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BE YE TRANSFORMED.

“Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”—Rom. 12:2.

(Continued from August issue.)

IN presenting the matter of holiness, perfection of character, Christlikeness, it is necessary to point out a, that this does not mean a perfection in the flesh, which we understand is impossible; but it does mean a perfection of heart, of intention, of will, and of endeavour, for, “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God” and “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.” There is, perhaps, a danger that some might misapprehend the right meaning and think it is perfection in the flesh, and might go to the extreme, as some people have in the past, of claiming that in act, word and thought they were as perfect as the Lord, and would no longer need the robe of His righteousness. This would be a serious mistake, as the parable of The Wedding Garment shows that the taking off or rejection of the robe would work the rejection of the individual from participating in the marriage. Such would ‘be cast into outer darkness of the world, be cut off from the knowledge and illumination .of the present truth.

On the other hand, some of the more conscientious of the Lord’s people, realising the imperfection of their flesh, their conduct, words and thoughts, might become wholly discouraged and give up the race entirely. Let such always remember the force of the Apostle’s statement, “Ye are complete in Him,” (Col. 2:10) and the Master’s words, “Abide in Me, and I in you” (John 15:4, 7)..

It is the Father’s will that while we as new creatures thus tabernacle in the flesh, we should grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in love, grow in all the fruits of the spirit. It is not the flesh that is to grow up in the Anointed in all things, but the new creature. And the new creature never was a sinner. From its very start or begetting it was holy. It does not, therefore, pass from sin to righteousness, but from one degree to another degree of knowledge and appreciation of righteousness. Every step of the new creature is progress in Christ, progress along spiritual lines. The Lord has provided spiritual bread and spiritual water, and progress will be made in proportion as these are recognised and assimilated. Character development is thus a daily experience to these new creatures.

The character of Jesus becomes more and more their spirit, their disposition. If they maintain their original consecration, if they practise the lessons of the Lord’s Word, and if they grow strong in the Lord through partaking of His spirit, they are thus becoming more and more copies of God’s Son. Their testing is along the lines of continued obedience, continued devotion, as they reach larger degrees of knowledge of the Lord and Plan of God. Like their Redeemer, they must demonstrate that they are faithfully, fully submitted to the Heavenly Father’s will, fully loyal thereto. But we should all know that we must not mistake these new creatures and too closely identify them with the flesh. “Ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if so ‘be that the spirit of God dwell in you.” The flesh has its natural tastes, appetites and dispositions, through heredity. These will never be overcome entirely. Hence, as the Apostle says, there is continually a warfare between the flesh and the spirit. The flesh warreth against the spirit and the spirit warreth against the flesh; for the two are contrary.

The new creature fights his good fight of faith in that he stands loyal to the Lord and continues to seek in every way the will of God as did the Saviour. This will mean various encounters with the flesh. As St. Paul says, it signifies brow-beating himself, keeping his body under, and according to Scripture it will be a ‘fight to a finish. It is impossible to fully judge one another in this matter. Some of the Lord’s most loyal people may have a great fight with their flesh. Onlookers- might ‘be inclined to judge them severely and to think that they were not sufficiently loyal. But God alone

knoweth the heart. In some instances, as St. Paul intimates, it is difficult even for one to judge himself aright, difficult to know to what extent the new creature 'has done all in its power to war a good warfare against the flesh, and to what extent the new creature may have been partly excusable for some failure to come up to the highest ideals. St. Paul says, "It is a light thing that I should be judged of you, or any man: yea, I judge not mine ownself. There is One that judgeth me."-1 Cor. 4:3, 4.

Sometimes the battle is so closely drawn, sometimes the new creature is so beset by the world, the flesh, and the Adversary, that his victory may seem to outsiders to be rather ignoble. God alone knows to what extent better results were possible. Every Christian, however, has recognised that if his heart has been faithful to the Lord, and the victory has even been only a partial one, nevertheless valuable lessons have been learned by the new creature, and its faithfulness and endurance have demonstrated its loyalty to the Lord, and the principles of His righteousness. The test of Jesus' character was humiliating resignation to the Father's will in everything, even unto death. This demonstrated His love to the Father, His loyalty to the principles represented in the Father's character and government. These are the tests upon all the followers of Jesus. Whoever has this love and this loyalty is to that extent a copy of our Lord.

Let us all be fully agreed as to the grand perfection of character of our Lord, and as to the fact that this heart desire must be in us if we would have the mind of Christ. It is for the Lord to let increasing trials and tests come upon us as we grow older and stronger. Sometimes He permits a great fight from within or without, or both, and we are put to the test of endurance. It is not the Lord's intention that trying experiences shall crush any; but, on the contrary, that the putting forth of endeavour to resist the Adversary and every evil shall make us the stronger. We have the promise, "He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with every temptation provide a way of escape."-1 Cor. 10:13.

Thus it was with our Redeemer. At the very close of His ministry came His most severe tests, and He cried in an agony of spirit, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." The triumph of the new creature is shown in the succeeding sentence, "Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done." As with the Saviour, so with His disciples there is a struggle, a fight, to the end of the journey. With the Master every trial brought a victory. With His followers, because of their inherent weakness of the flesh, this is not so, except as the Lord by His grace turns a partial defeat into victory. The new creature, even partly defeated, is exhorted by the Apostle to come with courage to the throne of heavenly grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help for future needs. In doing this he is doing what God intended and foreordained for him. But if we say we have no sin (and as respects our flesh, no imperfection of act, word or thought), we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins (our shortcomings), He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all iniquity."-1 John 1:8, 9. He is just, for this is His plan.

In making this provision for the weakness of our flesh, God is not compromising with sin. _And in accepting this provision we are not compromising with sin either. Now the Apostle Peter gives us some sound advice in character 'building. He says, 1 Peter 1:14, 15: "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." This fashioning is a gradual process. Although we discover some things quickly, we do not learn all things at once. Some things are less conspicuous before our minds than are others, and represent the finer shadings of what would be proper for a new creature. We gradually come to note these things, and gradually come to know which things we shall choose, for the knowledge of God's will is a matter of education; and it takes some time to get everything harmoniously adjusted therewith. It is in line with this thought of our text, that the Apostle says, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." We must get our minds rightly balanced to see things correctly, according to God's will.

We have in the Scriptures all the providential indications that we might be thoroughly furnished so as to obtain a clear knowledge of God's mind, and can therefore conform our minds thereto. Thus our minds become gradually fashioned, and our reason plays an important part. God wishes to appeal to our reason because we are thus better developed than in any other way. We have the teachings of our Lord Jesus and the writings of the Apostles as a sure and solid foundation to build upon; and to show what authority the Apostles had, our Lord declared that whatsoever they should bind on earth would be considered bound in heaven, and whatsoever they should loose on earth would be so considered in heaven.

Our education progresses until at the end of this life those who have thoroughly learned the lessons of this school will be those who have been obedient children. To be obedient children means to be obedient to His Word, not to their own ideas, or given to sentimentality whereby some deceive themselves in thinking they have greater love than others, who do not feel the same way. It brings to mind some in the past who, having sympathy for Judas, have expressed the idea that he should have another chance, and thought they had greater love through their sympathy for him. Our Lord placed the main responsibility and guilt upon Judas, when He said, "The Son of Man goeth (that is, to death)', as it is

written of Him (prophetically); but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It had been good for that man if he had not been born." As our Lord had greater love than any man, any giving the above view shows us the misguided love some have had. What has been can still be manifested in various ways.

We may even notice how many misguided nominal Christians will get up petitions to the Government for some very despicable murderer, in which the law of the land must take its course. One wonders how such can consider any measure of justice done to the victim or the bereaved. But those who have truly come into Christ, and hearken unto Him, soon learn how imperfect are their depraved conceptions, and they seek and obtain His mind that it may be theirs thenceforth, instead of their own judgments. "We have the mind of Christ," says the Apostle. It is the new mind which is transformed so that we are able to prove and know what is that good and perfect will of God.

Those whose hearts go out too strongly towards gross evildoers seem to indicate that, however much they have submitted their judgment to God's will on some questions, they have not submitted themselves on this point. To love an evil thing is on a par with hating a good thing. Both are wrong, both are evidence that the mind is not remodelled, transformed into the mind of Christ.

The mind of the Lord inculcated by His Word teaches that we are to love the beautiful, pure, true, noble; we are to love (in the sense of sympathising with) the weak, the penitent, the oppressed, who are seeking for the paths of righteousness and truth; but we are to hate iniquity and every false way, and all the meanness and sin which is against light and of the Devil. For our part we should have no thought of ever becoming more loving than the Lord; we

accept His definitions and seek to be conformed mentally to His standard. We want to love just as He loves, and hate what He hates. Of Him it is written, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Heb. 1:9; Psa. 45:7. Therefore let us continue the process of transforming our minds.

(Concluded.)

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

(P. L. R.) (Excerpt from Pittsburgh Convention,
November, 1929.)

. . . Toleration is not enough. Sometimes we hear the value of toleration praised in high terms, and we certainly agree that toleration is a great deal better than intolerance, but toleration is not fellowship. What kind of a time would I be describing to absent friends if I told them of the wonderful way in which the friends at the Pittsburgh Convention had tolerated me? They would not think that I had had such a wonderful time after all, would they? It would be apparent that only by a considerable strain on their Christian forbearance had the conventioners managed to put up with me for three days. My experience would not be exactly what we would understand by the word fellowship.

When the Apostle John (1 John 1:3) speaks of fellowship with “us,” I understand that he had reference to the fellowship of spirit which exists in the Christ Company. As our first thought in this connection let us consider 2 Cor. 5:16, “Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh.” We are still in the flesh, each of us trying to “keep the body under,” and the fellowship we have is the fellowship of spirit. If I meet with ‘brethren who are striving to walk in the footsteps of Christ, handicapped as we all are by reason of birth, education, environment, etc., the fellowship I have with them is not after the flesh but in our mutual attempt to grow more and More like Christ. So with the Psalmist I rejoice to say, “I am a companion of all them that fear Thee and keep Thy precepts.”

In Phil. 2:1 the Apostle speaks of fellowship of the spirit. As illustrating this: Suppose I have been absent from a brother for a year or so, and during that time I have been seeking to grow more and more like Christ, to develop more of His spirit of humility and of truth. I have been trying to get more of the spirit of holiness in my life, more of the spirit of liberty, more of the spirit of joy in bearing the fruit of the spirit and in helping others, more of the spirit of patience, more of the spirit of peace. Suppose, when I meet this brother, I find he has been striving likewise and that as a result the mellowing influence of God’s holy spirit in him is manifest to me as the mellowing influence of God’s holy spirit in me is manifest to him. Is there not fellowship of spirit? There is, indeed. There is nothing else on earth quite like it.

There are some places where they are not so well educated—they spell the word fellowship differently. In the dictionary it begins with “f,” but there are some who begin it with “g,” and they go on in this way—g-o-s-s-i-p spells fellowship. That is not the kind of fellowship with which we wish to have anything to do.

Another point I have noted down for myself is, try and be a better listener—to listen in a way that shows I am giving full attention. If one’s mind is preoccupied he may appear to be listening when others are speaking to him when actually his mind is too much filled with other matters to be of any real comfort to the one who may ‘be seeking sympathy or attention. A father was reading a newspaper when his little child wished to tell him something, and he attempted to hold conversation with her while still reading the newspaper. “Listen, Father,” said the little girl, tugging at his coat sleeve. “I am listening,” he said, continuing to have his eyes glued to the newspaper. “Ah, but I want you to listen with your eyes, too,” she replied. And so in order to have more of the fellowship of my brother in Christ I am determined to give more of my fellowship to him and this will empty my life of all the things to centre around self, that I may be free indeed to fellowship with my brethren in a way that will mean something to them.

OUR PATTERN AND HELPER.

Turn the mind to Christ at the first assault (of the tempter), and keep it fixed there. Think of Him who walked amidst temptations without ever being submerged by them, as of One who can enable His followers to do the same. Think of Him. as calm, serene, firm, majestic, amidst the most furious agitations of nature, and as One who can endue thy heart with a similar steadfastness. Think of Him as standing close by thee, with a hand outstretched for thy support as soon as ever thou lookest towards Him. Remember that it is not you who are to conquer, but He who is to conquer in you.

Goulburn

THE DECEPTIONS OF SPIRITUALISM.

THE following report appeared in the Melbourne "Age" of July 9th, 1930, in respect of the death of the late Sir Conan Doyle, a great spiritualistic enthusiast. and leader: -----

"Father fully believed he would keep in touch with the family on the other side," said his son Adrian. "We are certain we are going to have conversation with him. We shall miss his physical presence, but that is all. Otherwise he might only have gone to Australia."

These remarks respecting the belief of the late author and spiritualist are just another indication of the increasing hold spiritism is getting through Satanic theories and doctrines predicted in the Bible, and pertaining particularly to these latter days.

All around us to-day we see the steady growth in numbers of adherents to this devilish belief, and one wonders how the average intelligent being could be so easily led to accept its teachings, with all the deception and contradiction of the Bible presentation respecting the death state. We have only to study our Bibles to note how- the great Adversary, Satan, has ever sought to oppose the Word of God and His plan and purpose respecting mankind, and in consequence has been successful to a very great degree in deceiving the people regarding the original sentence of Jehovah, on account of disobedience—"dying thou shalt die."—Gen. 2:17. This arch-deceiver, Satan, deceiving our first parents with his great lie (and he is the father of lies—John 8:44) in stating, "Thou shalt not surely die," set himself up in direct opposition to God, and it is this same great lie that he has been successfully foisting upon mankind generally, as he works continually in the hearts of the children of disobedience to blind them to the glorious Scripture truths.

We are glad that the Bible is so reasonable and clear regarding not only the state of the billions resting in the tomb, but also the remainder of the race in a ,dying condition, through hereditary weaknesses, trespasses and sins, mainly on account of our first parent's transgression. God's Word assures us that "the dead know not anything."—Eccles. 9:

5. "Though their sons come to honour, they perceive it not of them."—job 14:21. "That there is no Wisdom, device, or knowledge in the grave, whither all goeth."—Eccles. 9:10. That the hope of each. and all from the grave and this death state is through the sacrifice of Christ as the ransom price for sin and the curse of death, and by a resurrection through Him, who said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," in. the great central teaching and hub of the Christian's belief and faith; all else as expressed in the various beliefs, such as taught in denominations of to-day, and also by Evolutionists, Christian Scientists, Higher Critics, and Spiritualists, must be, and is, only credulity, without any ground for their Satanic and man-made theories. John 5:28, 29 clearly teaches that "the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth," and other Scriptures teach that God hath appointed a day (the great Millennial Day of Christ) in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man (Christ and His Body members, the Bride of Christ), whom He hath ordained (Acts 17:31; Luke 12:32); and the Apostle Paul states (Rom. 8:22, 19), "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God."

While presenting the Scripture teaching respecting the departed, we are not underrating or denying the fact that spiritism is a very real thing, but acknowledge that it has been in existence right from the time of Satan's deflection and opposition to God. This great Satanic influence through his agencies, the evil spirits (Gen. 6th chap.) and mediums, has been very much in evidence following the days of the Flood and ever since, and soundly condemned by God to the extent that if any of His chosen people (Jews) were found associating with or practising witchcraft, sorcery, and the like, they were to be immediately put to death. Also, in the days of our Lord and His apostles, we find a strict denouncing of this evil tendency and practice, and the necessity of casting out numerous evil spirits in possession of certain individuals, who -had become obsessed and demented in consequence.

Surely, then, statements as appear from time to time in the daily news only go to show that the great leader of spiritism, Satan, is ever fostering and misleading, with cunning, device, the old original lie, "Thou shalt not surely die"—and thus mankind in general of all sects and denominations are becoming more and more susceptible to his seducing doctrines and devilish theories and teachings, such as, for instance, the immortality of the soul, and the evolution theory, both of which plainly deny the need of Christ as the sacrifice for sin through Adamic weaknesses.

Particularly in these last days we would warn each and all against this arch-deceiver as he transforms himself into an angel of light, putting light for darkness, and darkness for light. We need to have on the complete armour of God, that we may be able to withstand all the fiery darts of this wicked one, and to stand, having our loins girt about with the pure message and' light of the Truth. Only the Gospel truth can sanctify, • mid only the saintly few are being kept

during this acceptable time from the wiles and besetments of the Adversary, whereas the vast majority of the world have been blinded by erroneous beliefs at the hands of the Prince of this world, Satan.

Thank God the time is fast approaching when the shackles of sin, superstition and error 'are to be broken and the clear light of the Gospel poured out upon the people after this great deceiver has been bound. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, .and men shall come to rejoice in the love, mercy, wisdom, and grace of God through His rich provision in Christ, who is the Resurrection, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'—Rev. 21

The statement of Mr. G. A. Brown, given in the first of a series of lectures on Spiritualism which appeared in the press some time ago, is heartily endorsed, and we would that all men would view this Satanic belief in the same light, and denounce it as this gentleman did, as opposing the Word of God and its teachings. We publish his remarks herewith, and trust that our readers will be encouraged and helped to stand on guard in this evil day against the deceptions of the Devil, the Prince of this world, and the father of lies. Mr. Brown admitted the phenomena of Spiritualism, but denied that they were the manifestations of departed human beings. "They were," he contended, "the work of devils and seducing spirits. Spiritualism was founded upon the lie first promulgated in the Garden of Eden, that man was immortal. It denied that there was any God and yet sought to make everyone a god. It was the witchcraft and necromancy denounced ill the Bible, and its prevalence at this time denoted that the second advent of Christ was at hand."

MR. ARTHUR BLACK, writing in the "British Weekly" regarding "The Life of the Poor," says: "While most people will agree that the struggling, ill-paid or unemployed family must be helped, in spite of poverty, into a decent home, is it not often forgotten by those who draw up tables of figures as to the weekly cost of living for working-class families, proving that their wages do not permit of as much as 11/- per week being paid for rent of council houses, that many slum dwellers are drained dry by the public house, by sport and the bookmaker, by the cinema and amusement hall? The proportion of weekly income that some poor families spend in indulgence is extraordinary. Those who want to get at the root of things cannot ignore such facts as those revealed regarding Bermondsey by Dr. Salter, M.P., and as to part of St. Mary's Ward, Birmingham, by the Rev. E. Benson Perkins. In the first named over 2000 families are overcrowded, more than half the deaths take place in public institutions, every seventh person two years ago was getting poor relief, and nearly 4000 were on the unemployed registers. Yet, based on -figures returned at the quinquennial valuation in 1925, it is computed that £1,200,000 was spent in the 230 licensed houses-and a few clubs, a yearly average of £10 per man, woman and child—a sum more than equal to all the rents and to the milk and bread bills of the borough. The average paid in compensation for surrendered public houses in recent years has 'been £5400. In the second case, in a melancholy area, with over 400 back-to-back houses, and with the infantile death rate twice as high as in favoured districts, there are 62 licensed houses, one to every 295 inhabitants, and an average of £1 per week per family is spent in drink. -Clearly a reform in many a family expenditure would be one long step. forward.

"No doubt such facts as these will be brought before the Licensing Commission by way of proof that the drinking habits of a section of the people who can least afford to waste their resources of health, character or cash are perhaps the most potent agency in perpetuating slum evils and in hampering every kind of attempt at removing them.

"Because the human element is more crucial than .the economic, I re-echo my cry for the much more adequate support of those engaged in this moral and spiritual struggle in the slums." •

The poor "groaning creation" still groans and waits for the Kingdom. That such conditions still exist in the land of the most enlightened nation and the nation that has clone so much to carry the Bible to the uttermost parts of the earth,- to evangelise and lift up the depraved races of the world, seems strange. •

We have heard much about the churches winning the world for Christ and establishing the Kingdom, yet how far from 'being Christianised is England, with all its-grand cathedrals and professions. Yet no land can boast of more noble effort to lift the fallen and to • provide opportunity to all to.earn an .honest decent living. Had we to think that such was the purpose of God for the Gospel Age we should have • to conclude, as so many have done, that Christianity had proved a failure. While approving and appreciating every good' effort calculated to alleviate the condition of the ill-born and unfortunate, yet we rejoice to say that Christianity has not yet ,been. tried. The Church has not yet been authorised to reform. the world. The commission given to the Church referred only to the preaching' of the Gospel as a -witness to all: nations in order to select a church—a class to be specially prepared to reign with Christ (Rom. 8:17; Acts 15:14-17) in the coming Age, for the blessing of all the families of the earth. When God's Will shall be done on earth as in heaven, there will soon be no such blots in all the earth. The present systems, with all their faults, have made some noble efforts to rule, but their 'best is failure. When man realises that he cannot of himself reach the Golden Age of peace and plenty, the Kingdom will 'be prepared to begin its wise and: benevolent reign. To-day we see the signs that the time is near. Before that day comes, however, the present systems are to go down ill a "time of

trouble such as never was before, nor ever will 'be again.' Then the Jewish people will again be established in Palestine and 'be used of God as the earthly representatives of the spiritual kingdom. Satan will be restrained and Christ and His Church will have the dominion. How great a change that will be. Satan has prospered the wicked, "yea, even those who tempt God are set up." but Christ will reward the righteous, who will "flourish like the palm." All who will turn 'to. serve God and righteousness will be rewarded by. health-. prosperity. and "when the judgments of the Lord are' abroad in the earth then will the inhabitants of the earth learn righteousness," "truth 'and righteousness shall spring out of the earth," and soon "the whole earth shall be covered with the glory of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the great deep."

The good hopes, however, are not to discourage any in any good efforts of relief. We are to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith."

CLASS MEETINGS.

For the benefit of our readers, particularly those who may wish to get in touch with, or visit the various classes in the coming months, we desire to state that regular meetings of the friends are held each Sunday afternoon and evening at the present time, at Rawson Chambers (5th floor), Room 593, Pitt-st., Sydney; Liverpool Buildings (2nd floor), Flinders-st., Adelaide; and Molesworth Chambers (3rd floor), 450 Little Collins-st., Melbourne.

For further particulars in respect of these and other gatherings of the Lord's people who appreciate the unfolding of truths respecting the Divine Plan, the second presence of Christ, the Harvest, the gathering of the saints and the consummation of the Age; also regarding the circulation of literature on these and other important truths, please address, The Secretary, Berean Institute, National Bank Chambers-Hawthorn, E2, Melbourne, Victoria. 4

CORRECTION.

A passage in the Question Box of last month's "Peoples Paper" stated that the Law Covenant was also the Abrahamic Covenant. The reading should have been the Law Covenant, as also the Abrahamic Covenant. While the Lord came as the Angel or Fulfiller of the Law Covenant so that Ire might redeem those under the Law; He was in the larger sense the Angel or Messenger of the Abrahamic Covenant, the Oath-Bound .Covenant, which is the hope of both natural and spiritual Israel.

The Messenger or Servant of that Covenant is the One through whom its provisions will be accomplished, namely, the seed of Abraham.—"which seed is Christ." (Gal. 3:16).

Correspondence

Queensland,

11th August, 1930. My Dear Friends,

Please find enclosed . I know I am in arrears for the little "Paper," but I thank you for sending it, and hope this amount will cover what is due, and pay for another year. I live in the bush, and seldom meet with Christian friends, at least with friends that will talk heart to heart about our dear Redeemer, so the little "Paper" is very welcome and very helpful. Hoping it will continue its good work for many a year, and that the Lord will bless every effort put forth for the advancing of His Kingdom.

Your sincere Friend,

New South Wales, 11/8/30. The Secretary,

Berean Biblical Institute.

Dear Brother,—

I received the copy of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" and also "Foregleams of the Golden Age" in safety and would be much obliged if you would send me "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" in two volumes. I sent two ones I had to my mother, but heard last week of someone whom I thought might be interested in them.

I am sorry to say that I do not know anyone in this area who seems to take any interest in religion, except that of the nominal Churches, so I have to rely on the "Herald's," etc., for companionship. Sister —, from writes often, for which I am very glad, as she was the friend who brought to my attention the very unsatisfactory state of affairs in the I.B.S.A.

I am enclosing — for the books. If there is a small amount left over after they are paid for, kindly keep it for the Tract Fund. With kindest regards from

Your Sister in Him,

Durban, South Africa. Dear Brother,

No doubt it will interest you and others, particularly those who contributed to the Zulu printing fund, to hear what has been done.

Immediately on arrival here I began to get the matter in hand, and within a week had settled upon both the work of translation and printing. The booklets will be ready, I hope, in about two weeks, and there are willing hands to endeavour to place them where they may be appreciated. We shall, anyway, feel that the message of the true Gospel has been put in a simple way so that the Zulus may take hold upon it. Our prayers should then be that the Lord will bless the effort, even if the results may not be seen for "many days." Being in booklet form, it is hoped to be more carefully preserved. During the remaining time I am hoping to get a little more in touch with some of the Indians as well as the natives. Many of the Indians speak English and are professing Christians. The class here appears to be progressing in Christian character, and it is a pleasure to see them all again. They are all so kind. Possibly they do not appreciate all the opportunities there are in this country. It may be that the narrow way being so near the end that not many more are to be gathered into the garner as members in Christ. Yet it is not for us to neglect the opportunity of "doing good to all men" but to seek to bring the glad message of the wideness of God's mercy to all. It is not for us to conclude that there is nothing more to do: it is for us to fulfil the commission of our Lord to the Church, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel," and to leave the Lord to grant the increase whether it be for the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus" or for the call of the "Spirit and the Bride who say come, and whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life freely."

With Christian love to all,
Yours in Christian service,
R.E.B.N.

Question Box.

Question.—Are the foolish virgins that have no oil in their vessels a spirit-begotten class? Seeing they are shut out from the marriage chamber, will they ever get into the heavenly phase of the Kingdom?

Answer.—The parable of the ten virgins was undoubtedly given as illustrating the matter dealt with in the preceding chapter (Matt. 24). Indeed, the three parables of chapter 25 show the progressive development of our Lord's work at His second presence. This first one indicates the attitude of those Christians who at that time should be looking for His coming. Evidently all who are watching are not properly prepared for the event for which they are watching and waiting. Some have taught that the five foolish virgins represent a class of sinners eternally lost. There is no such thought intended, for the foolish as well as the wise are "virgins," pure ones. They have turned away from the world of sin to serve the living God. The only way to be "pure" ones is by faith in "the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin." This class (five unwise virgins), then, represents a justified class, "justified by faith, and at peace with God." Not only so, but they have faith in the Lord's Return and Kingdom, and have their minds exercised on the subject, and have their lamps trimmed. They discern Bible evidence in the signs of the times, so are in an attitude of expectation, and are associated and go out with the wise virgins to meet their Lord. They have the same hope of entering with the Bridegroom. The difference is that they were short of oil. Possibly those who had positively fixed upon some particular date when the Lord would come, and then became discouraged because He did not come as they expected, may be represented in these foolish virgins. They lacked sufficient supply of the Holy Spirit (oil). Their

knowledge and enthusiasm had been more a matter of the head than of a fully devoted heart filled with God's Holy Spirit, ready to trust through light and shade, when the way is plain and when the road is dark, when the sunshine of Divine blessing surrounds them, or when "clouds and storms go o'er my head and every comfort be withdrawn," when "sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings," or when disappointment be their portion. Still they loved the Lord and hoped to enter into the marriage chamber. While they failed to have that deep heart appreciation and preparation which would have gained that great reward, they did go to the market of experience and the Word of God, and, having obtained a further supply of the Holy Spirit, they knock at the door and are disappointed to find they are too late. However, while the Lord could not recognise them as of the class He desired, they are not eternally lost. The purpose of the parable was to urge watchfulness and carefulness in preparation of heart to meet the great Bridegroom.

The thought that the five unwise virgins represent an earthly class is out of accord with the Scriptures. There is no calling to an earthly hope during the Gospel Age. "We are all called in one hope of our calling."

During the Law Dispensation there was no heavenly hope. It was an age of works to be rewarded by earthly hopes. The Gospel Age is an age of faith to be rewarded by spiritual blessings and a heavenly hope. The coming Kingdom Age again, be an age of works to be rewarded by natural human blessings and eternal life on earth. The five unwise virgins represent a class begotten to the same hope of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus as the five wise who enter in. They fail to gain the prize, but being rightly exercised by their disappointment, they seek grace and help and secure more "oil," more of the Holy Spirit and its work of grace in their hearts, and come through great tribulation with their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb. While they missed the wondrous opportunity of sitting with Christ in the throne, with those who are "more than overcomers," they are shown in Revelation 7 as serving before the throne. They are indicated in Psalm 45, "The virgins her companions that follow her," and in Genesis 24, as the nurse of Rebekah, who represents the Bride of Christ.

Question.—What is the difference re anointing and spirit-begetting?

Answer.—The anointing and spirit-begetting of the members in Christ throughout this Gospel Age we would understand to be a little different, and yet together bringing about the same result to the faithful—the birth of the new creature to the Divine nature.

In the type of the anointing of the priesthood (Exod. 29:7) the anointing oil was poured upon the head of the high priest only, and ran down over the body to the skirts of his garments (Psa. 133:2). So with the anti-typical Priesthood, the Head only was anointed. The under-priests are not anointed individually, but as members of Christ's Body are partakers of the same anointing after their Head. "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you."—1 John 2:27.

On the other hand, each truly consecrated member accepted by the Father is begotten individually to the new nature, and throughout their earthly pilgrimage it will be necessary to keep under the holy anointing oil, the Holy Spirit,

flowing down from our Head for the purpose of development as new creatures. If we come out from under the anointing, or, in other words, if we put off the wedding garment, there would be immediate danger of quenching the spirit within us. So while each member is begotten individually, how necessary it is that we keep under the holy anointing of our Head, for we are complete only in Him; we are accepted in the Beloved.—Eph. 1:3-6.

Question.—Will you please explain Luke 12:36, “When He will return from the wedding”? What wedding is meant here? and who are the servants that He will find watching? Can it be the marriage of the Bride?

Answer.—While the above text is much misunderstood, perhaps there is a no more important one than these words of the Master respecting what must be the attitude of the Lord’s people in this only acceptable Age and particularly during the period of His Parousia.

From the context we note our Lord’s words are along the line of watchfulness and a state of preparedness concerning the -Saintly footstep followers of Christ, urging all to have their loins girded about and lights burning, and admonishing His people to give diligence that they might be found at all times acceptable to Jehovah through ‘Him. But especially do the words of this text apply to the period of our Lord’s. presence, and warning His followers to be in such an attitude of piety and readiness for His presence in order that they should receive the promised blessing which His parousia would bring to the faithful according • to verse 37 of this chapter.

In explaining this verse we are not to view it in the light of our questions, but must realise that it is only in the nature of a parable that our Lord would picture the matter in illustrating the alertness and attentiveness that shall ever characterise His followers. Amongst the Jews there would be no occasion on .which the servants of the _household would, be expected to be more alert or to manifest more interest in the •welfare of the household than on- the evening or morning on which their master would come to his home bringing with him his bride. And -so the Lord chooses this as an appropriate illustration of the alertness that • should characterise His followers while waiting for His second coming.

.The sole lesson here is that diligence in service, that watchfulness for the interests-of the Master’s cause, that faith in His promise to return and expectancy of the event, serve as an aid or stimulus to proper service. When the master of the house should arrive with his company it ,would be a reflection against the interest of his servants and their love and devotion for him, if on such an occasion . they. were found asleep or otherwise than ready to open the door at the master’s intimation of his arrival: The parable implies that at our Lord’s second coming He will have arrived before any of His faithful servants .will be aware of the fact, and this agrees” with our. Saviour’s reply in answer to the disciple’s question, “What shall be the sign of Thy presence?” not what shall be the sign of His arrival, but the indications of His presence after He had come. His presence will -be known by the knock, and the knock would correspond to an announcement, through some special unfoldment of His Word and..a .recognition of the fulfilment of prophecy.

.- According to ancient Jewish method of reckoning the night time, the second watch would be from ten to two o’clock, and the third from .two to six o’clock. The parable does not state in which watch the Master may be expected. That question was left open; the faithfulness Of the.:servants being tested in proportion to His delay, Many-would find it easy to keep awake and alert during the ‘first watch, not so many during the second watch, and still fewer during the third. It is in accord with this implication of the parable that we find to-day general lethargy amongst Christian people respecting the return. of the Bridegroom and the glorious things of the Kingdom to be brought unto His faithful household.

Many are asleep in Zion, many are overcharged with the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. Not only have worldly people made a god of -business, money and pleasure, but many who are at heart lovers of righteousness, and who desire to be considered servants of the Lord; are seriously overcharged, absorbed in worldly things. Their hearts are so filled with these, other minds are so occupied with some great work, movement, outward success, pleasure or personal interest that they cannot hear the knock. “They know not” in the sense of a heart appreciation of the Master’s presence and open not their hearts to the things pertaining to this-wonderful announcement for which the Lord’s people have waited so long and have prayed earnestly. “Thy Kingdom come.” ‘Such arc missing in consequence a great blessing implied ‘in our Lord’s words and parable.

What I say unto you, I say unto all—”Watch.”

THE VALLEY OF SILENCE.

“Come ye apart and rest awhile.”

“In the hush of the valley of silence
I dream all the songs that I sing;
And the music floats down the dim valley,
Till each finds a word for a wing,

That to hearts, like the dove of the deluge,
A message of peace they may bring.

“But far on the deep there are billows
That never shall break on the beach;

And I have heard songs in the silence
That never shall float into speech;
And I have had dreams in the valley
Too lofty for language to reach.

“And I have seen thoughts in the valley,
Ah me, how my spirit was stirred!
And they wear holy veils on their faces,
Their footsteps can scarcely be heard;

They pass through the valley like virgins,
Too pure for the touch of a word.

“Do you ask me the place of the valley,
Ye hearts that are harrowed by care?

It lieth afar between mountains,
And God and His angels are there:
One is the dark mountain of sorrow,
And one the bright mountain of prayer.”

—Selected.

When discouragement appalls you, your cry is, “What’s the use ?”

-Your heart is heavy laden, faith’s hold is weak and loose:

Just grip a little tighter, and a little tighter still,

Refuse to be a weakling, when you have a mind and will. —1 Peter 1:13; Eph. 6:10-18.

The trivial round, the common task,

Will furnish all we ought to ask:

Room to deny ourselves; a road To bring us daily nearer God. —Keble.