

ence of conversion. Once received, the disposition of most persons is to assume that they are certainly Christians. If they doubted before, from their own knowledge of themselves, they consider the disposition of the Session as settling the question. It is hard to get them to re-open it, and they are prepared to resist all tests, however searching. In the Church is a very unfavourable place for correcting or even discovering the fearful mistake of a premature profession.

It is a more reasonable enquiry to ask, How many more such accessions can the Church stand? or how many more, in order to break down all its moral power in the world? We know well enough that the argument involved in such a damaging influence is entirely unsound, and that it is enough for all purposes of a true logic that there are millions whom even the captious must acknowledge to be genuine Christians according to the true standard. But we know as well the common tendency to turn away from these and look at the unfavourable examples. We know that "one sinner destroyeth much good," especially if he is a church member. And then we cannot shut our eyes to the painful fact that thousands have crowded into the Church that had better be anywhere else, whose lives are either palpably unchristian or so entirely worldly, that but for the church roll they would never be suspected of being professors of religion. It is the sorest evil under the sun. It is worse than non-profession, or open vice, or infidelity. It more dishonours God, more disparages Christianity, and its effect upon ignorant and doubting minds is worse than all these other evils combined. We have no fear of infidelity or of any of the assaults of open wickedness; but we are alarmed at the numbers of unconverted persons in the Church, the sins seemingly sanctioned by false professions made and accepted, and the low standard of piety that prevails in many quarters in God's visible kingdom.

The attention of the whole Church needs to be turned earnestly in this direction, and every possible effort should be made to abate this evil. We must seek to have a purer membership—a higher standard for reception, and a higher standard of conduct after reception. We urge no rash and violent pulling up of the tares, but we do think there is a loud call for greater care in the admission of applicants for church privileges, more diligent training especially of recent professors, and a firmer discipline in dealing with offenders. Of course this discipline should be at first mild, and always kind and adapted to recover and save rather than to drive off and punish; but the mind of the whole Church needs to be directed most positively to the purification of the lives of its membership and to the elevation of the entire moral and spiritual tone of our people. We need revivals in the Church.—*Southern Presbyterian.*

A WELL-SPENT LIFE.

A minister of the gospel was asked to visit a poor dying woman. The messenger being ignorant, could give no account of her state, except that she was a very good woman and very happy, and was now at the end of a *well-spent life*; therefore sure of going to heaven. The minister went, saw she was very ill, and after a few kindly enquiries about her bodily condition said: "Well, I understand you are in a very peaceful state of mind, depending upon a well-spent life." The dying woman looked hard at him and said:

"Yes, I am in the enjoyment of peace. You are quite right; sweet peace, and that from a well-spent life. But it is the *well-spent life of Jesus; not my doings, but His; not my merits, but His blood.*"

Yes. Only one man has spent a life that has met all the requirements of God's holy law, and on which we can rest before God. Yet it is also true that they who most absolutely rest thus through life on the merits of Christ alone, are those who, by His grace, so live as to have the testimony of the conscience to their sincere aim to "live holily, righteously, and godly in the world," and often, as in this case, to win the testimony of others to their "well-spent life."—*British Messenger.*

You cannot dream yourself into a character; you must hammer and-forge yourself one.—*Froude.*

LET friendship creep gently to a height; if it rushes to it, it may soon run itself out of breath.—*Fuller.*

THE Christian is not one who looks up from earth to heaven, but one who looks down from heaven to earth.—*Lady Powerscourt.*

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

ANGLO-ISRAEL. NO. II.

In order to show upon what foundation this doctrine rests, let us turn to the book of Genesis, and there we find that God, in His electing grace, made choice of Abram, while he yet dwelt on the other side of the flood and served other gods, Joshua xxiv. 2-3, and called him from Ur of the Chaldees, away from his father's house, and led him into the land of Canaan, which land he promised to give to him and to his seed for an everlasting possession, Gen. xvii. 8-9. Abram perceiving that the call was from God, immediately consulted not with flesh and blood, but faithfully and literally followed the Divine counsels in all his after life, and so obtained the high and exalted title of "The friend of God," and the "The father of the faithful."

It was during these migrations that God upon several occasions promised to make of him a great nation, Gen. xii. 2-3; to make his seed as the dust of the earth, "so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered," Gen. xiii. 16; to make his seed as the stars of heaven for multitude, Gen. xv. 5; a father of many nations with their kings, Gen. xvii. 5-6; to bless him and multiply his seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea shore, and cause them to possess the gates of their enemies, and to be a blessing to all the nations of the earth, Gen. xxii. 16.

This latter promise we are informed was sworn to and the reason given, "because (says God) thou hast obeyed my voice."

It is evident that no conditions were here attached to the promise. The service for which this reward was given was already performed, viz.: the offering up of his son Isaac, and his great faith in "accounting that God was able to raise him up from the dead." The promises made before this act of faith was performed were of a more limited nature, as if to show that before the great sacrifice here typified took place his seed should not be so great and prosperous as they would be afterwards. It was after the sacrifice of the ram that God added this to His former promises, "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;" read the history of the Israelites before the Christian era and you will find that so little a hold had they upon their enemies' gates, that frequently they were unable to keep their own gates, and the Jews, that branch of his posterity who remained in Palestine longest, have to-day no gates in possession, nor have they had for nearly eighteen centuries. Therefore in the ante-Christian period they did not possess the gates of their enemies, because the promise confers possession in perpetuity.

That this promise was unconditional, we have further evidence in Gen. xxvi. 3, where the same promise is given to Isaac; because, says God, "that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments and My laws."

It is hardly necessary to take up valuable space in your paper to show that these inestimable blessings descended to Abraham's posterity through the line of Isaac, Jacob, and principally (so far as the temporalities are concerned) through Ephraim. I need only refer you to the words "in Isaac shall thy seed be called," "Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated," also to the direct promises to Jacob in Genesis xxvii. 27, xxviii. 13; xxv. 11. So that although Ishmael and the children of Abraham by Keturah, and Esau, were to become and did become nations, yet the blessings were to descend through the line of Jacob specially, and of the family of Jacob, Ephraim in particular. See 1 Chron. v. 1-2. "Now the sons of Reuben, the first born of Israel, for he was the first-born; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel;" and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's. See also Jacob's blessing to Ephraim and Manasseh, Gen. xlix. 16. "Bless the lads * * * and let them grow into a multitude (margin, as fishes do increase) in the midst of the earth;" also (verse 19) of Manasseh he says, "He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great, but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations," (margin, fulness of nations). That this had been fulfilled in the days

of the Apostle Paul, he says (Rom. xi. 25), "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles. Literal, nation, he come in," evidently quoting the prophecy of Jacob.

Many have argued that these blessings have already been fulfilled in a literal sense and now they are receiving their fulfilment in a wider, i.e. a spiritual sense, that as Isaac was a type of Christ the one seed of Abraham in whom all nations were to be blessed, so the Israelitish nations of Judah and Israel were the type of what is now denominated "The Church" or "Spiritual Israel," (this latter a term not to be found in the whole volume of inspiration, and that when the antitype appeared the type was abolished, and so they explain away the oath of God and give those blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and which they evidently believed were to their literal seed or posterity according to the flesh, to a nation or mixture of all nations and races of the world, because they should receive the blessings accruing to them from their faith in Christ, whereas the promise distinctly states, "Thy seed shall be as the stars," dust, and sand, innumerable, and thy seed shall be a blessing to all nations (referring here not only to Christ but to the great numbers of Abraham's posterity, designated seed, and therefore not of or belonging to the nations here referred to). This is further borne out by the fact, that while Judah was to be the progenitor of the Messiah, through whom the spiritual blessings were to come, not only to the "multitudinous seed of Abraham" but to the whole world, Ephraim was to be the progenitor of the "fulness of nations" as well as of the principal other temporal blessings bestowed upon the house of Israel (see Gen. xlviii. 16th to the end, and xlix. 22nd to the 26th inclusive, also Deut. xxxiii. 13th to the 18th inclusive, and his seed along with the other tribes of Israel were to become the instruments through whom the Messianic blessings to the nations were to be conveyed.

"Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the world with fruit," Isa. xxvii. 6-8. They were to be "as a dew from the Lord; as showers upon the grass," Micah. v. 7. "They shall show forth my praise," Isa. xliii. 21. "They shall declare My glory among the Gentiles," Isa. lxxvi. 19. "I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth," Isa. xlix. 6. "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising," Isa. lx. 3, etc., etc.

It is true that the posterity of the patriarchs became very numerous and powerful during their residence in the land of Palestine, so much so that it was claimed for them at different periods of their history as a people, that they had become as the "stars of heaven for multitude," Deut. x. 22; "as the sand by the sea," 1 Kings iv. 20; "like the dust of the earth," 2 Chron. i. 9. But while this was the case (speaking hyperbolically, for in their palmiest days in Palestine they did not number more than from six to ten millions), it did not by any means come to their anticipation of what the number of the seed of Abraham should be, see Deut. i. 10; "The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and behold ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude." But immediately thereafter Moses adds, "The Lord God of your fathers make you a *thousand times* so many more as ye are and bless you as *he hath promised* you, and long after Solomon's time, Jeremiah prophesied of the restoration of Israel to their own land in terms implying that increase should be multiplied to them, Jer. iii. 16, and Hosea speaking of Israel in their "Lo ammi" or cast-off condition says, "yet the number of the Children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea which cannot be measured or numbered, and it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them 'ye are not my people,' there it shall be said unto them 'ye are the sons of the living God,'" Hos. i. 10. Clearly referring to a time far on in the future after their conversion to God (or in a Christian condition) and to a place far distant from Palestine, for Jeremiah states, (chap. xxx. 5) For lo the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers and they shall possess it," a time and event not yet accomplished. Read on to the 19th verse, "And I will multiply them and they shall not be few, I will also glorify them and they shall not be small, their children also shall be as aforetime," etc., etc., and Ezekiel nearly 150 years after the captivity of Israel to Assyria says (chap. xxxvii. 10), "They lived and stood upon their feet an exceeding great