

Church History is that it is the history of real Christians. These alone constitute the Church.

"K. T."—A.: You manifest too much indecision in the management of your church affairs; this is sure to encourage opposition. The half-way man, unconsciously, like the eagle, "nurses the pinion that impels the steel" to his destruction. The nettle, you know, grasped firmly, stings not. Make up your mind slowly, but when once you have made up your mind, see to it that all concerned know it.

"Failing Memory."—Is there any cure for it?—A.: Probably yes. In one so young the faculty may recuperate. You have overtaxed it. Give it rest for a period. Use your MS. in preaching without hesitation; you can so use it as not to detract from the effect. Be the more thorough in your preparation, put your soul into your sermon, and like Adam Clark, you may have occasion to thank God for the loss of memory.

"R. R."—Will you please translate the extract in French on page 350 of Prof. Hoppin's work on Homiletics?—A.: In answer to the above, Prof. Hoppin has sent us the following translation:

"We know that all things work together for good to them who love God.

Our text contains but few words, yet their meaning is wonderfully suggestive. . . . So when God, in answer to the prayer of Elias would open the heavens, as in answer to his prayer He had closed them, the cloud which the prophet saw rising from the sea for the fulfillment of this favorable will of God was no larger than the palm of a man's hand, yet, nevertheless, in no appreciable time it covered the sky with clouds and all the earth with rain. In the same manner this text, although very brief, if you ponder it attentively, in less than an hour's time will cause you to see the whole sky filled with the marvellous works of God's providence for the guidance and preservation of all those who love him, and your souls will be watered in every part with the consolations of his grace."

"INQUIRER."—Can you throw a little light on the "Balm of Gilead"?—A.: There are three references to this balm in the Old Test. The first is the old familiar passage Jer. viii. 22. "Is there no balm in Gilead?" The second is Jer. xlv. 11. "Go up into Gilead and take balm, O Virgin, the daughter of

Egypt;" rendered in Matthew's Bible, (1537): "Go vp (O Galaad) and brynge triacle vnto the daughter of Egypte." The third is Ezekiel, xxvii. 17. The word balm used in this passage is also rendered *triacle* in Matthew's Bible. *Notes and Queries* is also our authority for saying that Beck's Bible (1549), the Bishop's Bible, and others, have *tryacle* in the same passages. Gilead was specially noted for this exceedingly odoriferous balm, which was highly esteemed in the East for its medicinal qualities. Josephus said that it was introduced into Palestine by the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings, x. 10), in the way of a gift to Solomon. But Greek and Arabic authors affirm that the genuine balsam does not exist outside of Palestine. The gardens of Jericho produced the finest kind. Pompey brought it from there to Rome, and the Romans derived revenue from it.

"SPIRITUALISM."—I attended, some time since, a spiritualistic *séance*. The medium, who was a modest appearing lady, shut herself in the back parlor, which was wholly dark; darkness, it seems, is necessary for materialization. In a few moments a form, very like a ghost, came into the partly lighted room in which we were seated. Other forms manifested themselves during the evening, in all about twenty. They claimed to be near relatives of persons present. Some were recognized, others not. Now, either these manifestations were what they pretended to be—spirits of departed friends—or there was horrid deception on the part of the medium. I cannot bring myself to believe that a human being, for the sake of a few dollars, would attempt a deception so cruel and sacrilegious. My faith in human nature makes me a Spiritualist. Am I too credulous?—A.: Your faith in human nature is beautiful, truly touching, but it is too ethereal for earth. You have evidently witnessed little and read less on this subject. You are not the man to make investigations in this field. A lamb among wolves would stand a better chance.