

of that great work of which he was the instrument. Amid much obloquy and opposition he succeeded in establishing the scriptural evidence of the truth of this tenet; and the Holy Spirit sanctioning the doctrine has in all periods of our history raised up numerous, constant, and unquestionable witnesses of its reality. We entreat you, dear brethren, to follow the example of these eminent saints. As the holy Scriptures unequivocally speak of an adult or perfect state of holiness, patience, love, and conformity to the will of God; and as this state is presented to our faith through the provisions of the atonement and influence of the Spirit; it is impossible that a people holding these principles should neglect the attainment of the state without injury to their souls. Fidelity to the truth, to the love of God, to our Saviour's death, to the promised assistance of the Holy Spirit, as well as to their own sacred professions, unite to urge them to seek the high privilege of perfect Christian holiness.

We remind you that the blessings of the Gospel, as found in the sacred records and expounded and illustrated in the writings of our venerable Founder, are clear, distinctive, and experimental. It was his great object, as it has been that of your Ministers in every period, not to organize an ecclesiastical system for its own sake, but by the mercy of God to raise up a pardoned, regenerate, holy, and happy seed, who, having served God in their generation according to his will, may transmit the same blessings to others, while they themselves pass into that inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." It is the anxious desire of the Preachers of this Conference again to pledge themselves to these high and original designs of Providence in raising them to the ministerial and pastoral office, and to invite their beloved brethren, in every place, to unite with them to preserve in their own souls, and the societies to which they belong, the spirit of a living, experimental, and practical piety.

[To be Continued.]

THE EXPOSITOR.

THE GENEALOGIES OF CHRIST.

MATT. I. 2—16; AND LUKE III. 23—38.

FOR a full investigation of the questions which have been raised on the genealogies of Christ given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, recourse may be had to Grotius, Hammond, Le Clerc, Lightfoot, Bishop Kidder, Whitby, Dr. Barrett, and others who have written at large upon them. The genealogies coincide from Abraham to David; and then so entirely differ, except in two descents, that they must be regarded as two distinct tables; and the opinion now generally admitted is that of Lightfoot, that St. Matthew gives the genealogy of Joseph, whose adopted son Jesus was; and St. Luke, that of his virgin mother. This derives strong confirmation from the circumstance that the Jewish Rabbins in their writings call Mary the daughter of Eli. This distinction in the genealogies also serves to explain the reason why St. Luke begins his genealogy with stating that Jesus was the supposed son of Joseph, "who was the son of Eli." The natural father of Joseph was, as Matthew states, Jacob; but Mary being the daughter of Eli, Joseph became his son-in-law; or simply, according to the vague way in which the Hebrews used such relative terms, his son; which is further confirmed by another instance of a son-in-law being called a son in the same table, namely, Salathiel, who is called "the Son of Nevi," that is, his son-in-law; his natural father being Jechonias.—1 Chron. iii. 17.

The only point of real importance, however, in this question is, whether Mary as well as Joseph was of the house of David, because the Christ was indubitably to be of the seed of David "according to the flesh," which our Lord was not by mere virtue of his

being the adopted son of Joseph, and entered as such in the Jewish genealogies. Now, though there seems sufficient reason to conclude that Mary married Joseph as next of kin; and though the very silence of the Jews, who, upon the promulgation of the doctrine of Christ's miraculous conception, at whatever period that was first made known, whether during our Lord's life, or immediately after his ascension, must have raised this fatal objection, if Mary had not been a descendant of David as well as Joseph, proves that this first was a subject of public notoriety; yet the matter is settled by a passage in the Gospel of St. Luke, which those who have investigated this question of the two genealogies have generally overlooked. In Luke i. 32, where the angel makes the annunciation to Mary that she should become the mother of the Messiah, he says, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of His Father David;"—terms which could not have been used unless Mary herself had been David's descendant. It may be added to this, that unless it had been a matter well known and acknowledged, that Mary and Joseph were of the same house and lineage, it could have answered no end for Matthew to have copied from the public genealogical tables of the Jews the descent of Joseph from David, since he himself closes the list of descents with an account of the conception and birth of Jesus, which declares that he was not the son of Joseph, but of Mary only. But the family relationship of Mary and Joseph being well known, the one genealogy was as well suited to his purpose as the other. Besides that, it had also this advantage, that it established our Lord's legal right to the throne of David, through Joseph, of whom he was the son by adoption. And this was of importance in arguing with the Jews; for although Mary was descended from David, yet, had she married into the tribe of Levi, under the same circumstances as she married Joseph, our Lord would have been reckoned in the Jewish genealogies as of the tribe of Levi, this legal claim to the throne of David could not have been maintained on the ground of descent; but having married into her own tribe, our Lord was the descendant of David, both in law and by nature.

With respect to other difficulties in those tables of descent, they are to be referred to the Jewish records and not to the evangelists who copied from them. As, however, the Jews exerted peculiar care in preserving the pedigree of their priests, and also the line of David, in which they expected the Messiah, the discrepancies are probably apparent only, and the obscurity arises from the circumstance that their mode of keeping them, as being affected by their changes of name, or the practice of bearing double names, and by their laws of succession, is now but partially known. The tables are, however, sufficiently clear to prove the only point for which they were introduced, that Jesus was the son of David, and the son of Abraham.—RICHARD WATSON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[FOR THE WESLEYAN.]

ON RELIGION AS AN INWARD PRINCIPLE.

IN proportion as the profession of religion becomes fashionable, is the danger increased of piety being regarded as a mere form or ceremony. In the first ages of Christianity, the Christian religion, instead of being fashionable, was the reverse: it was opposed, in whole or in part, by every other professed religious system extant; it opened not into any flowery arena at the end of which was exhibited a prize of earthly fame or pleasure; but it exposed its followers to certain contempt, poverty, infamy, and in some instances, to death. Of the painful ills then necessarily resulting from an attachment to the religion of Christ, the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, has given a graphic sketch:—"Even unto this present hour we