

Saviour. John xvii. 21. And lastly, a perfect love, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, 1. John iv. 17; that as in the case of Peter, when the great testing question shall be asked, "Lovest thou Me?" we may be able in reply to appeal confidently to Him, "Yea Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." John xxi. 15. J. T.

CHURCH OFFICERS.

Not many years ago the strictest scrutiny was exacted by every disciple of Christ in things pertaining to the religion of Jesus. This was noble. Scarcely would one be allowed the name of disciple who was not a Berean, searching "the scriptures daily." Is it so now? Things are too often taken for granted without sufficient examination because spoken by one in whom confidence is placed. Each christian ought to be able to know why and wherefore he believes, and be ready to give a "reason of the hope" that is in him. In doing so it is necessary to avoid a parrot-like use of words and passages to uphold an idea, or to carry out a notion. Such things seem to be lamented by Jeremiah—ix. chap. 5th verse—when he says of "the daughter of my people,"—"They have taught their tongue to speak lies." Paul also speaks of a class who "believe a lie."

A man in becoming a disciple of Christ Jesus does not lose his desires or feelings. He is the same physical man, and the religion of Christ is to direct him—to control, not destroy his desires and feelings. Still very often the feelings control the judgment of the man, and he follows his own will instead of the will of Christ, persuading himself and others he is right. Suppose then a man who has a desire to obtain a name in Christendom—is fond of money,—wishes to rule among his fellows,—is lazy and loves an idle life, or desires to be looked up to as a counsellor—joins the church; these feelings or desires do not leave him, and as the world calling itself christian is now constituted, instead of keeping these desires under subjection they are encouraged to excess. The acquisition of these things being of the world and not of the church of Christ, Paul's instructions—"they that use this world as not abusing it," should be acted upon. A man with such aims at once sets to work and uses all the power and influence at his command to become a Pope, Prelate, Archbishop, Bishop,

Minister, Deacon, Class Leader, or to occupy some other position in the church where his desire for one or more of the offices or positions named can be gratified. How he will teach his tongue to speak and his heart to believe that the scriptures just mean that he should be placed in that exact position—that the Holy Spirit gave him direct instruction to secure it. He will with wonderful adroitness quote passages to suit his purpose; so cleverly will they be interpreted that only a few can detect the error.

With deep-felt solicitude the watchful and disinterested disciple sees in embryo a leaning to these things among the Brethren in the States and among ourselves in Canada. A fondness of official distinctions in the church is particularly apparent. Does Christ sanction a pre-eminence among his disciples? It is taken for granted he does, and we have our elections of officers as well as other societies of men. Christ says, "but be not called Rabbi, for one is your master—Christ, and all ye are brethren." If so, where are the Officers, the Elders, the Bishops to "rule" in these times when disciples, as it is said, require so much oversight? The answer is, "ALL YE are brethren"—no higher rank, no official position. It will not do to say there were Bishops or Elders in the primitive age, and that the Apostles spoke of them in their epistles and appointed them to superior positions, and therefore they must be appointed now. This would be an interpretation in opposition to Christ's saying, and no christian would knowingly do that. The official positions, if they can be so called, were given for a particular purpose and to cease in a particular time. See Eph. iv. ch. 7th to 17th verse. Here Paul calls them gifts. This may be called a new idea, but care should be taken lest notions preconceived may prejudice the mind without sufficient investigation. Let us examine this matter of Bishops, since the office is looked upon as still existing. In all the New Testament *not a passage can be found to shew that any congregation appointed one*, and if the church does not appoint, it follows that there can be now no such appointment—apostolic succession being denied. The appointment or making of Elders is only spoken of three times in scripture, and in each case it was done by other agency than the church. The first place is in xiv. chap. of Acts, when Paul and Barnabas, separated by the Holy Spirit for a special work, went to the churches