

TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH. NO. 15.

INTRODUCTION.

MY brethren and sisters will hardly expect this number of my Testimonies so soon. But I had many personal testimonies on hand, some of which are given in the following pages. And I know of no better way to present my views of general dangers and errors, and the duty of all who love God, and keep his commandments, than by giving these testimonies. Perhaps there is no more direct and forcible way of presenting what the Lord has shown me.

It seemed important that No. 14 should reach you several days before the General Conference. Therefore that number was hastened through the press before I could find time to prepare important matter designed for it. In fact, there was not room for this matter in No. 14. Having on hand, therefore, matter sufficient for No. 15, it is presented to you with the prayer that the blessing of God will attend it to the good of his dear people.

E. G. W.

SKETCH OF EXPERIENCE,

FROM FEBRUARY 7, 1868, TO MAY 20, 1868.

It was after we had reached our home, and ceased to feel the inspiring influence of journeying and laboring, that we felt most sensibly the wearing labors of our eastern tour. Many were urging me by letters to write what I had related to them of what the Lord had

shown me concerning them. And there were many others to whom I had not spoken, whose cases were as important and urgent. But the task of so much writing seemed more than I could endure in my weary condition. A feeling of discouragement came over me, and I sank into a feeble state, and remained so several days, frequently fainting. In this state of body and mind, I called in question my duty to write so much, to so many persons, some of them very unworthy. It seemed to me that there certainly was a mistake in this matter somewhere.

On the evening of the 5th, Bro. Andrews spoke to the people in our house of worship. But, most of that evening I was in a fainting, breathless condition, supported by my husband. When Bro. Andrews returned from the meeting, they had a special season of prayer for me, and I found some relief. That night I slept well, and in the morning, though feeble, felt wonderfully relieved and encouraged. I had dreamed that a person brought to me a web of white cloth, and bade me cut it into garments for persons of all sizes, and all descriptions of character, and circumstances in life. I was told to cut them out, and hang them up all ready to be made when called for. I had the impression that many for whom I was required to cut garments were unworthy. I inquired if that was the last piece of cloth I should have to cut, and was told that it was not. That as soon as I had finished this one, there were others for me to take hold of. I felt discouraged at the amount of work before me, and stated that I had been engaged in cutting garments for others, for more than twenty years, and my labors had not been appreciated, neither did I see that my work had accomplished much good. I spoke to the person who brought the cloth to me, of one woman in particular, for whom he had told me to cut a garment. I stated that she would not prize the garment, and that it would be a loss of time and material, to present her a garment. She was very poor, of inferior intellect, and untidy in her habits, and would soon soil the garment.

The person replied: "Cut out the garments. That

is your duty. The loss is not yours, but mine. God sees not as man sees. He lays out the work that he would have done, and you do not know which will prosper, this or that. It will be found that many such poor souls will go into the kingdom, while others, who are surrounded with all the blessings of life, having good intellects, and their surroundings pleasant, giving them all the advantages of improvement, will be left out. It will be seen that these poor souls have lived up to the feeble light which they have had, and have improved by the limited means within their reach, much more acceptably than some others have lived, who have enjoyed full light, and ample means for improvement."

I then held up my hands, calloused as they were with long use of the shears, and stated that I could but shrink at the thought of pursuing this kind of labor. The person repeated again :

"Cut out the garments. Your release has not yet come."

With feelings of great weariness I arose to engage in the work. Before me lay new, polished shears, which I commenced using. At once my feelings of weariness and discouragement left me, the shears seemed to cut with hardly an effort on my part, and I cut out garment after garment, with comparative ease.

With the encouragement which this dream gave me, I at once decided to accompany my husband and Bro. Andrews to Gratiot, Saginaw, and Tuscola counties, and trust in the Lord to give me strength to labor. So, on the 7th of February, we left home, and rode fifty-five miles, to our appointment at Alma. Here I labored as usual, with a comfortable degree of freedom and strength. The friends in Gratiot County seemed interested to hear, but many of them are far behind on the health reform, and in relation to the work of preparation generally. There seemed to be a want of order and efficiency among this people necessary to prosperity in the work and spirit of the message. Bro. Andrews, however, visited them three weeks later, and enjoyed a good season with them. I will not pass over a matter of encouragement to me, that a very pointed

testimony I had written to one family, was received with profit to the persons addressed. We still feel a deep interest in that family, and ardently desire that they may enjoy prosperity in the Lord, and although we feel some discouragement as to the cause in Gratiot County, we shall be anxious to help the brethren, when they feel anxious to be helped.

At the Alma meeting, there were brethren present from St. Charles, and Tittabawassee, Saginaw County, who urged us to visit them. We had not designed to enter this county at present, but to visit Tuscola County if the way opened. Not hearing from Tuscola, we decided to visit Tittabawassee, and meantime, write to Tuscola County, and inquire if we were wanted there.

At Tittabawassee we were happily disappointed to find a large house of worship, recently built by our people, well filled with Sabbath-keepers. The brethren seemed ready for our testimony, and we enjoyed freedom. A good work, and a great work had been done in this place through the faithful labors of Bro. M. E. Cornell. Much bitter opposition and persecution had followed. But this seemed to melt away with those who came to hear, and our labors seemed to make a good impression upon all. I attended eleven meetings in this place in one week, spoke several times from one to two hours, and took part in the other meetings. At one meeting there was an effort made to induce certain ones who observe the Sabbath to move forward and take up the cross. The duty before most of these was baptism. In my last vision I saw places where the truth would be preached and bring out churches which we should visit. This was one of those places. I felt a peculiar interest for this people. The cases of certain ones in the congregation opened before me, and a spirit of labor came upon me for them, which I could not throw off. I labored for them, most of the time appealing to them with feelings of the deepest solicitude, for about three hours. All took the cross on that occasion, and came forward for prayers, and nearly all spoke. The next day fifteen were baptized.

No one can visit this people without being impressed with the value of Bro. Cornell's faithful labors in this

cause. His work is to enter places where the truth has not been proclaimed, and I hope our people will cease their efforts to draw him from his specific work. In the spirit of humility he can go forth, leaning upon the arm of the Lord, and rescue many souls from the powers of darkness. May the blessing of God still be with him.

As our series of meetings in this place was near to its close, Bro. Spooner, of Tuscola, came for us to visit that county. We sent appointments by him as he returned on Monday, and we followed, Thursday after the baptism.

At Vassar, we held our meetings Sabbath and first-day, at the Union School House. This was a free place in which to speak, and we saw good fruit of our labors. First-day afternoon, about thirty backsliders, and children who had made no profession, came forward. This was a very interesting and profitable meeting. Some were drawing back from the cause, for whom we especially felt to labor. But the time was short, and it seemed to me, that we should leave the work unfinished. But our appointments were out for St. Charles and Alma, and to meet them we must close our labors in Vassar, Monday.

That night what I had seen in vision concerning certain persons in Tuscola County, was revived in a dream, and I was still more impressed that my work for that people was not done. Yet I saw no other way only to go on to our appointments. Tuesday we journeyed thirty-two miles to St. Charles, and stopped for the night with Bro. Griggs, and wrote fifteen pages of testimony, and attended meeting in the evening.

Wednesday morning, we decided to return to Tuscola, if Bro. Andrews would fill the appointment at Alma. To this he agreed. I wrote that morning fifteen pages more, attended a meeting and spoke one hour, and we rode thirty-three miles with brother and sister Griggs, to brother Spooner's, in Tuscola. Thursday morning, we went sixteen miles to Watrousville. I wrote sixteen pages, and attended an evening meeting, in which I gave a very pointed testimony to one present. The next morning wrote twelve pages before breakfast, and

returned to Tuscola, and wrote eight pages more.

Sabbath, my husband spoke in the forenoon, and I followed for two hours before taking food. This meeting was closed for a few moments. I then took a trifle of food, and spoke in a social meeting which followed, for the space of one hour, bearing pointed testimonies for several present. These testimonies were generally received with feelings of humility and gratitude. I cannot, however, say that all were so received.

The next morning, as we were about to leave for the house of worship, to engage in the arduous labors of the day, a sister for whom I had a testimony that she lacked discretion and caution, and did not fully control her words and actions, came in with her husband, and manifested feelings of great unreconciliation and agitation. She commenced to talk and to weep. She murmured a little, and confessed a little, and justified self considerable. She had a wrong idea of many things I had stated to her. Her pride was touched as I brought out her faults in so public a manner. Here was evidently the main difficulty. But why should she feel thus? The brethren and sisters knew these things were so, therefore I was not informing them of anything new. But I doubt not that it was new to this sister. She did not know herself, and could not properly judge of her own words and acts. This is in a degree true of nearly all, hence the necessity of faithful reproofs in the church, and the cultivation of love for the plain testimony by all its members.

Her husband seemed to feel unreconciled to my bringing out her faults before the church, and stated that if Sister White had followed the directions of our Lord in Matt. xviii, 15-17, he should not have felt hurt—"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

My husband then stated that he should understand that these words of our Lord had reference to cases of personal trespass, and could not be applied in the case of his wife. She had not trespassed against Sister White. But that which had been reprov'd publicly, was public wrongs which threatened the prosperity of the church and the cause. Here, said my husband, is a text applicable to the case. 1 Tim. v, 20. "Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear."

The brother acknowledged his error like a Christian, and seemed reconciled to the matter. It was evident that since the meeting of Sabbath afternoon, they had got many things about the matter wonderfully magnified and wrong. It was therefore proposed that the written testimony be read. When this was done, the sister who was reprov'd by it, inquired, Is that what you stated yesterday? I stated that it was. She seemed surprised, and quite reconciled to the written testimony. This I gave her without reserving a copy. Here I did wrong. But I had such tender regard for her and her husband, and such ardent desires and hopes for their prosperity, that I, in this case, broke over an established custom. But already meeting time was passing, and we hastened one mile and a half to the waiting congregation. The reader may judge whether the scene of that morning was well adapted to the collection of thought and nerve necessary to stand before the people. But who thinks of this? Some may, and show a little mercy. While the impulsive and careless will come with their burdens and trials, generally just before we are to speak, or when perfectly exhausted by speaking.

My husband, however, mustered all his energies, and by request spoke with freedom on the Law and Gospel. I had received an invitation to speak in the afternoon at the new house of worship recently built and dedicated by the Methodists. This commodious place of worship was crowded, and many stood up. I spoke with freedom for about an hour and a half upon the first of the two great commandments repeated by our Lord, and was surprised to learn that it was the same from which the Methodist minister had spoken in

the forenoon. He and his people were present to hear what I had to say.

In the evening we had a precious interview at Bro. Spooner's with brethren Miller, Hatch, and Haskell, and sisters Sturges, Bliss, Harrison, and Malin. We now felt that our work for the present was done in Tuscola Co. We became very much interested in this dear people, yet feared that the sister referred to, for whom I had a testimony, would let Satan take advantage of her, and cause them trouble. I thought and felt, Oh! that she could view the matter in its true light. The course she had been pursuing was destroying her influence in and out of the church. But now if she would receive the needed reproof, and humbly seek to improve by it; the church would take her anew into their hearts, and the people would think more of her Christianity. And what is better still, she could enjoy the approving smiles of her dear Redeemer. Would she fully receive the testimony was my anxious solicitude. I feared she would not, and that the hearts of the brethren in that county would be saddened on her account.

After returning home, I sent to her for a copy of the testimony, and, April 15th, received the following, dated at Denmark, April 11, 1868.

"Sister White: Yours of the 23d ult. is at hand. Am sorry I cannot comply with your request."

I shall still cherish the tenderest feelings of regard for this family, and shall be happy to help them when I can. It is true that such things in those for whom I give my life, cast a shade of sadness over me; but my course has been too plainly marked out for me to let such things keep me from the path of duty. As I returned from the post office with the above note, on the 15th day of April, 1868, feeling rather depressed in spirit, I took the Bible in my hand, and opened it with the prayer that therein I might find comfort and support, and my eye rested directly upon the following words of the prophet: "Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee; be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made

thee this day a defended city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee." Jer. i, 17-19.

We returned home from this tour just before a great fall of rain which carried off the snow. The descending storm prevented the next Sabbath meeting. I immediately commenced to prepare matter for No. 14. We also had the pleasure of caring for our dear Bro. King whom we brought to our home with a terrible injury upon the head and face. We took him to our house to die, for we could not think it possible for one with the skull so terribly broken in to recover. But, with the blessing of God upon a very gentle use of water, a very spare diet, till the danger of fever was passed, and well-ventilated rooms day and night, in three weeks he was able to return to his home and engage in matters of his farming interests. He did not take one grain of medicine from first to last. Although he was considerably reduced by loss of blood from his wounds and spare diet, yet when he could take a more liberal amount of food, he came up rapidly.

About this time we commenced labor for our brethren and friends near Greenville. As is the case in many places, our brethren around us needed help. And there were those who kept the Sabbath, yet did not belong to the church, and also some who had given up the Sabbath, who needed help. We felt disposed to help these poor souls, but the past course of leading members of the church in relation to these persons, and their present position, made it almost impossible for us to approach them. In laboring with the erring, some of our brethren had been too rigid, too cutting in remarks. And when some were disposed to reject their counsel, and separate from them, they would say, "Well, if they want to go off, let them go." These poor, erring, inexperienced souls, buffeted by Satan, with such a want of the compassion, and long-suffering, and tenderness manifested by Jesus, were certain to

make shipwreck of faith. However great may be the wrongs and sins of the erring, our brethren must learn to manifest not only the tenderness of the Great Shepherd, but also his undying care and love for the poor, straying sheep. Our ministers toil and lecture, week after week, and rejoice that a few souls embrace the truth; and yet, brethren of a prompt, decided turn of mind may, in five minutes, destroy their work by indulging in the feelings which prompt actions and words like these, "Well, if they want to leave us, let them go."

We found that we could do nothing for the scattered sheep near us until we had first corrected the wrongs in many of the members of the church. They had let these poor souls wander. They took on no burdens for them. In fact, they seemed shut up to themselves, and were dying a spiritual death for want of spiritual exercise. They still loved the general cause, and were ready to help sustain it. They would take good care of the servants of God. But there was decidedly a want of care for widows, orphans, and the feeble of the flock. Besides some interest for the cause in general, there was but little apparent interest for any but their own families. With so narrow a religion they were dying a spiritual death.

There were those who kept the Sabbath, attended meeting, and paid Systematic Benevolence, yet were out of the church. And it is true they were not fit to belong to any church. But while leading church members stood as some in that church did, with little or no encouragement, it was almost impossible for them to arise in the strength of God and do better. As we began to labor with the church, and teach them that they must have a spirit of labor for the erring, much that I had seen relative to the cause in that place opened before me, and I wrote out the pointed testimonies not only for those who had erred greatly and were out of the church, but for those members in the church who had erred greatly in not going in search for the lost sheep. And I was never more disappointed in the manner in which these testimonies were received. While those who had been greatly in fault were re-

proved by most pointed testimonies, read to them publicly, received them, and confessed with tears. Some of those in the church, who claimed to be the fast friends of the cause, and the testimonies, could hardly think it possible that they had been as wrong as the testimonies declared them to be. When they were told that they were self-caring, shut up to themselves and families; that they had failed to care for others; had been exclusive, and left precious souls to perish; that they were in danger of being overbearing and self-righteous, they were brought into a state of wonderful agitation and trial.

But this experience was just what they needed to teach them forbearance toward others in a similar state of trial. There are many who feel sure that they will have no trial respecting the testimonies, who continue to feel so till they are tested. They think it strange that any can doubt. They will be severe with those who manifest doubts. They will cut and slash, and show their zeal for the testimonies, showing more self-righteousness than humility. And when the Lord reproves them for their wrongs, they find themselves as weak as water. Then they can hardly endure the trial. And these things should teach them humility, self-abasement, tenderness, and undying love for the erring.

It seems to me that the Lord is giving the erring, the weak, the trembling, and even those who apostatized from the truth, an especial call to come fully into the fold. But there are but few in our churches who feel that this is the case. And there are still fewer who stand where they can help such. There are more who stand directly in the way of these poor souls. Very many have an exacting spirit. They require them to come to just such and such terms before they will reach to them the helping hand. Thus they hold them off at arms' length. They have not learned that they have an especial duty to go and search for these lost sheep. They must not wait till they come to them. Read the touching parable of the lost sheep. Luke xv, 1-7. "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes

murmured, saying, this man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, what man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it? And when he hath found it he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."

Jesus received publicans and common sinners, and ate with them. The Pharisees murmured. In their self-righteousness they despised these poor sinners who gladly heard the words of Jesus. To rebuke this spirit in the scribes and Pharisees, and leave an impressive lesson for all, the Lord gave the parable of the lost sheep. Notice in particular the following points:

The ninety and nine sheep are left, and diligent search is made for the one that is lost. The entire effort is made for this unfortunate sheep. So should the effort of the church be directed in behalf of those members who are straying from the fold of Christ. And have they apostatized far away, do not wait till they return before you try to help them, but go in search of them.

When the lost sheep was found, with joy it was borne home, and much rejoicing followed. This illustrates the blessed, joyful work of laboring for the erring. That church that engages successfully in this work, is a happy church. That man or that woman whose soul is drawn out in compassion and love for the erring, and labors to bring them to the fold of the Great Shepherd, is engaged in a blessed work. And, oh! what a soul-enrapturing thought, that when one sinner is thus reclaimed, there is more joy in Heaven than over ninety and nine just persons. These selfish, exclusive, exacting souls, who seem to fear to help those in error, as though they would become polluted

by so doing, do not taste of the sweets of this missionary work. And that blessedness which fills all Heaven with rejoicing upon the rescue of one who has apostatized more or less, they do not feel. They are shut up to their narrow views and feelings, and are becoming as dry and as unfruitful as the mountains of Gilboa, upon which there was neither dew nor rain.

Take a strong man and shut him away from labor, and he becomes feeble. That church, or those persons who shut themselves away from bearing burdens for others, who shut themselves up to themselves, will soon suffer spiritual feebleness. It is labor that keeps the strong man strong. And spiritual labor, toil and burden-bearing, is what will give strength to the church of Christ.

Sabbath and first day, April 18, 19, we enjoyed a good season with our people at Greenville. Brethren Cornell and Kellogg were with us. My husband baptized eight. The 25th and 26th, we were with the church in Wright. This dear people are ever ready to welcome us. Here my husband baptized eight.

May 2d, we met a large congregation at the house of worship at Monterey. My husband spoke with clearness and force upon the parable of the lost sheep. The word was greatly blessed to the people. Some who had strayed, were out of the church, and there was no spirit of labor in the church to help them. In fact, the stiff, stern, unfeeling position of some in the church was calculated to prevent their return should they be disposed thus to do. The subject touched the hearts of all, and all manifested a desire to get right. First-day and evening, we spoke three times in Allegan to good congregations. Our appointment was out to meet with the church at Battle Creek, the 9th; but we felt that our work in Monterey was but just commenced. We therefore decided to return to Monterey, and labor with that church another week. The good work moved on exceeding our expectations. The house was filled, and we never witnessed such a work in Monterey in so short a time. First-day, fifty were forward for prayers. Brethren felt deeply for the lost sheep, and confessed their coldness and indifference, and took

a good stand. Brethren G. T. Lay and S. Rummery gave good testimonies, and were joyfully received by their brethren. Fourteen were baptized, one of them a man near the middle-age of life who had felt opposed to the truth. The work moved on with solemnity, confessions and much weeping carrying all before it. Thus closed the arduous labors of the Conference year. And still we felt that the good work in Monterey was by no means finished. We have made arrangements to return and spend several weeks in Allegan county.

The Conference just past has been a season of deepest interest. The labors of my husband have been very great during its numerous sessions, and he must have rest. Our labors for the past year are regarded favorably by our people, and there was manifested to us at the Conference, sympathy, tender care, and benevolence. With them we have enjoyed great freedom, and we part, enjoying mutual confidence and love.

* DOING FOR CHRIST.

FROM what has been shown me, Sabbath-keepers are growing more selfish as they increase in riches. Their love for Christ and his people is decreasing. They do not see the wants of the needy, nor do they feel their sufferings and sorrows. They do not realize that in neglecting the poor and the suffering they neglect Christ, and that in relieving the wants and sufferings of the poor as far as possible, they do it to Jesus.

Christ says to his redeemed people, "Come! ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a

stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

To be a toiler, through patient continuance in well-doing, which calls for self-denying labor, is a glorious work, which Heaven smiles upon. Faithful work is more acceptable to God than the most zealous and thought-to-be, holiest, worship. It is in working together with Christ, that is true worship. Prayers, exhortation and talk are cheap fruits, which are frequently tied on, but fruits that are manifested in good works, in caring for the needy, the fatherless and widows, are genuine fruits, and grow naturally upon a good tree.

Pure religion and undefiled before the Father is this: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The doing principle is the fruit that Christ requires us to bear; deeds of benevolence, of kind words, of tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief. When the hand dispenses to the needy. When the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and in your full heart. Angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in Heaven. Every act, every deed of justice and mercy and benevolence, makes heavenly music in Heaven. The Father from his throne beholds and numbers them with his most precious treasures. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, when I make up my jewels." Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a more close relationship to Jesus.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels: for I was an hun-

gered; and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?"

"Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. Matt. xxv, 41-46.

Jesus here identifies himself with his suffering people. It was *I* who was hungry and thirsty. It was *I* who was a stranger. It was *I* who was naked. It was *I* who was sick. It was *I* who was in prison.

When you were enjoying your food from your bountifully spread tables, I was famishing of hunger in the hovel, or street, not far from you. When you closed your doors against me, while your well-furnished rooms were unoccupied, *I* had not where to lay my head. Your wardrobes were filled with an abundant supply of changeable suits of apparel, upon which means had been needlessly squandered, which you might have given to the needy. *I* was destitute of comfortable apparel. When you were enjoying health, *I* was sick. Misfortune cast me into prison and bound me with fetters, bowing down my spirit, depriving me of freedom and hope, while you roamed free. What a oneness Jesus here expresses as existing between himself and his suffering disciples. He makes their case his own. He identifies himself as being in person the very sufferer. Here, mark, selfish Christian, every neglect of yours to the needy poor, the orphan, the fatherless, is a neglect to Jesus in their person.

But I am acquainted with persons who make high professions, whose hearts are so encased in self love and selfishness that they cannot appreciate what I am writing. They have all their lives thought and lived only for self. To make a worthy sacrifice to do others good, to disadvantage themselves to advantage others, is out of the question with them. They have not the

least idea that God requires this of them. Self-is their dear idol. Precious weeks, months, and years, of valuable time pass into eternity, but they have no record in Heaven of kindly acts, of sacrificing for others' good, of feeding the hungry, in clothing the naked, or taking in the stranger. This entertaining strangers at a venture is not agreeable. If they knew that all who shared their bounty were worthy, then they might be induced to do something in this direction. But there is virtue in venturing something. Perchance we may entertain angels.

There are orphans that can be cared for; but this some will not venture to undertake, for it brings them work more than they care to do, leaving them but little time to please themselves. But when the King shall make investigation, these do-nothing, illiberal, selfish souls will then learn that Heaven is for those who have been workers; those who have denied themselves for Christ's sake. No provisions have been made for those who have ever taken such special care in loving and looking out for themselves. The terrible punishment the King threatened those on his left hand, in this case, is not because of their great crimes. They are not condemned for the things which they did do, but for that which they did not do. You did not those things Heaven assigned you to do. You pleased yourself, and can take your portion with self-pleasers.

To my sisters I would say, Be daughters of benevolence. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. You may have thought if you could find a child without fault, you would take it, and care for it; but to perplex your mind with an erring child, to have to instruct it, and to unlearn it many things and teach it anew, to teach it self-control, is a job you refuse to undertake. To teach the ignorant, to pity those who have ever been learning evil, and to reform them, is no slight task; but Heaven has placed just such ones in your way. They are blessings in disguise.

I was shown years ago that God's people would be tested upon this point of making homes for the homeless. That there would be many without homes in

consequence of their believing the truth. Opposition and persecution would deprive believers of their homes. And it was the duty of those who have homes to open a wide door to those who have not. I have been shown more recently that God would especially test his professed people in reference to this matter.: Christ for our sakes became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich. He made a sacrifice that he might provide a home for pilgrims and strangers in the world seeking for a better country, even an heavenly. Shall those who are subjects of his grace, who are expecting to be heirs of immortality, refuse, or even feel reluctant to share their homes with the homeless and needy? Must the strangers be refused entrance to our doors, who are disciples of Jesus, because they can claim no acquaintance with any of its inmates?

Has the injunction of the apostle no force in this age. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." I am daily pained with exhibitions of selfishness among our people. There is an alarming absence of love and care for those who are entitled to it. Our Heavenly Father lays blessings disguised in our pathway, which some will not touch for fear they will detract from their enjoyment. Angels are waiting to see if we embrace opportunities within our reach of doing good—waiting to see if we will bless others, that they in their turn may bless us. The Lord himself has made us to differ. Some poor, some rich, some afflicted; that all may have an opportunity to develop a character. The poor are purposely permitted to be thus of God, that we might be tested, and proved, and develop what is in our hearts.

I have heard many excuse themselves from inviting to their homes and hearts the saints of God. "Why, I have nothing prepared—I have nothing cooked—they must go to some other place." And at that place there may be some other excuse invented for not receiving those who need their hospitality, and the feelings of the visitors are deeply grieved, and they leave with unpleasant impressions in regard to their hospitality. If you have no bread, sister, imitate the case brought to

view in the Bible. Go to your neighbor and say, "Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him." We have not an example of this lack of bread ever being made an excuse to refuse entrance to an applicant.

When Elijah came to the widow of Sarepta, she shared her morsel with the prophet of God, and he wrought a miracle, and caused that in that act of making a home for his servant, and sharing her morsel with him, she herself was sustained, and her life and that of her son preserved. Thus will it prove in the case of many, if they do this cheerfully for the glory of God. Others plead their poor health—they would love to do if they had strength. Such have so long shut themselves up to themselves, and thought so much of their own poor feelings, and talked so much of their sufferings, trials, and affliction, that it is their present truth. They cannot think of any one else, however much they may be in need of sympathy and assistance. You who are suffering with poor health, there is a remedy for you. "If you clothe the naked, and bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, and deal thy bread to the hungry, then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily."

Doing good is an excellent remedy for disease. Such are invited to bring their prayers to God, and he has pledged himself to answer them. "His soul shall be satisfied in drought, and he shall be like a watered garden, whose waters fail not."

Wake up, brethren and sisters. Don't be afraid of good works. "Be not weary in well doing, for ye shall reap in due time if ye faint not." Do not wait to be told your duty. Open your eyes and see who is around you, and make yourselves acquainted with the helpless, afflicted, and needy. Hide not yourselves from them, and seek not to shut out their needs. Who gives the proofs mentioned in James of their possessing pure religion, untainted with any selfishness or corruption? Who is anxious to do all it is in their power to do to aid in the great plan of salvation?

There is a widow I am acquainted with who has two

small children to support, wholly by the use of her needle. She looks pale and careworn. All through the hard winter has she struggled to sustain herself and her children. She has received a little help. But who would feel any lack if a still greater interest was manifested in this case. Here are her two boys about the ages of nine and eleven years, who need homes. Who is willing to give them homes for Christ's sake. The mother should be released from this care and close confinement to her needle. These boys are in a village, their only guardian their hard-working mother. These boys need to be taught how to work, as their age will admit. They need to be patiently, kindly, lovingly instructed. Some may say, Oh! yes, I would take them and teach them how to work. But they should not lose sight of other things which these children need besides being taught to work. They need to be instructed how they shall develop good Christian character. They want the manifestation of love and affection, and to be fitted to become useful here, and finally be prepared for Heaven. Disrobe yourselves of selfishness, and see if there are not many whom you can help and bless with your homes, your sympathy, your love, and in pointing them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. Do you wish to make any sacrifice to save souls? Jesus, the dear Saviour, is preparing a home for you; and why not you in your turn prepare a home for those who need homes, and in thus doing imitate the example of your Master. If you are not willing to do this, when you shall feel that you need a habitation in the heavens, none will be awarded you. "For inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me." You that have been selfish, studying your ease, your advantage, all your life, your hours of probation are fast closing. What are you doing to redeem your life of selfishness and uselessness? Wake up! wake up!

As you regard your eternal interest, arouse yourselves, and begin to sow good seed. That which ye sow shall ye also reap. The harvest is coming — the great reaping time, when we shall reap what we have

sown. There will be no failure in the crop. The harvest is sure. Now is the sowing time. Now make efforts to be rich in good works, "ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that ye may lay hold on eternal life." I implore you, my brethren, in every place, rid yourselves of your icy coldness. Encourage in yourselves a love of hospitality, a love to help those who need help.

You may say you have been bitten, taken in, bestowing your means upon those unworthy of your charity, and therefore have become discouraged in trying to help the needy. I present Jesus before you. He came to save fallen man. He came to bring salvation to his own nation; but they would not accept him. They treated his mercy with insult and contempt, and at length they put to death him who came for the purpose of giving life to them. Did our Lord turn from all the fallen race because of this? If your efforts for good have been unsuccessful ninety-nine times, and you received only insult, reproach, and hate, if the one-hundredth time proves a success, and one soul is saved, oh! what a victory is achieved. One soul wrenched from Satan's grasp; one soul you have benefited; one soul encouraged. This will a thousand times pay you for all your efforts. To you will Jesus say, "As much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Should we not gladly do all we can to imitate the life of our divine Lord?

Many shrink at the idea of making any sacrifice for others' good. They are not willing to suffer for the sake of helping others. They flatter themselves that it is not required of them to disadvantage themselves for the benefit of others. To such we will say, Jesus is our example.

When the request was made for the two sons of Zeb-edee to sit the one on his right hand and the other on his left in his kingdom, Jesus answered, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They say unto him, We are able. And he said, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup and be

baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with, but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." How many can answer, We can drink of the cup; we can be baptized with the baptism; and make the answer understandingly? How many imitate the great Exemplar? All who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ in taking this step pledge themselves to walk even as he walked. Yet the course many pursue who make high professions of the truth shows that they make but little reference to the Pattern in conforming their lives thereto. They shape their course to meet their own imperfect standard. They do not imitate the self-denial of Christ, or his life of sacrifice for others' good. The poor are in our midst—the homeless and widows.

I heard a wealthy farmer describe the situation of a poor widow among them. He lamented her straitened circumstances, and then said, "I don't know how she is going to get along this cold winter. She has close times now." Such ones have forgotten the Pattern, and by their acts say, Nay, Lord, we cannot drink of the cup of self-denial, humiliation, and sacrifice you drank off, nor be baptized with the suffering you were baptized with. We cannot live to do others good. It is our business to take care of ourselves.

Who should know how the widow should get along unless it be those who have well-filled granaries. The means for her to get along is at hand. And dare those whom God has made his stewards, to whom he has intrusted means, withhold from the needy disciples of Christ? If so, they do it to Jesus. Do you expect the Lord to rain down grain from Heaven to supply the needy? Has he not rather placed it in your hands to help and bless them through you? Has he not made you his instrument in this good work to prove you, and to give you the privilege of laying up a treasure in Heaven?

Fatherless and motherless children will be thrown into the arms of the church, and Christ says to his followers, Take these destitute children, bring them up for me, and ye shall receive your wages. I have seen

much selfishness exhibited in these things. Unless there is some special evidence that they *themselves* were to be benefited by adopting into their family those who need homes, some they turn away and answer, No. They do not seem to know nor care whether such are saved or lost. That, they think, is not their business. With Cain they say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" They are not willing to be put to inconvenience or to make any sacrifice for the orphans, and they indifferently thrust such ones into the arms of the world, who are sometimes more willing to receive them than they are. In the day of God, inquiry will be made for just such whom Heaven gave them the opportunity of saving, and they wished to be excused and would not engage in the good work unless they could be a matter of profit to them. I have been shown, those who refuse these opportunities of doing good will hear from Jesus, "As ye have not done it unto one of the least of my brethren, ye have not done it unto me." Please read Isaiah lviii :

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually,

and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

✓ This is the especial work now before us. All our praying and abstinence from food will avail nothing, unless we resolutely lay hold of this work. Sacred obligations are resting upon us. Our duty is plainly stated. The Lord has spoken unto us by his prophet. The thoughts of the Lord and his ways are not what blind, selfish mortals believe they are, or wish them to be. The Lord looks on the heart. If selfishness dwells there, he knows it. We may seek to conceal our true character from our brethren and sisters, but God knows. And nothing can be hid from him.

The fast is described which God can accept. To deal thy bread to the hungry. Bring the poor which are cast out, to thy house. Wait not for them to come to you. The labor rests not on them to hunt you up, and entreat of you a home for themselves. You are to search for them, and you bring them to your house. You are to draw out your soul after them. You are with one hand to reach up and by faith take hold of the mighty arm which bringeth salvation, while with the other hand of love reach the oppressed, and relieve them. It is impossible for you to fasten upon the arm of God with one hand, while the other is employed in administering to your own pleasure. If thou shalt engage in this work of mercy and love, will the work prove too hard for you?

Will you fail and be crushed under the burden, and your family be deprived of your assistance and influence. Oh! no, God has carefully removed all doubts upon this question, by a pledge to you on condition of your obedience. This promise covers all the most exacting, the most hesitating, could crave. "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health spring forth speedily." Only believe that He is faithful that hath promised. The physical strength God can renew. And more, he says he will do it. And the promise does not end here. "Thy righteousness shall go before thee. The glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." God will build a fortification around

thee. The promise does not stop here. Thou shalt call and the Lord shall answer. Thou shalt cry and he shall say, Here I am. If ye put down oppression and remove the speaking of *vanity*, if ye draw out your soul to the hungry, "Then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday. The Lord shall guide the continually, and make fat thy bones, and satisfy thy soul in drought (famine) and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

Read Isa. lviii, ye who claim to be children of the light. Especially do you read it again and again who have felt so fearful to inconvenience yourselves by favoring the needy; you whose hearts and houses are too narrow to make a home for the homeless, read it. You who can see orphans and widows oppressed by the iron hand of poverty, and bowed down by the hard-hearted worldlings, read it.

Are you afraid that an influence will be introduced into your family that will cost you more labor, read it. Your fears may be groundless, and a blessing may come, known and realized by you every day. But if otherwise, if extra labor is called for, you can draw upon One who hath promised, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily." Why God's people are not more spiritually-minded, and have no more faith, I have been shown, is because they are narrowed up with selfishness. The prophet is addressing Sabbath-keepers, not sinners, not unbelievers, but those who make great pretensions to godliness. It is not the abundance of your meetings that God accepts. It is not the numerous prayers, but the right-doing. Doing the right thing, and at the right time. It is to be less self-caring, and more benevolent. Our souls must expand. Then God will make them like a watered garden, whose waters fail not.

Read Isa. i. "And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve

the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

3. The gold mentioned by Christ, the True Witness, which all must have, has been shown me to be faith and love combined, and love takes the precedence of faith. Satan is constantly at work to remove these precious gifts from the hearts of God's people. All are engaged in playing the game of life. Satan is well aware if he can remove love and faith and supply their place with selfishness and unbelief, all the remaining precious traits will soon be skillfully removed by his deceitful hand, and the game will be lost.

My dear brethren, will you allow Satan to accomplish his purposes? Will you submit to lose the game in which you are desirous to win everlasting life? If God has ever spoken by me, you will just as surely be overcome by Satan, instead of being an overcomer, as the throne of God stands sure, unless you are entirely transformed. Love and faith must be won back. Will you engage in this conflict anew, and win back the precious gifts you are nearly destitute of? You will have to make efforts more earnest, more persevering and untiring, than you have ever made. It is not to merely pray or fast, but it is to be obedient, to divest yourselves of your selfishness, and obey the fast which he has chosen, which he will accept. Many may feel grieved because I have spoken plainly. But this I shall continue to do, if God lays the burden upon me.

God requires that those who occupy responsible positions should be consecrated to the work; for if they move wrong, the people take lenity to follow in their footsteps. If the people are wrong, and they lift not their voice against the error and wrong, they sanction the same, and the sin is charged upon them as well as the offender. Those who occupy responsible positions should be men of piety, who feel the burden of the work resting upon them continually.

Epistle Number One.

DEAR BRO. :—I have been designing to write you for some time, but our labors have been so constant and wearing, that I have had no time nor strength to do so. Your case was shown me in the last vision given me. You were in a critical condition. You knew the truth, you understood your duty, and in the light of the truth you had rejoiced; but because it interfered with your worldly pursuits, you were about to sacrifice truth and duty to your own convenience. You were looking at your own present, pecuniary advantages, and losing sight of the eternal weight of glory. You were about to make an immense sacrifice for the flattering prospect of present gain. You were just upon the point of selling your birthright for a mess of pottage. Had you turned from the truth for earthly gain, it would not have been a sin of ignorance on your part, but willful transgression.

Esau, because he lusted for a favorite dish, sacrificed his birthright to gratify appetite. After his lustful appetite was gratified, then he saw his folly, but found no space for repentance although he sought it carefully, and with tears.

There are very many who are like Esau. He represents a class who have a special, valuable blessing, within their reach,—the immortal inheritance; life that is as enduring as the life of God, the Creator of the universe; happiness immeasurable, and an eternal weight of glory. Yet there are very many who have indulged their appetites, passions and inclinations, so long that their powers to discern and appreciate the value of eternal things are weakened. Esau had a special, strong desire for a particular article of food, and he had gratified self so long, he did not feel the necessity of turning from the tempted, coveted dish.

He thought upon it and made no special effort to restrain his appetite, until the power of appetite bore down every other consideration, and controlled him, and he imagined he would suffer great inconvenience, and even death, if he could not have that particular dish. The more he thought upon it the more his de-

sire strengthened, until his birthright, which was sacred, lost its value and its sacredness. He thought, Well, if I now sell it, I can easily buy it back again. He flattered himself that he could dispose of it at will, and buy it back at pleasure. He bartered it away for a favorite dish. When he sought to purchase it back, even at a great sacrifice on his part, he was not able to do so. He then bitterly repented his rashness, his folly, his madness. He looked the matter over on every side. He sought for repentance carefully and with tears. It was all in vain. He had despised the blessing, and the Lord removed it from him forever. You have thought if you should sacrifice the truth now and go on in a course of open transgression and disobedience, that you would not break over all restraint and become reckless, that if you should become disappointed in your hopes and expectations of worldly gain, you could again interest yourself in the truth and become a candidate for everlasting life. But you deceived yourself in this matter. Had you sacrificed the truth for worldly gain, it would have been at the expense of life everlasting. Under the parable of a great supper, our Saviour shows that many will choose the world above himself, and will as the result lose Heaven. The gracious invitation of our Saviour was slighted. He had been to the trouble and expense to make a great preparation at an immense sacrifice. Then sent his invitation. But they with one consent began to make excuses. "I have bought a piece of ground and must needs go and see it, I pray thee have me excused; and another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused; another said I have married me a wife, therefore I cannot come." The Lord then turns from the wealthy and the world-loving, whose lands and oxen and wives were of so great value in their estimation as to outweigh the advantages they would gain by accepting the gracious invitation he had given them to eat of his supper. The master of the house was angry and turned from those who had thus insulted his bounty offered them, and turns to a class who are not full, who are poor, who are hungry, who are not in