

if there be one thing which especially belongs to a time of ruin, it is strife in the family of God. Let us have our hearts enlarged as to the work of God in this world. When entrusted to other hands than ours, it should have the same importance and value for us, as though it were done by ourselves. Paul, in chains at Rome, writing to the Philip-
 pians, rejoiced that Christ was preached even by those who were adding affliction to his bonds. Let us not give any importance whatever to *our* work, but like Gideon leave the vintage of Abiezer unestimated. A season of quietness is no guarantee against these dangers. At the beginning of the church's history (Acts vi. 1-6), there arose murmurings and jealousies between the Grecians and the Hebrews, to appease which needed more than the humility of a Gideon, requiring even the great wisdom of the apostles. They handed over to others the care of serving tables, relinquishing an authority which would have given them prominence in the administration of the assembly, in order to continue in prayer and to give themselves wholly to the ministry of the word. By such acts as these, consciences are reached and Satan's devices against the testimony defeated.

Ibsan, Elon and Abdon.

(Chap. xii. 7-15.)

After Jephthah, under the reign of three judges, Israel enjoyed the peace which had been acquired.