

*blessed be God that I was born.* O, that I was where he is. I have a father and a mother, and ten brothers and sisters in heaven, and I shall be the eleventh. O, there is a telling in this providence, and I shall be telling it forever. If there be such a glory in his conduct towards me now, what will it be to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne? *Blessed be God that I was born."*

Here is a contrast indeed—a contrast which the blind themselves may discern between the righteous and the wicked, the man that loves and the man that hates the word of God.

### QUERY.

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—What is meant by letters of commendation: should they be given to brethren when they remove from a church: if so, what should be their contents?

Z.

There are three queries in one. Letters of commendation, introduction, or approval, (1 Cor. XVI: 3.) are different names for the same species of epistolary writings—documents making known or certifying character. Sometimes, in this age of new things, we hear of letters of dismissal. We have never seen a letter of this description, but from the name, should judge that all such letters are far below par. They are of recent origin.

All who are worthy of christian fellowship, are worthy of receiving letters which testify their relation to the church, on application, when about to remove. The church who gives a letter is responsible for it, and should have a care how it is used, until delivered to another church, at which time it becomes a *dead letter*, so far as relates to its original object. A brother on removal, having a letter from the elders who formerly watched over him, if he does not unite with another church, will have such respect both for himself and the brethren with whom he formerly united as to return the letter, or if not, the church who gave, has the right to demand it.

The contents of such letters should be simple. Facts should constitute them. There can be little difficulty here. Any church giving a letter, knows what testimony it is willing to receive, and if governed by this rule, the document written and given will be as near perfect as it can be under the circumstances. But is it not sometimes the case, that churches retain members which they are reluctant to recommend on their removal? This, we fear, sometimes happens. It betokens an exceedingly weak or very delinquent eldership. They will allow per-