

after year, there were many occasions on which they felt the keenest mental suffering, and made the most strenuous efforts to stem the tide which they felt was bearing them away from their old moorings, they knew not whither. And if at last the thoughts and reasonings which they could not quiet, and from the constant recurrence of which they could find no means of permanent escape, have resulted in making them doubters of, or disbelievers in, the inspiration of the Bible, as we believe in it, or of any other of their old religious faiths, do you not see that by an act or exercise of the will

"They cannot now retrace the winding mazes
Their feet have trodden through the weary years,
Unthink the thoughts whose thousand varying phases
Have brought but empty hands and blinding tears?"

Neither do these men take kindly to the term "infidel" as an appellation by which to distinguish them from ordinary mortals. Some of them have a conviction that fidelity to their own best conceptions of what is true and honest and manly is after all the best fidelity, and that they would better deserve the title did they profess a faith which they do not feel. The idea is worth considering.

No, I am not "running with the hare," my friend. I am only trying to show that we have been carrying altogether too much dead weight in the race, if our object is to overtake him.

It is exceedingly unfair to the Christian religion to recommend it to the sceptic on the ground that it is the best thing that is available. You have already claimed for it that God, the source of all wisdom, is its author and designer; that it is His way of eliminating all that is evil from humanity, and now to say that nothing better offers is to "damn it with very faint praise" indeed.

Conditions are quite conceivable in which the best available thing is utterly inadequate as a remedy for the evils which they entail, or for the reason of the existence of which the best explanation offered is wholly insufficient; in which you can but believe that the true explanation of the "situation" has never been discovered or revealed. The sceptic thinks he sees such conditions in the past history and present situation of the human race. He will probably readily agree to the proposition that the Christian religion is the best of all the religions of the earth; that it is from many points of view the best thing that offers.

But if you are to arrest his attention and influence his beliefs and habits of thought, you must claim infinitely more for it than this. And you may boldly make the claim that it is not only the best thing that is offered as a means of benefiting humanity, but the best thing that is conceivable. That it is the only thing that ever has so transformed any considerable number of the human race as to fit them for eternal life; and that it is able to transform and redeem to the very uttermost all who accept it honestly and sincerely enough to act as if they believed it; any professed acceptance of it which falls short of accomplishing this result being only a sham and a delusion. You may make the most comprehensive claims along this line that you please. There is no danger of claiming too much. The sceptic will perhaps be ready to question the correctness of your claims at first, or to characterize them as absurd, but you easily have the best of the contention if you know the facts, and are sure to benefit him if he is an honest man, by directing his thoughts into this channel.

The sceptic is commonly a man who believes in the existence of the Creator,

and that He governs the universe which He has created. Ask him if it is possible that the thing which of all others is capable of doing, and has done, the most to elevate, purify and benefit humanity, is an accident or a fraud. He can not believe so till he is ready to abandon his belief in the guiding and controlling hand of God, which, to the most of his class, is impossible; the evidence of it being too overwhelming.

Don't claim to know everything and be able to explain all the providences and intentions of God. The sceptic will think none the less of you for being subject to the limitations common to your kind; there are some things which he doesn't know himself. Especially do not insist upon such conceptions of God as I once heard expressed by one of those abnormal developments known as boy preachers; who, when the weather turned out showery and unfavorable on the great Sunday of the camp meeting, still took heart of grace when the attendance became larger than he had expected, in view of the state of the weather, and told the people that he believed that God was doing the very best He could for them under the circumstances.

Hepworth, Ont.

The Sunday School.

Sunday School Committee of the Co-operation of Disciples of Christ in Ontario:—J. A. Alkin, Chairman; E. B. Barnes, J. D. Stephens.
All matter intended for publication in this department should be sent to J. A. Alkin, Orangeville, Ont.

Written Examinations.

The Disciple church are taking the initiative in the way of written examinations in connection with Sunday school work in town, and a list of the questions asked will be found on another page. The questions will be given out next Sunday, and each scholar will have until the following Sunday to write the answers. This looks like a good idea.—*Aylmer paper.*

Church of Christ S. S.

BIBLE CLASS.

Examination questions for the Bible class of the Church of Christ S. S.—1st quarter, 1893; Acts i. to viii.

I. Identify: Joel, David, Caiaphas, Barnabas, Peter, Herod, Pilate, Ananias, Stephen, Gamaliel, Theudas, Aaron, Philip, Theophilus, Abraham, Samuel, Esaias.

II. Explain all the names given to Jesus in these eight chapters.

III. Make it clear how people become Christians, defining the terms, Faith, Repentance, Baptism, Conversion, Church (according to the usage in the New Testament.)

IV. (1) What is the Holy Spirit? (2) What was the Baptism of the Holy Spirit? (3) What were "gifts" of the Holy Spirit? How, by whom, and what for, were they given. (4) Why are there no "gifts" of the Spirit today? (5) To whom and when is the Holy Spirit given? (6) How does it come? (7) Mention six other names given to the Holy Spirit, and explain them.

V. Describe the events of Pentecost in your own language, stating also: (1) Why the Apostles needed to wait till that time before they began to preach? (2) Why Peter spoke first? (3) Whether or not there were Christians before Pentecost?

VI. Show how the Gospel comprises all these expressions: "The resurrection from the dead" (iv. 2); "all the words of this life" (v. 20); Jesus as the "Christ" (v. 42); "Christ" (viii. 5); "Kingdom of God" (viii. 12); "the

name of Jesus Christ" (8. 12); "Jesus" (viii. 35).

VII. What was the condition of the first church: (1) Spiritually? (2) Socially? (3) Financially? (4) As to organization? (5) As to its mission spirit?

VIII. (1) What were the qualifications and powers of an Apostle? (2) Who were Scribes? Priests? Sadducees? Prophets? Jews? Gentiles? Cretes? Parthians? Proselytes? Grecians? (3) Explain why the Revised Version differs from the Common Version, and where the former makes the meaning clearer, or makes any important changes in these eight chapters.

IX. Briefly explain: "Acts of Apostles"; "the former treatise" (i. 1); "infallible proofs" (i. 3); "his brethren" (i. 14, name them); "purchased a field with the reward of his iniquity" (i. 18); "cloven tongues" (ii. 3); these are not drunken—seeing it is but the third hour of the day" (ii. 15); "the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood," (ii. 20); "the day of the Lord" (ii. 20); "pains of death" (ii. 24); my flesh shall rest in hope" (ii. 26); "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell" (ii. 27); "pricked in the heart" (ii. 37); "in the name of Jesus Christ" (ii. 38); "fellowship" (ii. 42); "breaking of bread" (ii. 42); "times of refreshing" (iii. 19); "restoration of all things" (iii. 21); "unlearned and ignorant" (4. 13); "believers were of one heart and one soul" (iv. 32); "great grace was upon them all" (iv. 33); "lie to the Holy Spirit," (v. 3); "yielded up the ghost" (v. 10); "bring this man's blood upon us" (v. 28); "the word of God increased" (vi. 7); "blasphemous words" (vi. 13); "church in the wilderness" (vii. 38); "living oracles" (vii. 38); "Kingdom of God" (viii. 12); "gall of bitterness" (viii. 23).

Answer as briefly as possible, and prove everything by the Scriptures.

The Critic's Corner.

Arrangements have been made for the undersigned to occupy a small space in each issue of the CANADIAN EVANGELIST, in criticisms upon important and difficult passages of the Word of God, and he will be pleased to receive any suggestions or queries in regard to such from any of its readers; with the understanding, however, that only such questions as relate to what is practical and useful will receive attention, and that subjects of mere speculation or idle curiosity will be discarded. E. SHEPPARD, Walkerton P. O., Bruce Co.

May 13th, 1893.

BRO. SHEPPARD: Please give us your views in Critic's Corner, EVANGELIST, on the first sentence, 2 v. 1 ch. 1 Peter; also, 11 v. 3 ch. Philippians. D. M. K.

1ST PETER, 1ST CH. 2ND V.

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."

In the first place let it be noticed that in the original the word *eklektos* (elect) is prefixed to the words rendered "strangers scattered" in the several places named, and is thus rendered in the revised version:—"To the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion"—the word elect thus conveying the idea, not of choice to eternal life, for a letter directed in that way, no one, as Lardner observes, could receive; because no one could be certain of his election to eternal life till it was made sure by his final perseverance.

The persons thus addressed were those whom God had chosen, on account of their obedience to the Gospel, to be His people, and agrees with the reminder made to the Israelites in Deut. vii. 6: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord hath chosen (elected) thee to be a special people unto Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth,"—which is said of them as a people not as having been elected to eternal life individually, for many of

them proved unworthy of that glorious destiny. And in the same manner the word *election* is used in 1 Thess. i. 4: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God," which is said of them as a church; for, individually, many proved themselves unworthy of their profession, walking "disorderly," and were certainly not entitled to life eternal.

In his comment upon this passage, Dr. Macknight, though a Calvinist, says that the word elected is used in this sense (collective and not individual) in other passages of scripture.

"According to the foreknowledge of God the Father."

A definition of the word *prognosis* (foreknowledge) will assist us to understand its import in this scripture. It is from the verbal form of the word which means:—"To make a previous choice of, as a peculiar people. To know before, or foreknow WITH APPROBATION, TO FORE-APPROVE. TO ordain before."

And so it is that God has ordained before-hand that all who believe in Christ and obey Him shall be His elect or chosen people. "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will," Eph. i. 4. 5. Notice, chosen us in Him; not when we were non-existent, but when we came into union with Christ through faith.

To make this plain let us notice how Paul illustrates the nature of the "election of grace" in the eleventh chapter of Romans: "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? How he made intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so then at the present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

Now let us read from 1 King, xix. 18: "Yet I have left me (or, I will leave me) seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him," thus plainly intimating they were left (elected) BECAUSE they did not bow; and so in the gospel dispensation such of the Israelites as were obedient to the gospel were recognized as God's people according to the election of grace.

The final election to eternal life will be at the eternal judgment when each person who has been faithful unto death will be received to the enjoyment of that great and wonderful gift in company with all the redeemed. E. S.

P. S.—The answer to the second question of our esteemed brother will (D. V.) be given in next issue.



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OUR SPECIAL OFFERS FOR 1893

1. Anyone now a paid up subscriber, who wishes to present a friend or neighbor with the EVANGELIST for one year, may do so by sending us 50c.

2. Should our agents or other friends, who are soliciting subscriptions, find any brethren or sisters who are anxious to have the EVANGELIST, but not able to pay for it, if the names and addresses of such persons are sent to us, we shall put them on our complimentary list, and give them the paper one year for nothing.

3. By the kindness of J. M. Warner, proprietor of the Hamilton Carpet Sweeper Manufacturing House, we are able to offer to anyone sending ten new yearly subscriptions to the EVANGELIST a Grand Rapids Carpet Sweeper, the retail price of which is \$3.50. This offer will hold good throughout the year.

4. We have great pleasure in making the following offer to all subscribers to the EVANGELIST, old and new: For \$1.25 we shall give the EVANGELIST for one year, and a copy of "On the Rock; or Truth Stranger than Fiction." "On the Rock" until recently was only issued in cloth binding, and sold for \$1.50. The edition we offer is bound in paper—good, tough paper, though—and sells for 40 cents a single copy. "On the Rock" is one of the most popular and most useful books ever written by a Disciple. This is an opportunity to procure it for a trifle.

5. We are very anxious that "On the Rock" should have a large circulation in Canada this year. It is admirably adapted to the religious situation in this country at the present juncture. We should like to place a copy of it in every home the EVANGELIST visits, and in every family in the brotherhood in our land, and we are confident that it would be of great benefit to the cause of Christ were it widely distributed among our religious neighbors. To further such distribution we make this offer: If any paid-up subscriber will send us 50 cts. with the name and address of some person, not a Disciple, we shall send that person the EVANGELIST for three months, and a copy of "On the Rock."

GEORGE MUNRO,
85 Wellington St. North,
HAMILTON, ONTARIO.