

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B., AUGUST, 1890.

EDITORIAL.

THE WHOLE FAMILY.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.—Ep. iii. 14, 15.

The apostle was a man of prayer. When bidding the elders of the church at Ephesus the sad adieu (Act. xx), he knelt down and prayed with them all. Now, when writing to that church from his Roman prison he still bows his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant them favors in keeping with the riches of His glory.

Paul felt a deep interest in the whole family of God. He was bound to this family by ties which things seen or unseen could never sever. Death, which dissolves all other ties, will but consolidate the eternal union of this family.

The apostle had always belonged to a noble family. In his veins flowed the best blood of earth. Both his parents were of the stock of Abraham, and he profited in the family religion above his equals, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers. He said, no need of a better family than the fleshly family of Abraham; did not understand the need of "enlarging the place of its tent" (Isa. lvi), nor know that all the families of the earth should be blessed in Abraham's seed. When he was converted his understanding was enlightened, his heart enlarged, and what was his former gain was loss for Christ. He had this grace given to him to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. He understood the secret which was hid from the foundation of the world, that the Gentiles were to be part of the whole family, and he published that secret with a death-defying ardor.

When Jesus came to seek and save the lost, He did not take hold of angels, but took hold of the seed of Abraham. He came unto His own (family), but His own received Him not. They saw in Him a desire to bless all the families of the earth, to separate all men from sin, to condemn sin, and to save and clear the sinner. For this His own family hated and crucified Him. But when His own rejected Him, He gave power to all that believe in His name, to become the sons of God. These were not born of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God; born of water and the Spirit, they enter into His family. All worldly ties are ignored in this divine relationship. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise (Gal. iii. 26, 29.)"

The dying love of Jesus is the bond that unites the new family to Him, and to each other. His death on the cross was not alone for sin, but displays such love for the sinner as destroys his enmity, and God makes of Jews and Gentiles one new family, so making peace.

Every family is expected to have a distinctive name, the name of its head. When Jacob had power as a prince with God and prevailed in prayer, the angel called him Israel, or Prince of God, and his children bore his name. When a woman leaves her father's house to be married, she takes in the lawful ceremony the name of her husband and head. When Jews and Greeks believed in Christ with all their hearts, they took His name in baptism as He appointed. If any of them had been baptized in the name of Paul it would be right and proper to call themselves by his name, and say "I am of

Paul." Paul thanked God that he had baptized so few in Corinth, lest it should be falsely reported that he had baptized in his own name, (1 Cor., 1). Many of the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized in the name of Christ, that they might be of Christ and bear His name.

But this family was not distinctly known by the name of its Head, until both Jews and Gentiles flowed into it. Acts 10, tells when, and how, the Gentiles joined the family. The 11th tells how Peter was censured by his brethren for preaching to the Gentiles, and of their joyful surprise when he told them how God had sent him to the house of Cornelius, and of the glorious results. Before the chapter closes it narrates the following facts: that some of those who had been preaching to the Jews only, when they had come to Antioch preached to the Grecians (or Greek) the Son Jesus—that the hand of the Lord was with them, and great multitudes believed and turned to the Lord. That the church at Jerusalem heard the news and sent Barnabas to Antioch; that he saw the grace of God, was glad, exhorted them all to cleave to the Lord, and that much people were added to the Son. That Barnabas sought out Saul, brought him to Antioch; that they met with the church, taught much people, and the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

Eminent critics render the passage thus "Barnabas and Saul assembled with the church, taught much people, and called the disciples Christians first at Antioch." This rendering is in harmony with the scope of the passage, which affirms two actions of the apostles. 1st. They met with the church. 2nd. They taught much people. The conjunction and couples the third action, viz., calling the disciples Christians, with the first and second things which they did. Now if it meant that some one else, especially an enemy had called them Christians, then the disjunctive but would be used, because new and opposing actors were introduced, the first actors doing the will of God, but the second opposing His will, but there is nothing in the passage to indicate such opposition.

Some affirm that Christian was a nickname of reproach given to the disciples by the enemies of Christ. This idea is absurd. Nazarene was a name of reproach. The enemies called Jesus a Nazarene, and called His followers Nazarenes on His account. But did these enemies call Jesus the Christ? No indeed. They vehemently denied that He was the Christ. How then could they call His followers Christians on His account? When Isaiah speaks of the Gentiles coming into the new family he adds "Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name" (Isa. lii. 2). So then pursuant to this prophecy, when the Gentiles came in, Paul and Barnabas, the Lord's speakers, called this family Christians after the name of their husband and head. Christ was crucified for them, they had been baptized in the name of Christ, and were ever after known as Christians. They acknowledged no other name given by friend or foe, and no other name is appropriate for them in earth or heaven. None of those who contend for the denominational names which divide the family of God expect these names to survive death. If good on earth they will be utterly ignored in heaven. None are so foolish as to expect these names to satisfy the whole family on earth. They are but the names of men and things unknown in the Bible, and as such must perish, but the worthy name by which the whole family is called is dear to every member, and becomes dearer to all as they approach the river, and will be still dearer on "the other shore."

To wear a name unworthily is to dishonor that name. The firm foundation of God has this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his", and, "Let every one who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." This double seal of safety and

sanctity, is like the foundation, unchangeable. One is to encourage all the faithful children of God with the assurance that God knows them, and all they do and hope and suffer for His cause; the other is to warn them to be true and faithful to Him and His people and His cause, whose name they bear. That name stands high above every name in the universe, and if I am called by it how dreadful to associate with it any thing selfish, mean, or dishonorable. When Jesus shall send His angels to gather out of His kingdom every abomination, He will drive from Him every one that sayeth Lord, Lord, but does not the will of His Father. Let this seal be ever before our eyes "The Lord knoweth them that are His, and, let every one that nameth the name of the Christ depart from iniquity" even when others turn from Him (2 Tim., ii, 19.)

The whole family is very large, much larger than the Jewish family. Many have crossed the flood and some are nearly over. Happy day, when all will meet without a spot, a wrinkle, or a sigh. When the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall have wiped every tear from their eyes.

Original Contributions.

SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1890.

We want all to notice the above date and remember it is the time of our Annual Meeting, and that Milton, N. S., is the place. Those who come by teams know how to come much better than we can tell them. Those who come by public conveyance better come to Bridgewater. You will go on the Annapolis and Windsor R.R. to Middletown and change there for Bridgewater. From here you take coach to Milton about thirty miles. This saves thirty-five miles of coaching as in former times. Pay the whole fare to Milton and you will get back home for one-third fare by getting a certificate from the Secretary of the meeting. This includes both the N. S. Central and the A. W. R. R. I will probably get a reduction on the coach line. If the friends want to come through to Milton the same night—getting to Milton between eleven and twelve o'clock—rather than remain in Bridgewater over night, and come off by the morning coach, they can let me know and I will arrange with the coachman to suit the coaching to your wishes. This arrangement makes it much easier to come to Milton than ever before. The boat from Halifax, and from Yarmouth to Milton, are the same as in former days. Those wishing to come by boat can, no doubt, obtain reduced fares by application on the boat.

We anticipate with unwavering confidence a grand and profitable meeting. Bro. Dart of Boston, has assured us that he and his wife will be with us, both of whom will contribute largely toward making the meeting interesting. We expect Bro. Crawford and wife, Bro. Emery and wife, besides our own preachers of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

In behalf of the brethren and friends in Milton I extend to all our brethren and friends who will come to the Annual a hearty welcome, and we assure you that our welcome does not "stick in our throats" like Macbeth's amen, but it comes from the warmest corner of our hearts. We anxiously hope that many will come. Come with your hearts full of life and enthusiasm, come burning with devotion, to the best work and grandest plea that ever engaged the heart and hand of man. Come and partake with us the joy of Christian love and union as divinely blest. Come and unite with us in earnest prayer to the Father of Light, to strengthen and widen and deepen His work on earth. Come and grasp hands in friendly greeting and make the occasion a reinforcement of