

city. At times divisional officers from Toronto will visit us and special services will be held."

BRO. FORD writing us from Westport, says: "About three weeks ago the brethren here made us a liberal donation visit. Quite a number of them were present, and a pleasant evening was spent. But it was only an evening party. But yesterday, the 22nd, being the birthday of both Mrs. Ford and myself, between 40 and 50 of the brethren came to tea, being mindful to bring the needful with them, and celebrated the occasion in good style. A very fine table was spread; indeed, you would have thought that a first-class tea meeting was in full blast. It was certainly, and admitted by all, one of the most enjoyable evenings it has been our privilege to spend in a long time. Such gatherings do much to strengthen the social element among brethren."

BRO. EATON, who has become somewhat familiar to our readers by his valuable contributions to the columns of THE CHRISTIAN, has, we are sorry to say, been called to mourn the loss of one of his children. But she is better off, and is now where we all wish to be. To him and to his family we extend our sympathy and trust that the kind Heavenly Father whom we all serve, will abundantly bless them in their hours of affliction.

The people of Maine seemed determined to exterminate from their midst the liquor traffic, as will be seen by reading "Amendments to the Maine Liquor Law," found on another page.

It is generally understood that Mr. Moody will soon visit St. John, but nothing definitely is known.

We are informed that our next annual meeting will be at Milton, N. S.

The June Quarterly will be held with the church at Kempt, Queen's Co., N. S.

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

ON WHICH SIDE ARE YOU?

M. B. RYAN.

"He that is not for me is against me and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."—Matt. xii: 30.

This language, like all God's statements, is plain. There is no ambiguity about it. There is no possibility of a candid person mistaken its meaning.

There never was an individual who sustained a relation to the whole of mankind at all similar to the relation sustained by Jesus of Nazareth. His relation is not simply to a nation or a family; but to individuals as individuals and to the race as a race. The whole of mankind was contemplated in His incarnation, His life, His teaching, His death, His resurrection, His exaltation. He came into the world that the world might through Him be saved. He lived not simply as a Jew or for Jews, but as a man and for men. He taught, not Jewish truth; nor Asiatic truth, but TRUTH, and hence a common legacy. He died a ransom for sin, whether Jewish or Gentile. He rose, a victor over death—the last enemy of the race—and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, and that for all men. He was exalted on high and is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through Him. Not only so. His demands are as universal as His provisions. God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord. He has issued a universal proclamation, offering pardon and life to the obedient and assuring the disobedient of punishment. So, in reference to Him and His claims, every man is involved—and every man must dispose of Him in some manner. There can be no neutrality. The conflict in which Christ is engaged, as Captain of the forces of righteousness, is unlike

any other warfare. There are rumors of wars among the nations now. And those nations are preparing for conflict. But there are other nations that are neutral in the matter. This is because the claims of the antagonistic powers are sectional. Were England and Russia to contend for universal supremacy the case would be different. Then no nation could be neutral; neither could any man. Now this is precisely the case in the spiritual conflict. The forces of good and evil are mustered under their respective leaders for deadly warfare; and the contest is for the control of the world. The vital question is: Shall the black flag of Beelzebub spread its venomous folds over this fair earth, shutting out the sunlight of heaven and spreading desolation and death? Or shall the banner of Immanuel be flung to the breeze to reflect the light and warmth of the Sun of Righteousness and to fill the earth with joy?

And to that question every man must give an answer, and to its solution every man must lend a hand. Hence this pointed language: "He that is not for me is against me." Here is a choice of masters—of captains. "He that gathereth not with me scattereth." Here is the rally to the flag of Jesus and the enlistment in His ranks, or the scattering to the enemy. There, then, is the line. It is sharply drawn. There is no room on the line for any one to stand. One side or the other must be chosen. Every man is *now* on one side or the other of that line. My brother man, "Where art thou?" Perhaps on self-examination you will find yourself on the wrong side—arrayed against Christ. Do you know what that means? It means final and utter defeat and irretrievable ruin for you if you persist in your course. The hand that framed the worlds is against you. The arm that deluged a sin-corrupted earth; that swept the Egyptian oppressors of His people into oblivion; that annihilated the rebellious cities of Sodom and Gomorrah; and that wrested from the grasp of death his richest spoil, is stretched out to do you battle. Do you think you can prevail against the armies of the living God? Brother—get over on the other side of that line. You need to be on the side of right and of victory. "If God be for us who can be against us?"

Williamsport, April 20th, 1885.

DID PAUL MAKE A MISTAKE?

DEAR EDITOR.—When I wrote the short article headed, "Did Paul Make a Mistake?" I did so in order to have the views of some of the brethren on the subject, to enable me to arrive at a clearer understanding of the truth; and must say I am pleased with Brother Ford's good natured article on the subject, although not yet convinced that the mist has been cleared away. I admit the infallibility of the apostle when guided by the Holy Spirit but do not accept that he could not nor did not sometimes err in his actions and especially in taking the Nazarite vow under the New Dispensation which he did without the authority of the Holy spirit, so far as we can learn.

Bro. W. M. in reviewing my article says, "As it is important that the words and actions" of the apostle should be placed in a proper light, "he feels" it his duty to assume that Paul did not make a mistake" and to the question, "why did the apostle take the vow," his answer is, "being a Jew he had the right to take the vow."

Now, sir, if affirmation would prove anything, then the difficulty might be considered settled without further investigation. Are you not aware that Christ "hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us * * * to make in Himself of twain one new man;" therefore "there is now neither Jew nor Gentile in Christ Jesus," and being a Jew according to the flesh, gave Paul no authority to cling to the law, which he himself declared was taken out of the way. We are not now looking at Paul as a Jew, under the law, but as a Christian freed from the law."

His answer to the question, "On what ground did he take the vow?" proves about as much as his affirmation in reference to the first question—that is

literally nothing. He refers to Gen. xxviii: 20-22, where Jacob took on himself a vow at Bethel. Was this vow a part of the law? Did he make an offering unto the Lord of one he lamb, of the first-year, without blemish for a burnt offering and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering and one ram without blemish for peace-offerings, &c.? (Num. vi: 13-21.) These Paul must offer to the Lord in taking the Nazarite vow, the reason why he was requested to "be at charges" with the four men with whom he was to purify himself. In Acts xviii: 18, reference is made to a vow which the brother supposes Paul had taken, but is he not aware that some eminent commentators claim that for Aquila who was a companion of the apostle. But suppose we admit his claim that Paul was the man, is there any mention of a sacrifice being offered? Will he affirm it was a part of the law? If so, we demand the proof and ask him as a favor to tell us the nature of the vow taken at Cenchrea.

He can not understand how "taking a vow" was contrary to a Jew, "having the privilege to take it or leave it alone. Now, remember, I did not refer to Paul as a Jew but as a Christian; if he were not the latter there would be no difficulty, but because he is, makes his act appear strange. Again, does the brother make no distinction between "a vow," and the Nazarite vow which was a part of the law, now taken out of the way by Jesus?

Yes, a part "of the law of Moses proper" according to his own language. But what does he mean by "the law of Moses proper?" Does he wish us to understand that the Nazarite vow was not a legal enactment? Now, suppose we admit it, the difficulty is not removed, for the sacrifice for sin still remains, and how could a Christian offer such to God knowing that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, without making a mistake?

My reference to Peter's action towards the Gentiles was merely to show that Paul was as liable to err as he, and being inspired to preach and teach that inspiration did not keep him from sometimes making mistakes in his actions. The brother's allusion to Paul's last words, "I have fought a good fight, finished my course and kept the faith," to prove he never made a mistake smacks of Calvinism or something akin to it. Are we to suppose, because Paul uttered these words in his last days, that he wished us to understand he never made a mistake. Very well, did he know that Jesus alone is perfect, my brother?

But Bro. Ford thinks the apostle acted wisely because James and the Elders at Jerusalem requested him to take the vow, and says, "it is too much for his credulity to suppose that the combined wisdom of these persons" was misleading.

Remember, I am of the opinion that these brethren acted as they did from the best of motives—yet their zeal was not according to knowledge. May they not have been in very much the same condition on this subject that they were before the conversion of Cornelius in reference to receiving Gentiles into the church? They did not as clearly understand as was afterwards the case; neither they nor Paul had a thus saith the Lord for what they did so far as we can learn.

He also states, "their object" for so acting, was to conciliate the "believing Jews" when it is very clearly stated in Acts xxi: 22, that "the multitude must needs come together;" who were the multitude? Where did they come together? Was it not in the Temple? What did they do on coming together? but take Paul out of the Temple to put him to death. Would not the believing Jews have been satisfied with a statement from the apostle as regards the report? If not, why not? If they would not believe his word would they more readily believe his actions? Our respected brother asks, "was it a 'streak of inconsistency' for Paul to hasten if it were possible for him to be at Jerusalem for Pentecost?" and concludes "it was just as lawful to take a vow according to the law." Does he suppose the apostle went to Jerusalem for that purpose? Then there was no need of the brethren interfering as he would have done so anyway. But the most