

of the Gospel" on the part of many gatherings, to which, through grace, there are happy and honored exceptions. Many little companies, especially in back parts, are apparently uncared for, and many, alas! in turn little caring for others or the Lord's interests there or elsewhere, doing nothing either *for* or *in* the Gospel. Some are not visited, they say, for a year or two together, although near to others that are often so, and where also there are those who more or less minister the Word. Some thus left to themselves at last counted themselves not of "our company," the enemy suggesting that if they were with others they would be better cared for. The blame herein may be largely their own, through having little interest and fellowship in the Lord's work elsewhere, which thus brings its retribution from His hand. One would not forget either that "the harvest is great and the laborers few"—need everywhere and new fields opening, and the number free to respond so limited, yet I am assured that in God and His Word is sure help in our lot, though it be "fallen on evil days."

As to the spread of the truth in Acts viii. 4 (although then brought about by persecution and now often through employments or otherwise), they "*went everywhere preaching the Word*"—each in their measure and in their respective spheres of life *did what they could* to spread the good news which had proved the "Gospel of our salvation" to themselves. This I deem all-important as a start, and can thank God that in several (would that it were many) places hearts are being stirred as to these responsibilities. One lately thus expressed it: "I find it a blessed thing, *this doing what you can*," trusting in the Lord for both grace to do it and with all results. This is *right*, beloved brethren (and therefore as surely *blessed*), for each and all to exercise the gift entrusted to us (of which none are devoid) rather than listlessly wait for "some gift to come along" to do what God has perhaps committed to ourselves. This we need more of, and where existing to "encourage home productions," as we say, expecting God to make us in a right and true sense not only "self-sustaining," but with hearts enlarged to others, as in Rom. xv. 14-33. How often, alas! through selfishness, the very blessing sought is missed, when God is pleased to send any to minister among us, by monopolizing their service instead of, as here, bringing them "on their way to the regions beyond," when

mutually "refreshed" and "filled with each other's company." This was the apostle's *rule*, as he terms it (II Cor. x. 15, 16), and is doubtless still the scriptural one for us, of course subject to the guidance of God's Spirit in carrying it out.

In this line we have further, Philip evangelizing Samaria, sent to meet the eunuch, then "found at Azotus," and "passing through, preaching in all the cities till he came to Casarea," others following in turn as pastors and teachers (Comp. Acts viii. 14; ix. 32, 43; x. 19-27, etc.). This distinguishes between the "work of the Gospel" and the "care of the saints," though doubtless they may often be happily blended. Here Peter and John confirm the converts in Samaria, and Peter "passes throughout all quarters," as the Lord had charged him, feeding and shepherding His sheep. Blessing resulting from the scattering of Acts viii. 4, we see the care of the brethren elsewhere, and Barnabas's *exhortation*, he and Saul *teaching*, prophets *forewarning* of coming trials, and in happy response the *disciples*, "every man according to his ability," sending relief to the brethren whose spiritual good they had received.

Beautiful simplicity, full vigor of youth, this record of mutual "caring one for another" which Scripture yet enjoins upon us! Nor is this all; for when, as with ourselves, difficulties arose (*without*, chaps. iv., xii.; and *within*, chap. v.), they "went to their own company," "lifted up their voices to God with one accord," "gave themselves to *prayer* and the ministry of the Word," "prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God." Depending on God, and meeting all that arose in grace, the evil day past still they *stand*; for they "*ministered*" unto the Lord and *fasted*, and God expresses His mind as to a new sphere of service entered upon as "sent forth by the Holy Ghost" and with the fellowship and prayers of their brethren (xiii. 2 4, xiv. 26). All this, grand in its very absence of assumption, charms the heart to consider, and yet with it comes the reminder, "If ye *know* these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them."

Later, when this mission was carried out, difficulties arising overcome, they return whence they had gone forth, and "some days after"—a breathing spell, as it were, in their prolonged service—they, apart from any miraculous guidance that we read of, say, "Let us go again and *visit our brethren* in every city, and *see how they*

do." And though reminded in the contention of Paul and Barnabas that then, as now, there was need to be "sober and vigilant" because of the adversary, yet was the service proposed carried out in the face of all intervening obstacles.

For ourselves, then, let it weigh that we too have the Lord's interests at heart, and "as much as in us lies" going out with the Gospel, and exercising godly care and oversight over others adjacent to us. And as to those more free to minister the Word coming to us, let us also get others before them, bringing them on their journey, and as far as able extending the work of the Lord. Thus would God, who will be no man's debtor, make our own supply increased, blessing others with us and glorifying Himself.

In this connection the scriptural order of maintenance of the Gospel may be noted—those who "live of the Gospel" being compared (I. Cor. ix. 13, 14) to those who "live of the temple" and "wait at the altar," where all received was first offered (rather than given) unto the Lord. Again, "that there may be equality" is the principle urged (II. Cor. viii. 14, 15), which carried out in a godly way involves their honest maintenance as a sacred responsibility, and also that the work be supported when toward others equally as when to ourselves (Phil. iv. 15, 16; III. John 6-8; Titus iii. 13, 14). Otherwise, the Lord's servant may be doubly harmed—turned from fields to which He would lead to those where He may not, because in the latter ministered to more freely, and also through this unscriptural way of "supporting the work" perhaps unwittingly become the "servant of men" rather than of the Lord, Christ; from which may His mercy preserve us!

Then to those more specially in the work is there not in these things a voice from God as to faithfully looking up all within reach in parts the Lord may direct to, making enquiry and godly effort (as Nch. i. 2-11, ii. 12-18) to help them on? Thus alone can we fulfill His will who has "counted us faithful, putting us into the ministry," and be exempt from the solemn charges against the shepherds of Israel: "Ye feed not the flock; the diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost" (Ezek. xxxiv. 3, 4). And while some places may rightly more fully than others claim our attention, let us not forget

other more neglected ones, following His example who "seeks out His sheep and delivers them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." The Lord enable us each in our respective spheres thus to know and do His holy will! *Benj. C. Greenman.*

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

A paper entitled "Christian Progress" states: "There is progress in the right direction [noting it numerically in the leading denominations of evangelical faith]; weak points are guarded, strong ones emphasized, and the Church universal is on her knees asking God to show the right way to all. The Catholic clergy are among the foremost and best of the workers in the temperance reform, and the spirit of inquiry and progress is among their churches. The Jews are many of them accepting Christ as their Messiah, and others are carefully examining His claims. Ingersollism has practically died out of this country [United States]. Ten years ago a man could hardly ride in a car without being asked to buy his books. The writer has travelled considerably here and in Europe without seeing a single copy of his writings for sale. Why? Because of the growing intelligence of an aggressive and investigating people, who are willing to let the prodigal of 1800 years ago have husks if he wanted them, but they demand food for the soul. A mighty tide of brotherly love and union has set in, cementing the churches in a spirit of concord, if not of organization, awakening hope and expectation throughout the world that wrong and oppression will soon cease, and the world smile with a new happiness under the life-giving reign of the Gospel." (G. P. Lindeman.)

On the other hand, we read of "down grade" in many quarters of which this boast is made, and must enquire, *Which* is true? Dr. McCosh (Princeton, N. J.) writes concerning the revision of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, "At no distant date I may find myself joining my neighbors in the theological seminary here in opposing those who would undermine the faith. This overture is made to them, and the responsibility will be upon them if they reject it." Dr. Brookes (St. Louis, Mo.) states that "Dr. Marcus Dods and Prof. Drummond deny salvation through the atoning sacrifice of Christ, have no fixed faith in the inspiration of Scripture, and yet are set in high places." Dr. Dods, chosen by the Free Church General Assembly

to teach young men to preach the Bible, does not believe the Bible. He has lately preached that it is not necessary to believe in the divinity, atonement or resurrection of Christ to be a Christian; that the Bible contains contradictions, commends immoralities, sets forth "unpreachable" doctrines, and asks us to accept "unbelievable" narratives. "He hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (I. Tim. v. 8). His father, who wrote "Remarks on the Bible" (recently republished), believed in the Scriptures as divinely inspired from beginning to end; that our Lord and His apostles put the seal of their sanction upon all; that the oracles of God were carefully preserved by the Jews; that the denial of verbal inspiration brings them down to the lowest level, and yet no one has been brazen enough to propose a continuation of Biblical books; that the words of the Bible are necessarily inspired, as declared throughout itself and shown by the diligent study the prophets gave their own writings, to discover, if possible, their meaning. Here also would we repeat the enquiry, *Which is true?*

The English Presbyterians have chosen a higher critic to teach young men Hebrew who is substantially at one with another who teaches that "the prophets depended upon their own knowledge of the world," not inspiration of God; that "Isaiah was no more inspired than any pious and thoughtful student of human history." Alas! for the taught if such be the teachers!

These higher critics assure us there were two Isaiahs, one writing chapters i.-xxxix.; the other, living much later, writing the rest. The Holy Ghost in the New Testament assures us that the latter part, ascribed to some other person, was written by *Isaiah*. (Comp. Matt. lii. 3, Isa. xl. 3; Matt. viii. 17, Isa. liii. 4; Matt. xii. 17, Isa. xliii. 1; Luke iv. 17, Isa. lxi. 1; John xli. 38, Isa. liii. 1; Acts viii. 32, Isa. liii. 7, 8; Rom. x. 20, Isa. lxxv. 1, 2; Acts xxviii. 25.) The decree of Cyrus is found there also (Ezra i. 1, 2; Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. 1-3); written, these critics suppose, after the days of Cyrus. His very name is given (Isa. xlv. 1-4), either by the true Isaiah or an impostor pretending to a prophecy. The first part was written in the days of Hezekiah, the latter speaks of his wife as a type of restored Israel (Isa. lxii. 4, II. Kings xxi. 1).

Canon Isaac Taylor exalts Mohammedanism as to be encouraged as a preparation for Christianity; the apostle marks it among the "many

antichrists," and assures us that "no lie is of the truth."

Canon Wilberforce now supports the doctrine of universal restoration, quotes S. Ambrose as to the rich man (Luke xvi.): "He is pressed with penal agonies that he may escape the sooner;" and *infers* from his concern for his five brethren that "selfishness was giving place to solicitude for them." How different the thoughts of the Holy and the True as to "the great gulf fixed," and "Moses and the prophets" not only sufficient but *fatal*.

Prof. Harnack, one of the most eminent of Germany, says the Protestantism of the next century will be more spiritual than now, or it will die and Roman Catholicism will take possession of the world as a new form of Paganism.

BAHAMAS.

NASSAU, Aug. 4.—I have just returned from a month's sojourn in Abaco, visiting the saints and preaching as the Lord gave open doors. There is much need of ministry amongst them, but on the whole they seem to be going on with the Lord. Amid much to discourage, yet we met with much to cheer also in seeing souls brought to the knowledge of the truth. At Great Harbour we met with very great opposition, chiefly from the Methodists and "lewd fellows of the baser sort," whom Satan used to prevent the truth from going out, even going so far as to beat two brethren, breaking the cheek bone of one and beating the other while on his knees, praying, like Stephen, "Lord, lay it not to their charge." The Lord preserved me and mine from any violence, though many threats were made against us. But I thank God for the persecution, as I believe it will all redound to His glory; even now honest souls are beginning to see that the opposition is not against us merely, but the truth of God, as we were only giving the simple Gospel in obedience to our Master's command, "Go ye out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in."

I purpose (D. V.) remaining here for a few months doing the Lord's work as He may lead, though I am feeling quite wearied, almost used up, owing to the extreme heat and many meetings, and my dear wife is not well, yet we count on Him only for sustaining grace in all our varied circumstances. The saints here are very kind to us, for which we thank God. They have rented for us a comfortable house, and furnished it as we needed. May the Lord reward them, as He surely can and will. I was glad to hear of the welfare of saints in the Ottawa Valley, and heard through Bro. Paul of the happy fellowship at Napanee meeting, and of the departure to the Lord of our sister Smith of Douglas (Ont.) after twenty minutes' illness.

The Tract Depot here, I fear, will be still a thing of the future, though I long to see one here; but it is in the Lord's hands. Bro. Byndloss is still here, and suffering.

George Pearson.

[The Lord strengthen and encourage our brethren in their labor of love, and give them to realize Deut. xxxiii. 25-29, and that He is faithful that promised. May recompense be given to those also who are so happily fulfilling the part of Gaius, and assurance of heart that in it they "do well."

ED.]

CANADA.

HALIFAX, N. S.—In the face of many hindrances the Lord gave us a good start in the tent at last, which was fairly filled inside and many more outside. The irreverence and inattention of the younger portion at first sorrowfully witnessed that there was need of some work in that direction, and a mission among them would plainly be "a good work." May it, as well as a work of God all around, grow out of our small endeavor, as one who came in last night prayed. In view of the children's need, a meeting was ar-

ranged specially for them Saturday afternoon, and for others nightly and Lord's Day afternoon and evening. Several Christians around express favor, and one trusts to have their interest in the work. The Lord fulfill, as in His grace He has already, "The Lord stood by us and strengthened us."

B. C. G.

FAIRFIELD, N. B.—Watching those who go on a journey, we see the saddest are left behind. My dear wife went home leaning on the arm of the Lord. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." It is said a Christian ought not to grieve, it is selfish; but we all have philosophy enough to bear our neighbor's trials, but when such come to us we know their depths. By His grace I will continue to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

"I look for Thee, my lovely Lord;
For Thee I sigh, for Thee I tarry still;
Mine eyes do long to gaze on Thee my fill;
For Thee I watch, for Thee I pray and pore,
My soul for Thee attendeth evermore;
My soul doth thirst to take Thee at a taste;
My soul desires with Thee e'er to be blest."

J. F. Withers.

THESSALON, ONT.—I have left Cook's Mills, and am back here; the boss got very overbearing and made me miserable. I cannot tell the reason he turned on me unless it was my giving tracts and testifying for the Lord. Truly there seemed an opening for the Word, and many were sorry to have me leave. I only preached once, but gave away a lot of tracts and got acquainted with most of the people, and did not meet with any prejudiced against us. One man I was sorry to leave, he loved the Lord in such a simple way. There were six or seven colored men there, and they seemed so glad that I took an interest in them. There were quite a few that loved the Lord, although tangled

up in that which is useless and wrong. I must now try and do a little for my Master here. The saints are all as usual. Mrs. Dawson has gone to the Lord, quite happy in Him. We would like to see you, but must wait our Father's time.

J. Lamont.

UNITED STATES.

202 LOCKIE ST., ATLANTA, GA.—I was very glad to receive your letter and the enclosed pamphlet, the lesson from David is one I so much need; and I pray that as He leads me on I may be girded with strength—His strength.

We have been passing through a little sickness. Our little girl was quite sick for some days, but is much better now. After preaching on the street a week ago I came home sick, and though better and able to try it again yesterday, was very weary after, and am not well today. I have been working hard of late, but look for a deliverance ere long. I shall be (D. V.) more at liberty this coming winter; meanwhile as I find time and opportunity I preach the Word. There are but two brothers who break bread with us, one a dear, godly soul, lately from the Baptists. There are a number of others clear about salvation, but something hinders them. I am slow to urge, yea, never ask any to come to the table, yet point out the way. When preaching on Lord's Days I often have a hundred or more to give good heed to the Word, after which I give out tracts. Bro. Lyle lately sent me a good supply. On Thursdays I have some Gospel meetings at railroad shops, where they show an interest. I am invited to more places than I can go to away from the city. From Jug Tavern (now Brandon) word has just come that five have gathered to the Lord, and show forth His death. This was a joy to me, as

there was none to lean on or guide them save the Spirit. So often souls wait for some servant to come and "start them." How much better to cast themselves entirely on the Lord. There seems to be an open door in those parts for the Gospel. I would gladly visit our Bro. Booth in North Carolina, but the trip there would cost as much as to New York. At some future time I hope to see and labor with him. It was my desire to have seen him ere this. I have no recent news from the Bahamas. I would love much, if the Lord tarry, to visit them this coming winter. The Lord may lead you also. It would be the more pleasant for me.

C. Holder.

CATAWBA, N. C.—The Lord has preserved us in fair health, although considerable sickness around. The weather has been quite warm and dry, though the crops look promising; wheat, though, is quite a failure. I don't think I will more than get my seed back. Fruit crop short too. I have my crop laid by and am now ready, so far as time is concerned, to go out fully into the work. There are still many open doors within reach of here. I expect (D. V.) to go tomorrow to Denver, N. C., and may remain a week or more. Two there have seen their way out of man's system—one a person of marked character and piety, the other has been in the Legislature. A number of other Christians seem much interested; the preaching there has also been blessed to the unconverted. Some other points where I once preached as a Baptist I have received invitations to go to. Indeed there are many open doors where I trust to be able to go this year. Last week I drove 30 miles north, where one gave me a hearty welcome, saying he got much help while I was at his house last March. Next morning at the church we first had a reading on Matt. xii., then at the request

of the pastor I preached; the large church was packed. I then spent an hour talking with the people outdoors and giving out tracts. Drove three miles to Harmony, where the brother had an appointment in the academy. He talked about 20 minutes and then gave way for me, when I preached to another full house. We then spent the night together and went over much truth. Monday I went to Houstonville; all appeared happy to see me, and some have evidently been making progress in divine things. One old sister said she was happy, waiting for the Lord. If He tarried much longer she would have to depart, but if He came before it would be still more blessed; at any event it would be well. In the evening I preached in their grove and next night at Harmony; house crowded again. Have had it on my heart about visiting Dr. Peddicord at Roanoke, Va. Have not been back to Wake County yet, home, business, etc., keeping me away. I am very anxious to visit them again during this year. The Lord is graciously good to us in many ways; we have all the milk and butter we need, and our garden is fine. Letters from any of the brethren are rare. I get many tracts, and the demand for them is increasing. Tell the brethren not to forget to pray for us, and that there are still many open doors for laborers.

J. H. Booth.

TOWANDA, PA.—I spent a few days in that great Moravian centre, Bethlehem, Pa., though but a small place. One has much to learn and to unlearn, as you say. It would have been well for me to have felt that more than I have. How different the school of God from man's thoughts. A little superficial knowledge and zeal satisfies our vanity, but the meek will He guide in judgment and teach His way. The perfect Servant said, "I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught

me I speak these things." So we "without Him can do nothing." "The Lord hath given me the tongue of them that are taught. . . . He wakeneth mine ear to hear" (Isa. l. 4). He alone can put the word into the mouth. When the Lord took the place of perfect and constant dependence, well may we. But to bring us there in any measure we have chastening and so to be kept there. The Lord make us ready to be used of Him—the Master.

There is a meeting here and one three miles from here, Macedonia. A Mrs. A. was baptized there yesterday by Bro. Haskell, her husband bitterly opposed. The Lord is blessing her and others for her faithfulness. There is a fair attendance here Sunday evenings, but no special interest. We need to be aroused to consecration and sanctification, that sinners may be converted to God, and to love one another.

E. S. Lyman.

HARRISBURG, PA.—Had a good time in giving out tracts in Milton; could have used many more. My sister was astonished that I should do that kind of work there; she said she never heard of such a thing as giving out tracts there. It has been done, and the *Lord* had it done, and surely some one has gotten blessing from it. Yes, yes—"He that goeth forth and *weepeth*, bearing precious seed." *Weepeth!* Oh, for our God's thought about this precious seed! How cold my heart is *always*, sometimes so happy in Him, always realizing in a measure the value of His Word and the condition of the lost, but never, never, as I ought. But I must not wait for realization; I must walk by faith, and go forth because His Word is true and He gives me the opportunity and disposition to give it out.

I found my family well, thanks to our Father. Things have been discouraging to anything but *faith*, but His love can-

not fail us. He will respond to the faith He inspires.

A brother from up the Cumberland Valley was in this morning, and has cheered us by what he tells us of his own defence of the truth and the desire to have me come and preach in his house if no other place is opened. Had a sweet letter, too, from Bro. Deibler at Lewisburg College. Against all the solicitations, he stands out against the organizations of the college, and is going on only desiring to follow Jesus. The Lord make him a "polished shaft in His quiver."

(To A. F. O.)

We have nothing to encourage us here but the Word of the Lord, which is indeed a great thing, and so we go on feeding, trying to feed upon His Word and staying our souls upon it, and giving it out in distributing tracts and preaching it whenever and wherever we can, greatly comforted in His own declaration, "My word shall not return to me void," and "Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is *not in vain* in the Lord." Spoke at the Capitol last night, for the first time this season, to a large and appreciative audience. If the Lord will, we shall go there as long as we can. Was at Shamokin and the neighborhood. Good meetings at Shamokin. At Deibler Station, where I preached for the first time last January, those who got much blessing then and were delivered entirely from system were much encouraged and established this time. I went six miles below Deibler, to Arter's, a new place, and preached the Gospel for three nights to good audiences. The Lord opened the hearts of one family to receive the Word, and gave me a stopping place for the future. We trust it is the Lord's mind to have His Word preached in all that region, notwithstanding the opposition, which at Deibler is intense, where the religious people would

stone me if the Lord did not prevent. But still the truth goes forward to *victory*.

Bro. Howard Rupp, whose family you baptized at Columbia, Pa., has removed to Reading, to the great help of the meeting there. He and another brother are going out to a neighboring village and giving out the Gospel with encouragement.

I ran up to Williamsport on my return home to see Bro. A. Cowles. Had only two meetings. Things are tightly shut up there, but Bro. Cowles is hopeful.

Our new location here has made our little Tract Depot more conspicuous and has brought in some new faces, and a few more tracts have gone out. A few strangers, too, have been coming in to our meetings. Bro. — of the "open brethren" (whom you met) and seven others have gone out from them; what they will do has not yet been seen. They have gotten away from the Word as to separation *unto Him*, we believe, because of what they say and do. We can only pray for their entire deliverance.

Martin Stutzman.

(To E. B. L.)

Haverstraw, N. Y.—The Lord has given me plenty of time for His work, and I want you to pray earnestly for me that I may not be slothful in business, but *fervent* in spirit, serving the Lord. Oh, to be like Him who fulfilled the prophecy, "The zeal of Thine house hath *eaten me up*." What a wonderful word that is in Timothy, "Instant in season and out of season;" and how *literally* He fulfilled it, saying, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."

The Lord knows just what we need in order that we may be "vessels unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use." May we not murmur if the discipline seem severe. I. Peter v. 10 is the inexorable condition. May the Lord guide our hearts and hands into patient continuance in well-doing.

Alex. Lyle.