

It is very true as you say that "the devil exercises none of the true functions of fatherhood" for he is not true anyway or anywhere. Yes, he is "a child-stealer, a soul-snatcher, an abductionist, a slave-maker and slave-driver—he never created anybody or redeemed anybody, nor has he done a good turn for any creature in the universe to give him the slightest claim upon a single soul;" and it may be added that every one of his progeny is just like him—true to type.

But it must not be overlooked in this connection that the function of fatherhood belongs to the creature rather than the Creator. The latter has no great necessity for the function. He can create—"of stones he can raise up children"—yet in his providential dealing with our race he permits the poorest devils of our race to have large families, as well as this privilege granted to the Lord's poor.

So it may be that the devil's claim to this function is not entirely forfeited. Without attempting to analyse the genesis of human life we can afford to take the statements of Scripture in the case. As the Heavenly Father steps down to us in his grace plan and accepts the human function of fatherhood that he may come in more perfect sympathetic touch with us in our sorrows and conflicts with sin—that through the mists we may more perfectly see him and more distinctly hear his sweet voice of love, we need rightly to interpret this act of humiliation. To attempt to build up a system of theology on this act is to put the grand pyramid of revealed truth on its apex.

J. H. SAUNDERS.

Ohio, Yar., Nov. 12, 1901.

DEAR EDITOR:—Every reader of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR will regret to learn that the author of the foregoing has recently been ill. I sincerely hope he is now fully restored and that he may be long spared to the work he loves. Perhaps with the return of that bonhomie which accompanies health, he would wish to eliminate that central paragraph of ridicule in the above. It scarcely strengthens his argument and is not altogether sweet. But the latter part of his article, beginning with the "Fatherhood of The Devil" is something of a riddle. The more I read it, the less coherency I find in it. Surely the writer is not happy here. It looks as though he had undertaken to belittle the nature and functions of the divine fatherhood. He seems to teach that fatherhood is something which God "accepts" in an "act of humiliation." This is amazing doctrine, something new in theology, a brand-new twentieth century product. It has always seemed to me that the Scriptures exulted in the glory of God the Father, that they taught the manifestation of His glory in the unveiling of His Fatherhood. I am not yet ready to give over saying, "Unto our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever."

Perhaps it is now in order for me to say that there is not a word in anything I have written to obscure the distinction between sinner and saint; not a word that tones down the sinfulness of sin; not a word calculated to blur the atoning Cross of Christ; not a word that would gloss over the necessity of the new birth. Apart from the Grace of God in Jesus Christ, applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit and received through faith, every man is without God and without hope in the world. He is lost and ruined and on the way to everlasting darkness.

Having said this, I will now state more fully than hitherto, my thoughts concerning the great fact of the divine fatherhood. It is a three-fold relationship.

1. God is the father of Christ in the unity, the mystery and the glory of the Godhead. In this relationship, Christ is God's "only begotten Son."

2. God is father, through grace, to the believing, reconciled, regenerated sons of men. Such as these he welcomes to his fellowship and makes them his heirs, in joint-heirship with Jesus Christ. The Christian believer is the only man who enjoys a full-orbed sonship, a sonship that accompanies salvation.

Up to this point there is agreement between the worthy doctor and myself. But I maintain, 3. That in a limited though real sense, God is father to all men, through his creation of man in his own image and likeness. To support this position I summon the following evidence.

1. God is a spirit and so is man: and God is "the Father of Spirits." (Heb. 12:9). Therefore God is man's father. He is "the God of the Spirits of all flesh." (Num. 16:22.) He saith, "Behold all souls are mine." (Ex. 18:4).

2. Every man is recognized as a son of Adam. "Adam was the son of God." (Luke 3:38).

3. In the Incarnation Jesus Christ is "the Son of Man." He represents humanity at large. He is the child of the race. If God is father to "the Son of Man," He is man's father.

4. Jesus distinctly taught that God is father toward all men, though he did not interpret His fatherhood in the same sense toward saints and sinners.

Take the parable of the Prodigal Son, which might be more correctly named the parable of the father who had two sons, one of whom was a prodigal. Note the occasion of the parable. "Now all the publicans and sinners were drawing near unto him, for to hear him. And both the Pharisees and the Scribes murmured, saying, 'This

man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.'" Jesus was on His defence for His treatment of sinners and his defence was this: He loved them as a brother because God loved them as a father. His attitude toward them reflected the attitude of God. Can anyone maintain that the younger son of this parable does not represent the unconverted sinner? He was alienated from his father, he journeyed into a far country, he wasted his substance in riotous living, he hired himself out to a forger, he surrendered himself to a disgraceful service, he fed on husks. The father said of him he was "dead" and "lost." If these terms do not describe a man alienated from the life of God, lost in unregeneracy, dead in trespasses and sins, there is no language to describe him. Yet he was a son. His one encouragement to repentance was the thought of his father. Hence his repentant cry, "I will arise and go to my father!"

And what shall we do with John 3:16? That deathless sentence teaches us beyond all question that God loves all men and has made provision for their salvation. That feeling for all men and the activity to which it prompted is what Christ calls Fatherhood. By any other name that truth might taste as sweet, but by no other name could that truth become so clear to us.

According to the argument of Dr. S. when you get down to the bottom of it, God can have no dealings with sinners, as such, except in judgment. There is no place left for a holy God to deal with sinners along the lines of appeal, or persuasion, or argument. God must either damn the sinner out of hand, or by a sovereign, unconditioned, unaccompanied act of power recreate him, thus making a child of God out of the progeny of the devil. This goes well with the "limited atonement" theory and that disguised fatalism which declares that there is absolutely nothing the sinner can do towards entering the gate of life. On such an hypothesis there is no encouragement to preach the gospel to the lost, for there is no power in man to receive it. I hold on the contrary, that there is something in man to appeal to and something in God that makes the appeal. That in man to which the appeal is made, is that which constitutes him, in the lower sense a child of God. That in God which makes appeal is fatherhood. The result of response to that appeal is the full-orbed sonship of grace. "As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become (in the higher sense) children of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which were born, (as to this higher sonship), not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

J. D. FREEMAN.

Notes by the Way.

My last notes were hurriedly completed in order to catch the train, but as no mail-box was provided on that express the letter was entrusted to the capacious pocket of the conductor, with strict orders to mail at Truro on first train west. The result was that the letter reached St. John too late for the next issue, and two weeks wanderings remain to be accounted for.

After a few days pleasant and profitable work at Sydney, an enjoyable moonlight trip down and across the harbor brought us again to North Sydney. A few hours Saturday morning were employed in picking up the loose ends of the work there, and after an early dinner the train was taken for

PORT HAWKESBURY

where the writer was expected for Sunday. Arriving I found that Rev. J. Miles, of Surrey, N. B., had unexpectedly arrived a few hours previous. So the Sabbath's work was lightened and at the morning's service we were permitted to hear from Bro. Miles a sound and thorough exposition of I Cor. 13:13, "and now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." The Port Hawkesbury church is at present without a pastor, Rev. L. J. Slaughterwhite having removed from here to Port Hillford a few months ago. A compact field and a kind and appreciative people make an inviting opening for a young man who wants to do work for God and is content to begin in a small church. If the hospitality accorded Bro. Miles and myself at the pleasant home of the church clerk be a sample of what the pastor may expect, it would be hard to find a more desirable location.

A few hours on Monday sufficed to finish the work here, and New Glasgow was reached before night. As readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR already know Pastor Estabrook is about to leave this church, having received a call to the church in Springhill. The faithful few here are bearing heavy burdens, and by the leaving of the pastor are cast down but not discouraged.

After a night's stay at New Glasgow the journey was continued to

TRURO

which was reached shortly before tea. Here attending Normal School was a class mate and room-mate of the ever-to-be remembered days spent at Acadia. No time was lost in locating him, and when his present room-mate generously decamped for a few days satisfaction reigned supreme—at least in that room, though we suspect that our midnight chats may not have proved of much interest to the occupants of the other rooms. Shortly after

arriving at Truro, I was informed that a reception to the Normal School students was to be given that evening at the Immanuel Baptist church. The opportunity thus afforded of meeting with Pastor McLean and his young people was promptly seized, and a pleasant evening was enjoyed. The Baptist cause is strong at Truro both in quantity and quality. The Prince street church is yet without a pastor, being unable as yet to secure a suitable successor to Rev. H. F. Adams. The Immanuel church and its pastor, Rev. M. A. McLean, are alike happy in their relationship, and life and activity are apparent in all departments of church life. The pastor of Zion church, Rev. Dr. Burch, is known to all who attended the Convention at Moncton. A call at his home found him hopeful and planning for aggressive work for the winter. All the churches in the town are looking forward to the coming of Evangelist Mickle, and great things are hoped and expected from his labors.

The work in Truro occupied the time until Saturday morning, with satisfactory results in collections and new subscriptions. The stay in Truro was enlivened by the presence of the Acadia foot-ball team, which reached here Thursday evening, after defeating Mt. Allison by a score of 30. Friday afternoon they again succeeded in administering defeat to the Truro athletes to the tune of 10 to 0, greatly to the delight of the few Acadia graduates and students who were present.

Saturday morning, although the work at Truro was not quite completed, it seemed best to reach the next stopping place before Sunday. The continued fine weather tempted me to try one more short trip through the country. So leaving the line at Londonderry, a short ride brought me to Great Village, where dinner was taken with Pastor Martell. After dinner the writer again bestrode the wheel for his 22 mile ride to Lower Economy. This church, with Five Islands, Bass River and Portauquique, has been for some years under the pastoral care of Rev. F. E. Roop. The recent special services have greatly strengthened the churches, and the field has been divided, Lower Economy and Five Islands retaining Pastor Roop, while Bass River and Portauquique have called Rev. C. H. Haverstock from Pugwash, who has accepted.

Pastor Roop was found at the home of his father-in-law, and your representative was at once made to feel at home beneath the same hospitable roof. Deacon Josiah Soley is well known to the denomination, especially to the treasurers of denominational funds, and a personal acquaintance begun at the convention at Fredericton was renewed with much pleasure.

The revival services held here and at Five Islands recently have already been reported in the columns of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. Sunday proved to be a stormy day, but fair congregations gathered at all the services, and the young peoples' meeting at Five Islands was especially enjoyed.

But this letter is becoming too long, and many things must be left unsaid, while the account of the work at Bass River and Great Village must be held over for next week.

Yours in service,
Great Village, Nov. 15. R. J. COLPITTS.

No Famine.

DEAR EDITOR:—About one month ago I wrote a note to the MESSENGER AND VISITOR that we seemed to be on the verge of a dreadful famine. The rain fell up to that time had been about one-third of the normal. The rice crop when the transplanting had been completed was almost withered, whilst the untransplanted seedlings, to all appearances, were beyond recovery.

About four days after I wrote, a cyclone on the Bay of Bengal set in toward the lands, and brought with it an abundant rain which lasted four or five days, during that time nearly six inches of water fell in Paralakmedil. The vitality of the rice plants is marvellous. That which seemed entirely beyond recovery a few days before the rain, at once revived. The work of transplanting was again begun, and now the fields are a beautiful green. The rains have continued up to the present so that during the last month about twelve inches have fallen.

Whilst the crop will be much lighter than usual, there is no doubt but that there will be harvested sufficient to prevent famine. We praise God for his timely help, and we pray that he may send showers of spiritual blessings upon this great nation.

Paralakmedil, Oct. 20.

H. Y. CORRY.

New Books.

GALOPPOFF, THE TALKING PONY, by Tudor Jenks.

This is a story for young folks, and a very entertaining story too, about a pony. The pony could do many wonderful things and could tell many remarkable stories; for among his other accomplishments he could talk and was accustomed to hold frequent conversations with two little girls his young mistresses. The book is printed in large type on heavy paper. It is prettily bound and illustrated and is just the kind of book to please the little folks.

Published by William Briggs, Toronto. Price, \$1.00.

It has been said that it is doubtful if American journalism has ever produced a more picturesque figure than the late editor of "The Interior" of Chicago, Dr. W. C. Gray. There was one department of "The Interior" which, under Dr. Gray, made many friends and held them through all the years. This was his "Camp-Fire Musings," where he let nature control his pen, and poured his soul out in lines of rich beauty. At the time of his death Dr. Gray was engaged in the preparation of his "Later Camp-Fire Musings" for publication in book form. The MS. we understand, is now in the hands of the Revell Company and will be issued shortly.