

we employ the laws of gravitation and cause it to do our bidding. There is scarcely a physical force in the world that we do not master. If man can thus control and bridle the laws of matter, shall God be judged unable to do as much? He who is the maker of all things can most certainly control them for man's good, and in thus controlling the laws of the universe He does not overcome or destroy any law of matter but rather uses it in the accomplishment of His purposes.

This admission which we are compelled to make at once removes the objections to prayer based upon the fixity of natural laws. If we ourselves can answer the petitions of our friends, as often we do, by employing the forces of nature, and that without destroying any of her laws, we ought not doubt the providential interpositions of the Divine hand in answer to our supplications.

But another objection is raised, and perhaps a stronger one, against the necessity of prayer. From the history of prayer we are told that those who pray receive no more or greater blessings than those who reject prayer, and that the prayers, or a larger portion of them, are not answered. If we should admit this objection or statement as true, it would not undervalue the power of prayer in the least; as we all know that many who pray have no faith in their own prayers. While we believe that prayer is a condition of our blessing, we as firmly believe that prayer has conditions, and unless those conditions are fulfilled our prayers are of no use whatever. The conditions of prayer is what makes it a "prayer of faith." To pray without faith is formal and vain; to pray without attending to the conditions of prayer is arrogance and is adding sin to crime. When, therefore, we object to prayer because we do not see the answer, we ought to know whether they are prayers of faith and obedience or whether they are simply the lip service of unconsecrated hearts. The scripture as given above assures us that we shall receive what we ask, on the ground of keeping God's commandments and doing what is pleasing in His sight. If there is any failure in the answer to our prayers it must be on our part in not doing God's will, because God must be true; there is no failure on His part. I have been careful to notice that those who have the least faith in the power of prayer and raise the most objections are the ones whose lives are the least conformed to the law and life of Christ. Where were you last evening, my brother? Did you not know it was the evening for the prayer-meeting and that Christ was present with His children? Do you really think your excuse for not being present is acceptable to God? Do you honestly think God is pleased when you let the cares and pleasures and business of this fleeting life keep you away from His presence and from the hour of prayer. Can you think it strange that after opportunities for worshipping God are neglected for the trivial things of life, that you should have serious doubts as to the real worth of prayer? Let us be true to the commandments of God and ever do those things that are pleasing to Him before we presume to pass our judgments or express our doubts in regard to the answer of prayer.

There are some who are believers in prayer but object to praying for everything. They seem to know what and what not to pray for, but our lesson tells us that *whatever* we ask we receive, i. e., whatever is good, and we do not ask for that which is not for our good. Now comes the question, Who is to be the judge what is for our best good? When I ask God for certain things am I to be the judge as to whether it is for my good. If I ask Him to save my child can I, dare I, say it is best the child should live. Just here we see the weakness of frail nature. How we do try to decide for God what is best. How hard it is for us to believe that what is, is best. Here is the key to our unbelief in the answer to prayer. We are sure that what we ask

for is best, and because not answered we conclude there are things we should not pray for. He only who sees the end from the beginning can tell what is best. Our prayers, therefore, should be "Thy will be done," as we know He wills only that which is right and good. We dare not presume to teach "eternal wisdom how to rule."

The "prayer of faith" should be from a consecrated heart. It should be in the line of obedience to the will of the Lord, and with a desire to please our Heavenly Father. And whatever we need we should ask for, leaving it to the wisdom of a kind Father in heaven to grant what is for our good.

H. MURRAY.

POINTED REMARKS.

A lady in North Carolina, who makes her own support by the labor of her hands, presents the following inquiry: "How shall I make a calculation to find what the tithing of my income is? I keep boarders for a support, and buy nearly all that we use. We cultivate some vegetables for the table, and grass for the cow. If I find that I only clear expenses, what do you say is my income?"

This question is capable of two answers. The first is a general one. If a man decides that he will give a tenth of his income to the Lord (or a fifth or a twentieth) he should ascertain what his income is in order to find out how many dollars he will give. Not all the money a man receives from his customers is included in his income. If a merchant buys a stock of goods for ten thousand dollars, pays a thousand for rent, etc., and a thousand for salaries, and then sells the goods for fourteen thousand dollars, only two thousand out of that fourteen thousand constitutes income, and the tithe would be two hundred dollars.

John Sunday, the converted Indian chief of Upper Canada, addressing a missionary meeting in England, in his appeal to the benevolence of the people, said: "There is a gentleman, I suppose, now in this house; he is a very fine gentleman, but he is very modest. He does not like to show himself. I do not know how long it is since I saw him, he comes out so little. I am very much afraid he sleeps a great deal of his time, when he ought to be going about doing good. His name is Mr. Gold. Mr. Gold, are you here to-night? or are you sleeping in your iron chest? Come out, Mr. Gold; come out and help us do this great work, to send the gospel to every creature. Ah, Mr. Gold, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, to sleep so much in your iron chest! Look at your white brother, Mr. Silver; he does a great deal of good in the world, while you are sleeping. Come out, Mr. Gold! Look, too, at your brown brother, Mr. Copper; he is everywhere! See him running about, doing all the good he can. Why don't you come out, Mr. Gold? Well, if you won't come out and help us yourself, send us your shirt, that is, a bank-note, and we will excuse you this time."

"Do pure an' undefiled 'ligion," says the Rev. Plato Johnson, "is allus to be foun' in a man's pocket. Dat is a curus place fer 'ligion, but ef it taint dar then taint nowhar. Do man dat can't put his han' on his 'ligion when he puts his han' on his pocket-book ain't got none. When a man talks loud 'bout his 'ligion, dat is only puttenso; but when he shells out de hard cash he ain't foolin'—he means bizness." W. J. M.

News of the Churches.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

ST. JOHN ITEMS.

Three additions to the church since last report. Two of these were from the Baptist church, and one by confession and obedience.

Our Sunday-school room has been undergoing some needed improvements.

The Sunday-school had their quarterly collection for Home Missions last Sunday. Amount realized, \$8.50.

NOVA SCOTIA.

RIVER JOHN.

Our meetings closed in this village Lord's day evening, June 3rd. A more kind, hospitable and affectionate people I have never met than the citizens of River John. I was with them sixteen days and delivered twenty-two addresses. Two Lord's days I occupied, by invitation, the pulpit of the Kirk Church on account of its being so much larger than the Christian Church. The last evening I preached on Lord's day there were four preachers in attendance, and our audience numbered about 375.

I also delivered three lectures under the auspices of the Temperance Society. At two of the lectures the chair was occupied by the Kirk minister, the Rev. Robert McCann, M. A. The other lecture was presided over by Dr. Munroe, M. D., subject, Anthropology.

The country around River John is beautiful. I was kindly taken wherever I wished to go with horse and carriage, and the drives were most delightful. This is one of the most pleasant places I have yet seen in Nova Scotia. The river, by the same name, passing through the village, adds an additional charm to the country. During my sojourn with the people here, my home was with Bro. P. D. Nowlan, as well as with the Rev. Robt. McCann at the manso. Seldom, however, has it been my privilege to see a greater exhibition of unmixed kindness and brotherly love.

Bro. P. D. Nowlan was not enjoying good health. He has had a very difficult field to till, and has labored under many adverse circumstances. He has the good-will and sympathy, not only of our own brethren, but also of the different churches throughout his parochial field of labor. His parting with the church in River John, in order to go to New Brunswick, seemed to be painful in the extreme. They were very loath to give him up. But it seemed necessary that he should go back to his old field of labor. I was very much pleased in forming Bro. Nowlan's acquaintance, and trust wherever he goes that his labors may be crowned with abundant success.

Bro. Rupert Stevens, my travelling companion, preached his first sermon at the Christian Church in River John, Lord's day, June 3rd. I was pleased with the effort. Bro. Stevens is a singer of no mean ability, and he won for himself friends wherever he went. The result, I had to leave him to take charge of the church in this village, though reluctantly we took the parting hand. May God richly bless these noble young preachers, and enable them to lead the embattled host on to victory. A young man was to be baptized the following Lord's day after I left. W. K. BURK.

RIVER JOHN.

Although this church is one of the oldest in the Province, dating from June 18, 1815, its membership is very small at present, not exceeding thirty-five, and never was large at any one time. One of the principal causes is emigration, and at present our members are mostly aged people. We have had Bro. P. D. Nowlan with us during the past year, whose teaching has broken down a great deal of prejudice. Our audiences were steadily increasing in number and interest, and six have taken membership. We are moving on in peace and deeply regret parting with our esteemed brother. The future looks gloomy on account of his leaving, but we could not support him longer at present. He has left us with the hope that in the future he will return to the community where he is so highly appreciated as a preacher and citizen.

We are situated in the west corner of Pictou