

All wanted to share the honor of a relief committee, so the number needed was readily and speedily obtained.

Alice gave directions to each as to what they should bring, and out of the scene of gaiety they proceeded on their errand of mercy.

Soon all met again in the brilliant parlors with light hearts and happy faces.

A desolate home was made bright and comfortable by that gracious act. Each felt the genial influence which accompanies a generous deed, that it is truly "better to give than to receive," and that "he who gives to the poor leads to the Lord."

Will Harding told little Edith one day that he regretted sincerely having called her a "little fraud," and Mrs. Ward reassured him by remarking that the fact of his arousing Edith's indignation led to the much-needed assistance.

Edith very readily forgave the thoughtless words.

Many kind friends ministered to Mrs. Ward's wants when her condition became known, and she was soon restored to health and comparative independence by the aid of her musical abilities.

It is only necessary to add these words—you all remember who uttered them—"The poor ye have always with you."—Sunday School Times.

Correspondence.

Luthardt's Apologetical Discourses.

Translated from the German for the Christian Messenger by Prof. D. M. Welton.

SECOND DISCOURSE.

III.

The Enigmas of Existence.

Here we find the truth which we seek.

But in order to find this truth, we must seek. And in order to seek it aright, we must wish to find it.

It would be unworthy of us and should also be impossible, to take an interest in all ordinary questions and phenomena, and yet take no interest in this highest of all questions. For we are created for the truth, and truth is the food of the soul. Herein is our greatness. And though the door of truth should be shut to me, I would rather in the sadness of my heart set myself down before this door, "that this sadness might at least bear witness that I feel myself born for the truth," than that I should be too indifferent ever to enquire after it. But it signifies little interest in the truth merely superficially to touch on the surface of knowledge instead of penetrating to its depths. What Bacon says of philosophy, that slightly tasted, it leads from God, but comprehended in its depths, it leads to God, holds true also of the knowledge of truth. For truth dwells in the deep; God dwells in the deep; he stands behind things. The ways of investigation are many, but the end is one: that is God, who is the truth. But we must press forward to the end. Why should we not? Because obscurity lies upon the way? What way is free from it? Do we not live in the midst of mysteries? Is not life itself, and the conception of life, a mystery? If reality is full of obscurity, why should there be none in our knowledge of it? Where has man ever put forth a system of truth in which there was no darkness? "The farther man advances in knowledge, the nearer he comes to the inscrutable," says Goethe. Do not mysteries multiply, the farther the inquiring spirit penetrates into the depths? We must calmly hold ourselves to matters and questions and let them operate upon us, and not chase from one to another so that they can make no impression upon us. And then: we must desire to find the truth of things themselves, and not project our own thoughts into them. The knowledge of truth begins, according to Pythagoras, with silence: that is with the still, inward surrendering of ourselves to it, and not with reasoning or doubting. There is, indeed, an inquiring doubt that appropriates the promise that God enlightens the upright; but there is also a doubt that "ever learns, and yet never comes to the knowledge of the truth." This is not only a fault of the mind, but in the last analysis a fault of the will. Man questions not the axioms of mathematics. Why not? Because he feels no interest in questioning them. But to question

the existence of God—well, indeed, may he feel an interest in this. Our thoughts depend much more upon our inclinations and desires, in short, upon our whole moral condition, than is often supposed. "The heart has its arguments of which the understanding knows nothing," says Pascal. And a proud philosopher, Fichte, has confessed: "our system of thought* is often only the history of our heart. All my conviction comes from feeling, and not from intellect; and the improvement of the heart leads to true wisdom." We live not as we think, but we think as we live. Our relation to truth is not simply an intellectual one, but above all a moral one. Our moral relation to truth is decisive for the character of our thoughts. It often happens that a person falls morally, and then also intellectually. The understanding is bribable; it yields from all sorts of motives to the wishes of the heart. Truth is a matter of great concern. It is not easy to endure its glance. In the first place it penetrates and judges the heart; then only it enlightens and elevates. Man must submit to the former operation if he will experience the latter. In a word: the knowledge of the truth is a moral matter; it lies in the will, and not first of all in the understanding. For after all misunderstanding and doubt have been laid aside, it is finally the will that decides upon the acceptance or non-acceptance of truth. One must be willing to know the truth.

Christianity declares itself only for the truth. Man must come into direct relation to it; he cannot go around it. He can combat it, he can hate it, but he can not ignore it; for it meets him in every way and compels him to give an answer to the question which it addresses to him.

It is often said indeed: Christianity is a beautiful theory; but it is still a theory. It is too ideal, it does not suit our relations. Our public affairs, political life with its tasks and changes, the great problems of humanity, science and art, trade and industry, &c., all these are not compatible with Christianity. Christianity does not accommodate itself truly to these actual relations. To the whole of real life it is too foreign. It is a poem, but life is prose. It is a kind of apparition from another world; but we live in this world. It directs our thoughts to that other world; but we belong with all our energies to this world. It stands in opposition to our natural feelings and thoughts. It is the denial of the human. It produces also no real, entire and complete men. The Christian under the best circumstances is "an angel who rides upon a brute." Christianity is not human enough. What shall we do with it? We cannot use it. It cannot be the truth which we seek and need.

What shall we reply to these things? We appeal first of all to facts; we call history to witness. Is it not a fact that Christianity has been the highest and richest spiritual force in history? Even the foes of Christianity must acknowledge this. They would not so violently assail its truth, were they not obliged to acknowledge the reality of its power and influence, and even to feel it also, at every step they take in the sphere of the outer as well as of the inner life. Thus Christianity is not simply a theory and a fiction: it is the power of reality, and indeed its greatest power. Does not the time subsequent to Christ's coming vastly transcend that which preceded it? It was only with Christianity that the age of humanity began. Thus Christianity must be suitable to man's nature. In every province of science and art it has disclosed new depths in the human heart and mind; in the sphere of social life it has given incomparable sincerity and tenderness to man's sensibilities and personal relations. Thus it must be, not the negation of human life, but its reality. History testifies that Christianity is the truth. But its truth itself bears witness. It is this which obliges us to show that the ground-truths of Christianity are those of our mind. This will appear in the following discourse. Christianity, however, grounds its whole system of truth in the certainty that God exists. The first word of Christianity proclaims: God! The solution of the enigma of our existence lies in God. The truth which we need and desire is God, the living, personal God. This is the foundation of the entire Christian world-contemplation.

For the Christian Messenger. Letter from London.

(From our correspondent.)

THE OPENING OF THE GREAT AGRICULTURAL FAIR.

LONDON, June 27th, 1879.

The exhibition of the Royal Agricultural Society of England will be opened with appropriate ceremony on the 30th of June.

The first Triennial celebration of the society was held at Oxford, in 1839, under the presidency of Earl Spencer, and upon that occasion the great American orator, Daniel Webster, who was present, held language which is less applicable to British farmers at this moment than it was forty years ago. He told his hearers that the whole world looked up to English agriculture as to a parent; that in no other country was it so well understood as a science or so well practiced as an art as among the English people; that the civilized and commercial interests of mankind were so blended that the fear or the prospect of a short-crop in England must derange and agitate the business transactions and monetary speculations and exchanges of the whole civilized globe; and that, should there be a frost in England fifteen or twenty days later in the spring, or a dozen cold and wet days when the harvest is reaped and garnered every corn exchange in the world would be affected if not convulsed by the result.

Since these words were spoken by Mr. Webster, the tendency of the day, thanks to the distance-defying inventions and applications of steam and electricity, is more and more in the direction of an equalization of prices throughout the globe. The dealers and speculators in cereals upon the corn exchanges of Chicago, Milwaukee, and San Francisco are now as well acquainted each successive day with the price of wheat in Mark-lane as the English merchants who determine or set the price of grain in the greatest commercial mart of civilization. Simultaneously, the shippers of live cattle, sheep and hogs, or of dead meat, from the ports of the United States to these islands, know whether the moment is propitious for fresh consignments to foreign shores. The whole world in fact is now an enormous glass house, in which every transaction that takes place is seen and reported with lightning speed and unerring accuracy. The British farmer is upon his trial, and his interests are so inseparably woven with those of his landlord and those of his laborers that it is more than ever necessary for him to address himself seriously to the task of rising in the scale of reflective and intelligent humanity. For these reasons the approaching International Exhibition of the Royal Agricultural Society offers an opportunity to farmers of learning how they stand when compared with their rivals beyond the seas. Seventeen years ago the same society held one of its annual shows at Battersea, and was patronized by so scanty a contingent of spectators as to leave a serious deficiency in the balance-sheet of its council. Regarded merely as an exhibition, the many miles of sheds already prepared at Kilburn to receive the animals, implements, and products that are expected will afford a rich treat even to Londoners, who understand nothing about stock, and have no other conceptions as to the price of wheat than those afforded by the cost of a loaf of bread.

The architectural work of the great show is far advanced. Near the unrivalled horse-ring, and long, sweeping line of raised and covered seats, are the dormitories for foreign herdsmen; but it may be doubted whether all or many of the hundred beds here provided will be nightly occupied, seeing how prevalent is the custom among these men to sleep in sight of their charges. The foreign horses will make a grand show; but, in face of quarantine regulations, the horned stock from abroad will present rather a diminished appearance. Still, there will be French beasts worth regarding; and yesterday forty cattle and fifty sheep from Cherbourg arrived at Portland, where they must remain for ten days. The Channel Island cattle, of which not fewer than 200 will be shown, promise to be the best as well as largest display ever seen in England. In consequence of the noble exertions of Canon Bagot, 500 Irish working farmers, who have been induced to join in a trip to the Kilburn show yard, will have op-

portunities of seeing for themselves those new operations in foreign dairy labor by which, as their reverend and wisely benevolent friend very truly says, Irish butter is being beaten out of the field.

The trials of railway wagons entered in competition for the gold medal and prize of £50, offered by the Mansion House Committee, "for the best wagon for conveying perishable articles, such as fish, poultry, game, etc., a journey of 500 miles, the trucks to retain their contents at a temperature of 45 deg. Fahrenheit for a period of six days," will commence to-morrow, when the vans will be attached to the train from Camden Station on the London and North Western Railway, reaching London at 4.30 A. M. The wagons will not then be opened, but will be placed in the show-yard with their contents still sealed up to undergo the stationary trial. The articles of food to be deposited in the wagons will consist of a side of ox beef, a carcass of ewe and of wether mutton, a side of veal, a lamb, a porker, a gosling, a leveret, and a couple each of fowls, ducks, and rabbits.

For the Christian Messenger. The Violated Law.

Matt. xviii. 15-18.

By Rev. T. H. PORTER.

The Jews have a saying that one cause of the ruin of their nation was, no man reproved another.

Persons often when offended become vindictive, and seek to retaliate and injure. Or they get angry and passionately express their displeasure. Or they become morose and reserved, avoiding the offender, or refusing to have any intercourse with him. All this is wrong, and utterly opposed to the requirement before us. And in giving that law, our Lord, I think, laid down a general principle for the reclaiming of offenders, of universal application, exceptions alone excepted. That principle is simply this—first, private and personal labor with the one who has done wrong, in case of failure in bringing him to repentance, as slight a deviation from it as possible that will at the same time permit assistance: "Take with thee one or two" only. And then, third, bringing it before the body having supreme jurisdiction. It is therefore a plan that combines what really is valuable both in arbitration, and ordinary legal processes, for the settlement of difficulties. If this rule were generally observed, how much trouble might be prevented. And, since every man is my brother, who shall say that I am not in all cases bound to put the principle in practice.

But it is especially applicable to the discipline of Christian churches, and it is in this connection that I now propose to consider it:

1. What then does it require?

It demands that when a trespass has been committed by a member of a church, the brother member offended go to the offender. It is natural to say, especially if we have proof he has done the wrong, Let him come to me. But not so says our Lord. He is not likely to come, though it is admitted he is required to:—"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." How blessed for the two to meet half way.

But whatever he may do, you, because supposed to be in the better state of mind, must go. Not send; not write unless to go is impossible. Then it would be carrying out the spirit of the command, all else necessary being as close in conformity to it as possible. Your object is to ascertain the facts, and if he is guilty to show or convince him of his fault: Not to criminate, not to upbraid, not to humble him. Not as a preparation for the subsequent action. It is nothing less than to gain him, and you should expect and be satisfied with nothing less. Consequently you are not merely required, as we read, to "tell him his fault," but, if necessary, argue the case, and make him see it.

Go "alone." Let no one know of the offence, or of your intention. For if you feel right, you are concerned as well for his reputation as his salvation. He will be more likely to receive admonition if you thus go. He will not be so likely

to put himself on the defensive. And he will see that it is interest in him that prompts, and that you have not utterly lost confidence in him, nor deem him beyond hope. And should he either satisfactorily explain, or be won, how great will be your confusion if you have previously divulged the matter. "Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself, and discover not a secret to another; lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away."

And now, in this first step you have more to hope than in any required in case of failure. "A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool,"—or a wise man either. And if you fail here, the probability is that all subsequent effort though just as much required, and for the same purpose—will also prove a failure. Therefore be prayerful, earnest and persevering. For if successful, what a gain—to yourself, the cause of religion, and to Christ who sends you! Surely the object is abundantly worth the effort. And this law, so explicit, is binding upon all Christ's followers. Not one is exempt. Not the weakest, nor the least influential, nor the most unworthy. And its neglect is perpetuating difficulties and wrongs, otherwise easily disposed of, more I think, than any and every thing else. It is confessedly opposed to human nature. And therefore self-denying and difficult—perhaps more so than any other service in which we are called to engage. But this, instead of hindering, should only stimulate us.

It is sometimes objected that all this effort is more than the individual is worth. But "take heed that ye despise not one of those little ones," your Father's child, your "brother"!

But, you say, it will hurt his feelings, perhaps offend him for me to go to him. But are you sure of this? And even if it should, is not that better than that the weak brother perish? Some think it opposed to a forgiving and loving spirit. But do not all the teachings of the chapter prove the contrary? "If thy brother trespass against thee rebuke him; and if he repent forgive him." These two things then are not incompatible. On the contrary, nothing more shows our love, while it is its neglect that proves the absence of it. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor and not suffer sin upon him." "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." But perhaps the most frequent objection, and the one most frequently made, is, our own unworthiness. But even this will not do. "Restore such an one considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." A sense of this should render us cautious and charitable, but it was never intended that it should hinder us.

It is universally admitted, that in all cases of private and personal offences this is the divine rule. These include all injuries done to the person, property, reputation or feelings of a brother, whether real or only supposed, intentional or unintentional. If worth mentioning or even brooding over and remembering, they are included. And this being the case, we should be exceedingly careful how we either give or take offence, knowing what must follow if the law of Christ is obeyed.

But the point I am seeking to establish is that this rule is of universal application, and capable of being, and intended to be applied to all classes of offence requiring church discipline. Baptist Churches recognize this idea in the mutual pledge of our covenant. In it we give ourselves to one another to watch over each other in the love of God—reproving, rebuking and admonishing one another for good. And we pledge ourselves that if we at any time know that any of the church are guilty of immoral conduct even, we will not expose them by tattling it to others but will faithfully labor with them according to this direction of our Lord. If then we adopt this plan in offences which are most open and flagrant, and all agree that we should in those least so, surely there can be no doubt as to those that lie between these extremes. Therefore "a heretic," for instance, that is, a factious man, a disturber of the church's peace, we can "reject" only after this "first and second admonition." But the Bible which is our sole authority, has been called a book of principles. Applying this to the case in hand, I do not know that I can better illustrate it than by reference to the only Scriptural sys-