will you complain at me when I tell you, as a Christian, what you must do, or you cannot be saved; one is just as plain and important as the other. Can we be in full fellowship in the church and refuse to communicate or give? It is a command. But what is fellowship we will see, and then we will be able to understand what we are about to say.

Fellowship—1st. Partnership, an association, a company, a band. 2d. The rule for dividing property and losses among partners. 3d. A contract between two or more parties.—Webster.

The church is an association, a company in fellowship or partnership with one another and with Christ. Then to be in full fellowship in the church is more than to have a good moral standing; it is to have a partnership, interest in all the money and property of the church.

"If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship." Lev. vi. 2. I have quoted this language just to show you the meaning of the word fellowship.

See the first church ever organized by the apostles, and they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.

And fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles; and all that believed were together and had all things common. And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all as every man had need. Here we have doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer, sold their possessions and goods, and gave to every man that had need. Mark this, to every man that had need; not to those that had no need. I think some have taken extreme views of this passage in order to avoid its simple plainness.

I now call your attention to 2 Cor. viii. 1-14. And you will pardon me for making such a lengthy quotation, for I do want to get this subject fully before your minds.

"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit (or would have you to know) of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God. Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased and ye burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality."

The apostle praises these brethren for their liberality, I bear record; yea, and beyond their power they were willing to do, praying the apostles to receive their gift. Do the churches do this now? No, they never have anything on hand to give; they generally have to send a begging committee around to raise money to support the church, and in this way the church of Christ becomes a beggar, and that too from the world.

The apostle says, "See that your abound in this grace" (or charity). What for? "To prove the sincerity of your love." Is our giving a test or

proof of our love to Christ or the Church? The apostle would seem to say so. Suppose we make it a test in all the churches now, I fear it would prove that we love but little, because we give but little. You know the love of our Lord Jesus Christ; How do we know his love? When he was rich, for our sake he became poor, that we, through his poverty might be rich. In the act of giving himself for us, he has given us the evidence of his love for us.

Now, brethren, how can we compare what little we have done, and are doing for him, with what he has done for us? Can you say you have done all you could do, and were willing to do more, if you could? If so, you have done well. You have made a sacrifice that is well pleasing to God.

It may be said by some that they are not able to do anything; now are you sure that is true, and if so, are you willing you say yes. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted. Let every one that can do, do something, make some sacrifice; don't do too much; the apostle says, "I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened." No, not that, but this is what I mean, that all that can do, to do something, that there may be equality.

This fellowship is called the contribution in other places. See Rom. xii. 13. It is here called, "Distributing to the necessities of saints; given to hospitality." See Rom. xv. 26, 27, 28: "For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. When therefore I have performed this, and sealed to them this fruit."

But some good brother, that is always ready for an argument, will say, this is the way to raise money for the poor saints, and not for the preachers. I will just say the apostle is not talking about raising money, or the manner of raising it, but about sending the money or contribution already raised, it was the fellowship money of the church they could help the poor saints with it, or they could send a preacher to preach the Gospel to poor sinners, and all have a partnership interest in the good work.

If the Masons of Eugene City were to send a contribution to the Masons of Portland, would that be saying anything about how the money was raised, or what it was raised for. Surely not, but the conclusion would be, that the money was drawn from the treasurer. The partnership, of fellowship money of that body, in which they all have a common interest. So it should be in the church of Christ. But how do we get the money into the treasury, or any place where it becomes the money of the church, and not individual. There is but one way known to me, that is one Bible way. I know that that money has been raised in many ways for the church. I am not talking about ways, but the way that the Bible teaches, so that we may not get into a controversy.

Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the church at Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

The same order was given to the Corinthian church, that was given to the churches in Galatia. What was that order? Upon the first day of the week let some of you lay by him in store. No, that is not it; but some of us do that way; let everyone of you lay by him in store.

Now suppose that I do not do this, am I doing right? I think not. But suppose I do not go to church every

first day, that has nothing to do with this question whatever. You can lay by in store at home just as well as you were at church. But you say some of the brethren won't do anything, therefore I will not. Do you not know that that is a very poor excuse. My brother will not go to church, therefore I will not; he will not pray in his family or at church, therefore I will not. Now do you think the Lord will take such a poor excuse as this? No, you don't; the true spirit of a Christian is, "Lord speak, thy servant heareth thee, we will be obedient."

Now is it right for me to lay by in store something, however little it may be, on every first day of the week? If it is, I will do it, I will not wait to see whether my brother will do his duty or not. Paul says, "let every one of you do this." Now suppose that every Disciple in the State would do this, do just what Paul says to do, what a different state of things we would have in this country, and that very soon.

I do not say that you should put your contributions on the table every Lord's day, but I do say you ought to put away something, sanctify it to the Lord and to his cause.

How much must I give or set apart to the Lord? I am not allowed to say, you are to decide that matter, you must settle that in your own mind. Paul gives the rule, and you are to decide the question by that law.

But this I say, "He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.

God loves a cheerful giver. He gave his Son a sacrifice for us, cannot we give or make a sacrifice to him, one that is worth something, one that we can feel; a sacrifice that is worthy of the name we will feel it, and we ought to feel it, and with such a sacrifice God is well pleased.

(To Continue)

Correct Speech.

Nothing bespeaks a true lady and gentleman or well-bred child more than the use of correct language, pure, clean speech. Cultivate, my young friends, good English in every-day conversation. Unclean speech is in keeping with a smutty face, begrimed hands, and soiled clothes. Strange how easy and almost unconsciously one slides into a careless, slipshod way of talking, even when the rules of grammar are quite familiar. It is not uncommon to find people learned in all the rules of syntax, who apply them to the art of writing, yet they habitually talk incorrectly.

Early culture and association with refined persons are quite essential to give purity of speech; but if one has unfortunately been deprived of these, he should continually watch his words till he gets the habit of using decent English, for nothing so unmistakably marks one with vulgarity, no matter how elegant the outside covering, as shabby, low-born speech.

Not long since the young folks belonging to several families in a certain neighborhood, who had frequent intercourse with each other, entered into an agreement to pay a small forfeit every time either of them made use of certain vulgarisms in speech that had become a habit with them. Old and young, large and small, soon became interested and entered into the compact. All had fallen into the habit, for false syntax is contagious, and spreads through whole communities when it once breaks out, and one of its worst phasias is that people are affected by it without knowing it.

For a time the treasury, the contents of which, by the way, was given to charitable purposes, was pretty full. Each one was a self-appointed

monitor. The plan caused considerable fun, but, what is better, completely cured that habit. I doubt if in that circle the horrid words "a'nt," or "won't" or "have got" or ever heard, or "done" for "did." And their conversation is seldom embellished with "you know," "now a," "I tell you what," "of course," and the like, or with high-sounding superlatives where only the moderate positives have any meaning.

As much as I dislike slang, even what is termed the better sort of it, which, by the way, should be used very sparingly, if at all, apt as it sometimes seems, I dislike these specimens of false syntax, these vulgarisms, more, and they should be carefully watched lest they creep in and spoil fair speech.

I would recommend to my young friends who have frequent intercourse with each other the formation of such a club as I have been describing for mutual benefit. My word for it it is a marvellous corrector of false syntax, and the rules might extend to other bad habits, and so be constituted a reform club.—Illustrated Christian.

The Weakness of Words.

Words are necessary evils! We should be much happier if we could do without them. Who has not been painfully conscious of emotions no words could convey? If we had some power of impressing others with emotions and thoughts, just as they impress us, without words, but with some native inborn magnetism, how much more eloquent and earnest we would be! Gestures are only the effort of pent-up thoughts striving in vain for utterance.

If we have more to say than we have words to express, we motion with the arms, fingers, head, body, and feet, and so convey more thought than we possibly could with words alone.

We hear of the "speaking eye" the "beaming countenance," proving that there is a language higher than ordinary speech, which must live in the atmosphere of unadulterated thought. Many have long sought for a universal alphabet, and far down in the depths of the old languages they have tried to find its remains; but as yet no certain results have been reached. Nature has a language whose words are continually spoken, and yet clearly understood by all nations alike. But while she is full of voices, she has also a written language. The heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth are full of language of their own. It requires a student of nature to read it but it can be read.—National Repository for May.

Great Thinkers.

"It is a belief in the Bible which has served me as the guide of my moral and literary life."—Goethe.

"I account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy."—Sir Isaac Newton.

"To give a man full knowledge of true morality, I should need to send him to no other book than the New Testament."—John Locke.

"I know the Bible is inspired, because it finds me at greater depths of my being than any other book."—Coleridge.

"A noble book! All men's book. It is our first statement of the never-ending problem of man's destiny and God's way with men on earth."—Carlyle.

"I must confess the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with astonishment."—Rousseau.

"There is not a boy or a girl, all Christendom through, but their lot is made better by this great book."—Theodore Parker.

Vomiting can frequently be prevented so it is said, by holding the hands in water as hot as can be borne, letting it extend over the wrists.