

truth gets into old bottles, the bottles burst and the wine is lost; but the fault is not in the wine but in the bottles. The truth of God, like the new wine, is dilatable, and when it gets into retrogressive heads the head flies off of its base, and all the benign influences of truth is lost to that head. The head and heart that receive the truth must undergo the process of transformation. This is true of the church of God. It must be aggressive, and should be strong enough to shake off dead forms. We should keep pace with the progress of the age. What manner of us are the effete usages that produce no growth or advancement in church or home? Let us not be afraid of what is new but take hold of whatever is better, and drop whatever is not vital and useful. The church or the Christian that is not aggressive and constantly putting on new life will sooner or later suffer oblivion. H. M.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

In this age of science and speculation, when man is forever spreading out his tentacles of research, grasping eagerly at that which pleases the fancy or suits the depraved tastes of humanity, it requires a solidity of spirituality based upon truth present in every professor of Christ to enable him to withstand the seducing influences of the world. To some of us, perhaps, the boundary between the church and the world is not as clearly defined as it should be. Christ has clearly taught us that between the world and the church there can be no union, they are as distinct from each other as night from day. We must either belong to one or the other. If we belong to Christ or his church, we must crucify the world or *vice versa*. You will see from this that our position as Christians must be clearly defined to ensure our salvation; for, if we profess Christ and walk with the world, we have forfeited our Christian citizenship and jeopardized our final hopes. The question that presents itself at this juncture is an important one to the disciple of Christ viz: What are our limits as Christians? To answer this question with the space at my disposal is an utter impossibility. I do not declare the answer as difficult as some of our periodicals have done. I have read articles upon this subject, dealing with it in about as logical a manner as one could expect from party propagandists.

For an uninspired man to lay down a standard for the guidance of other men in religious matters, is an usurpation of arrogance and pride, begotten from mystic Babylon. "Conscience," says one, "is our guide in the matter." This by the general class of religionists is considered a safe spiritual adviser. One says, "I can do this, I can go here, and still retain the approval of my conscience." But let me tell those people whose religion is conscientious, that Paul lived in all good conscience towards God at the same time he was hindering the cause of Christ. Paul had not the knowledge to give truth to conscience, so may you not have, my dear brother and sister. When Paul had been taught the perfect way, his conscience was founded on reason and knowledge and was then capable of being his guide. The privilege is ours then to obtain the truth by the word of God as Paul did, and probably if we have honest hearts it may prove the fallacy of relying on un instructed conscience. What then should guide us in the matter of our limits with the world. We have seen conscience is not to be relied on, nor can its relative, opinion or belief founded on human reason, which is far more deceptive. The only answer that can be given to the question is, "search ye the scriptures." What saith the scriptures? Our distinctive plea is to speak where the Bible speaks, and to be silent where it is silent. Christ established a kingdom, He instituted laws governing that kingdom. The realms of his rule can be seen only by the eye of

faith. Yet it was so established that it can be always enlarged. When we become subjects of that kingdom it is our duty as well as our privilege to obey those laws. Those laws are so framed that their compliance always renders honor and glory to the King, and happiness to ourselves and fellow-men.

Whenever we disobey one law we obey the laws of another master, which is in direct conflict with Christ's system. For we cannot serve two masters, therefore we must of necessity obey the laws of God's kingdom; or in other words, we must do that which renders honor and glory to God and happiness to our fellowmen. You will readily see from what I have said, that it is the Christian's duty and privilege to labor both for the temporal and spiritual happiness of others. If we do not do this, we fall short of our calling. S. N. G.

(Continued next issue.)

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY.

Covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet I show unto you a more excellent way. I. Cor. xii. 31.

The above words were addressed by Paul to "the Church of God at Corinth," because there was strife among the brethren there on account of jealousies. This church had had much trouble over a number of things, and all because the brethren had neglected to cultivate a spirit of love. What though they could speak with the tongues of men and angels; understand all mysteries and have faith so strong that they could remove mountains? What though they were so benevolent that they would give all their goods that the poor might be cared for? Yea, what though they were so zealous for their religion that they would sacrifice their lives at the stake rather than give it up? All of these would profit them nothing, if they lacked the one great thing. Many people are trying to get to heaven by being good, benevolent, zealous and sacrificing. Paul and Jesus says: "I will show you a more simple way—a way in which, if you follow, you will do all these things, and more, without ever thinking about them." If Paul, vested as he was with such wonderful powers, could write: "With all these things and without love, I am nothing," how can we expect to be profited by such insignificant powers which we possess if we have neglected love? The answer is: We can not.

The Disciples of Christ are deploring the divided condition of the church and are pleading earnestly for a return to the Apostolic faith and practice. The theory is undoubtedly correct and scriptural. But how about our practices? Here, I think, is one of our weakest points. We are willing to sacrifice our lives and spend our money to break down denominational walls—to disorganize some religious sect while we are neglecting among ourselves the very principle by which these things are to be accomplished. We want to see denominational quarrels cease, and yet we are often engaged in quarrels among ourselves. We want to see all the churches united into one body, while we oftentimes refuse to unite with one another.

The most powerful sermons are not those which are delivered from the pulpit, but those of the life of professing Christians. Every day Christian living will do more to correct the world than the Sunday sermons. We press upon the world the claims of the Prince of Peace and forget that Jesus said: "Have peace among yourselves," or that Paul wrote: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." And again: "Be at peace among yourselves."

If we expect to impress the Christian world with peace, we must be at peace among ourselves. If we would unite the broken fragments of the church of God, we who plead for that unity must not be fragmentary.

Even among ministers there is much envy, jealousy, pride and such like. When these things exist among those who ought to be leaders, shall we expect to find a better state of things among the people? When a people who plead for Christian unity will not practice Christian unity, that people need not be surprised if they find that other people will not hear them.

If we would try to cultivate love, we would have no time to hate. If we have love, we will not envy our brother. We will be kind, generous, courteous and unselfish toward one another, and it will be impossible for us to think evil one of another.

Christianity is not a theory, it is a life; and that life is perfect in the one great thing—love. It is very imperfect without it. "Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Love is the law by which all other laws are fulfilled. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." If we would be God-like, we must be loving. For "God is love."

How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord,
In one another's peace delight,
And so fulfil the word.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love.

W. N. A.

JAPANESE JOTTINGS.

WISE AND OTHERWISE.

Last year the increase of membership in all the Protestant churches was 1,199. In 1889 it was 5,667, in '88 it was 5,785. The total on January 1st was 32,380. Statistics being imperfect, 35,000 is more accurate. Contributions have not fallen off but show an increase total of \$69,324.

While we were sitting in the léper hospital a few evenings ago waiting for the lepers to come in, the Japanese preacher began to tell me that it was said that the churches in Tokyo are asleep. I asked him what reasons were assigned and he replied:

(1) Government affairs take up attention. (Japan's first National Assembly met in November, adjourned in March. The capitol was burned down, the fire being caused, it is said, by the electric light apparatus).

(2) Business has been dull for two or three years. (It has been difficult for many to keep alive. Many have parted with family keep-sakes for bread; others, already half starved, have died of mild diseases).

(3) There are preachers of too slender education.

(4) The influence of the Unitarians and Universalists. The preachers have lost nerve; some have doubts.

(5) The believers, many of them, do not live Christianity, so that outsiders say they are no better than Buddhists. (This shows that they expect Christians to be better).

To the above reasons must be added the wave of anti-foreign feeling which is sweeping over Japan. Christianity, as a foreign religion, is under reproach. The patronage of Christian schools has fallen off, and patriotism and anti-Christian are regarded as synonyms by the multitude. Some Japanese who lead in this movement have been to America; but concluding that Japan can never compete with a country having such cities, wish Japan to slink back into her former exclusiveness.

A few words of counsel from the Emperor were written (some say by the Emperor) and with joy and reverence were hung upon the walls. In the upper night school, near here, out of forty teachers three are Christians. They regarded, the bowing