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## Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. Incidents of Ministerial Life. A TALE AND SOMETHING MORE.

CHAPTER VI.

into blossom and fruit without sunshine; like plants. If we wish to become fully acquainted with persons, we must treat them with confidence and kindness.

Mr. Alethes after a while enjoyed more sunshine amongst his fellow students than he had given them credit for. The trouble was, in part, he had been a little exacting in the matter, and did not make the greatest use of that excellent maxim, "Do unto others as you would have others do to you." Those who knew him best thought him one of the most genial of men; but, on being introduced to strangers, he seemed to struggle with a renovation of disposition which was sometimes misunderstood, and his mind was too quick to close up, if he felt treated with indifference. He soon concluded that it was part of his education, if possible, to cure this disposition, for it was his determination never to be lacking in important attain-

When he finally graduated, his whole educational course was pronounced a remarkable success; and whatever deficiencies remained could not be attributed to the want of assiduity. Who shall describe the feelings by which a young man, of 'Timothy's knowledge of things, surveys the field of ministerial labor, and apprehends the periods of probation about to succeed?

Judging from the unreasonable demands sometimes made on a minister. it would be impossible exactly to define his character, if he were so constituted as to meet those demands. Such a man would be a combination of contradictions. Somewhere hereabout, lies the difficulties often experienced in choosing a paster, and the far greater difficulties by which some men hold a position year after year.

Some take pride in a pastor who has had the advantages of the Theological School; others, of the same church, with a far greater pride, assume to pour contempt on your college men." Mr. Rigens likes to hear the doctrines logi cally explained, and has no patience with that which is soft and tender; and brother Pliant says, he must have a preacher who can make him smile and weep all in one sermon. Nearly every one rejoices in a pastor who can com mand universal respect, by reason of his magnanimity: let us suppose such a man reduced to the necessity of collecting the greater part of his salary from house to house. What a complex character he would be if he did this cheer fully as a matter of course! It is well known that a few stingy church members neglect to pay the minister more than a mere pittance. What kind of a man would that be, who, time after time, could visit such persons, and with genial smiles, talk and read and pray with the families as though nothing were wrong? Is there a being in heaven or earth, or anywhere else. who could do this, and do it well?

Many are profoundly ignorant of the damage they are capable of doing to the dispositions of their pastors, and to the ministry at large. There must be accessions on the part of the whole; no one has any right to require the minis- another if they are nothing, distinction from luminous bodies, governed ter to assume another character if he has implies difference, but in all nothings been received as a pastor, after the order of the New Testament; the interests of all will best be promoted by is nothing, yet that nothing holds the leaving him to develop himself. Paul was "made all things to all men;" but these were right things, and there was no contradiction in his character.

respectability will see that his minister be not obliged to do things beneath the dignity of his position. Ministers, of necessity, are perpetually reflecting honor or disgrace on every individual under their care. The mendicant Friars of the Romish Church had honorable reasons for begging. Protestant ministers have as good reasons for doing the same thing. They may be simply asking for work honestly done. It must not be forgotten, however, that every real man who extends his hat to solicit a pure alms, undergoes a revolution in his soul, and changes his position in society once for all. That it is done indirectly makes no difference whatever, because they will not do anything that attached to the majority of their people, are at the same time suffering in silence and passing rich.

It is not a little vexing to think how serious thought. Our people generally tree, sea and river, hill and dale, smoke can that which God made be Himself? do not mean to be unkind. Very few and fire. We see that the human body God is unchangeable, and always the i. 8.

every place there are ample means, if each one did his part, to meet the requirements of the pastor. There are many of our large fields of labor where a minister may grow rich if he had the disposition to become a mendicant, and practice the art to the fullest extent; but to allow our pastors to get their We cannot expect plants to leaf out salaries in this manner would open the door of the ministry to the lowest order and human beings, in this respect, are of mercenary men, and close it against those we so greatly need.

We learn from the public press that the world's greatest need to day is men is put in in italics, and even in capitals -" MEN." The work of the ministry is so transcendantly glorious, we may wonder there is not men enough.

Surely there must be wrong somewhere. Although, as we have seen, Mr. Alethes was pretty well acquainted with the whole matter, yet he did not waver; but he was on several occasions heard to exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things ?"

(To be continued.)

For the Christian Messenger. God and Natural law.

He was before his works of old .-Proverbs viii. 22, 23

God only is eternal, all other things and beings had a beginning. This doctrine is plainly asserted in the word of God. If God be first, then all else, secondary, and if secondary, dependent on God for existence. This great truth, self evident in our own existence. We are conscious, that we had a beginning. We never remembered that we had any preexistent state. Nor we never will, therefore our beginning, is the production of a power exterior to ourselves, and adequate to accomplish the marvellous effect of our immortal being. The soul was produced by the immediate energy of God. God breathed into Adam and he became a living soul. But while God made Adam, by an act of his power, Adam was no part of God, for we can neither add, nor diminish from the Deity-Adam was made in the moral likeness of God, but distinct, created finite, relative and changeable, elements that can never enter into the nature of the Deity. Now then, if God can create human minds out of no preexisting material of any kind, surely there is no difficulty in believing, that matter, which is inferior in every respect to mind, can easily be created by God out of no preexistent material. As the Bible clearly expresses, it "things which are, were not made of things which do appear." Then the assumption, that matter is eternal, is without the shadow of proof. Again men say, space is infinite, I believe it is infinite, but I am certain no man can prove it to be so. It is the easiest thing in the world for men to say things, but it is quite another thing to prove their statements. I could but smile at the language used by a late correspondent of the Christian Messenger that the Natural Laws, were infinite as infinity eternal as eternity. Let those who made that statement, attempt to prove its truth, and if they are young men now, I will guarantee they will be grayheaded before they get through with

Again it is a departure from all nomenclature in philosophy, to say that the "Natural Laws are nothing." If they are nothing, how can we define? How can we distinguish one Law from there are no distinctions. All nothings are alike, so that the Law of gravitation, earth in a certain position in space, by a constant energy, so that power is nothing; the Law of expansion, is just the opposite of the Law of cohesion. The former Every man with good feeling and is developed by the separation of the particles of matter, in steam, the latter by condensations. Now here are two Laws of Nature, working in direct opposition to each other, yet in perfect harmony in other respects, both Laws being essential to life, and to the existence of our material world. Does the word Law, mean, nothing, and yet these nothings rule the heavens and the earth. Let God take away the sun from the solar system, and you would soon find out whether or no these Laws are noth ing, when all the planets would go sweeping into eternal darkness where they would land, I am doubtful if our ablest scientific men would be able to tell us. Some of our ablest thinkers consider the Natural Laws, as attrilooks like this. Several excellent pastors, butes of matter. Take away the world at all, that mysterious Law that It may prove my existence, but I am unites all the particles of matter into a unit, and thus composes suns and manifested in creation may prove His much of the trouble arises from want of systems, man and beast, flower and

among them would refuse a minister is formed into a marvelous system, by same. If the Natural Laws are the anything he asked of them. In nearly the Law of Cohesion. Now unless the product of His power, and every one who eternity of matter as proved, it will be believes that God created all things and impossible to prove the eternity of beings, these Laws, things, and beings, natural laws, because we cannot conceive the Laws to exist without the existence of the matter. Where there is no matter, there will be no gravitation, where there is no matter there will be no light, no electricity, no cohesion, no inertia, no motion, no expansion, no attraction? I might, in a word say no existence; except God himself. Now, every world in space, is bounded, limited, and occupies a certain amount. Therefore being bounded and for the ministry. The significant word | limited it is finite, and so is every world that God has made; they are simply parts of the universe he has formed; therefore put the whole together, they are not infinite. We cannot add anything to infinity; but since the earth was created there has been an addition, which proves that space was not absolutely filled up that there was no more room for other worlds to be formed. Indeed it is the opinion of some that new worlds are being created at all times, as new stars have come into existence, since the days of Adam. Still we are not compelled to go into that idea, to prove finiteness of nature. The addition of our earth to the number of worlds already created is a posi-

tive proof that creation is finite. Creation then being finite all her Laws that regulate the material creations of God must be finite also, for we do not need infinite Laws to regulate around us, out of sight. Still we would no further than the matter they control. when we first started, and suppose we I think it is self-evident that every thing as being that God has, or will could never come to the boundary line create, as from the necessity of its nature finite. We cannot conceive of any being or thing infinite but the Deity, nor can we conceive the infinitude of the Deity; it is utterly beyond our

feeble capacities. worlds and Laws and beings he has or ever will create. For it is certain God could by the breath of his mouth anihilate the whole universe he has created. All nations before him are as nothing and vanity. To whom then will you nature. They not only liken him to them but still more marvelous they say: " They are he."

God puts the question, To what shall ye liken me? We have surely found an answer now, by modern scientists, to the senseless natural Laws of the universe. So that glorious infinite incomprehensible Being, that ushered all things and Beings into existence, by the flat of his power is metomorphosed by modern scientists into the senseless material Laws of the universe. What an amazing change the Deity has passed through! Thank God that this change is nothing more than the mental wanderings of feeble finite beings like myself. Feeble finite beings attempting to explain things that lie buried in the infinite depths of God's mysterious operations in nature. A sea where all our thoughts are drowned. Who can span the infinite abyss, and read the

eternal mind. Again in these articles it has been asserted, that the energy of God is in the Laws of Nature. This assertion is merely hypothetical. It wants proof, It may be so, may I not equally assume that God in creating the earth, created all its Laws-governing our world, self-acting. Now this seems to be the case. The Law of light, flows some extent by attraction. The Law governing electricity, when the negative cloud passing by the surplus fluid rushes into the vacant cloud, to equalise the elements. Again would it not show greater perfection in the machinest if he were to make a machine that would work as well in his absence as in his presence. So will it most certainly show more skill in the Deity to make a world of self-regulating Laws, acting in perfect harmony with the design of God in accomplishing every desirable end without the immediate energy of God. Indeed this seems to be the case: We see the Laws of Nature acting with a constant, invariable energy. It is said that the diurnal rotation of the earth has not varied one second of time since God put it in motion. Nevertheless, I have no objection to the idea that God is present superintending the operation of Natural Laws, for a "sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His permission." But the energy of God, in any method or form, is simply a manifestation of Deity; but the manifestation of a being, and the Being are two very Law of cohesion, we could have no different ideas. My power is not myself.

from the very nature of their existence, are finite, limited, changeable, relative, subordinate. Then take the idea, "They are He." What is the conclusion ? i. e. That God is finite, limited, relative, subordinate, changeable-in e word, God has become the creature instead of the eternal invariable, infinite, absolute, incomprehensible God. Then again, take the other statement, "The Natural Laws are nothing." Natural Laws are He. He is nothing. This is the logical deduction from these premises. Surely there is something widely aside from the true description of the Deity here.

I would also notice here, that the passage quoted from the 139th Psalm, is inapplicable. It applies to the omnipresence of God, and to the Natural Laws. "If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." the Natural Laws shall lead me, I omit the fact that wherever we go, the Natural Laws will be there, for we carry them with us. But suppose Mr. Chesley and myself, should depart together from this location, and proceed on a strait line into the abyss of space, at the rate of the lightning's flash, at the end of a million of years, we would have left the solar system, and all the starry heavens be no nearer to our journey's end, than kept on at that rate to all eternity, we for the simple reason, there is no boundary line. Then you will say, what of all this. Well, it gives me an argument. My argument is this, that finitude however much multiplied can never fill infinitude. Then as all the worlds God made God is infinitely superior to all the are finite, there is room for millions of myriads more, and God may go on through all eternity creating new worlds, and at the end of myriads of ages there will be as much space as when he first commenced. Now, if I can prove that finitude can never fill infinitude, I can liken God? Some say, to the natural easily prove that the Natural Laws are Laws that have neither life, nor moral not infinite. The Natural Laws were made to rule finite created beings, whether they are animate or inanimate. Now it would be preposterous to make Laws that were not required, for if the number of Universes that God has made are limited, so will the Laws governing them be limited. We do not need infinite laws to rule finite beings or things. Therefore the Natural Laws are not in-

> JOHN ROWE. Melvern Square.

## The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1884. THIRD QUARTER.

Lesson III.-JULY 20, 1884. GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID 2 Sam. vii. 1-16.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 13-16. GOLDEN TEXT .- " Thy throne shall be

established forever."-2 Sam. vii. 16. DAILY HOME READINGS. M. The Lesson.

T. Parallel Account. 1 Chron. xvii. W. The Messiah's Kingdom. Psa. ii.

The Messiah's Conquests. Psa. cx. F. David collecting Material for God's House. 1 Chron. xxix. Solomon Building the House.

Christ's Throne Established Forever. Heb. i. 9-13.

ANALYSIS. - I. David's Desire, Vs. 1-3. II. The Lord's Message, Vs. 4-14. III. The Everlasting Kingdom, Vs.

Quustions. - When the ark was brought to Jerusalem, where was it placed?

at this time? What had the Lord given of all honor. 3. The Lord was with him? What kind of house did David live in? In what kind of a house did the ark of the Lord dwell? What was the desire of David's heart? To whom Lord had made him a great name. did he reveal it? What did the prophet answer?

Vs. 4-14.—Was David's desire a proper one? Had Nathan given to him the Lord's will on this matter? Did the Lord reprove David for desiring to build him a house? Did he grant his desire? Had God asked any of the tribes to build him a house? Was God with David when he was persecuted by Saul? What else had God done for him? What had God done for Israel? What land was to be their permanent home? What promise does God give? Who was to build the Temple? How are Solomon's throne and kingdom. established forever?

Vs. 15, 16.-What does God say shall more than mere power. So God's power not depart from David's house? What is meant by this? How did he take his existence, but it is not Himself. How mercy way from the house of Saul? What strong promise is given in vs. 16? In whom is this promise fulfilled? Heb

Provings.-Where, in this lesson, do we find-1. That God is pleased with our des re to do a service for him, even when he may hold us back from doing it? 2. That timeliness is an important feature in true service? 3. That God is more anxious to do for us than to have us do for him? 4. That the Kingdom of Jesus is sure to triumph, and will endure forever?

The ark, when brought to Jerusalem, was set in its place "in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it" (vi. 17). But David desired to make a permanent temple for it. that desire, and God's message to him through the prophet Nathan, our lesson

Notes. -Vs. 1-3. -Sat in his house. The palace of cedar of v. 11, which the carpenters and masons, sent by Hiram, had built for him. Rest round about. The position of this chapter, chronologically, would be after chapter viii, which tells of more wars; but the writer is led by the subject of the sixth chapter to record, in that connection, the further purposes of David with regard to the ark. Still, it is not likely that the rest was more than an interval of peace after his first victorious conquest against all his enemies. David was a man of singular energy, and could not consent to inaction. While fighting his enemies, he had enough to do; but now he has leisure for "the arts of peace." His first thoughts are not with plans of trade, but with the worship of God. Naturally he turned to Nathan the prophet, who was not only God's mouthpiece to him, but his confidential counsellor. I dwell in a house of cedar. Cedar was the rarest and most costly timber. The contrast between the elegance of his house, and the meaner tabernacle in which the ark of God rested, pained the king. Note the opposite state of mind of the returned exiles (Haggai i. 10). Curtains. The coverings of the tabernacle. Not now had the ark even the elegant coverings of the tabernacle of the wilderness, but was in a temporary structure. Nathan said. Nathan saw that the desire of David was commendable, and Godhonoring, and at once said: Go, do. He had not inquired of the Lord, but spoke from general principles. He did not then know that the Lord was reserving the building of a temple for another than David. The Lord is with thee. The Lord both incited and endorsed the desire. See 1 Kings viii. 18.

Vs. 4-7.—The word of the Lord. A distinguished from Nathan's opinion. The Lord corrects the error of his ser vant, kindly, considerately, and at once. My servant. What an honor for David to be specially designated, as was Joshua, as the servant of the Lord But believers now are sens. Shalt thou build? The question implies a negative answer. See thou shalt not, in the parallel account. 1 Chron. xvii. Why did God refuse this service from David? It may be that David's idea of God's grace was defective. The Lord had done great things for him, and he may have thought to return the favor. God did not demand a house of cedar, for they were in an unsettled condition. Nor were they now sufficiently settled for a fixed sanctuary. The Lord shared their lot, even as Christ endured poverty with his people. David's desire was premature, while as yet there were enemies. It was as if he wanted retire from his work as a man of war which God had called him, and to choose his own calling. He must be satisfied with his work.

Vs. 8, 9.—I took thee. David was to remember that the Lord had planned his life for him, and it was not for him to take the planning out of God's hands. He is reminded of five acts of grace towards him in the past: 1. The Lord took him from the sheepcole, or pasture, the place where the sheep feed; from the menial employment of a shepherd, which was considered fit for women, servants, and children. 2. The Lord made him ruler over Israel, over the Vs. 1-3.-Where was David dwelling people of God, giving him the highest him whithersoever he went. 4. The Lord cut off all his enemies. 5. The Under him Israel had become a great and powerful nation, and his name shone as the most brilliant military leader and king of his day. Thus much had God done for him.

Vs. 10-16.—There are five acts of grace for the future: 1. I will appoint a place for . . . Israel, and will plant, etc. Better, have appointed, and have planted, as the tense in the original is not changed. The Lord here speaks of something that he is accomplishing and will finish; as something already done. He had brought Israel into Palestine to stay. Their migratory life was over; they should move no more; and the children of wickedness, the Canaanites, who gave them so much trouble in the times of the Judges and Saul, should JONATHAN-ABINADAB, -1 Samuel not afflict them any more as beforetime.

The beforetime refers to the history of Israel in Egypt before coming into Canaan. And as since, refers to their history after entering Canaan. 2. The Lord telleth the that he will make thee & house. Thee is emphatic. Instead of David making God a house, he should receive a house from the Lord, i. c., a permanent royal authority, or dynasty. 3. The Lord promises to establish his kingdom, and that David's son shall succeed to his throne. Special reference is made to Solomon, who shall build a house for my name. For fulfillment of this promise, see 1 Kings viii. 16-20. But the promise extends beyond Solomon to the forever; and this is fulfilled only in Christ. See Luke i. 32, 33. The last clause of this verse may be rendered, thy throne shall be made sure forever. This could only be through one who lives forever, and of whose kingdom there can be no end. Adn this is none other than Christ.

## SUGGESTED LESSONS.

1. One that loves God will be solicit ous about his house. He will make sacrifices toward building a suitable house of worship. 2. Mistaken zeal is far better than

spiritual apathy. 3. The way to give to God, is to

receive the more largely from him. 4. See the Lord's identification of his fortunes with his children's. When they toil, he toils with them.

5. Our past history, like David's, is a history of grace.

6. Our future, like David's, is also one

7. Believers belong to an everlasting kingdom. Earthly dynasties and governments may rise and fall, but the throne of our Christ is established for-

-Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

The Lesson for the little Ones.

One day, as David was sitting in his beautiful palace, he told Nathan, the prophet, that he felt ashamed to live in a fine house, while the ark of God was placed under curtains. Nathan advised him to do what he so much wished, and build a house for the Lord. But, in the night, God told Nathan to go tell David not to build him a house. He was pleased with David for wishing to build it, but the enemies of Israel must first be conquered. David would have to go on fighting battles for God's people, and the Lord would bless him in so doing; but he promised to give David a son who should build the house. God made David a much greater promise; this was, that one of David's family should always be king. This did not mean an earthly king, but that the Lord Jesus should come of his family, and be king forever and ever.

David went again for the ark, and this time everything was carefully done according to the word of the Lord. David himself took off his kingly dress, and putting on one of pure white like the priests, walked with the musicians playing on his harp and singing. The old tabernacle had been made so long before that its beauty was gone, but David had prepared a new one on Mount Zion, close to his own palace. There were walls around Mount Zion, the gates were opened wide to let the king come in, and the ark which was the throne of the Lord. Ask some one to read to you Psalm xxiv., and you will hear what the priests sang that day.—Primary Quarterly.

## Bouths' Department.

Original and Selected: Bible Enigma,

No. 285. Find answers to the following and the initials will give the name of a party among the Jews who were bitterly opposed to Jesus; and the finals will shew the name of another party who were also opposed to Christ and hostile to the other party:

1. What was that which the apostles were not to take with them? 2. Who was the king of Gerar?

3. What was the name of Felix's wife? 4. A town left undisturbed by Manasseh.

5. Who was the father of Bezaleel? 6. The governor of Syria at the time of Christ's birth.

7. Who was the daughter of Lois? 8. Who was the witness of a miraculous power of speech? 9. Whose household did Paul baptize?

Find answers to the above-write them down-and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

> Answer to Bible Enigma. No. 284.

1. J oshu a.....Joshua i. 1. re b.....Judges vii. 25. 3. N aom i ..... Ruth i. 29. 4. A aro n.....Exodus iv. 14. abith a ..... Acts ix. 36. 6. H ero d..... Acts xii. 1. 7. A quil a..... Acts xviii. 2, 8. N ada b ..... Num. iii. 4.

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