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THE CREED OF THE CHURCH.

The word *faith*, like the word *religion*, is not unfrequently used in three different senses, or at least with three different shades of meaning, in the Bible.

I. *It is sometimes used by metonymy in an objective sense, to denote that system of doctrine which is revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures.* Such is evidently its meaning in the following passages:—

1.—Acts vi. 7: "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests became obedient to *the faith*."

2.—Acts xiii. 8: "But Elymas the sorcerer withstood them (Paul and Barnabus), seeking to turn away the Deputy from *the faith*."

3.—Gal. i. 23: "But they (the Churches in Judea) had only heard, that he (Paul) who persecuted us in times past, now preached *the faith* which he once destroyed."

4.—Gal. iii. 23: "But before *faith* came, we were kept under the law, shut up into *the faith* which should afterward be revealed."

5.—1 Tim. v. 8: "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied *the faith*, and is worse than an infidel."

6.—1 Tim. vi. 19: "For the love of money is a root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from *the faith*, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

7.—Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should contend earnestly for *the faith* which was once delivered to the saints."

II. *Most frequently it is used subjectively, in its literal and proper sense, for that state of the understanding and the heart which causes a man to trust in Christ, and to obey all his commandments.* The following examples will suffice for illustration:—

1.—Matt. viii. 10: "When Jesus heard it (the remark of the centurion,) he marvelled, and said to them that followed him, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great *faith*, no, not in Israel."

2.—Matt. ix. 22: "But Jesus turned about; and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy *faith* hath made thee whole."

3.—Matt. xv. 28. "Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy *faith*; be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

4.—Acts vi. 3: "And Stephen, full of *faith* and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."

5.—Rom. x. 17: "So then *faith*

cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

6.—Heb. xi. 1: "Now *faith* is the confidence of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," &c.

III. *It is also used sometimes by metonymy for the obedience of faith.* Take, for instance, the following passages:—

1.—Matt. xxiii. 23: "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and *faith* (fidelity)."

2.—Rom. i. 8: "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ, for you all, that your *faith* (fidelity) is spoken of throughout the whole world."

3.—Rom. iii. 3: "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the *faith* (fidelity) of God without effect?"

4.—Gal. v. 22: "But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, *faith* (fidelity)."

5.—Titus ii. 10: "Not purloining, (speaking of servants,) but showing all good *fidelity* that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

6.—Heb. xiii. 7: "Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose *faith* (fidelity) follow, considering the end of their conversation."

Here, then, we have a sort of trinity in the word *faith*; not properly three separate, independent, and distinct things; but rather three phases and manifestations of one and the same thing. The first of these may, for the sake of distinction, be called *objective* faith in the book; the second, *subjective* faith, or faith in the heart; and the third, *practical* faith, or faith in the

life. The last is but the immediate and necessary effect of the second; and the second is, in like manner, the legitimate effect of the first; so that if we would have true and genuine faith in our lives, we must first have it in our hearts; and if we would have it in our hearts, we must first have it in our Creed. And hence it is that we are brought back to the Bible itself as the ONLY PROPER CREED OF THE CHURCH; *the only infallible and reliable standard of our faith and practice.* Our faith, subjectively considered, is always liable to be erroneous in many respects; and our practice is likely to be even more so. But the Bible is perfect, as its Divine Author is perfect. And hence it should be our constant aim and effort day by day, to test our thoughts, our words, and our actions, by this divine standard; and to bring them up as near to its requirements as possible, but never go beyond it. All efforts to transcend this limit are attempts at reformation in the wrong direction; they are the bitter fruits of infidelity, come from what source they may.

Happy, then, thrice happy, would it be for the Church to-day if she had always contended earnestly for the creed delivered to the saints by the inspired Apostles. But the pride of the human heart is amazing. There is a constant inclination on the part of fallen man, weak, frail, and erring as he is, to make his own opinions the standard by which to judge of every thing else. And hence, at an early period, the subjective faith of the Church or rather of her aspiring bishops and presbyters, was reduced to writing, and in a great measure substituted for the inspired creed of the apostles and prophets. But the evil did not stop here. Very soon different opinions were entertained respecting the meaning of the newly-formed creed; and hence the necessity of again correcting the objective by the subjective. A third creed was formed, and a fourth,

and a fifth : but every attempt at creed-making has only served to destroy the unity of the faith, to multiply sects and parties, and to lead away the minds and hearts of the people from the earnest and prayerful study of the Holy Scriptures, which alone are able to make us wise even unto salvation.

And hence it is evident that every attempt to unite the people of God on any human basis must ever prove utterly vain and abortive. The only possible way to accomplish this end is to throw aside all human creeds, and take the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, as our rule of faith and practice.

But I am aware that just here, some will be ready to urge an objection against the view presented. A man, for instance, they say, applies for membership in a certain Church. He says that he believes the Bible to be the word of God, and the only proper rule of faith and practice. But the elders of the Church ascertain from him that he has totally misapprehended some of its teachings on certain very grave and important practical questions. He believes, for instance, that Jesus Christ is a mere man ; that there is no Holy Spirit ; that sprinkling is baptism ; that when a person becomes a member of a Church he may do just as he pleases, being no longer under law, but under grace, etc. The elders labour in vain in attempting to convince him that he is in error on all these matters ; and finally they reject him as one who is wholly unfit for a place in the Church of God. Now, says the objector, do not these elders reject this applicant simply on the ground that their subjective faith is different from his ? And does not this prove, beyond doubt, that in practice at least, every man's interpretation of the Bible is his creed ?

I answer, no. He is rejected not by the elders of the Church, but by the apostles of Christ, who still sit on

thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

But let me explain a little just here. It is a self-evident fact, that without assuming something we can really prove nothing. This is universally conceded ; and hence we have given in every department of literature and science certain axiomatic or self-evident truths, which are not to be proved themselves, but which are constantly used for the purpose of proving other more abstruse and complicated propositions with which they stand connected. Thus, for instance, we say in geometry, that "Things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other." "If to equals, equals be added, the sums will be equal" ; "The whole is equal to the sum of all its parts," etc. And, in like manner, we enter upon the study of psychology, by assuming our own personal existence, our own personal identity ; that every effect must have an adequate cause, etc. And just so it is in biblical science. It, too, has its self-evident truths and propositions : among which we may, I think, safely rank the following :—

I. *That when God spoke to man, he spoke for the purpose and with the design of being understood.* The contradictory of this proposition is an absurdity.

II. *That every honest man, whose mind has not been biased by the influence of a false education, may, therefore, understand what God has said in the Holy Scriptures, so far as a knowledge of the truth is essential to his own happiness and the happiness of others.* The contradictory of this proposition would imply that God has failed in His purpose.

III. *That the fundamental facts and principles of the Christian faith are not, therefore, proper and legitimate subjects of debate.* True, indeed, some persons may object to them just as they object to almost everything else. Even the evidence of sensation and consciousness are not sufficient to satisfy some minds. But the Bible was not made to suit such abnormal cases.

Whea., therefore, we say that the elders of a Church have a right to reject such persons as pervert, or deny the plainest proposition in the word of God, we claim no more for them than we commonly concede to other men in all the various ranks, pursuits, and relations of life. It is true that they may sometimes err in applying the plainest rules and principles of our creed. And so, also, may the mathematician err in applying the plainest and simplest axioms of geometry; the merchant may err in applying his yard stick; the surveyor may err in applying his chain and compass; and the farmer may err in the use of his half bushel. But who would thence infer that the farmer measures his grain by his own conceptions of the capacity of a half bushel? or that the surveyor measures his land by his conceptions of a chain and compass? or that the merchant measures his cloth by his conceptions of a yard stick? Why then, in reason's name, should any one charge the elders of a Church with ignoring the Bible, and making their own conceptions of its plain and simple truths their practical rule and standard in the government and discipline of a Church?

But if any one can not perceive the force of this reasoning let him try the two following syllogisms.

I. Whoever acts in harmony with the divinely authorized creed will be saved.

Every man's own interpretation of the Bible is his divinely authorized creed.

Therefore, every man who, like Saul of Tarsus before his conversion, acts in harmony with his own interpretation of the Bible, will be saved.

II. Every man who acts in harmony with the divinely authorized creed will be saved.

The Holy Bible is our only divinely authorized creed.

Therefore, every man who acts in harmony with its precepts will be saved.

Now, gentle reader, which of these two syllogisms do you prefer? The first

contains the logic of sectarianism, and the second contains the logic of Christianity.

R. MILLIGAN.

TELL YOUR MOTHER.

I wonder how many girls tell their mother everything. Not these "young ladies" who, going to and from from school smile, bow, and exchange notes and *carte de visite* with young men who make fun of them and their pictures, speaking in a way that would make their cheeks burn with shame if they knew it. All this, most credulous and romantic young ladies, they will do, although they gaze at your fresh young faces admiringly, and send or give you charming verses and boquets. No matter what "other girls" do, don't you do it.

School girl flirtation may end disastrously, as many a foolish, wretched young girl could tell you. Your yearning for some one to love is a great need of every woman's heart. But there is a time for everything. Don't let the bloom and freshness of your heart be brushed off in silly flirtations. Render yourself truly intelligent. And, above all, tell your mother everything. Never be ashamed to tell her, who should be your best friend and confidant, all you think and feel. It is so very strange that so many young girls will tell every person before mother that which is most important that she should know.

PUNCTUALITY.—A committee of eight gentlemen had been appointed to meet at twelve o'clock. Seven of them were punctual; but the eighth came bustling in with apologies for being a quarter of an hour behind the time. "The time," said he, passed away without my being aware of it. I had no idea of it being so late." A Quaker present said, "Friend, I am not sure that we should admit thy apology. It were a matter of regret that thou shouldst have wasted thine own quarter of an hour, but there are seven besides thyself whose time thou hast also consumed, amounting in the whole to two hours, and one-eighth of it only was thine own property."

GETHSEMANE.

The ambitious spirit delights to pause and linger around scenes and records of achievements which have added to the pyramid of fame. Many spots, o'er wave and hill, are only cherished in memory because of the deeds of wonder or of daring they have witnessed. It only needs the words, "For freedom," to be sounded in the ears of a soldier on the battlefield to inspire him with the spirit of heroism. Such scenes and words act like a charm in nerving the energy and stirring the heart. So, too, with the soldier of the Cross! The Christian warrior hath his scenes and places of glorious fame. Animated by a holier love, he beholds spots sacred and dear to him because of the feet that trod them and on account of the hearts that poured out their life's blood for what they held dearer than life itself.

There stands Jerusalem! Noble, grand Jerusalem—heaven-favoured city; where deeds of love and mercy have been so profusely given. There stands her Benefactor, with head bowed and face bathed in tears, as He speaks of the desolation to come. Yonder is Bethlehem; where the angel shouted for joy and sang of "peace toward men." And there stands Bethany—blessed betany! sacred for thy ministering love to the weary traveller from day to day and for the record of that divine sympathy with human sorrow—groaning in spirit "JESUS WEPT." But mourning souls, dry up your tears: for hark the solemn but joyful words, "Lazarus come forth!" The eye rests, too, upon the waters that were

calmed by the same voice and which nearly overwhelmed a wavering Peter.

But let us leave all these and retire to an, as yet, unmentioned spot.—Bordering on Mount Olivet, shrouded in vines and olives, stands the ever-memorial garden of Gethsemane; and as we gaze on that scene of sorrow and suffering, with heart hushed with wonder and eyes in tears, let us ask, why it was? Yea, "surely He hath carried our griefs and borne our sorrows?" Think you, gentle reader, of that night, when He, the Son of God, yet man—who was rich, yet poor—left the city for that sacred spot where He had so often communed with His Father. Where He kneels! Well might the moon cease to give her rays of peacefulness, and well might the heavenly host, if ever called to weep, shed tears over such sorrow as this! Behold the meek and lowly one, borne down by the torrent of guilt (not His own), prostrated on the ground, and hear the words—"Let this cup pass from me." O, will the Saviour falter at the last? No! The flesh is weak but the spirit is willing. Then hear His saving word, "Thy will be done." Blessed garden! Sad Gethsemane! Sacred ground! Scene of sorrow, of love, of infinite condescension! Let thy ground be ever sacred to my memory, ever joy for my sorrow, ever animation for my love; and as drops of blood fell from Thee, thou Lamb of God, may tears of love and gratitude flow from my eyes in proof of appreciation of that blood which flowed to set me free; then, if I have sorrows to meet, sufferings to endure, trials to

overcome, oh, blessed Jesus! may I imitate Thy example, and in the midst of all exclaim, "Not my will, O Father, but Thine be done."

T. H. F.

EXEGETICAL ITEMS.

The printers of our version have smothered an old Saxon word in 1 Tim. ii. 9. For "Shame-faccdness" read "Shame-fastness," a word purely Saxon, and formed like "steadfastness." The Saxon form is scam-fæst-nes, from sceamu—shame, and feast—firm or fast.

Another obsolete Saxon word in our Bible is "earring," which occurs three times in the Pentateuch with reference to agriculture; viz.: Gen. xv. 6; Exod. xxxiv. 21; Deut. xxi. 4. What is "earring-time?" Most readers think of the time when the grain begins to ripen in the ear, and in Saxon ear means the head of wheat, while an animal's ear is eare. But this is not the meaning of "earring-time." It comes from the Saxon word *erian*—to plow or *ered*—plowed. "Earring-time" is plowing-time, and "a valley neither eared nor sown" is one that has been neither plowed nor sown.

The Preacher says: "The words of the wise [are] as goads, and as nails fastened [by] the masters of assemblies, [which] are given from one shepherd." The second clause of the verse is often quoted, but what does it mean? Did the Moderator or Chairman of Hebrew assemblies keep order by "punching heads" in that style? Sharpe, in his Revision of the Authorized Version, translates it thus:—

"The words of the wise are as goads, and as stakes fastened by the owners of the flocks, when they are given up by a shepherd." This makes better sense, and does not bring in chairmen of meetings between the ox driver's goad and the shepherd.

SAVE A SOUL.

Who can behold the increasing flames that are consuming a stately mansion and make no effort to quench those flames? Who can see those devouring flames gathering around the inmates of that house without an impulse to save them from such a terrible death? To save a city, a world filled with such mansions—filled with inhabitants from temporal destruction, is of small importance compared to the saving of one soul from eternal death. Yet how many professed followers of Christ behold with unmoved calmness the sinking of souls "to endless ruin down." Alas, how few are otherwise! It is strange that our blood does not chill in our veins. The soul is sinking under the burden of its sins. Hour by hour and day by day, down, *down* it goes and in a few more hours or days it will be hopelessly and forever gone. Will *none* have pity on him, and turn him from the error of his way, before it is eternally and forever too late? Oh! thou whose all-seeing eye beholds the glories of heaven and penetrates the fearful depths of hell, awaken the sleeping hearts of thy disciples and give them power and a burning desire to save souls from that awful death.

W. F. P.

STOP, FRIEND, AND THINK.—Think about what? About the questions I am going to put to you in the name both of Christianity and humanity.

1. Is your family the better for you? It must be either the better or the worse for you; which is it?

2. Is your town the better or the worse for you? Are you part of the salt that is keeping it from corruption, or are you a part of the corruption?

3. Is your land the better for you, and would you be missed if you were taken away? Would it lose a loving, praying, believing man?

4. Is the world better for you? Are you, however feeble, one of its lights? Would the church miss your help were you away? Would the heathen miss your faith and prayers? Would the world be poorer at your death?

CHOCK FULL OF BIBLE.—A little boy was on a ship with a company of wicked men. He was a pious, praying boy. The sailors wanted to teach him to drink rum, and chew tobacco, and to swear, but he would not. They tried and tried, but in vain. At last one of the sailors said to the rest: "We might as well give up. We can not spoil that boy, for he is chock full of Bible."

Yes, the way to be safe is to be chock full of Bible.

PRAYING FOR HER ENEMIES.—A little girl in an Italian Sunday school complained that some of the children had hissed at her.

"Why did you not do your best to defend yourself, or complain to the master?" inquired her mother. The child hung down her head and was silent. "What did you do?" added the mother, "when they were seeking their pleasure in tormenting you?"

"I remembered what Jesus did for his enemies," replied the child: "I prayed for them."

BELIEVING IN VAIN.

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. (I. Cor., xv, 1-2.)

There are several ways in which a person might be said to have believed in vain, if much of the so-called orthodox teaching of the present day could be relied upon. For instance, we are told by a certain class of divines that no matter how sincerely we act up to our faith, or how earnestly we seek salvation, unless we are of the *elect* our faith will be in vain; that the devils believe and tremble, but being elected to condemnation, it is in vain. Another class tells us that if we are once in a saved state there is no fear of us afterwards, in other words. "Once in grace always so."

An opposite class affirm that a man may attain to the favor of God, and even to perfection, and fall from it twenty times in a day, and then be saved or lost according to the state of his soul in his last moments.

Some again are almost persuaded that a man may believe in the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Christ, and unless he has correct ideas with regard to the kingdom, or some other subject past, present or prospective, it is all in vain.

Now I do not wish to argue the point as to the amount of truth or error that may be found in the foregoing propositions, but will assert, without fear of successful contradiction, that the Apostle's meaning is not found in any one or more of them; but that he had reference to certain facts which he had declared to them, as well as to all others to whom he had preached the gospel; and that, not only their future salvation, but their present salvation as well, depended upon the certainty of these facts having actually

occurred. These facts were, as he tells us immediately afterwards, that Christ died, was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures. And one of these, namely,—The resurrection of the Messiah, was virtually, though perhaps not intentionally denied by a certain class of persons at that time, for we find that some affirmed there was no resurrection of the dead, while others believed it was past; and the Apostle first proves that Christ was raised from the dead and then argues very logically and forcibly that those who are Christ will be raised at his coming; and he even goes further and assures us that all will be raised (see verses 21 and 22). Now the apostle's argument amounts to this. "If the dead raise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised your faith is vain." More anon.

W. M. C.

CONFESSON OF WRONG.—A little girl once gave her mothe. the following note :

"Dear Mother—It was I who lost your thimble; I was afraid to own it. I have felt unhappy since I told you I didn't know.—Mother, will you forgive me? I told it all to God—I prayed to him. From your sorry daughter,

HANNAH."

This note, you see, made a confession of sin. For days and nights, perhaps, this child suffered under the sense of guilt—it took away her comfort—until at last, no longer able to bear the burden, she came and acknowledged it.

This teaches an important lesson, which you should early understand and act upon—that, when you have done wrong, you will never have real peace of mind till you have confessed it. And confession, to be worth anything, must spring from real sorrow of fault, and a desire to do better in time to come. "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy."

ORIENTAL PIETY.—Rabia, a devout Arabian woman, who being asked in her last illness how she endured the extremity of her sufferings, made answer: "Those who look upon God's face do not feel his hand."

"DISCIPLE" OR "CHRISTIAN" WHICH?

Bro. King of England advised the brotherhood of that nation to adopt the name *Christian* as preferable to "Disciple of Christ." Bro. K's remarks on this are not the result of close thinking. From his pen we generally find carefully written articles. The word *Christian* occurs three times in the living oracles. Once used by Agrippa, once by Luke in the Acts, and once by Peter in one of his letters. From no place in the Bible can it be proved that the Lord gave this name to his followers. It is adopted by Peter and that is all the Bible we have for it. But the name *Disciple* was given by the Master—used by the spirit before and after the term *christian* was employed. And it is the name we should always wear. It is not used by "professing christians" generally; but this is no argument. They are not our guide. The Bible is our guide. And if we could give no other reason for calling ourselves Disciples than the Master's authority, it is quite enough. But we can see reasons why we should always wear this name. It indicates the true relation existing between the Master and ourselves. A relation which does not cease in this age at least. A relation that is at once precious, dear and full of meaning. It is a title by which we can at once be put to the proof. It is simple—easily understood, and sets forth our true position before the world.

How immensely would our conversation be abridged if all mankind would only speak the truth. That virtue which parleys is near a surrender.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN CHURCHES.

On this, we in Canada are one. Of Great Britain the same may be said. In the United States they cultivate the spirit of discussion upon this, as upon many other topics. Men of great ability stand among those who advocate it and among those who oppose it. Among the former Bro. Pendleton is found. This we regret. He is calm, dignified, courteous and has the reputation of being quite a logician. Some excellent and useful articles have been written by him in the *Harbinger*. All this makes it the greater matter of surprise to find the following from his pen in the March No. "The propriety of using musical instruments in our church worship is a question of daily increasing practical importance. Many of our congregations already use instruments; and many more, which do not admit them into the worship of the church, encourage or allow them in Sunday Schools. Many families use the melodeon or piano in accompaniment to the voice in private worship, and thus there is a gradual familiarity with the employment of instruments in sacred music growing up among us that can scarcely fail to educate the disciples to the employment of them in the public worship of the congregation. I presume to say that there is equal piety and sincerity on both sides of this investigation, and hope that it will be well conducted with the only weapons that can permanently influence minds so trained to independent investigation as are our brethren. The *Investigation* ought not to become a *controversy*. Let us look calmly and courteously for the truth, for there are good men and argumentative minds on both sides. The question is not to be settled by dogmatism nor denunciation. Ridicule nor sarcasm can neither deter the advocates of the new system from introducing it nor silence its opponents in their sincere and deliberate sentiments of resistance. Let us sift it to the bottom, as we have

done many another knotty question, and then kindly and fraternally harmonize upon the verdict of the general judgment. We have been free and frank to express our own judgment on the subject, but desire to have all views fairly and fully represented. It would be well if those who write on the question would clearly define the ground on which they propose to rest the argument, and then adhere logically to the discussion of the definite issue. *Is there express and specific scripture teaching against instrumental music in church worship. Or must we rest opposition upon the ground of expediency?* Let the writers make their election, and then in the discussion adhere to the one or other issue, or to both, and we may hope to come to some conclusion that will be satisfactory." —W. K. P.

The questions I have italicised give rise to our wonder. Has it come to this, that Bro. P. will advocate the introduction of a matter in the worship of God on the plea that there is no "express specific scripture teaching against" it? Could we not advocate dancing on the same plea? Card playing and Hores racing "for church purposes" on the same plea? Is not the New Testament as silent upon instrumental music in church worship as it is upon infant baptism? Bro. P. is a scholar and a logician and we can now safely say there is no plea for it: but *taste* or expediency. It is easier to go with the stream than against it—easier to tear down than to build up; and as the wedge is in the consequences may be dreaded.

HE who loves God most will lay out the most for God. More than once in the Scriptures do we read of "the labour of love." Love resteth most when it laboureth most. Nothing labours more or thinks its labour less.

Money is but the representative of labour, and all labour demands time; therefore he who wastes time of others by his tardiness is guilty of positive dishonesty.

REMARKS ON "WHAT DOES IT MEAN?" IN FEB'Y. NO.

In the same mind sincerity and error may dwell, and if shrewdness put on the garb of simplicity it will not be so easily detected. In the above named article the author's opinion is pushed in gently before the public without claiming any higher authority than that the human mind cannot avoid thinkings so. The author refers strongly to his own feelings and judges others accordingly. Being so fortunate as to have in my possession a beautiful lamp and purest light by which I am told to try all things. By placing the article opposite that perfect light, it proves to be only a composition of conjectures, suppositions and human feelings; the product of an imaginary mind. The author did not claim or produce any scripture to support his notions, therefore it is not necessary to produce any to the opposite.

DETECTOR.

A QUERY ON THE SAME PIECE BY A. McM.

Why did the writer of the article headed, "What does it mean?" in Feb'y. No. quote the passage "God is a Spirit," leaving out the article? making it read God is spirit. He should at least have given his reason.

[The article in question was one of those put in without giving the author proper credit. This was partly unintentional. The author is really one of our best writers and one of our best speakers. Touching the query, let it suffice for me to say that to be true to the original the article must be omitted. With this omission it makes good sense.

The Bible does not convey the idea that God is one of the spirits: but that he *is* spirit. That is His *nature*. The *Word* from the beginning was spirit also. The Holy Spirit is of course spirit.

A Word to "Detector." He has apparently omitted one thought in the aforesaid article. "*The pure in heart shall see God.*" Is there any scripture which says the pure in heart shall *not* see God? If there be none then "Detector" will upon reflection see that the author of the article did not draw on imagination for the leading, the main, the pervading thought of the piece.—These "queries" and "remarks" are all intended for good and will do good. Let every piece and speech be sifted. With, however, a proper motive and in a proper manner.—En.]

Editor Bible Indicator :

Sir,—Having chanced to see a No. of your paper I observed that it contained the expression "*Father Black.*" Now is this *scripturally correct?* and as you criticised sectarianism pretty sharply on numerous points, pray let me ask is not this one step in the direction of Romanism?

I would also ask you, as a learner, to explain to me, if possible, the meaning of the words "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," as found in the 2nd verse of the First Epistle of Peter; and is the word baptize ever used in the same sense as "sprinkle," or has it only the one signification viz: to dip, plunge, or immerse? or is sprinkling in the Greek ever used synonymously with baptize?

Please answer through the INDICATOR,
and oblige yours in search of truth,

JOHN EVERGREEN.

Trafalgar, March 10th, 1870.

REMARKS.

If the writer has given the real name, it is that of an entire stranger. The Saviour says "call no man father on earth." But in what sense? Surely he did not inhibit the calling of our natural parent *father*. He did not disapprove of calling Abraham father: nor the patriarchs father. Paul to Timothy, I. 5, teaches that we should speak to the aged men as fathers and to the aged women as mothers. The term father is used in Isaiah XXII. 21, (and other places) in the sense of Universal Governor or Head. By creation and providence God is also called father.—Deut. XXXII. 6, and Mat. II. 10. In these senses we should call no man father upon earth. Paul called Timothy his son in the gospel, and in this sense he was father to the Corinthian brethren. The aged Brother Black is not the editor's father in this respect; but to him and Bro. Scott he is greatly indebted for lessons of light. Mr. Evergreen may rest assured that he did not call him *father* in the sense of "Reverend." This would be drifting towards Rome indeed. Bro. Black is an aged man—has brought a great number to the truth—has lived a blameless life and acts and speaks among us like a good old father.

"SPRINKLING OF THE BLOOD OF
JESUS CHRIST."

is a figure borrowed from the Jewish law. Upon things animate and inanimate blood

and the water of separation were sprinkled, with a view to their purification or to the removal of pollution or condemnation. Peter says elect or chosen according to the foreknowledge of God *through* sanctification of the spirit; or chosen by the setting apart by the teaching of the spirit, or, in order to *obedience* and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, or through faith and obedience coming in contact with the atonement of Jesus, through which condemnation is removed, the evil conscience put away.

THE WORD BAPTIZE

is never used in the sense of sprinkle in the Bible. Baptize and sprinkle are just as different as immerse and sprinkle. There is not an instance in the Bible in which the word sprinkle refers to christian baptism.

FAITH.—"Willie," said a little orphan boy to his brother, "now we are all alone in the world; father, mother, and auntie are gone, and there is nobody to take care of us; what shall we do?" "O, I'm not afraid," said Willie; "don't you remember the verse that dear mamma taught us? 'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.'"

A LITTLE girl five years of age on being asked what is faith, artlessly replied: "It is doing just what God wants us to do, and ask no questions about it."—This covers the whole field; perfect trust, combined with implicit obedience.

"You cannot expect too much from God or too little from men."

"MEN judge our hearts by our words and works. God judges our words and works by our hearts."

REFLECTIONS ON I. PETER, III.
20, 21. BY J. H. R.

I purpose to give only the points. I do not wish to say that there is any efficacy in the water alone, for that idea the Apostle expressly disclaims. He says it involves (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh; but the answer of a good conscience towards God). The sense is, that baptism, including all that is properly meant by baptism, as a religious rite, that is, when administered in connection with true repentance and true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then, and not until then, does it properly set forth our forsaking the condemned world and entering the church of Christ where there is safety—where there is no condemnation. It shows also that we have been quickened by the Spirit or renewed by the Spirit, and have been unreservedly consecrated to God and to Christ who is our sanctification and redemption. Baptism is said to save us, not as the meritorious cause: but as a condition of salvation.

Salvation is ascribed to the water which carried Noah from the condemned world to that which should no more be destroyed by water. It is also ascribed to baptism. The one saved Noah from death; the other saves us from hell. It is the transitional act, bringing the penitent believer from the world into the church. Baptism alone does not save us however solemnly done. No outward ablution or purifying of the flesh saves us; but that which pertains to a good conscience. This important thought is given by Peter to guard his statement from the abuse to which it

would otherwise be liable: viz: the supposition that baptism has of *itself* a purifying and saving power. The apostle declares that he means much more than the mere baptism; for he immediately adds the words: "but the answer of a good conscience towards God."

What think you reader, is not this a death blow to infant baptism? Tell me now the infant can have a conscience in the matter at all? Barnes, a Pedobaptist says of Anti-Christ, "His third work is, that he attributes the regeneration of the Holy Spirit to a dead outward faith; baptizing children in that faith and teaching them that by the mere outward consecration of baptism, regeneration may be procured." The word *answer* in Peter's epistle means properly a question, an inquiry. It implies "examination, profession," &c.—*Robinson's Lex.* This implies that questions were asked and answers given at baptisms. Which accords with the procedure of Philip in baptizing the Ethiopian officer.—Acts viii. The answer implies that the heart was sincere, that the conscience was enlightened, and that the real efficacy of baptism or its saving power was not in the mere physical act only; but in the state of mind indicated by the answer of the candidate. But after all we are saved by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The whole efficiency in the case is derived from that. If he had not been raised from the dead, baptism would have been vain, our faith also vain. How beautifully does baptism, properly administered, set forth a death, burial and resurrection.

Dear reader, does the passage not prove

that baptism is something more than an empty form, or putting away the filth of the flesh? There is a work to be done with respect to the conscience, that cannot be reached by water. It is the good conscience, the renovated heart, the purified soul. No external rite will be a substitute for the change of mind, of heart, of conscience. What is baptism to the infant but an external rite, an unmeaning ceremony, not commanded by God nor by Christ, nor taught by the Holy Spirit. But dear reader, while baptism *alone* is of no service, of no good, yet connected with the change of mind or of heart it occupies an important relation to salvation.

“And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying.” Precious words to the mourner. Hast thou ever stood beside the couch of one dearer to thee than life and watched, in tearless agony, the shadow of the approaching wing of the death-angel creeping slowly over the pale brow; and then even in the presence of the silent relentless conqueror has the burden of thy spirit-cry gone forth “*what have I to live for now?*” and then hast thou seen the pale hands folded on the still bosom and gazed on the sweet face that will smile on thee no more through all the future years, and realized that it was for *the* last time, and then hast thou heard the heavy clods fall, one by one, upon the coffin, and turned away to battle on again through a life from which the sunshine and flowers have all vanished. O, heart stricken one, turn in thy sorrow to Him who *alone* can comfort thee. Blessed be the

name of our God for his loving kindness and tender mercy to us during our past lives; and thrice blessed be His ever holy name for the bright and glorious promise which he has given us of future joy. May we realize more fully all His kindness, and feel more truly thankful for all His mercies; and strive more earnestly and faithfully to lay hold on the hopes that are set before us; to live to His honour and glory here, that we may have an abundant entrance into that everlasting kingdom where there “is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying;” but where we may meet the loved ones who have gone before, and mingle our voices with theirs in the song of praise that trembles on the jasper sea as it ascends from the hearts of ten thousand times ten thousand of earth’s redeemed.

JANNETTE.

ADVICES.

Since returning from Elin, meetings have been held at Cape Rich, Owen Sound, Stone School house, and one at Woodford. On account of the busy season many evenings have been missed. Two came forward at a meeting in Owen Sound. Our hearts were filled with joy. I attended a meeting at Meaford on the evening of the 24th Inst., in the Town Hall. My “Rev.” opponent, Mr. Will, opened his clerical battery and kept on firing for nearly two hours. The writer felt the benefit of the Christian armour. Several clergymen were on the platform. The proceedings were such that Bro. Anderson’s Highland heart was stirred within him. In framing other propositions for public debate the “Rev.” T. Watson (Church of England) acts for Mr. Will and Bro. Hiram Brown for me. Mr. Will obviously has his fears about meeting the Disciples fairly and honorably to debate the doctrinal differences.—He has shewn himself quite capable of dealing in personal invectives. We wish to be above such work.

BRO. LISTER,

Dear Sir,—The *Bible Indicator* for April has just come to hand. It was so long in making its appearance that we thought it had come to an untimely end. We looked for it with some degree of impatience, desiring to see your comments on the "Oshawa Circular." I perceive that you take great pains to handle that beautiful production very gently. Not a word of disapproval of the * * * * perpetrated by the propagators of that Circular, in assuming that it represents the congregation of Disciples in Oshawa. It exposes itself, however, by stating that about thirty of the members declined to endorse the action of the Overseers, and withdrew in a body,—*being very nearly one half of the congregation.* Were you as thoroughly acquainted with the whole affair, as I am, you would, I am sure, be convinced that the "Circular" is a foul fabrication. It is stated in letters, received from Bros. Errett and Franklin, that Bro. Patterson "bore an *unblemished character when he came here.*" Then the question arises, what has he done since coming here? A large number of us have asked this question, again and again. We did so from a desire to arrive at the truth, that we might be able to see justice done on both sides, especially as the *Overseers* made a *show* of wishing to consult us on the matter. The only answer given is, "that he is a bad man;" but where is the proof? Not one of us wished to retain the services of Bro. Patterson a day longer than it should be agreeable to a majority of the congregation. But we could not descend to become a party to what we considered, *collusion and in-*

justice. We could not allow him to be ruined in character and dismissed, simply because two or three said, "they didn't like the man," even if they were (as they called themselves) the *most respectable* members of the congregation. You say, "still Bro. Patterson is severely exposed." With all deference to your opinion, I must say, that being present at the investigation, and the trial of Bro. Patterson, I am convinced, he is severely *truduced* and *slandered* in that Circular. Bro. Patterson may be wrong, you may be wrong, and I may be wrong, in a great many points.—We do not, either of us, I trust, claim to be infallible. But Bro. Patterson was not convicted of criminal intention, in any of those charges preferred against him by Bro. A. Farewell at that trial. It is the honest conviction of twenty-two respectable witnesses who watched the proceedings through the whole trial, that Patterson came out clear on the first two charges; the third was sustained only so far as confidence can be placed in the *veracity of the prosecuting witnesses.* Dear Bro., we feel very much aggrieved by your insinuations on the last page of *INDICATOR.* You say "no stranger could divine the names were those of 14 women and girls," &c. This, you insinuate, was done for the purpose of deceiving. Why should we dissemble or desire to deceive? Of whom are we afraid, or ashamed? But, have you been told the ages of those girls? In fair play, the public should be informed on that point, and allowed to judge whether they are girls or women. This discovery on your part, shows how true the old proverb is, "set one rogue

to catch another." But you have left it in a mist, perhaps not intentionally, as to how many really are girls and how many women. There seems to be a *little* attempt at deception, or disguise, at least, in "14 women and girls!" It shows that some parties are conscious, how exceedingly shaky their foundation is, when they grasp at such *straws*, for support. Not one of us ever thought there was any necessity to make a distinction between men and women. We were so simple-minded as to believe what is said by Paul to the Galatians, "that, having put on Christ, there is neither male or female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." In conclusion, I wish to state, for myself, at least, that what I have done in the matter, was done with the best intention, and, I trust, with all due reference to my accountability for my conduct. As I did not take the step rashly, I must say I do not regret it. I deplore the circumstances which led to it, but, for them I am not in the slightest degree responsible, and consequently, could not help nor avoid the result. When we left the congregation, it was obvious that we could not agree with some parties, and simply withdrew from them. We have taken a position in which we think, more good can be done, than where we left. We do not wish to continue in strife; we would like to be at peace with all men. We are determined to do what we can for the good cause, and build up a large congregation in this place, if the Lord is willing. And we would exhort those, whom we have left, to wake up, and build up the old congregation, and show their zeal for the salvation of sinners, as the best way

to correct their former blunders, and glorify the Lord, and we shall pray the Lord to prosper them, because we wish them no harm. If this course is followed on both sides, I have no doubt, but great good may come out of this seeming evil. If you will give us space in the INDICATOR for this, we will consider it a favour, more especially, as we have failed to obtain a hearing on our side yet.

I remain yours in the good hope.

JAS. W. FINNEY.

Oshawa, May 17th, 1870.

REMARKS.

Your article has been inserted in full excepting two words. Others are exceptionable: but that you should not have the semblance of complaint, they are printed. I know not what Bros. Franklin and Errett have written: but Bro. Patterson *did not go to Oshawa* with "an unblemished character." His course in Bowmanville was enough to satisfy any person that he could do a great deal of mischief. He set brethren who are good and true, at variance in that church. He well nigh divided it. Brethren whom I had esteemed and loved for years were opposed to each other on account of Bro. Patterson. Had he remained there a division was *inevitable*. The brethren in Oshawa were not—could not have been ignorant of this. You say with reference to the names that I have left you "in the mist." You do not, you cannot deny that there were the names of 14 women and girls on the list. Look at it again and ask yourself if a stranger would come to such a conclusion. Why put "Mrs." in one or two

instances and nothing to distinguish the sexes in all the others? And from a statement in the "old congregation's circular" you know something was pending just there. If you acted upon the principle that there was "neither male nor female" why distinguish the sexes in an instance or two? I made no objection to the sisters, whether young or aged, voting or transacting business in church matters, not the slightest: but their names were *so written* for effect, and any body can see it. This however, is a small matter, I only regard it as a *straw*.

Bro. Finney and his sister have been known to me for years, and I have esteemed them much, and I am the more sorry that they have left the church and gone with a party—led away by a man whom they do not know. I do hope they and others may prayerfully consider the steps they have taken, see their error and return. We have all to appear at the judgment seat of Christ, and what reason can we give for taking part in dividing his flock. We should duly consider this; and what we are taught to bear for His name's sake.

BRO. FRANKLIN is expected to preach in Oshawa some two weeks, commencing on 20th June. If the brethren will give the precise date the next No. of *Indicator* will advertise it.

STUDY THIS FACT.—Nearly fifty children were received into Spurgeon's church last year, while that eminent minister says that he never yet has had occasion to excommunicate a single member of his church who united with it when a child. This is only a realization of the old assurance, "Train up a child." &c.

A MAN should not praise his works, but his works should praise him."

No evil action can be well done, but a good one may be ill done.

DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION.

[FOR THE BIBLE INDICATOR.]

Written after the Death of my Brother, who departed this life in January last.

What is fashion? what is pow'r?

What are riches, pomp or fame,
In the all compelling hour

When Death to man asserts his claim?

When the spirit looks behind,
O'er the way that it has pass'd.
While the vital cords that bind
To the earth, are breaking fast.

Then the body, now so frail,
Of the earth, returns to earth,
And the spirit trusts the veil
And goes to Him who gave him birth!

And the partnership so strong,
'Tween the body and the soul,
Shall remain dissolved so long,
As earth through time and years shall roll.

Till the elements shall melt,
All dissolved by burning heat;
And the saints call'd from the grave,
Shall rise their coming Lord to meet!

Bodies now, no longer vile,
Welcome back each native guest,
Parted once by mortal pain,
They meet to be forever blessed.

W. A. STEPHENS.

Owen Sound, April, 1870.

NOTES.—G. J. B.—I knew you would be displeased with it; but I have my own way of doing such things. I will do what is right, as I understand it, irrespective of consequences. Always treat a brother who is wrong, faultlessly fair. Give him the benefit of all doubts. Will write soon. . . . Thanks to brethren Spure, Laws, Robertson and Burr. Bro. Hughes has overpaid. Sorry you cannot continue. . . . Sister H.—The paper you so kindly ordered was duly sent. . . . Sister Thompson,—You have again overpaid. Thank you kindly.

Just come to hand, "Another notice to the Brotherhood." I pronounce it "perfectly *unanswerable*." No Christian will attempt it. The "Pastor" has written himself into notoriety: but he will soon work his own ruin. He will soon write himself out of favor with every well regulated mind.