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Rev. E. Crawley

THE
CHRISTIAN GLEANER.

NEW SERIES.

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“ PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD.”

S A C R E D E X T R A C T S.

M O M E N T O U S C O N S I D E R A T I O N S.

“ AND when Christ had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it ; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?

Whosoever therefore, shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation ; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.”

“ And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say ? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like : he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock : and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it : for it was founded upon a rock.

But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth ; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell ; and the ruin of that house was great.”

ON SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.

No. 3.

SOME EVILS, ARISING FROM IGNORANCE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THE most heinous crimes which have ever been committed in the world, are ascribed in the Bible to men's ignorance of God. The apostle Paul, speaking of the sins of the Gentiles, declares, that "it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret," Eph. v. 12. The same apostle shows us the cause from which they proceeded. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk, not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds; having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts," Eph. iv. 17, 18.

Peter, exhorting Christians to holiness, reminds them that their former state of wickedness was a state of ignorance: "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation," 1 Pet. i. 14, 15.—Crucifying the Lord of glory, greatly enhanced the guilt of the Jewish nation; to ignorance this crime is ascribed by Peter, Acts iii. 17. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Paul more fully expresses the same thing, Acts xiii. 27. "For they that dwelt at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the Prophets, which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." He adds, in 1 Cor. ii. 7. "Which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Men generally think that their ignorance in a great measure, if not altogether, frees them from blame. If God had never given men the means of knowing him, this might possibly be admitted; but if men hate knowledge and despise the fear of the Lord, their ignorance very greatly increases their guilt. In this case the apostle says, "If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant," 1 Cor. xiv. 28.

It is evident, from the experience of past ages, that all the power and policy of men have been insufficient to banish crimes from society. Prisons have been built, and every kind of torture invented to punish offenders, but the world still lieth in wickedness. It is in the mind of man the source of the evil lies, and to this the remedy should be applied. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies," &c. Matt. xv. 19. It is the Gospel of God known and believed, which proves effectual in remov-

ing such crimes. It makes the drunkard sober, and teaches him that stole, to steal no more ; but rather to labour, working with his hands the thing which is good ; see 1 Cor. vi. 9-11. The hearts of the Gentiles were purified by faith, Acts xv. 9 ; and having purified their souls in obeying the truth, 1 Pet. i. 22. they became servants to God, and yielded their members servants to righteousness unto holiness ; see Rom. vi. 16-23. The same thing was made effectual by God toward the Jews : see Acts ii. 37-47.

All the false religions which have ever been in the world, have also arisen from ignorance. Some are so indifferent to truth, that they think all religions right ; and that, though people take different roads to heaven, they shall all arrive at the same place at last. We are sure that the religion of the Bible is right, and we know that the Bible reveals only one religion, or way of salvation to mankind. We may also very clearly see from that Bible, that men believing a lie shall as certainly be damned, as it is certain that he that believeth the truth shall be saved : " Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, even for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie ; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 10-12. We are also assured from the same Bible, that " wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat ;" and that " strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," Mat. vii. 13, 14.

Every false religion, or corruption of the true, arises from ignorance of the Scriptures, or departure from them. Paul, addressing the Athenians, declares to them that their worship was the effect of ignorance : " As I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." " And the times of this ignorance God winked at ; but now commandeth all men every where to repent," Acts xvii. 23-30. And Jesus addressing the woman of Samaria, tells her, " Ye worship ye know not what," John iv. 22. Paul admits, that his brethren, the Jews, had a zeal of God, but he immediately subjoins, that it was not according to knowledge. He proceeds to inform us, that " they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God," Rom. x. 2, 3 ; see also Rom. i. 21-23 ; Mat. xxii. 23-29.

Men ignorant of God's righteousness, must have one of their own, whether it consists in service done to a mere vanity, or in seeking it by the deeds of the law: both equally leave men

in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity ; and if men are ruined by a false religion, it is immaterial whether it be by the one or the other. All false religions originated in a departure from the true, and proceeded step by step until the nations have been sunk in the most gross superstition and idolatry. Every deviation of Christians from the truth revealed in the Bible, is a step in the same road which has led them into their present deplorable condition. Aware of this, and warning believers against it, the apostle says, " The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears ; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables," 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.

Every false religion, and every counterfeit of the true ; implies that there is a true ; as counterfeit money implies current. As men detect bad money, not by comparing it with counterfeit, but with good, so false religions can only be detected by comparing them with the Scriptures. As they arose from departing from the truth of God, have been continued in, from ignorance and neglect of it, so they shall be destroyed in proportion as it, is attended to, 2 Thess. chap. ii. Men seldom consider that the world is ruined by false religions. By these the god of this world blinds the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Much more time, zeal, and money, have been spent in diffusing error, than in spreading truth in the world. If a golden calf is to be made for a god to the children of Israel, the women will part with their ear-rings and jewels ; and if an offering is to be made to the queen of heaven, the children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to get it prepared, Exod. xxxii. 2-6 ; Jer. vii. 18.

The wicked are in their generation wiser than the children of light. The innumerable sects of professed Christians are certainly a disgrace to the Christian name, and the triumph of those who are honest enough to avow themselves infidels. They also afford ease to multitudes in their sins, and even perplex and stumble others who are weak in the faith. It is true enough they cannot all be right ; and what are people to do in the midst of such division and opposition about religion ? Every man ought to examine the Bible for himself, prove all things by it, and hold fast that which is good. For, saith the Saviour, " In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," Mat. xv. 9. and again, " Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right ?" Luke xii. 57. As long as men suffer others to judge for them, or do not judge all things for themselves by the Scriptures, they must be forever bewildered in the things of religion.

The various persecutions which have been in the world, have arisen from ignorance of the truth of God. Jesus forewarned his disciples that persecution for the truth's sake would come upon them; but he also informs them that ignorance was the cause of them. "These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have *not known* the Father nor me," John xvi. 1-3; see also Chap. xv. 20, 21; Acts xxvi. 9-11. These words were partly fulfilled in Saul of Tarsus; for he thought that he did God service, in persecuting the church of God and wasting it. Being asked by Jesus, "why persecutest thou me?" his answer implied that he *knew not God*, nor his son Jesus Christ. "Who art thou Lord?" was his reply; which illustrates and confirms what he afterwards declares was the cause of his persecution: "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it *ignorantly* in unbelief," 1 Tim. i. 12, 13.*

Christians marvel at the attachment of the Jews to the traditions of their fathers, and condemn them for their ignorant zeal in persecuting Christ and his disciples. Marvel not at this: *zeal* for the traditions of the Christian fathers has shed more of the blood of the saints than was ever shed by the Jews. It was not in reference to the Jews, but to professed Christians, that these words were spoken: "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," Rev. xvii. 5, 6. In the days referred to in this passage of Scripture, *ignorance* was the mother of devotion;

* Some have supposed that the apostle in this text assigns his ignorance and unbelief as a reason why he obtained mercy. Nothing more is necessary to obviate the difficulty which appears in this text, to reconcile it with the context and other parts of Scripture, than to translate the last clause of the verse before the middle. The idioms of different languages often require a transposition of the phrases, in translating from one language to another, to make common sense. The passage will then run thus, "Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief: but I obtained mercy, and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant," &c. If this transposition of the phrase be admitted, it appears that Paul states his ignorance and unbelief as the cause of his blasphemy, persecutions, &c. and not as the reason why he obtained mercy of the Lord. This view of the apostle's meaning is confirmed from many other texts, some of which have been already quoted; see John xv. 21. and xvi. 3; 1 Cor. ii. 8; Acts iii. 17, 18. and xiii. 27; Luke xxiii. 34.

and he that killed an heretic from the faith of the church, though he held the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, was thought to be doing God a service. In those days the Scriptures were entirely laid aside, or little regarded. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. The power of the pope, and the traditions of the church, were the test of truth, and the people loved to have it so.

Ignorance is also the cause of many of the miseries of the present life. As to many of these, "one event happeneth to all," as we may see Eccl. ix. 2, 11, 12. There are, however, many others which arise from ignorance of God and his salvation. Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go," Exod. v. 2. His ignorance was, in the end, the ruin of himself and all his host in the Red sea; see also Dan. iv. 25. Ignorance is declared by God to have been the cause of many of the troubles which his ancient people experienced, and of their captivity; see Hos. iv. 1-6; Jer. iv. 22; Isa. v. 11-13. The war and bloodshed which have been in the world, have arisen from the same cause; for when knowledge shall cover the earth, as waters do the sea, they shall cease, Isa. xi. 1-9. If the condition of families and of individuals were known, the poverty, sickness, and death, with which many are visited, have originated from ignorance of the things which belong to their peace. Dissipation wastes property, ruins health, and ends life; so that the wicked do not live half their days. Solomon, speaking of a young man of this description, calls him "void of understanding." See on this the whole book of Proverbs.

Ignorance finally brings men to everlasting destruction. The apostle states this in language solemn and impressive. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who art troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that *know not God*, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day," 2 Thess. i. 6-10; see also chap. ii. 10-12; and Prov. i. 24-33. Eternal life, on the contrary, is inseparably connected in Scripture with knowledge. "This is life eternal, that they might *know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*," John xvii. 3. "For he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son *shall not see life*; but *the wrath of God abideth on him*," John iii. 36. "The wisdom of the prudent, is to understand his way."—*Solomon.*

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

No. 1.

PATRIARCHAL AGE OF THE WORLD.

THE world had its infancy as well as man. Families preceded nations. Family worship was, therefore, the first religious institution.

At the head of this institution naturally stood *the Father of every Family*. From necessity, and from choice, he was the prophet, the priest, and the king of his household. As a *prophet*, he instructed his household in the knowledge of God and in the history of man. As a *priest*, he officiated at the family altar, interceded for those under his care, and pronounced benedictions upon his children. As a *lawgiver and king*, he commanded his children and servants, and rewarded them according to merit. By a divine ordinance the *first fathers of mankind* were thus constituted prophets, priests, and kings. Hence the first religious and political institution is properly called "*the Patriarchal.*"

Family worship was, then, the *first social worship*; and, during the first ages of the world (for at least 2500 years) it was the only *social worship* of divine authority. Though other institutions have since been added, this has never been superseded. Having its foundation in the matrimonial compact, the most ancient of all religious and political institutions, and this being founded on nature itself, it never can be superseded. While the forms of this worship have always been adapted to the genius of the various revelations of God vouchsafed to mankind, it has continued through all the changes of six thousand years, and will continue till the day when men, like the angels of God, shall neither marry nor give in marriage.

Family worship, so long as it continued the only social worship, underwent no material change; and this is the period which is properly called *the Patriarchal Age of the World*. So long as the descendants of one man and one woman continued under the paternal roof, or until they became heads of families themselves, they continued under this religious and political administration. And if, after marriage, they did not migrate to a great distance from the patrimonial inheritance, the paternal authority was still acknowledged and acquiesced in. Thus, in process of time, he who at first was only the head of a single family, if his days were prolonged and his progeny multiplied, became the paternal prince or chief patriarch of a tribe.

In the youth of time and freshness of human nature, families soon became large; and as the father and head could not be always present while he lived, and as he might die before all his

children could have become heads of families, it became necessary that a substitute in his absence, and a successor in case of his premature death, should be appointed to fill his place, and administer the affairs of the family. Nature and reason alike pointed to his first born son, and religion consecrated him his vicegerent. Hence the privileges and honors of the first born son were both religious and political; and thus the duties devolving upon him gave him a right to a double portion of the inheritance. Esau was, therefore, both *prodigal* and *profane* in selling his birthright for a meal of pottage.

* * * * *

The moral and religious institutions of the patriarchal or family worship, which continued from the fall of Adam to the covenant of circumcision, were, the *Sabbath*, the *service of the altar*, *moral instruction*, *prayer*, *praise*, and *benediction*. With the addition of circumcision in the family of one patriarch, for special purposes, these were the parts of that system which continued for two thousand five hundred years.

The religious observance of weeks or Sabbaths in commemoration of Creation, and prospective of an eternal rest, to arise out of the sacrificial and typical institution, was religiously observed to the giving of the law, or the erection of the Jewish institution. Thus the law of the Sabbath commences with the words, "*Remember the Sabbath.*" We find Noah religiously counting his weeks even while incarcerated in the Ark. In the wilderness of Sin, before the giving of the law, we also find the Jews observing the Sabbath. And to facilitate the observance of it, God wrought three special miracles during the peripatations of Israel. He gave two days' portion of manna on the sixth day—none on the seventh—and preserved from putrefaction the portion laid up for the Sabbath, Exodus xvi. 15-27.

Sin-offerings and thank-offerings, on altars both of stone and earth, were presented to the Lord—the former, in faith of the promise concerning the bruising of the Serpent's head by the offspring of woman—the latter, in grateful acknowledgment of the goodness of God in creation and providence. Cain, without faith in the promised redemption, like many deists and natural religionists in our time, did acknowledge the goodness and care of God by a thank-offering; but Abel, *by faith in that promise*, not only offered his thank-offering, but a lamb as a *sin-offering*: therefore, while God respected not Cain's oblation without faith in that promise, he testified in favor of the *gifts* of Abel—he accepted his *sin-offering* and his *thank-offering*.

In the very brief and general outlines of almost two thousand five hundred years given us in the book of Genesis, we find sundry allusions to this part of the patriarchal institution. Immediately after his egress from the Ark, we find Noah rearing his altar upon the baptized earth, and of every clean bird and

beast offering to the Lord whole burnt offerings. Thus began Noah, after the deluge, to worship the Lord according to the patriarchal institution. And thus we find Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, and other patriarchs presenting their sacrifices to the Lord, while the family worship was the only religious institution in the world.

Even libations, drink-offerings, and anointing as tokens of gratitude and consecration, are found in this most ancient and venerable institution. "Jacob arose up early in the morning, took the stone which he had put for his pillow, set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it." Genesis xxviii. 18. "And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where God talked with him, even a pillar of stone, and he poured a drink-offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon." Genesis xxxv. 14.

A beautiful and instructive instance of ancient family worship, and of the sacerdotal functions, as exercised by the patriarchs in reference to the *Altar*, we have in that most ancient of books, supposed by many to have been written by Moses while in the land of Midian; but, according to others, by Job himself, who was certainly contemporary with *Eliphaz the Temanite*. Eliphaz was the son of Teman, who was the son of Eliphaz, who was the first son of Esau, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham. He therefore lived before Moses. Thus we find him also officiating at the altar. We are told that "his sons went and feasted in each other's houses, every one his day, and sent and called for their sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, that when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus acted Job continually." Job i. 4, 5.

The same Job, by divine appointment, acted as priest or intercessor in behalf of his three friends, princes of Edom: for having spoken amiss, they were commanded to take seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to Job the servant of God, and to offer them up for themselves; and "Job my servant shall pray for you." "Job prayed for them, and the Lord accepted his prayer, and forgave Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar." "The Lord also accepted and blessed Job after he had prayed for these his friends, and the Lord turned again the captivity of Job." Job xlii. 8-10.

During this period of the world there was but one high or general priest, specially called and sent by God. "He was king of Salem and Priest of the Most High God." To him the patriarch Abraham paid tithes or gave the tenth of the spoils taken in war, and Melchisedeck blessed him. He was of an order *sui generis*. He had no predecessor, successor, nor equal in the age of family worship.

From all these facts and documents we learn that the service of the altar belonged first to the father of the family—next, to his eldest son ;—that it consisted in presenting sin-offerings and thank-offerings of various sorts in behalf of himself or family—that all pious sons and individuals might *for themselves* erect altars, offer sacrifices, and pour out libations and thank-offerings to the Lord ;—that these sacrificial observances were generally, if not always, accompanied with prayer, intercession, and thanksgivings ;—and that intercession in behalf of those under the care of any father or patriarch was a part of the first institution.

Benediction also was one of the duties of this office. Fathers pronounced blessings on their children. Superiors in age and standing blessed their inferiors. Melchisedeck blessed Abraham, Isaac blessed Jacob, and Jacob blessed the twelve patriarchs. The invocation of blessings and the imposition of hands upon the head, were parts of the family worship institution.

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Prophets of a public character were occasionally raised up to bring men back to the primitive simplicity of the patriarchal institution, as well as to lead them forward to the future developments of God's purposes in reference to the work of redemption. Amongst these the most conspicuous were Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. To all these were given new visions of the future, and thus they were all preachers of righteousness and reformers in their respective generations.

* * * * *

There was, during the long period of this family institution, no community separated from the world larger than a single household—no public altars—no temples—no established order of public teachers ; therefore, there was no initiating or separating institutions. There was no *circumcision* for the infant, nor *washing of regeneration* for the instructed. These institutions of later times had respect to public professing communities ; and, therefore, for two thousand years there was no initiating rite or ordinance amongst men.

Wherever the family curtains were spread and a tent erected, the devout father built his own altar to the Lord, gathered his own children and domestics around him, instructed them in the knowledge of God the creator and preserver of all ; and in the history of man, his origin and destiny, as far as revealed to them. They offered their thank-offerings, acknowledgments of favors received ; and when conscious of sin, they presented their sin-offering, with confessions, and in faith of God's promise, supplicated pardon. Such are the essential attributes of the patriarchal institution, and of the family worship, as learned from the writings of Moses.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

No. 3.

EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT.

HAVING ascertained the scriptural import of the following words and phrases, "gift of the Holy Spirit," "spiritual gifts," "the Spirit by measure," "distributions of the Spirit," "demonstration of the Spirit," "manifestation of the Spirit"—we proceed to the examination of some other apostolic phrases relative to the same subject. The phrase "*earnest of the Spirit*" next deserves our attention.

If the reader has some preconceived system in his mind which he desires to see established by these examinations, I think it is probable he will be disappointed; for we are not seeking to establish any. We prosecute this inquiry as if we had never written nor spoken one word upon the subject. The reader, then, if he do justice to himself, will place himself in the same circumstances as the writer, and, with the candor and docility of a student, open the Living Oracles, and ask, *What say the Scriptures?*

Arrabon, the word translated *earnest* in the phrase before us, found 2 Cor. i. 22, occurs only in two other passages, (viz. 2 Cor. v. 5. Eph. i. 14.) It is a *Hebrew* word adopted into the Greek language of the New Testament, as the word *baptism* is a Greek word adopted into the English New Testament. It is translated usually *pledge*, *earnest*. In the common and in the new version, this word is always rendered *earnest*. The ancient Hebrew and Phœnician word is a commercial term, and indicates that part of the price of any article which was given in hand at the time of purchase. The goods were marked or sealed, and a sum in hand paid, when the purchase was made; hence the Hebrew verb from which it is derived signifies *to make sure* or *to become surety*. It is found three times only in the translation of the Seventy, and always adopted as in the New Testament, from which writings doubtless the Apostles had it.

Before we attempt to ascertain the precise import of this phrase, there is a word which occurs in the same connexion with it, both in the Epistles to the Corinthians and Ephesians, which must be distinctly understood antecedent to a full intelligence of "*the earnest of the Spirit*." It is the word *sealed*. "God," says Paul, "has *anointed* us Apostles"—"Christ establishes us, God *anoints* us, and has also *sealed* us, and given the *earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. And Ephesians i. 13, 14, speaking of the Ephesian converts in the second

person, contrasted with the Jewish converts who before expected the Messiah, Paul says, "Having believed, you were sealed with the Spirit of the promise, the Holy Spirit," (the promised Spirit,) "who is the earnest of our inheritance, for the redemption of the purchase to the praise of his glory."

The reader now perceives the intimacy between God's anointing, sealing, and giving of the earnest of the Spirit, and feels the importance of understanding the terms *sealed*, *anointed*, as well as the term *earnest*. We shall therefore attend to them in order; and first, to the word *seal*.

Sphragis, (*seal*), occurs in the New Testament sixteen times. Of these thirteen are in the Apocalypse; and always denote a public mark or external sign, such as the seal upon a letter. The instrument by which a visible mark or impression is made is literally *a seal*. This seal has an inscription upon it; and therefore we have the instrument, the inscription, and the impression made by it, all denominated "*seal*." They are, however, all visible. The instrument, the inscription, and the impression on the wax or on the paper, are called *seals*. Metaphorically it denotes secrecy, and is so used in the Apocalypse. It also imports confirmation.

Let us now examine all the places in which it occurs. Rev. v. 5. "*Seven Seals*"—visible impressions or marks indicative of security and secrecy. It is found chap. v. 1, 2, 5, 9. and chap. vi. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12. viii. 1. eleven times in this sense: chap. vii. it denotes the instrument by which impressions are made; chap. viii. 1. and chap. ix. 4. the impression made on the forehead; 2 Tim. ii. 19. it seems to be used for the inscription on the seal; and Rom. iv. 11. it denotes a confirmatory mark. Circumcision was in the person of Abraham a seal or confirmation of the faith he had in uncircumcision. It is only found once more, 1 Cor. ix. 2. "For the seal of my apostleship you are in the Lord." The converted Corinthians were a confirmation of Paul's apostleship. From this comes the verb,

To seal, [*sphragizo*], which occurs seventeen times. Ten of these are found in the Revelation in the sense above defined. Rev. vii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. x. 4, xx. 3. xxii. 10. Mat. xxvii. 66. it is applied to the stone on the sepulchre. John vi. 27. God has sealed his Son, confirmed his mission by the Holy Spirit without measure. Rom. xv. 28. metaphorically, *to secure*. The remaining passages bear upon the subject directly, and are found Eph. i. 13. and iv. 30. in the sense applied to Jesus, John vi. 27. God sealed his Son by the manifestations of his Spirit. The Apostles were sealed as his ambassadors by the same Spirit; and the converts from among the Jews and Gentiles were also sealed as God's people by the manifestations of the same Spirit.

To give a ring with an inscription, or to give a seal, indicated in all ages of the world the conferring of an office. Pharaoh gave Joseph a ring (Gen. xli. 42.) when he made him governor. A

similar example is found Esther viii. 2. iii. 10. The Lord Chancellor of England, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, Lord of the Privy Seal, and the Secretaries of State receive their office by the King's delivering to them the seals of their respective offices.

The seal of the Spirit was then a public sign, mark, or pledge that God had sent his Son—that Jesus had sent the Apostles; and on their converts it was a sign or pledge that God had received them as his people. Every "manifestation of the Spirit" was a confirmation of the mission of the Apostles, a seal of their apostleship. The spiritual gifts bestowed upon the converts by the hands of the Apostles, was a seal of the apostleship of the persons who conferred them, and it was also a pledge that God had received the persons sealed as his property.

Connected with *sealing* is the figure of *anointing*: for Kings, and Prophets, and Priests, on receiving their office, or on being sealed, were also anointed with oil. The pouring of oil upon the head was a literal anointing; but figuratively, the bestowing of the Holy Spirit, or some spiritual gifts, is the anointing spoken of in the New Testament. An examination of all the places where it is found makes this unquestionable. The word *chrío*, (to anoint,) is only found four times in the apostolic writings: Luke iv. 18. Acts iv. 27. x. 38. 2 Cor. i. 21. Heb. i. 9. It is four times applied to Jesus, and once only to the Apostles; and certainly alludes to "the gift of the Holy Spirit" in the ascertained sense of that phrase. Luke iv. 18. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," says Jesus, "because he has anointed me to preach the gospel." Acts iv. 27. "Against thy Holy Son Jesus, whom thou hast anointed." Acts x. 38. "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power." This explains the matter fully. Hebrews i. 9. "God has anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows"—[his other public servants.] The oil is the ointment or anointing, called the *chrísma*, found only in John's Letter, ii. 27.—the gift of the Spirit—"The anointing teaches you all things" The remaining passage is 2 Cor. i. 21. and is connected with the *seal* and the *earnest*: "God has anointed us, sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." As "the Holy Spirit and power" are not two things, neither is the anointing and the seal. "God anointed and sealed us" (apostles) are not two distinct acts, but the same act presented under two figures.

The oil, the pouring of the oil, and the head on which it was poured, are all external and visible. Hence the Holy Spirit descended on the head of the Messiah visibly, and sat upon the head of the Apostles in the resemblances of fiery tongues. Thus were Jesus and the Apostles anointed.

There is, however, a difference in meaning between the word anointing and the oil, and between the oil and its effects. Oil had sensible effects upon the person. Hence as the emblem of the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed on Jesus, it is called "the

oil of gladness." Joy in the heart, arising from consecration to the Lord, was the natural effect of this anointing. This joy in the heart is a prelude of the fulness of joy, an earnest of the inheritance. This brings us within sight of the meaning of the association of the anointing, the seal, and the earnest.

A seal and an earnest are not the same thing, though the same thing may be both a seal and an earnest. Anointing and sealing are not the same act, though the same act may be both an anointing and sealing. A sign and a seal are not the same thing; yet circumcision to Abraham was both a sign and a seal. There is this difference between a seal and an earnest: they are the same so far as assurance is concerned; but the seal assures of an inheritance without being any part of it: whereas an earnest assures us of an inheritance, and is a part of the inheritance itself. A seal may be a pledge to others, but an earnest is a pledge to ourselves.

The seal of the Holy Spirit, as explained by Paul, (Eph. i. 13.) is the earnest of the inheritance until the full possession of it. The seal may be upon the head, but the earnest is in the hand and in the heart. If the head be anointed, the whole person is perfumed with its graces. The oil poured on the head of Aron descended in its perfumes and influences to the tuft of his robe. The heart was always filled with joy when the head was anointed. All the members of Christ's body are anointed with him, and all experience the joy of that unction in their hearts; and this to them is an earnest, an assurance of the fulness of joy. But to this subject we cannot do full justice till we have examined "*the fruits of the Spirit.*"

Thus far we have progressed—God anointed and sealed his Son and the Apostles by his Spirit, and sealed the converts made by their ministry as his people, by various manifestations of his Spirit; and these manifestations filled the heart with the fruits of God's Spirit, which constituted an earnest in their hearts of the full fruition of the heavenly inheritance.

The argument or assurance which the earnest of the Spirit in the saints gives, is thus expressed: "If the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he who raised up Christ from the dead, will make even our mortal bodies alive through his Spirit who dwells in us."

Give every kind of knowledge its due attention and respect: but what science is to be compared to the knowledge of Christ crucified? Had a traveller lost his way in some desert, where he had wandered till he was fainting with hunger and thirst, for what would he first ask?—for music?—for paintings?—No! he would ask for bread—for water! Anything else offered him would be a mockery of his misery.—*Cecil.*

THE VOICE OF THE PROPHETS.

No. 1.

THIS is the day in which the evidences of a divine revelation should be clearly set before the public mind. It is a day in which skepticism is rampant, and Mammon is adored as the chief divinity. This state of things has been induced by spurious religions of our times. Instead of contending for the authority of the Living Oracles, the professed teachers of Christianity have been contending for their own notions, and, consequently, but few of the professors of the Christian religion are competent to give a reason for the hope which is in them. And even those who are best informed on the great question, Do the Scriptures contain a revelation from God? have failed to present the most powerful evidence to the minds of the people. They generally adduce the miracles which were wrought in confirmation of the revelations of Omnipotence as the stronger proof, forgetting, at the same time, that these evidences cannot bear with as much force on the minds of those to whom they are reported, as on the minds of those who saw them. Although there can be as much evidence produced in support of the fact that miracles were wrought by Moses, by Jesus, and by his Apostles, as in support of any other position of equal antiquity, yet there is sometimes a liability to mental misgiving on the part of him who has never seen a miracle wrought.

But there is evidence in existence equally as conclusive, that the Bible contains not only one revelation, but many revelations from the Deity. Yes, evidence which amounts to a standing miracle. That evidence we have in "the voice of the Prophets," the subsequent history of men, and nations, and events with reference to which that voice was uttered. Take, for the first instance, the prediction of Noah relative to his two sons and grand son, Shem, Japheth and Canaan, and their posterity.

"Cursed be Canaan ;

A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren.

Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem ;

And Canaan shall be their servant.

God shall enlarge Japheth,

And shall dwell in the tents of Shem,

And Canaan shall be their servant."—Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27.

As Canaan is the first in the prediction, we will attend first to that part of the prophecy which relates to his case, and that of his posterity. According to Hebrew usage, the name of the father often covered all his posterity. Hence says Paul, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel ;" and again, "Behold Israel after the flesh." "And so all Israel shall be saved."—

This form of expression is not peculiar to the Apostolic age.— It is frequently to be found in the writings of Moses, whose language we have under consideration. “And Pharaoh said, ‘Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.’” (Ex. v. 2.) This language was used of the descendants of Israel 144 years subsequent to his death. Canaan was a name which was not only applied to the grand-son of Noah, but also to his posterity, who were called many years after his death, by the name of their father.

The above prophecy fell from the lips of the venerable patriarch who is called a “preacher of righteousness,” and who, in consequence of his piety, had the honor of being the father of the post-diluvian world, 2317 years before the Messiah, or 4174 years ago. The curse prophetically pronounced upon this branch of mankind, at that early period, clearly indicated that they would be a wicked people, and such they emphatically were.— The curse denounced against them was the curse of slavery or servitude. “A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren.” The Israelites, who were descendants from Shem, in the days of Joshua, after invading the land of Canaan, destroyed upwards of thirty of the kings of that country, and made many of the people servants; and in the days of Solomon the remains of this wicked and miserable people were subdued and brought under tribute. (2 Chron. viii. 7–9.) In this way did the descendants of Canaan become servants to the posterity of Shem.

The Greeks and Romans, who descended from Japheth, not only subdued Syria and Palestine, but pursued and conquered the very remnants of the Canaanites, such as the Tyrians and Carthaginians. The Tyrians were destroyed by the famous Alexander, and the Grecians; and the Carthaginians by the celebrated Scipio and the Romans. From that time the remainder of that miserable people have been slaves to foreign powers, such as, first, the Saracens, the descendants of Shem, and subsequently the Turks, the descendants of Japheth, under whose domination they have groaned for so many years.

Thus has this remarkable prophecy been fulfilled if it be understood exclusively of Canaan’s posterity. But if we read the passage as several learned men think it should be read, it will embrace a much wider range, and the accomplishment of the prediction is still more striking. It is thought that the passage should be read, “Cursed be Ham, the father of Canaan.” This includes not only that part of mankind called Canaanites, but also the posterity of Ham in general; and the fulfilment of the prophecy has been as striking in the latter as in the former case. Egypt, which was for a long time a flourishing and mighty kingdom, it is often called in the Scriptures the land of Ham; and notwithstanding its ancient grandeur, and power, and sci-

ence, the Persians, who were the descendants of Shem, subdued it; and at a later period, the Grecians, who descended from Japheth, became its conquerors. As we have the prediction fairly before our minds, we will take its fulfilment from Messrs. Gibbon and Volney, two gentlemen who did not believe the Scriptures to contain a revelation from God, and consequently cannot be thought to have written their histories to accommodate the Scripture predictions.

“Such is the state of Egypt. Deprived twenty-three centuries ago of her natural proprietors, she has seen her fertile fields successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the race of Tartars distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks. The Mamelukes, purchased as slaves, and introduced as soldiers, soon usurped the power and elected a leader. If their first establishment was a singular event, their continuance is not less extraordinary. *They are replaced by slaves brought from their original country.* [“A servant of servants shall he be.”] The system of oppression is methodical. Every thing the traveller sees or hears reminds him he is in the country of slavery and tyranny.”—(Volney’s Travels, vol. 1, pages 74, 103, 110, 198.)

“A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised than that which condemns the natives of a country, to perpetual servitude under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above five hundred years.—The most illustrious Sultans of the Baharite and Borgite dynasties were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four-and-twenty Beys, or military chiefs, have ever been succeeded, not by their sons, but by their servants.”—(Gibbon’s History, vol. 6, pages 109, 110.)

Egypt has lately risen to a political eminence, to which it was a stranger for many centuries. But this is an indication of the fulfilment of another prophecy which was uttered by Isaiah 714 years before the Messiah. “In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a Saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it. And the Lord shall smite Egypt; he shall smite and heal it; and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them. In that day shall there be a high way out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third

with Egypt and Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

But we have yet to take a more extended view of this matter.—Almost the entire continent of Africa was settled by the people of Ham the father of Canaan. For how many ages did the fairer portions of that country lie under the dominions of the Romans, the Saracens, and the Turks? How great the ignorance, slavery, and misery of the greater portion of the inhabitants! Let the voice of African slavery be heard in every land, and it will be but the echo of the prophetic voice, reiterating the oracle of that Being who sees the end from the beginning. "A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren."

Jehovah is called the God of Shem, and in every age to them, were first "committed the orders of God," and of them, "as concerning the flesh Christ came." We have already seen that the Israelites who descended from Shem, took possession of Canaan's lands, destroyed many of its inhabitants, and made the rest tributary. Thus was fulfilled, "And Canaan shall be his servant."

Of Japheth it was said, "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." Whether this enlargement refers to the territories or posterity of Japheth, it has been literally fulfilled. As to his territories, they included all Europe, the lesser Asia, Media, a part of Armenia, Iberia, Albania, and the vast northern regions anciently inhabited by the Scythians, and more recently by the Tartars; and there is a strong probability that this continent was settled by some of his northern descendants, who may have found their way here by the way of Bhering's Straits.

But if the enlargement denotes a numerous progeny, the fulfilment is equally striking. On account of the astonishing fecundity of those northern people, Sir W. Temple denominated them "The Northern Hive." They were constantly swarming and sending forth colonies in Europe and Asia, both in ancient and modern times. Thus "God has enlarged Japheth," both in territory and progeny.

It is added, "And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem."—The present relative situation of Europe and Asia, or the descendants of Japheth and of Shem, presented us with a literal accomplishment of this part of this remarkable prophecy. Witness the numerous and extensive European colonies in Asia—the dwellings of many Europeans in the ancient Asiatic cities—and their well established settlements; and what is still more remarkable, if possible, there is not a single foot in all Europe which is the property of those nations who descended from Shem, or who are inhabitants of any part of that section of our globe

which they formerly possessed ! Now the question arises, From whom could such a complicated and comprehensive prediction, and one which has required the revolution of so many ages to fulfil it, have emanated, but from that All-wise Being whose prescience extends throughout the endless succession of ages ? If the waters of the Red Sea had continued separated as when Israel passed through dry shod, it would have presented evidence no more conclusive that those waters were divided for the salvation of that remarkable people, than the past and present conditions of these various nations does, that the Eternal Being was himself the author of the foregoing prediction. Here infidelity becomes a Sampson shorn of his hair.

FAITH AND WORKS.

A Worthy son of the church in the west Highlands, who had peculiar opinions touching the "full assurance of faith ; having to cross a ferry, availed himself of the opportunity to interrogate the boatman as to the grounds of his belief, assuring him that, if he had faith, he was certain of a glorious immortality. The man of the oar said he had always entertained a different opinion of the subject, and begged to give an illustration of his opinion. "Let us suppose" said the ferryman, "that one of these oars is called faith, and the other works, and try their several merits." Accordingly, throwing one oar into the boat, he proceeded to pull the other with all his strength, upon which the boat was turned round and round and made no head way.—"Now," said he, "you preceive faith wont do, let us try what works can." Seizing the other oar and giving it the same trial, the same consequence ensued. "Works," said he, "you see wont do neither ; let us try them together." The result was successful ; the boat shot through the waves, and soon reached the wished for haven. "This," said the honest ferryman, "is the way by which I hope to be wafsted over the troubled waters of this world, to the peaceful shores of immortality."

LINES written by *Lord Byron* a few weeks before his death, on the blank leaf of a Bible.

Within this awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries ;
Happiest they of human race
To whom their God has given grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, to force the way ;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Than read to doubt! or read to scorn.

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

IN all governments it is of the utmost importance to the people that the names and duties of the officers of their government should be well understood by them. Conscious that this is the case with the government of Jesus Christ, we will proceed forthwith, to examine the Christian Constitution, for the purpose of learning the names, qualifications and duties of its authorized officers. Under the expressive figure of a human body I will exhibit the Church with all her members and appendages, both in her infancy and manhood, and for the sake of perspicuity will give it from James Macknight's translation of the Epistles.—“ Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in part. Therefore these indeed God hath placed in the Church : First, Apostles ; secondly, Prophets ; thirdly, Teachers ; next, Powers ; then gifts of healing, helpers, directors ; kinds of foreign languages.” 1 Cor. xii. 27, 28. “ And he appointed some, indeed, Apostles ; and some Prophets ; and some Evangelists ; and some Pastors and Teachers, for the sake of fitting the saints for the work of the ministry, in order to the building of the body of Christ : till we come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, even to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Eph. iv. 11–14. These officers were given or bestowed upon the Church and were to continue until the body or Church should grow to the full stature of a man, then, he seems to imply, they would be useless, and would, eventually, cease. We will now state, numerically, these gifts, or offices, and show that they were intended, without exception, for the infancy of the Church.

1st. Apostles. The office of an Apostle was to declare, in an infallible manner, the whole gospel doctrine. Now, to qualify them for this high office, Christ gave them the inspiration called “ the word of wisdom.” 1 Cor. xii. 8.

2d. Prophets. The office of the superior Christian Prophets was to explain, infallibly, the true meaning of the oracles contained in the writings of Moses and the Prophets. To qualify the Prophets for this office, Christ gave them the inspiration called “ the word of knowledge.” 1 Cor. xii. 8.

3d. Teachers. That the Teachers were inspired persons appears likewise from Rom. xii. 7. where *teaching* is mentioned among the spiritual gifts, and from 1 Cor. xiv. 6, where *didache*, *doctrine*, is mentioned as a thing given to spiritual men by inspiration. From Eph. iv. 11. it appears that there were three orders of teachers among the Christians, namely, *Evangelists*, *Pastors* and *Teachers*, properly so called. The Teachers spoken of here are Evangelists, whose proper gift was faith.— See verse 9.

4th. Powers. Confirmers of the Gospel by miracles.

5th. Gifts of healing. The power of curing the sick.

6th. Helpers, or inferior Prophets, were such as had exhortations, prayers, and psalms given them by inspiration, which they uttered in the Church for the edification of the brethren, (1 Cor. xiv. 15, 26.) hence they are called, (ver. 28,) helps, or helpers, and are said, (Jude, ver. 20,) to "pray in the spirit," and their prayer is called inwrought prayer, (James, v. 15, 16,) and the psalms which they uttered are called "spiritual psalms," (Eph. v. 13.) Lastly, these helpers could sometimes foretell future events, and point out persons fit for sacred offices. Acts. xv. 32, and xxi. 10.

7th. Directors, or discerners of spirits. This gift was for the purpose of distinguishing between true and false doctrine, and to enable the possessor of this gift, for the benefit of the Church, to discern the thoughts and intents of the opposers and false friends of the Gospel: such as Peter's discovering the fraudulent purpose of Annanias and Sapphira; and Paul, the malice of Elymas.

8th. Kinds of foreign languages. Such as the eleven disciples being enabled, on the feast of Pentecost, to speak in as many dialects as Jacob had sons, and that too without the drudgery of studying them; also, Paul's declaring that he "spake more foreign tongues than they all did." 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

9th. The interpreters of foreign tongues. These were those who were inspired to interpret the revelations delivered to others in foreign languages."

From the above exhibition by Dr. J. Macknight, of the offices and officers of the infant church, it will necessarily follow that these offices are still in the Church, or, that they have been annulled at a certain period, and for certain reasons.—That the Church does not have, at present, any such gifts as are found in Paul's catalogue to the Corinthians, is confessed by every sane man in christendom; recollecting that they *all* must have something supernatural attending their office. Every man must be convinced that we have no such personages on earth at present. Some, in order to escape this dilemma, have asserted that a want of faith in the members, and an apostacy of the *body*, have caused spiritual gifts to cease. This Paul negatives by declaring that they should remain (not until a lack of faith or apostacy drove them from the earth, but) *until* the Church should arrive at the full stature of a man in Christ. Now in proof of the fact that the Church has long since arrived at this period, take the following beautiful paraphrase of Macknight on the 4th chapter of Eph. 11-14. "And he hath appointed some, indeed, Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists; and some Pastors, and Teachers, and bestowed on them the supernatural gifts of inspiration, prophecy, miracles, languages,

and interpretation of languages, and on some the power of communicating these gifts to others, to enable them to fit the saints, even the believing Jews and Gentiles, for the ordinary work of the ministry, in order to the building of the body of Christ, which is the Church, by converting unbelievers in every age. These supernaturally endowed teachers are to continue in the Church, *until*, being fully instructed by their discourses and writings, *we all*, who compose the Church, *come, through one faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood as a Church*, even to the measure of the stature, which when full grown it ought to have ; so that the Church, thus instructed and enlarged, is able to direct and defend itself *without supernatural aids*. So that, having recourse at all times to their writings, we may no longer be children, who, having no sure guide, are tossed like a ship by waves, and whirled about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning arts of false teachers, and by craftiness formed into a subtle scheme of deceit." Again, when commenting on the phrase 'perfect man,' he says, "The Apostle having represented the Christian Church under the idea of Christ's body, (verse 4,) he here speaks of it as in a state of childhood, whilst its members were few in number, and imperfect in knowledge ; and told the Ephesians that the supernaturally endowed teachers were to continue in the Church, till it was so enlarged, and so well instructed in the doctrine of the Gospel, as to be able to direct and defend itself without any supernatural aid. This advanced state of the Church, the Apostle termed "perfect manhood," "and the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ ;" at which when the Church arrived, the supernatural gifts of the spirit were to be removed as no longer necessary." This rational and scriptural exposition of the "spiritual gifts" shows satisfactorily, their design, accomplishment, and end of the infantile state of the Church. To this, perhaps some may object, by saying that this will destroy all succession and annihilate *all legal offices* in the Church.

As to annihilating all legal offices I reply, that although God did not intend to have supernaturally endowed teachers always in the Church, but caused them to cease, yet he did design to have legal, permanent officers in the Church throughout all time : these however are not classed with those officers who were supernaturally endowed. On this point hear our honest Orthodox Macknight again : "In the catalogue of spiritual men there is no mention made of Bishops, Elders, and Deacons, the standing ministers of the Church. The reason is, the Apostle mentions only those to whose offices the spiritual gifts were necessary, and who were to be laid aside when the spiritual gifts were withdrawn. Now Bishops, Elders and Deacons were not of that kind. It is true, many of the Bishops and Deacons, in the first age were endowed with spiritual gifts ; for the Apostle exhorted

the stated ministers of the Church at Rome. Rom. xii. 6-8. to exercise their spiritual gifts in the duties of their several functions. But as he had none of the stated ministers of the Church in his view here, I have translated the word *kubernesis*, by *directors*, rather than by *governors*, lest the reader might have thought the Apostle, by the name, meant the ordinary Bishops and Presidents." These latter officers as contrasted with the others we shall attend to in our next.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

From a Member of the G. S. Baptist Church in this town—now in England.

PLYMOUTH, Feb. 1st. 1837.

"The Providence Church is increasing rapidly, I believe I told you in my last, there are in it, persons of education, talent, rank and fortune, but their fortune is spent in the service of Christ; I do think they act more like the church in the Acts of the Apostles, than any church I ever met with; their love to every member evidences what they are, and it is said, by all, of every denomination, of them, 'if there are saints on earth, it is the Providence people.' They have three Pastors, Sir Alexander Campbell, Mr. Harris, brother of Col. Harris, and Mr. Newton—Captain Hall, Sir William Parker, and several others speak; they have four or five Clergymen of the Church of England, who have left it—they have the Lord's Supper every Sabbath morning, generally three chapters read and explained; two prayers and singing, the morning is for believers—in the afternoon there is a sermon—and always Sunday evening a sermon, to the unconverted. Prayer meeting every morning—Chapel open every evening for some religious services—besides private prayer meeting—they literally live to Christ. They have been established near ten years, and are increasing rapidly. I assure you to join them you must not in any way be of the world—they carry self-denial further than appears to me necessary."

From the Millennial Harbinger.

"BERLIN, Maury County, Tennessee.—The reformation is still moving onward in this section. I have *planted* another congregation this year. They number about fifty, mostly new converts. The Churches at Berea and Cedar Creek are doing well. They come together on the first day of *every week* to sing praises, offer up thanksgiving and prayers, to read the Living Oracles, break the loaf, and remember the poor."

JOSHUA K. SPEER.

G O D I S N E A R.

There is a time to pray.

'Tis when the heart is full, too full of grief
To breathe its bitterness to mortal ear,
'Tis then in prayer the soul may find relief,
'Tis then the mourner feels that God is near—
Then is the time for prayer.

There is a time for joy.

When the soul proves that earthly pleasure cloy,
That all is vain and unsubstantial here,
And turns to heaven for more enduring joys,
And finds, with transports finds, that God is near—
Then is the time for joy.

There is a time for sadness.

'Tis when we mark the young and gay glide fast
Upon the stream of life, without one fear
Of future ills, one thought upon the past,
One hope of heaven, forgetting God is near—
Then is the time for sadness.

There is a time for praise.

When each new day does some new joy afford,
And peace and loving kindness crown the year :
When death, dark angel, stays his fatal sword,
And spares us, then we feel that God is near—
Then is the time to praise.

There is a time to mourn.

We mourn, when those we loved, the blest, depart !
Why weep ye then ? They dwell in yon bright sphere ?
Nay, mourn, when, lost to heaven, some anguish'd heart
Lies down in death, without a Saviour near—
Then is the time to mourn.

There is a time to die.

Yes, all must taste the last, last bitter cup,
But soar my soul above this chilling fear ;
Oh ! may I yield my heaven-born spirit up.
And feel the blest assurance—God is near—
Then 'twere no pain to die.

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