

The Christian.

EDITORIAL.

REMARKS ON THE 8TH OF ROMANS.

At the 14th verse of this chapter the apostle sets forth the high calling of those who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God and can cry Abba, Father. The Spirit bears witness along with their spirits that they are the children of God—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that they suffer with Him that they may also be glorified together.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote the complete history of Christ that we might believe that He is the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through His name. And that we might be led by the Spirit of God He caused Luke to write a complete history of Him in the book called The Acts of the Apostles. Jesus plainly told that He must go to the Father or the Holy Ghost would not come, but when He went He would send Him, and also what He would do when He came. Luke tells us when and how the Spirit came according to Jesus' promise, filled the apostles, and through them, convinced the murderers of Jesus of sin and of righteousness, etc. When these were pricked in their hearts and eagerly asked, what shall we do, they were clearly told what to do, and obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine delivered. Three thousand on the day the Spirit came down from heaven were then led by the Spirit and became the children of God. These were further led by the Spirit when they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrines, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers, and required his leadership all through the journey of life. That law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus will remain in full force until the end of time, so that as many as are now led by the Spirit of God are His children and heirs with Christ.

In dwelling on the believers union with Christ Paul speaks of the sufferings and also of the glory of that union. The sufferings are here, the glory hereafter, but it is only by passing through the former that the latter is obtained. The future glory sends back its shadows in such power as to sweeten all the sorrows of time, to unstring death and surround the grave with a halo of immortality. With this in view the apostle reckons the sufferings of this present time unworthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us; for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. How natural for Him to look back to the time when the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who had subjected the same in hope so that He may follow him from the fall in Eden till the glorious resurrection.

This creature evidently means the Christian, as no other can answer the description herein given. It is only the Christian who waits for the manifestation of the sons of God, and he alone has the earnest expectation of such manifestation. God has promised that glory to those who are led by His Spirit, and has also given them the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts, and with that promise and foretaste they wait in happy expectancy.

At first the creature was made subject (not to sin) but to vanity. From the time God expelled man from Eden his life was but a vain thing. The sentence of death was passed on him and it was liable at any moment to be executed. But He subjected the same in hope. Before man left the garden to die, the hope of a better life was inspired by the promised struggle and triumph of the seed of the woman. Because of that triumph the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The grave is the bondage of corruption, out of

which the creature shall pass into that glorious liberty. Jesus, too, was bound by the grave, but what had corruption for the creature, had none for the Creator. His soul was not left in hades, neither did His flesh see corruption. He went into the grave, not to remain, but to triumph over it and deliver His brethren. He stooped to receive the foot of the tyrant, but only to carry him into captivity. He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.

The apostles introduce another party called "the whole creation." They have some things in common with the creature, but lack many important features. This party, as well as the creature, groan and are in pain together, until now, but there is nothing affirmed of them indicating intelligence, hope or deliverance. They seem entirely ignorant of the cause of their trouble, and have no hope of a deliverance from the bondage of corruption into any liberty, much less into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Here are groaning, travail and pain, but no waiting nor hoping, no earnest expectation. The inferior animals groan, sicken and die. Death enters inanimate creation, disease lurks in plant and air and water. It walks in darkness, and destroys at noonday. All groan in pain together until now. "Not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. With this groaning in ourselves, there is waiting, and a certain hope of adoption, even the redemption of our body: a deliverance from the grave of the whole body of Christ, which shall be there and then adopted into the full glory of the children of God. Although the individual bodies of the saints will be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Lord, Paul uses the singular and speaks rather of the collective body. "the redemption of our body."

Of this redeemed and adopted body we are permitted to learn some things, while other things are beyond our powers to describe or imagine.

1st. It will be a very large body. In it will be found the saints of all ages and dispensations. It will have in it all who die in infancy, and all who were incapable of knowing good from evil. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." This body will have in it all God's children who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord. Paul showed this mystery that we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, etc., etc. With such accessions the number will be so great that no man can number them, gathered from all nations and kindreds and tongues.

2nd. This body will have grand relations. God Himself will be their Father. Jesus Christ will be the elder Brother and Head of this body. And the Holy Spirit will be heart and life of this body.

3rd. The place which Jesus Christ has gone to prepare for them will be the eternal home of this body, where they will be with Him to behold His glory.

But who can describe the glory of that body when even the exalted Lord of angels comes to be glorified in His saints. When John and Paul, the master spirits, with all their eloquence and inspiration, attempt a description, it seems too much for them. John declares: "It does not yet appear what we shall, but when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Paul also refers us to the same: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Again, as if exhausted in the attempt, he exclaims of it: "A far more exceeding an eternal weight of glory." It was enough to tell us that it was a glory that far exceeded all our

thoughts, and eternally weighed down everything that could be put in the opposite scale.

If we are led by the Spirit of God, and are His children, it is most cheering to look on to that day when we will join "our redeemed body and meet Abraham and Moses and David and all the prophets and the apostles and martyrs of Jesus." When we shall meet those whom we loved so much to meet, but who have passed into the grave. But above all, how joyful to meet Him whose love to us destroyed our enmity and bound us forever to Himself. As the year of our Lord, 1886, passes away, and we are borne into a New Year, it reminds us that we are another year nearer the resurrection, and the glorious liberty of the children of God. May a merciful Father enable us to be more faithful in this year than ever before, so that when weary and worn in the Master's cause, we may by His grace be ready for the rest that remains for the people of God. D. C.

News of the Churches.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

ST. JOHN ITEMS.

At the close of the Prayer and Social Meeting on Thursday evening (23rd ult.) Bro. Ellis B. Barnes in an appropriate address, on behalf of the church and congregation, presented Bro. T. H. Capp with a purse containing \$53.00, as a slight token of the esteem in which he is held. Bro. Capp, who was completely taken by surprise, made a suitable reply, thanking them for their Christmas gift.

On New Year's morning, at 10 o'clock, according to our custom, we hold a prayer and social meeting. This meeting is generally well attended, and is the best prayer and social meeting in the year. Many good resolutions are formed. May the church learn wisdom and profitable experience from the past, and at the end of the next year see greater results for the Master. "Be not weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." W. A. B.

LE'TANG.

Since my last report we have had three more confessions and baptisms at Le'Tang. Very many appear to be much interested about their soul's salvation. And we trust more will soon follow in the footsteps of their Divine Leader. This makes eight who have followed Jesus of late at Le'Tang and vicinity. P. D. NOWLAN.

Dec 20th, 1886.

NOVA SCOTIA.

HALIFAX NOTES.

Disciples of Christ meet in the basement of the National School, Argyle street. Lords' day, at 11 A. M., Bible class; at 7 P. M., exhortation and "breaking of bread." Tuesday evening, 8 o'clock, prayer-meeting, and a cottage prayer-meeting in Dartmouth every Friday evening.

I am glad to report that one dear old Bro., 94 years of age, came out and accepted Christ as his Saviour, and was buried with Him in baptism December 1st. He was at first Church of England, but the last fifteen years a Methodist. Some time last spring I had several conversations with him about the love of Jesus, and occasionally I would read to him from the New Testament, and he always went away saying, I am thankful to you for your kindness. I would always invite him to come back again, in passing or repassing to rest himself, being an old man; and he always did so, and, after having him fully interested with the love of Jesus, a few weeks ago I showed him what great need there was for him to obey all the commandments of Jesus. He said he wanted to be saved according to the New Testament. I then showed him what the New Testament required of him to enter the Church of Christ on earth,—faith, repentance and baptism. He said that in 1839 while in the south, he was deeply impressed with the subject of baptism, but put it off; and after coming to