

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 1.

Eighth Series.

January, 1927.

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SECTION I.—ROMANS 1. 1-17.

From GLASGOW.—We would suggest that the Epistle to the Romans, usually placed about the year 58 A.D., was written from Corinth. From Acts 19. 21 we find that at Ephesus the Apostle had the desire to go through Macedonia and Achaia, thence to Jerusalem, and after that to Rome. "But now" of Romans 15. 25, we suggest, finds its time and place at this juncture. Further, the commendation of Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae, the Port of Corinth, included in the epistle, helps materially to confirm the above suggestion of the letter being written from Corinth. [Further interesting evidence is found in Romans 16. 23, where "the city" suggests a capital (viz., Corinth), in close proximity to the last mentioned place—Cenchreae verse 1.—Compare also "Gaius" (verse 23) and 1 Corinthians 1. 14—^{if} the same person, the Apostle's host, was a dweller at Corinth. Note, too, the Apostle's companions—"Timothy, Sosipater, and Erastus," Romanst 16. 21, 23, and compare Acts 19. 22, and Acts 20. 3, 4.]

It is evident that the Apostle had never been to Rome, but he writes to assure the saints there that, in the will of God, his desire is to be among them shortly. With what joy he looked forward to that day when he would see them face to face, and bestow on them some spiritual gift! Yet humbly he expresses the hope that there might be a mutual comforting in a mutual faith.

The subject of "some spiritual gift" provided interesting discussion. The words "that ye may be established," and the connecting words "that is," must not be overlooked. Could we suggest then that the purpose of Paul was to impart new gifts through the Spirit of God and stir up dormant ones? [The Apostle speaks of imparting "some spiritual gift," not gifts as is suggested, and this is evidently associated with the prospective ministry of the Apostle to the saints in Rome.—J.M.] That there were gifts in Rome we find from chapter 12. 6, but the Apostle's desire was to impart those gifts which were lacking that the church might be established.

What a message he had for them!—the Gospel in which God has been pleased to reveal a way whereby man can stand righteous before Him by faith; and this is disclosed to faith.

The opening of the epistle is lovely. "Paid a bondservant of Jesus Christ." "Separated unto the Gospel of God." Please read Galatians 1. 15, and Acts 9. 15. "Promised afore" had ever been the theme of prophetic writings. The Apostle often uses the Old Testament Scriptures when speaking of the Lord Jesus. (See Acts 26. 22-23) The "power" of verse 4, is seen when the Lord Jesus raised the widow of Nain's son, and also Lazarus. "According to the spirit of holiness"—the Spirit of God! The Holy Spirit, we suggest, but the expression here is singular. [See comments by J.H.]

This is the One (the Lord Jesus Christ) through whom he received grace and apostleship and the One whose they were called to be.

JOHN B. MARTIN.

From ATHERTON.—The letter to *the* Romans seems to have been written by the Apostle on his third journey, while at Corinth. (Compare Acts 20. 2, 3, and Romans 15. 25, 26.) He stayed there three months. The phrase "the Gospel of God" raised an important point for discussion, which we would like to present in the form of a question:—Are the terms "Gospel of God" and "Whole council of God" (Acts 20. 27) synonymous? "The whole council of God" covers a wider scope in Divine revelation than "The Gospel of God," They are not synonymous. (Note Acts 20. 24-26.) The Gospel and the Kingdom should not be confused.—J.M.] In the light of Acts 20. 24-25, the preaching of the gospel seemed also to involve the preaching of the kingdom. but Romans 15. 20-21, would seem to imply that the term "gospel" meant the preaching of salvation from sin's penalty. With regard to verse 2 please compare 1 Peter 1. 20-12. Verses 3 and 4 baring before us the Lord Jesus as Son of God and perfect man. we understand "the spirit of holiness," in like manner as "the spirit of truth" (John 14. 16-17) and "the spirit of grace" (Hebrews 10. 29), to mean the Holy Spirit. [See comments by J.H.] We are agreed that "by the resurrection from the dead" is meant His own glorious resurrection (see also Acts 17. 31, and Romans 8.11). If it referred to His raising Lazarus and others, then, surely Elijah or Elisha, exhibiting similar mighty power, could equally claim to be the Son of God. (1 Kings 17. 17-22; 2 Kings 4. 20-37.) [Neither Elijah nor Elisha made any claim to Divine Sonship, but the Lord did, and in proof of His Sonship He raised the dead. See John 11. 4. Lazarus died that the Lord might raise him from the dead, and so thereby the Lord was glorified as the Son of God. The Lord's Sonship does not rest on His raising dead persons nor on His own resurrection, for that matter, but on His being the Only Begotten Son; but in raising the dead He is marked out the Son of God in power. If His right to Sonship rests on His own resurrection what of those who shall rise and bear His likeness in resurrection, will they claim sonship in the sense He is Son? Of course they won't.—J.M.] The letter is addressed "to all that are in Rome, called to be saints" (1 Peter 2 9). And so as Paul was called, and the Romans were called, thus are we called to live henceforth unto Him. If we are living with, or for any other object, our life is a complete failure and a wasted existence.

What a real faith was that of the Roman saints- proclaimed throughout the then-known world! A true response to His holy calling! It had previously been spoken of some that they

had "turned the world upside down." How little we know to-day of this mighty power, and how feeble are our best efforts. Yet El Shaddai is able to use us mightily, if we but place ourselves unreservedly in His hands.

In verses 8 and 10, we see a divine order, firstly, the giving of thanks for them all and following that, the request that he might see ~~them~~ face to face. The love of the Apostle toward all the churches finds its expression in incessant fervent prayer, and in this instance, that they be established. (Compare 2 Timothy 3. 15, and 3. 14-17). We see the whole-heartedness of the Apostle in verse 15, and his devotion to the service of the Master, which characterised his whole being.

In this precious gospel is laid bare a righteousness of God, not of works, but proceeding from faith, and impelling, empowering and energising those who possess it, to a continual living faith, a daily walk with God "by faith unto faith"

E. BIRCHALL.

From BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—At the very commencement of our study, we are brought to the name of the Apostle Paul as the writer of the epistle. This seems to have been his invariable custom in all his writings (save perhaps in the case of Hebrews, if he were the writer of that epistle). Those to whom the Apostle is writing have never (as a church) beheld his face in the flesh; though it would certainly appear from a reading of chapter 16, that he was acquainted with certain individuals in that company.

The Apostle's separation unto the Gospel of God dates back to his birth (see Galatians 1. 15), was confirmed in Acts 9. 15, and was actually put into operation in Acts 13. 2. [Galatians 1. 15 does not state what he was separated to, but what he was separated from, a physical rather than a spiritual separation.—J.M.]

The Gospel of God in this verse would seem to be, the Gospel which emanated from God, or, God's Gospel. This Gospel speaks to His Son, and here we are shewn at the very beginning, both the humanity of the Lord Jesus (verse 3) "the seed of David," and His Divinity, "The Son of God" (verse 4).

The Spirit of Holiness, in verse 4, caused some difficulty. It was thought by some to refer to His generation as found in Luke 1. 35. Others again thought that it had reference to His life, since this is a declaration of His divine character. His mighty acts of grace and love declare Him to be the Son of God "in" power, whilst the final proof is to be found in the "resurrection of the dead." [See comments by J.H.]

The Romans, like the Thessalonians, were not an idle people in spiritual things, for their faith was proclaimed throughout the whole world. (Compare 1 Thessalonians 1. 7 and 9; Romans 1. 8 and 16. 19.)

We cannot, but be impressed with the Apostle's care for all the churches (2 Corinthians 11, 28), when we read of prayer on their behalf. His longing desire was that they should be built up, strengthened and established, that God might receive the greater glory.

Nothing would deter him from preaching the Gospel. He said himself "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel" (1 Corinthians 9. 16), and he was prepared to go to the uttermost parts of the earth for the sake of the Name.

The Gospel of God concerning His **Son** is the grand theme, and as we pursue it, may our hearts and minds **be** opened **to** hear His voice, and may our hearts be strengthened, even in the truths of the Gospel.

JOHN MCCORMICK.

From LONDON, S.E.—At the commencement of **our chapter**, Paul establishes his authority for writing to those who do not know him personally by declaring his relationship to "Jesus Christ." The word "servant" is rendered "bondservant" in the R.V. margin. It was thought that this did not indicate an unwilling servant, but rather referred to the slave of old, who, when offered freedom, had the opportunity to remain, and said "I love my Master," "I will not go out free." [The Apostle was a slave by right of purchase and his love for the Lord, his Despot, was unflinching.—J.M.]

Another point that impressed us was the fact that the Gospel as defined by Paul, is not concerning works or things, but a person. The Lord Jesus Christ is referred to five times by name (once as Son of God) in the first seven verses.

Verse 4. The expression here, "the spirit of holiness" occasioned some thought, and upon referring to Ephesians 1. 19, we concluded that the Spirit referred to is the Holy Spirit. Are we correct in this assumption? [See comments by J.H.]

The keynote of this chapter, (perhaps we may say, of the epistle), is "faith," and some were of the opinion that "the gift" mentioned in verse 11 was "faith"—the strengthening of their faith. [Is not the keyword rather the Gospel?—J.M.]

Others thought that the gift was something more specific—such as the gift of healing or the gift of tongues, as we know that these gifts obtained in the early churches. Seeing that opinion was divided, it was decided to see what other "Corners" had to say about the matter. [See note in Glasgow's contribution.] The Apostle declares, "I am ready to preach the Gospel to you also that are in Rome."

Despite many possible dangers in Rome he further writes: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation." This Power he himself had experienced in his own life. May we learn to repeat these words in truth.

G. E. SOULSBY.

From PAISLEY.—The Apostle in writing to the Romans, first introduces himself as a servant of Jesus Christ and points out to them his claim and authority for so doing. We think of how he persecuted the saints when he was called Saul; possibly many in the church at Rome thought of that time too. Now he has realized the grace of God. We recall his thrice repeated experience in the Acts. Chapters 9, 15, 22, 14, 15, and 26, 16.

His message contained far more than what is generally termed salvation in the first aspect, as verse 5 shows. The obedience of faith is the duty of every born again person. [This is not obedience to the Faith, moral obedience to the commandments of the Lord, but the obedience of faith which one who believes the Gospel renders.—J.M.] The great theme of the epistle is the Gospel of God which is inseparable from the Son of God. Verse 2 reminds us of the promise of God and how that the prophets spake and testified concerning the incarnation (the earliest testimony of which is found in Genesis '3, 15). The Lord Jesus bore this remarkable witness, "And beginning from

Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to **them** in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24. 25-27.

Verses 3 and 4 show **His** manhood and **His** Deity. The resurrection proclaims the power of God, yea the exceeding-greatness of his power, the strength of His might (Ephesians I. 19, 20). [See note in Atherton's contribution.]

We noted the progression in gospel truth. Faith in Christ alone, apart from **any** merit or righteousness on the part of the sinner, secures eternal life, an imputed righteousness. This same message brings believers into the very presence of God. Later, at Rome, the Apostle preached the kingdom of God and taught the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 28. 31). We should remember this **in our** aggressive work. Therein is revealed a righteousness by faith unto faith. We suggest the **Romans** were falling short of this **as** the Jews seem to have been teaching circumcision amongst them, involving the keeping of the law of Moses. [There is no indication in this chapter that the **Roman** saints were going back to law-keeping. Paul is stating fundamental facts connected with the Gospel.—J.M.] Paul's desire to see the Romans, though delayed by Satan [?] was to impart some spiritual gift, to the end they may be established, which we take to mean "instruction in the ways of God." The Apostle expresses similar sincere wishes on behalf of the Colossians (chapter 1. 9) and the Ephesians (chapter 1. 17). Desire earnestly the greater gifts (1 Corinthians 12. 31). Desire earnestly spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 14. 1). Zealous of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 14. 12). Desire earnestly to prophesy (1 Corinthians 14. 29). [The matter here is some spiritual gift, not gifts.—J. M.] S. THOMSON.

From PORTSMOUTH.—The epistle to the Romans deals in a most comprehensive manner with the truth of Justification by Faith, and also deals with the practical effects which this and associated truths should have on the Christian life. It is fundamentally a letter for all persons throughout the Day of Grace. The epistle was evidently written at Corinth by the hand of Tertius, and was probably the only letter written by Paul to an assembly he had never seen. It would appear, however, that some of the assembly, e.g., Priscilla and Aquila, were well known to him. The assembly would consist largely of Gentiles, and the writer is evidently addressing Gentiles (see chapter 11. verse 13) although he assumes in them a knowledge of the law.

The Gospel character of the letter is brought before us in the greeting. Paul describes himself as "separated unto the Gospel of God." It has been suggested that the words "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead," may refer to the raising by the Lord Jesus of others during His life in this world, as well as to His own glorious resurrection. Both cases show forth His Sonship. [See note in Atherton's contribution.]

E. J. EVERY.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—At the outset of our study of the Epistle to the Romans, it is well to consider some of the outstanding events in the life of the writer, the occasion of writing, and the people to whom the epistle was written.

From the opening verses we learn that the writer was the Apostle Paul. His past history is summed up by himself in Acts

22. 3-5 (which please read). But his beginning of days he reckons from the time when on his way to Damascus he saw that great light from heaven. Here it was he saw the Master he was to serve as faithfully, and heard from His own lips the purpose for which He had caused him. Acts 26. 16-18. Thus, in his opening remarks he is pleased to call himself a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God.

Paul had taken this glorious gospel both to the Jews and to the Gentiles, and was returning to Jerusalem in his third missionary journey, taking with him the contribution of Macedonia and Achaia for the poor of Jerusalem. He then intended to visit Rome on his way to Spain (Romans 15. 25). We learn from his salutations at the end of the epistle that Gaius was his host who lived at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1. 14). It would therefore seem probable that the epistle was written during his three months' stay in Greece before his departure for Jerusalem. (Acts 20. 2.)

The epistle is addressed "to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." It is quite possible that the Church in Rome owed its origin to the wonderful things some of its number had seen and heard at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, for, amongst the large number of people who had come to Jerusalem from foreign parts for the Feast of Passover were sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes (Acts 2. 10). A considerable time, however, had elapsed between Pentecost and the date of the epistle, which is reputed to have been written between A.D. 58 and A.D. 60.

The gospel was promised in the Holy Scriptures, and in verse 17, quoted from the Old Testament Scriptures we have the essence of the gospel "the righteous shall live by faith."

God is the Author of the Gospel, and it concerns His Son. As to His origin as a man he was born of the seed of David, the proof of this being the genealogies given by Matthew and Luke. But as to His heavenly origin, He was declared to be the Son of God. "Thou art My Son" (Psalm 2. 7). The force of the word declared is—having been, He was declared, which involves pre-existence as Son of God. In contrast to His origin according to the flesh, He was "declared to be Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead." The spirit of holiness refers to the holiness of His Person "Holy, guideless and underfiled" (Hebrews 7. 26). It was the perfect holiness of the Lord Jesus, and His consequent resurrection, which, above all other things, marks Him out to be the Son of God, even above the mighty works and wonders and signs which He did, including the raising of dead persons. Farther, it was the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ which was the seal of the gospel of God, as Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 15.

[It is not the Lord's personal resurrection by which He is marked out the Son of God in Romans 1. but by the resurrection of dead persons;—the dead He raised in His lifetime. The essential facts of the Gospel are, of course,— "Christ died, was buried, and hath been raised the third day."—J.M.]

God had committed to the Apostles a great trust. Paul felt that he was a debtor to those around him, both to Greeks and to Barbarians, to let them know God's Salvation and so fulfil his mission. May we each one of us feel a similar debt to discharge, and like Paul, be always ready to preach the gospel, of the grace of God, and seek to win men for the Lord Jesus Christ.

G.J., N.G.A.

This epistle is placed at the beginning of the apostolic letters, which seems to be its fitting and proper place. It was not the first to be written, but it is first by reason of its subject matter—the Gospel of God. It is from Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ (verse 1) to all in Rome, beloved of God, called saints. Paul describes himself as a called apostle, not named an apostle, but one called to apostleship; one whose call was direct from and by the Lord, and who had seen the Lord (1 Corinthians 9. 2; Acts 26 15-16; Acts 13. 2; Galatians 1. 1) He was not called among the original number, but one who called himself an abortion in his apostleship. (1 Corinthians 15. 8). Certain, professed to be apostles who had never been called (Revelations 2 2).

Those to whom he wrote were called saints, a known company in Rome, who could receive an epistle, as well as a letter of commendation incorporated therein (Romans 16. 1-2).

Paul describes himself as separated (marked out as to the service given him) unto the Gospel of God (1 Corinthians 1. 17 Acts 20. 24). The Gospel is originated and owned by God; no new invention; no mere afterthought, but something promised in the Holy Scriptures. The subject of this Gospel is the Son of God, and He who is God's Son is a divine-human person: of David's seed as to the flesh, but as to His divine nature He is marked out the Son of God in power. As to His power and deity, this is spoken of as being according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of dead persons. "The spirit of holiness" is not the Holy Spirit, but is attributed to the person of Christ, and shews the holiness of His being, the power of which is seen in evidence in the resurrection of the dead, of Lazarus and others. He is the Holy One of God: the One who was separated from

sinner.

"We received grace and apostleship," refers to the apostolic circle and not to the Apostle and those to whom he wrote. "Unto the obedience of faith in (or among) all nations" not "of" all nations. It is not obedience to the faith (as in Acts 6. 7), but obedience of faith in obeying the gospel. Note R.V. rendering of John 3. 36. and also the force of John 6. 29. "The work of God, that ye believe."

The Apostle describes himself as serving in his spirit in the Gospel of God's Son and uses the most exalted word possible for service (*latreia*—divine or temple service).

The spiritual gift which Paul wished to impart to the Roman saints was evidently to be imparted through his ministry to them; for he says, "I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome."

The Gospel which is the power of God contains a righteousness for men. This righteousness is revealed from faith to faith (out of faith into faith). It is written that "The just shall live out of faith." This phrase is used in Romans 3. 30; Galatians 3. 8, and shews the personal trust of the sinner, whether Jew or Gentile, in the Saviour. Having exercised faith in the Son of God this righteousness is revealed to faith; it is never revealed to such as go about to establish their own righteousness (Romans 10.) Those who seek righteousness by works never will know this imputed righteousness which is revealed to the faith of the believing sinner.

COMMENTS BY J.H

It seems to me that the phrase " According to the spirit of holiness " may point to one of the following:—

- 1 The Holy Spirit.
- 2 The spirit which animated the Body, born of David's seed; such was a spirit of holiness, and not one darkened, or defiled by any trace of sin.
- 3 The Divine nature of the Lord.

I am inclined to think that the last is the correct view, considering the phrase (a) " According to the flesh "; this points to Him as David's seed, David's descent, and therefore a human personality or nature. (b) " According to the spirit of holiness " indicates Divine descent or Divine personality: Divine nature.

The former (a) refers to Christ as He appeared to the outward eye, in His natural manhood, as David's Son. In contrast to this " According to the spirit of holiness " describes His higher nature; His Divine nature, of which, behind His visible manhood, men became gradually conscious.

But does it not seem that (a) " According to the flesh " and (b) " According to the spirit of holiness " are complimentary, and together make up the sum or divine whole of His marvellous personality, which none knoweth, not even angels, but God himself?
J.H.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

QUESTION:—Romans 1. 7. Is it scriptural to refer to all God's children as saints, regardless of their apprehension of, and obedience to, the truth?

ANSWER:—All believers are sanctified absolutely and unchangeably in Christ Jesus: He is our sanctification (1 Corinthians 1. 2, 30). Such as are thus sanctified, God wishes their sanctification from sin in whatever form (1 Thessalonians 4. 3) and the Lord prayed that such should be sanctified in truth (John 17.). This latter form of sanctification is relative, conditional and progressive. To be a saint rests upon an act of God who set us apart in Christ Jesus, not upon a series of acts by ourselves in obedience to the will of God, so that I judge each child of God is a saint.—J.M.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1926.

DR.	EXPENDITURE.	£	d.	CR.	INCOME.	£	g.	d.
Deficit from 1925 as stated in July Statement		4	2 10*	Collected for Papers, including arrears.		54	3	3
Add		1	15 6	Donations and Levies.		29	14	6
As an item of this amount had to be added in for Volumes.				For Volumes 1925 —Collected by A. J.M.		1	19	8
Printing: for 1926		61	19 2					
Postages and Expenses.		4	19 9s					
Balance, on hand.		13	0 1					
		£85	17 5					17 5

Thanks are due to the various individuals, assemblies and corners, who came forward so generously to help in our financial difficulties. We asked for £20 and got almost £30, and all our 1925 arrears paid up besides, so we have now a good balance on hand.
J. ROBERTSON.

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 2.

Eighth Series.

February, 1927

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION II. ROMANS 1. 18—2. 16.

From **ATHERTON**.—The latter portion of chapter 1. brings before us in its true light, the sin, depravity and entire corruption of the human race. As the writer is addressing a Gentile church, he seems to view, first of all, the state of the Gentiles. The wrath of God is revealed against their wickedness in that they deliberately prevented the truth of God from producing in them its effects of transformation and blessing. The words of John 3.19-20, would apply here; for they "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Such a state is described in Psalms 14. and 53. The Gentile, in contrast to the Jew, had not the law of God for guidance, but although the Gentile knew not the law, yet, the invisible things of God are clearly seen in creation (Psalm 19.). In spite of the depth of shame and degradation to which man sank, God was slow to anger and plenteous in mercy and long-suffering as in the days of Noah. Yet, in spite of such mercy, they did not return thanks, but became engrossed in every kind of folly, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for images of corruptible man, of birds and beasts, and so forth; so God gave them up. Three times we get that solemn statement: "And God gave them up," and, finally, "to a reprobate mind." Death is the sentence which God pronounces against their recorded deeds, and they not only provoked God by doing them, but also applauded others who practised similar wickedness. The Apostle reminded the Corinthians "And such were some of you." 1 Corinthians 6. 9-11. We, too, have much to praise God for, that His mercy has reached us (Titus 3. 4-6).

There is no escape from the judgment of God, for the stubborn or the impenitent in heart. The judgments of God are based on absolute equity: "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18. 25). The Jew will be judged by the law, and the doers of the law only will be justified. The Gentile,

though not possessing the law, yet by nature it was possible to obey the commands of the law; the work of the law written in their hearts was their guide, and their conscience either accused or defended them.

E. BIRCHALL.

From BARROW.—This section appears to deal **more** or less with the condition of the Gentile nations in the sight of God, and takes us back to the period when God spake to **men** in the works of creation, and revealed Himself as the God of **power** (see Psalm 19. 1-6; Acts 14. 17). It was in the mind of the Creator that the creature should seek after Him "for He is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17. 27). **But** the world in its wisdom knew not God (1 Corinthians 1. 21), and they exchanged the truth of God for a lie (verse 25). Verses 18 to 23 indicate how idolatry first came to be practised. Despite the visible witness of created things to a powerful and divine Creator, the creature in rebellion ignored God as supreme and worshipped the creature, or thing created. It seems incredible that man should become so corrupt, yet we have only to consider the actions of the Children of Israel in Exodus 32.; 2 Kings 17. 16; and Acts 7. 42 and 43, and we see how this enlightened people went astray.

The terrible words of verses 24, 26 and 28 "God gave them up," shew the extreme depth of depravity into which the human heart and mind had degenerated; while the words which follow to the end of the chapter, declare that God is just in His judgments.

Chapter 2. verse 1 leaves man without excuse. The words "¹ O man" do not, we suggest, refer to any particular person or persons, but is rather in the form of a declaration. The truth of this verse, while not, perhaps, primarily applicable to the believer, is very searching—"For wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself" (see 2 Samuel 12. 5-7; and Matthew 7. 2).

The first paragraph of chapter 2. deals, we suggest, with man who lived prior to the day of grace. [But may it not equally apply to all even in this day of grace, to whom the Gospel has not come?—J.M.] In the first eight verses are portrayed the judgment and doom of the self-righteous despiser, and the award of the patient well-doer. This thought is developed further in the remaining verses of the paragraph under the headings of behaviour "under the law," and "without the law." It is very significant that "eternal life" (verse 7) is, in the dispensation referred to an AWARD and not a gift. [Can it be true that eternal life in any dispensation has been **Avon** by men through their works? That some have sought by well-doing, glory, honour, incorruption is true, but to say that their well-doing- earned such an award as eternal life, as I take our friends to mean, is I think doubtful. The words of Peter to Cornelius in preaching the Gospel to him were "Everyone that believeth," but in describing his state before this he said "In every nation he that feareth Him (not believeth) and Avorketh righteousness, is acceptable to Him."—J.M.] We suggest that the "book of life" which will be opened at the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20. 12) may contain, along with the heathen who have never heard the Gospel, the names of such who have merited eternal life on account of their well-doing".

The text of the passage shews the ground of judgment of these Gentiles to be the conscience. Man, in whatever state,

has ever had the knowledge of good and evil and when he does by nature those things contained in the law, he becomes a law unto himself. Thus, in the day of judgment, his thoughts will either accuse or else excuse him. On the other hand, the Jew, who had the divinely appointed law, will be judged according to the standard of that law, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ (Acts 17. 31).

And so, in this section, it is shown that neither the Jew, with his divinely given law, nor the depraved Gentile, condemned by his own conscience, are exempt from the judgment of that day.

J. MCCORMICK.

From CLYDEBANK.—It was suggested that the wrath of God in verse 18 is not the wrath of God as proclaimed in John 3. 36, or in Romans 2. 5. [The statute of God regarding sin in Romans 1. 32 is death, which agrees with Romans 6. 23. "The wages of sin is death." That God did give manifestations of His displeasure upon sinners in the past is true, but this was only an evidence of a universally known fact that the sin of man provoked God to wrath. Even depraved idolators seek to appease their gods for their defaults. It is not "a wrath of God."—J.M.] Verse 18 would take us back to the book of Genesis, and the book of Job. The marginal reading in the Revised Version gives "a wrath" of God is revealed. We have instances of visitations of divine wrath upon men such as the flood and the destruction of the cities of the plain. (2 Peter 2. 5, 6.)

In Romans 1. men definitely refused to give to God, their Creator, the honour and worship which were His due. In Job 21. 14 we read "They said unto God, depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve Him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto Him?"

Again they said: "Depart from us; and, what can the Almighty do for us? Yet He filled their houses with good things." (Job 22. 17.) God did not leave Himself without witness: "For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse." The vanity of their reasonings is well exemplified in the building of the tower of Babel. We find here in verses 23 and 25, that men changed the glory of the incorruptible God, and exchanged the truth of God for a lie. The honour, veneration and worship of their being, they bestowed upon an image of corruptible man, four-footed beasts, birds and creeping things, and following this abominable spiritual depravity, we find men sunk in moral and mental iniquity, being filled with all such things as are enumerated in verses 29-32.

Primarily, the period in the history of the human race in these verses before us, would be covered by the Apostle's statement in chapter 5. "from Adam to Moses." [Romans 1. covers a much wider area than from Adam to Moses. It describes the state of the Gentile world to Paul's time and would apply to all to whom the Gospel has not come.—J.M.]

Paul showed God's goodness to the people of Lystra (Acts 14. 8-17); and again in Acts 17. 23-31 he shewed Him as One who gives all things, and the goodness of God should have led men to repentance. Alas, in the case of many, their hearts were hard and impenitent, and they treasured up for themselves

wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

JAMES MCKAY.

From GLASGOW.—At Rome there were both Jews and Gentiles who had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. In the case of both they had proved that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe. Previous to their reception of the Christ, He was to the Jews a "stumbling-block" and to the Gentiles "foolishness" (1 Corinthians 1. 23); but now, to both the ritual-loving Jew and the idolatrous and philosophic Greek, He was the power of God. It is appropriate, in an epistle dealing so beautifully with the glory and power of the Gospel, that the writer should give us a view of the utter depravity of fallen man. From verse 18, to the end of the chapter we have a very clear and detailed picture of the awful and unnatural sins into which the Gentiles had fallen.

God, who knows the ways and thoughts of all men, had revealed, in more ways than one, His righteous wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Firstly, they were without excuse, for, having eyes to see and minds to understand, they shut out the knowledge of God which might be gained from His created works—"The invisible things of Him," that is, His power, wisdom, and divinity are declared in all His works from the creation of the world. Psalm 19. has it thus:—

The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament sheweth His handiwork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech nor language;
Their voice cannot be heard. Verses 1-3.

It was His desire that men, viewing His wondrous works of creation, should seek after Him, He not being far from any, Acts 17. 27. But degraded in heart they glorified not the God of creation: they gave no thanks to the One who gave them fruitful seasons, and filled their ungrateful hearts with food and gladness, Acts 14. 17. Deliberately refusing to have the knowledge of the only true God, as Creator, and Upholder of all things, and pretending to be wise, they became fools, and having—already their senseless hearts darkened, they went from bad to worse. The God in whom they lived, moved, and had their being, they thought to be such an One as themselves, or even like birds, four-footed creatures, and creeping things. Not satisfied with thinking so, they fashioned gods of wood and stone after the image of the creature, and worshipped and served the work of their own hands. Could the utter depravity of fallen man be exemplified in a more outstanding way!

So God, in His wrath, righteously gave them up to gross and unnatural sins. Three times it is mentioned in the chapter that He gave them up, verses 24, 26 and 28. And we have the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of the plain, set forth as an example of God's wrath on the ungodliness of men, which are now suffering the punishment of eternal fire, Jude 7. How great, then, is the power of the Gospel of Christ, which can save and sanctify such degenerate devotees of idolatry and sinful passions!

Chapter 2. 1-16. Apparently this portion deals with those who have not heard the Gospel, and consequently are not judged for the rejection of the message. The judgment is entirely on the ground of works,

Even with men who practised such enormities enumerated in chapter 1., and who were, on that account, worthy of death, the goodness or gentleness, and forbearance, and longsuffering of God were seen in that He bore with them, and the goodness of God should have lead them to repentance.

It is clear that in the day of the righteous judgment of God, there will be no man who will have any excuse to offer. The Jew with his peculiar privileges and knowledge of the true God, will be judged accordingly, on the ground of his works; and the Gentile having no written law, will be held responsible in accordance with the knowledge of the law written on his heart, according to his works. Those who have, in well-doing, patiently sought for glory and honour, incorruption, shall receive in that day eternal life. On the other hand, those who have not obeyed the truth, according to the knowledge given by God, but have followed unrighteousness, shall be punished with wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. So, at the judgment of the Great White Throne, we believe there will be those who shall receive eternal life, the merits of the Atonement being imputed to them.

HUGH STEWART.

From KILMARNOCK AND GALSTON.—The closing words of the last section make reference to the righteousness of God which is revealed in the Gospel, a righteousness which has been acquired for us by Another, even by Him who is the Theme of "The Gospel of His Son." This righteousness can be ours on the principle of faith, as it is written: "The righteous shall live by faith." This reminds us of Abraham's faith, on account of which He was accounted righteous before God.

The opening words of Section II, present to us another picture, that of men who have known divine judgment because of their unrighteousness. The thought here seems to be that not only had they rejected the truth which God manifested to them, but that they also sought to hinder it. We have something similar to this spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2. 6-12, especially the words, "They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." How solemn indeed!

Those brought before us here refused the knowledge of God, which the writer here states is clearly seen by the things that are made even His everlasting- power and divinity. These words bring to our remembrance Psalm 19. How universal, therefore, is the witness of God to men of His everlasting power and divinity!

We also think of Paul's words in the Acts: "He left not Himself without witness in that He did good" and so forth. These, however, "exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator." They rejected God, and He rejected them, and left them to follow the bent of their own evil hearts. We think that the wrath of God upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah is referred to in verse 18. (See Jude 7.).

We live in a day of greater light—"God has spoken in His Son." The punishment of the day of judgment will be in proportion to the greatness of the light rejected. "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee."

The opening words of chapter 2. are directed to persons who would judge others for things which they themselves practise. How solemn ! The Lord Jesus said " judge not that ye be not judged." " The judgment of God " is the "end of such a course.

Verse 5 tells us of that yet future day when God will judge men in righteousness and render to each one according to his works.

Into this judgment we, who have accepted Christ, will never come : eternal life is our present possession. In that day however, eternal life will be given to men, who in their day responded to the light of God. On the other hand to those that are disobedient and work evil He will render indignation and wrath.

H. PIPER.

From LONDON, S.E.—We read in John " This is the judgment that the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light; for their works were evil." No doubt the word " light " in this passage refers to the Lord Jesus Himself, the " Light of the world." But prior to His coming, there was present light from God which all men could see—the light of His power and divinity shining through His creation, even as we read in Romans 1. Upon this light men deliberately turned their backs. They loved darkness, and blindly groping in their miry pit grew more filthy still. They themselves definitely chose to reject their Creator's claims, and we learn from Corinthians that the god of this age also blinded the minds of such people. Then " God gave them up." How like the history of the Pharaoh to whom Moses spoke ! Asaph in Psalm 81. speaking of Israel, says : " So I let them go after the stubbornness of their heart that they might walk in their own counsels." In the coming-day, when the Man of Sin shall be revealed, it is prophesied that: " For this cause God sendeth them a working of error that they should believe a lie, that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness " (2 Thessalonians 2.).

Even as in the Lord's day a few " received Him " (John 1.), so in Roman 2. there are some referred to who, allowing the light of God's righteousness to enter their consciences, acknowledged their own sinful state and humbled themselves, trembling at His Word. To these contrite ones God's goodness was manifest.

A third class is seen in this portion. Not only are there those who openly delight in sin, and those on the other hand who grieve because of their sin, but there are some who, condemning others, consider themselves righteous, and to them the word comes even as to David: " Thou art the man." All are under condemnation, and none can point his finger at his fellow : not one is fit to cast the first stone.

The Apostle Paul seems to have in mind the heathen world upon whose vision had not yet dawned the " Great Light " (Matthew 4. 16). The world to-day, however, may not only see the evidence of God's power and divinity in creation, but may also see and receive the witness of Christ.

DAVID A. HILL.

From PORTSMOUTH.—This section shows man's responsibility to understand something of God's character and requirements from His created works and also from the conscience that He has placed within man. It is made apparent that men without the law were quite capable of "having God in their knowledge" and "glorifying Him as God," and that the dense ignorance of the Gentile world was brought about by its having deliberately turned from God.

The latter part of chapter 1. gives a truly terrible picture of the Gentile world as it was in Paul's day. All these characteristics are to be found in the world to-day, in spite of a veneer of respectability and "Christianity" (so called). Perhaps the expressions "they refused to have God in their knowledge" and "become vain in their reasonings" have never been more true of my age than the one in which we live. Beneath an appearance of great candour and open-mindedness, or, even of devotion, there lies an intense antagonism to God, even as the Supreme Director of the wondrous universe, whose marvels are becoming more manifest daily.

The earlier part of chapter 2. makes very clear that every man must come under the judgment of God—"who will render to every man according to his works." At this stage in the argument nothing is said about justification by faith in the work of the Cross. It is necessary to make it clear to all that, whether Jew or Gentile, they cannot attain to God's standard.

Chapter 2. 15 shows us that conscience is a God-given thing, which came to man when he became a Living Soul. It would appear that man has within him that which can differentiate between right things (God-pleasing things) and evil things. The conscience is but little spoken of in Scripture and then mainly by the Apostle Paul, who exercised himself "to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man always." Without the Scriptures we might think that the conscience was, mainly, a thing of development, environment and habit, since, in so many instances, it appears to be very warped and linked closely with a trust in man-made traditions. From Romans 2. 15 and other Scriptures we suggest that a man's conscience is at first a reliable guide but through neglect, or wrong training- it may become distorted

E. J. EVERY.

From BRANTFORD.—As we read this chapter we are caused to wonder how man, professing- to be wise, should become so foolish. Creation itself shows forth God's power, yet how ignorant man has been of Him from the earliest times. We are privileged who have been enlightened to perceive the excellencies of Him, who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

The powerful reasoning- of the Apostle Paul is shown out in this chapter. We are caused to remember the words of Abraham in Genesis 18. 25. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Evidence of the character of man's judgment is shown the Lord's words to His disciples in Matthew 7. 1-5. This is also a lesson for each one of us as disciples.

It is suggested (verse 16) that the life of the Lord Jesus will be the standard used by God to judge the world. ("That by which God will judge men is evident in chapter 2. The Jew

under law will be judged by law, and the Gentile not having- the law will, nevertheless, be judged by the law in his heart, where his conscience has presided either accusing or excusing him. But where men have heard the words of Christ by these they will be judged. "The word that I spake the same shall judge you in the last day" (John 12. 48).—[J.M.] God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He hath ordained. Acts 17. 31. Also it has been suggested that all will be judged according to the light that has been given to them, for instance those under the law, will be judged by the law.

J.T., J.B., and R.M.

From TORONTO.—The argument-of this section, it seems to us, is that both Jew and Gentile are without excuse. (See 1. 20, also 2. 1). Both stand condemned before God.

By "the things made," the eternal power and divinity of God are clearly seen. The Gentile, though outside the pale of the commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2. 11-12), will therefore be without excuse. Further, they stand condemned in that, when they knew God, they neither worshipped nor served Him, but bowed themselves to images of birds and beasts and creeping things. The concluding verses of this 1st chapter tell to what depths sinner man can fall.

The Jew under law, was no better in his behaviour (Romans 3. 9). Neither is there an excuse for him (2. 1). And if he should pretend to be something better than the Gentile and sit in judgment upon him, he himself will not escape the righteous judgment of God. God is no respecter of persons.

The heavens still declare the glory of God (Psalm 19. 1-2); and His everlasting power and Godhead can still be seen by all, in this our day. But now to Jew and Gentile the Gospel of God, with all its blessings, is offered, on the acceptance of faith.

J. NICHOL.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—In this gospel is revealed a righteousness of God, and the Apostle contrast* with this the unrighteousness of men. We are shown that God is perfectly justified in revealing- His wrath against all ungodiness and unrighteousness, because He has given to all men a certain and sure revelation of Himself. Firstly, creation clearly declares God and His attributes, His everlasting- power and divinity (see Psalm. 19.). Secondly, God has given each man a conscience which tells him what is right and wrong, for man in his ill became as God, knowing good and evil.

The apostle takes up a similar line of argument when speaking to the heathen. Refer to Acts 14. 15 and 17c 22. It is evident therefore in this section the apostle is speaking- of all Gentiles who have lived beyond the reach of God's grace in the Gospel, having only the revelation of God in creation and conscience. This revelation, however dim it may be is such as shall leave everyone without excuse. Those Gentiles who set themselves against God's revelations go from bad to worse; until finally God gives them up, and they, refusing to have God in their knowledge, become filled with all unrighteousness and uncleanness.

It is to such that God reveals His wrath, but it is **not** clear to us just how the wrath of God is revealed to them. Some thought that it is revealed to their conscience, as in verse 32, "who, knowing the ordinance of God that they which practice such things are worthy of death"; and, in verse 27, where they receive in then* bodies affliction and suffering as the recompense of their error. It was also thought that God's wrath was revealed to men in such happenings as the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Others were inclined to think that verse 18 referred to things which the Lord Jesus said about the wrath of God, as for example to the Pharisees and to His disciples prophetically. We invite criticism of our suggestions from others.

Chapter 2. opens with what is a very common fault of humanity—judging others in the things of which we ourselves are guilty. We are reminded of the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 7. "Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged."

We considered that the day of wrath and righteous judgment of God, here referred to, is the judgment of the Great White Throne (Revelation 20.). when all who stand before that throne shall be judged according to their works,—eternal life for those who, having accepted God's revelation of Himself to them, have done good, and eternal death to those who are factious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness and do evil. Although this refers to the heathen, we see here no real difference from the principle of justification by faith. The latter is the acceptance of God's witness in the Gospel of His Son, and the former the acceptance of God's revelation in creation and conscience, both of which are outwardly evidenced by good works (see the epistle of James).

Peter, when speaking to Cornelius and his Gentile friends declared a similar truth to what we have here, "In every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him" (Acts 10. 35). And we remember too, what the Lord Jesus says in John 5. 29 that, they that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.

N.G.A.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From **ATHERTON**. QUESTION.—When does the judgment take place of the Old Testament worthies who died in faith?

Is this the same judgment that is referred to here in Romans 2. 12-13?

ANSWER.—Revelation 11. 18 shows that in association with the kingdom and reign of the Lord Jesus Christ the dead will be raised; the dead as included in—"Thy servants, the prophets . . . the saints . . . them that fear Thy Name." These will be rewarded then and shall share in the glories of the millennial kingdom. The judgment of Romans 2. is evidently that of the Great White Throne. (Revelation 20.).—J.M.

REMARKS.

Idolatry and immoral wickedness are the two things^ emphasised in this second part of Romans 1., as characteristic of

the Gentile world. Man's pursuit of all forms of evil followed upon his refusal to have God in his knowledge. God said through David :—

" I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go :

" I will counsel thee with Mine eye upon thee.

" Be not as the horse or the mule which have no understanding.

" Whose trappings must be bit and bridle to hold them in." Psalm 32. 8-9.

Where men say " No God," (and they are fools that say so), there is no restraining and controlling power, and the naturally sinful state of man will lead him to excess upon excess. But where men realise that God's eye is upon them, and that he has perfect knowledge of their deeds and thoughts, such persons need no human judge (O man that judgest another), no such bit and bridle are necessary to terrify and restrain them to ways of temperance and right living.

Verse 17 speaks of the righteousness of God being revealed, and verse 18 of the wrath of God being-revealed. The former is through the Gospel and is only revealed to faith. It is an inward and personal revelation to the believer. The revelation of God's wrath is from heaven and is universal, as is shown in verse 32 : " Who knowing the ordinance (or statute) of God that they which practise such things are worthy of death*."

God made known His truth in the hearts of men relative to what was His right from them as Creator, which would have, had they heeded it, resulted in right behaviour among themselves, but, instead, they refused all evidences of His power and divinity : they gave to Him neither glory nor thanks, and committed all forms of idolatry. Uncleanliness in things spiritual led to uncleanliness in things moral, and oftentimes the two forms of wickedness were housed in the same temple (so aided).

" God gave them up " is thrice recorded; and their bodies they dishonoured among themselves : they were guilty of all forms of bestiality, and were worse than beasts in many cases.

What a marvel that God should so love such a world of human beings as to give His only begotten Son ! He could deal with man on no other ground but in grace—wondrous, matchless grace. " Man had no merit this grace to inherit."

To restrain men in certain forms of evil, men appointed men to judge, and sometimes the judge condemned the criminal for sins of which he was equally guilty. Would judges, who sent the degraded criminal to his doom, escape? Nay, verily, neither judge nor criminal shall escape the judgment of God. There is no respect of persons with God. Nevertheless, the goodness of God should have led men, to repentance.

Despite this seething- mass of corruption there were tho'e, perhaps not a few, who sought by well-doing, for glory, honour, incorruption, who at the Great White Throne shall be among- the number of those whose names are in the book of life, and who shall receive eternal life. But such as were factious and obeyed not the truth (Romans 1. 18), upon such shall be tribulation and wrath. The punishment of each shall be measured in the light of what was known, or possible to be known, of God, and the secrets of men shall in that day be judged, whether of Jew or Gentile, and the Judge shall be our Lord Jesus Christ.—J.M.

SECTION I. ROMANS 1. 1-17.

From LONDON, S.W.—

(a) Salutation 1. 1-7.

(b) Introduction Proper, Paul and the Church in Rome, 1. 8-15.

(c) The Great Thesis, How can Righteousness be attained, 1. 16-17.

In the Salutation to the Church in Rome, which he had not yet visited, the Apostle Paul defines (1) his own position, (2) the position of the saints in Rome, (3) the central truth of the common faith which unites them. It contains important teaching (1) as to the person of Christ, (2) as to the connection of the old and new dispensations. The Gospel was not an afterthought, it had been foretold.

The introduction is more personal; it intimates (1) his personal interest in them, (2) his inability to see them, (3) his desire to have some spiritual fruit in them, (4) his readiness to preach the Gospel in Rome. Though almost entirely personal there is yet in it much teaching; (1) Christ is the Mediator through whom our prayers and thanksgivings must be presented to God (verse 8). [Should we not distinguish between the Lord's work as Mediator and Priest? Is not the presenting of prayers and praise done by Him who is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek?—J.M.] (2) God's care and providence are to be recognised in the ordinary affairs of life (verse 10). (3) God's servants are not exalted above the saints generally—spiritual benefits should be mutual (verses 11-12). (4) The Gospel is suited to all classes (verses 14-15).

Verses 16 and 17 are fundamental, they contain the grand theme of the ensuing argument, and are therefore, closely related to the following sections. The power of the Gospel is not intrinsic [This is a peculiar statement and may readily be construed to an erroneous meaning. If the Gospel had not intrinsic power its power could not be felt extrinsically. One might as well say that God has no intrinsic power, because He cannot save the ignorant and unbelieving.—J.M.] it is God's instrument in saving men. In its nature it cannot save those who are ignorant of it; it must be believed. It is equally efficacious to Jew and Gentile, there is no race distinction; but historically the first to experience its power was the Jew: it meets man's need: it reveals a Righteousness of God. The meaning of the term "Righteousness of God" will become clearer as we proceed; suffice it to say now that it is not God's inherent righteousness though intimately connected with it, nor does it mean an implanted and inherent righteousness wrought in men by Divine grace, this is Romish teaching, but rather a righteousness "reckoned" or "imputed" to us. The doctrinal part of the Epistle opens by demonstrating that the need of this Righteousness of God is absolute and universal (chapter 1. 18, -3. 20).

Verses 3 and 4 received particular attention as showing the evident contrast between "according to the flesh" (verse 3), and "according to the spirit" (verse 4). These seem to point to the divine and human natures of the Lord.

Verse 3. Born=became, usually indicating a transition from one state or mode of subsistence to another, as in John 1. 14. Thus the pre-existence of the Son is here implied. [You cannot prove pre-existence by the word born here, and it should

not be attempted.—J.M.] "The Resurrection of the dead." The change in the R.V. is a decided help to the student, but a somewhat doubtful gain to the ordinary reader, as there is a tendency to regard the phrase as equivalent to "the resurrection of dead ones." Christ's own resurrection, however, is here in view, as in Acts 26. 23, the only other passage in which the precise expression occurs, and which again are Paul's words, but some two years later. This is a case where it is difficult to render the precise thought of the original into English. "By a resurrection such as of dead ones" is perhaps as near as we can get, though not sufficiently idiomatic for a popular version. The phrase, though referring primarily to the Lord's own resurrection, glances at the whole resurrection of which He was the "First fruits"⁷⁷ (see also Colossians 1. 18). The thought here is expanded in chapter 6. 1-11. Our resurrection with its present concomitants is absolutely dependent on His.

[Two things are cited by the apostle as marking out the Son of God in power. (1) The Lord's own personal holiness as a Divine Being, which, beyond all argument, marks Him out as different from all the sons of men. "In Him is no sin," and "who did no sin."⁷¹ Then (2) He is marked out "by resurrection of dead ones" which cannot be limited, if we apply *h* at all, to the Lord's own personal resurrection. It seems rather to indicate that as the Lord's Divine Sonship is marked out by the holiness of His Being, so by His raising of dead ones, during His lifetime, He is marked out and proclaimed to men the Son of God. (See John 11. 4).—J.M.]

STEPHEN BURROWS.

From BRANTFORD.—This Epistle, sent by the Apostle Paul to the Romans, is testimony to his love for those who were associated with the "House of God" in a day that is past.

He designates Himself as a bond-servant of Jesus Christ. He was the willing servant of His Master ready to spend and be spent in His service. He also speaks of himself as an Apostle called by the Lord and separated unto the Gospel of God.

The Gospel is the glad tidings concerning the Son of God who was born of the seed of David, even as had been aforetime promised by God through the prophets.

Whilst many doubted that Jesus was the Messiah, Paul was persuaded that Jesus Christ was the Son of God with power from on high. This was made sure to him because of the spirit of holiness associated with His life and also by the resurrection of the dead.

What a revolution had taken place in the life of Saul of Tarsus, from being an injurious person, he now, by the grace of God, sought to build that which he at one time was determined to destroy. He addresses the saints, called by God to be Jesus Christ's as beloved of God. Thanks arose from his heart to God for the saints at Rome, and that because of their faith which was spread abroad throughout the whole world. It caused him to make mention of them unceasingly and to pray God to open up his way, that he might see them and impart to them some spiritual gift, with the object that they might be more rooted and grounded in the truth.

The desire was with him on many occasions to be with them at Rome and that more fruit might be borne by them. He felt he was a debtor to all men, for, said he on another occasion,

"Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." Thus he felt constrained to go to Rome ready to preach the glad tidings there also.

He was not ashamed of the glad tidings, for he realized it was God's power unto salvation to everyone **that** believeth, not only to the Jew but also to the Gentile.

The righteousness of God is revealed through the **Gospel**, not by works, as under the law, but to faith, **by** which faith the righteous ones shall live.

By grace are ye saved through faith; and that **not of** yourselves : it is the gift of god." (Ephesians 2. 8).

J.T., J.B. and R.M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From BRANTFORD.—QUESTION 1.—In verse **8 to 10** of chapter 1. is there a principle revealed for our guidance in giving thanks to God, before making our requests?

ANSWER.—It seemed to be characteristic of the Apostle Paul in many cases when he began his epistles to strike a note of thanksgiving to God for the saints to whom he wrote. **And** it is a comely and proper custom to mingle our prayers with thanksgiving. (Note how in 1 Timothy 2. I thanksgiving- comes last). Yet there may be occasions when in difficulty we pray for deliverance without thought or time for anything else, like Peter when sinking in the sea he cried: "Lord, save me!" (Matthew 14. 30).—J.M.

From BRANTFORD.—QUESTION 2.—What is the resurrection referred to in Romans 1. 4

ANSWER.—This resurrection of dead ones we understand to refer to the Lord's raising of dead persons during His lifetime in proof of His Divine Sonship.—J.M.

Correspondents will facilitate work by leaving a 2 inch margin as well as by writing on one side of paper only.

If fellow-students would send 20 to 30 clean copies of March, 1926, issue to Mr. A. J. McIntyre, Glen View, Prospect Avenue, Darwen, further volumes (for 1926) to that number might be bound should demand for same warrant it.

REQUEST FOR PRAYER.

Will beloved fellow-students and others join us in prayer for the complete recovery to health of our dear co-editor, Mr. James Martin, who has been seriously ill? He is now somewhat better, **but** still weak.—J.M.

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 3.

Eighth Series.

March, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION III. ROMANS 2. 17— 3. 18.

From LONDON, S.W.—In Sections 2 and 3 (Romans 1. 18—3. 20) we have the need of the Gospel disclosed; sin is universal; there is none righteous.

- (a) The Gentile? (Rationalist). 1. 19-32.
- (b) The Jew? (Ritualist). 2. 1—3. 8.
- (c) Summary the universal failure to attain to Righteousness shown from Scripture. 3. 9-20.

In 1. 18 the position of man which makes a righteousness of God necessary is stated in the terms "ungodliness" and "unrighteousness." Standing as it does in contrast to God's provision in grace as set forth in verse 17 it makes the darkness seem yet more dark. How often the bright glories of God's grace shine in the dark background of sin! (e.g. Micah 7. 18). How often too, His mercy precedes the revelation of judgment! (e.g. Revelation 4. and 5.). The antitheses of verses 17 and 18 should be noted. —

Righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel unto faith the righteous.	Wrath of God revealed from heaven against ungodliness unrighteousness.
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There are three stages in the section dealing with the Gentiles.

- (1) God may be known (a) through the conscience v. 19, (b) in creation v. 20.

[Can we safely conclude that we can separate the conscience from God's speaking to men in creation? Verse 20 is joined to verse 19 by "for," which adduces proof of God's manifestation to men. If God revealed His power and divinity to men, to what was it manifest, but to man's conscience?—J.M.]

- (2) Indifference to this knowledge ends in idolatry vv. 21-25.
 (3) Because of this " God gave them up " (thrice repeated) 24, 26, 28. God withdraws His preventing grace. It is a judicial abandonment under which they are allowed to reap to the full the fruit of their own evil course.

There are three parts in the section dealing with the Jews.

- (1) Transitional. 2. 1-16. Here with consummate skill the argument is shifted from the Gentile to the Jew. Under cover of a general statement, to which the Jew would readily assent, the Jew is condemned out of his own mouth.

[This section deals with man in general and not with the Jew only. Note " O man " verse 1. " The Jew first, and also to the Greek," verses 9 and 10, and verse 11 " No respect of person with God," shows the universality of the judgment of God. -J.M.]

- (2) The failure of the Jew 2. 17-29. The failure of the Jew is then shown (a) as to the law, (b) as to circumcision.
 (3) Objections considered 3. 1-8. (a) The Jews advantage vv. 1 and 2. (b) The promises not invalidated by failure vv. 3 and 4. (c) Though God's glory is more fully manifested, sin is not thereby excused vv. 5-8.

The Jew and Gentile having been proved alike under sin the argument is now clinched by quotations from Scripture 3. 9-18. While the final summing up is given in verses 19 and 20.

S. BURROWS.

From ATHERTON.—To enable both Jew and Gentile to appreciate the Gospel, it is first of all essential to prove to them their need thereof. The Gentiles' need has already been proved in chapter 1. In this Section the Apostle proceeds to prove to the Jew, that, although to him were the promises and covenants made aforetime, yet he has failed to rise to the responsibilities thereof by reason of disobedience.

The law given to Israel of old by the hand of Moses revealed to the Jew the glory and the will of God. Hence they were in a position to instruct others (e.g., the Gentiles), who were blind to the things of God. However, instead of bringing glory and honour to the name of God, by reason of their privileged enlightenment, it stands recorded against them, that " the Holy Name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles because of them " (see Isaiah 52. 5). They were verily guilty of the identical sins for which they condemned the Gentiles. Hence we have here what is very much in evidence to-day, that is, profession and not reality. Jeremiah reminds us of these things in which we should glory (Jeremiah 9. 23-24), and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself warns the hypocrite in Mark 7. 6-8.

These heart searching questions of the Apostle (verses 21-23) demonstrate clearly the absolute disobedience of the Jew to the law on which they professed to rest. Further, they were a source of stumbling and offence to others. (Compare 2 Samuel 12. 14, and Ezekiel 36. 20-23).

One is caused to contemplate the fact that we are God's people in the present day (1 Peter 2. 9), and are required to shine as luminaries in the deeply darkening gloom. (Philippians 2. 15). How very far reaching are the effect and the influence of

such a life; hence it behoves each one to undergo self-examination in order? that by means of a sanctified life and walk before God and men, corresponding with that which we profess to be, we shall be able to bring glory and honour to that Great Jehovah.

In chapter 3. the Apostle deals with the question of what advantage the Jew had over the Gentile and the conclusion is arrived at, that the Jew has greater advantages and privileges every way and hence greater responsibility. Reference was made to the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 4. 7-8, and of Stephen in Acts 7. 38-39. The oracles of God were entrusted to the Jew with the warning contained in Deuteronomy 27. 26. No man is justified by the law in the sight of God. (Galatians 3. 11.) Further, he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all (James 2. 10). Hence the Apostle clearly shows that the Jew is as guilty as the Gentile, both being in thralldom to sin. Their condition in the sight of a thrice Holy God is vividly portrayed in verses 10-18.

The deadly havoc wrought by sin, step by step, from the fall of man is dramatically emphasized here, for their throat, tongues, lips, mouth, feet, ways, knowledge and eyes were absolutely subservient to Satan and sin. The words used concerning the condition of man here, we think, could apply to both Jew and Gentile, not only by nature, but also by practice.

E. BIRCHALL.

From TORONTO.—The law demanded strict conscientious observance and anyone resting thereon must produce suitable works to obtain the promised advantages and blessings (see verse 25).

How great were the privileges of that favoured nation whom God called out of Egypt (Exodus 6. 7 ; 19. 6). If they had observed to do the will of their God their greatness would have been manifest (Deuteronomy 4. 7, 8). But failure was theirs (Hebrews 8. 9). Thus their circumcision became uncircumcision, for verily circumcision is of the heart, and not of the flesh (verses 28, 29). Also, their practices did not come up to the professions. The Jew as well as the Gentile is under sin. (Romans 3. 9).

The law was given to teach men their sinner state (Galatians 3. 19, 24), and that by the works of law, should no flesh be justified.

Luke 18. 10 furnishes us with an illustration. The Pharisee pleaded his good works as a ground for justification. But the publican shewed the true and contrite spirit of one who realised his condemnation before God on account of his sins. This is one object of the law—the imparting of the knowledge of sin (Romans 3. 20).

The Pharisee is typical of all those who rested or boasted in the law, and went about establishing their own righteousness (Romans 10. 3). The fact that they justified themselves shows that they did not understand the "Oracles of God" (Romans 3. 3), in which is recorded "there is none 'righteous' no not one" (Romans 3. 10). The oracles of God closed every avenue of escape other than that which is revealed to faith. (Romans 4.). God is true and absolute reliance on His word, i.e., "faith," is sufficient for justification (Romans 3. 4).

SAMUEL NICHOL.

From PAISLEY.—Judging from the contents of this portion we are led to conclude, the Jews had the idea that circumcision of the flesh was sufficient to meet the requirements of the law and bring them to a state of righteousness before God. That they were well acquainted with their history as the chosen people of God is clearly evident from John 8. 39, and John 9. 28, 29. But position seems to have been their chief concern without the slightest regard to condition. As a nation they failed to see in the Lord Jesus Christ, the One to whom the law and the prophets testified (see Galatians 3. 24; Acts 15. 21; and 2 Corinthians 3. 14, 15).

The sign of circumcision was given to Abraham as the token of the covenant God entered into with him (Genesis 17.). The Jews had apparently been strict in the observance that the law of Moses should not be broken (see John 7. 22, 23), yet by their lives they had brought dishonour to God. Thus they had trifled with the advantage, that should have been theirs, of being entrusted with the oracles of God. We were reminded of the promise to David concerning the establishment of his throne (2 Samuel 7. 13, 16) and while at present Israel has no king, still the words of Jeremiah 33. 14-17 will yet have fulfilment.

We had a little difficulty as to the full meaning of the expression "the oracles of God." One suggested that it refers to the complete law as given by Moses, another that it takes in the whole of the Old Testament scriptures. [There need be no reasonable doubt but that the "oracles of God" here refer to the Old Testament scriptures—Genesis to Malachi; the Jewish people received this sacred trust.—J.M.] We remembered the Hebrews had need again that someone should teach them the first principles of the oracles of God. Hebrews 5. 12.

Now all are shut up under sin, both Jews and Greeks, and the Apostle further shows them the true circumcision are those who know the Lord Jesus Christ, "the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth." Compare also Colossians 2. 11 and 3. 11-15; Philippians 3. 3; Ephesians 2. 13-15.

S. THOMSON.

From LONDON, S.E.—One of the first questions to occur to us during the consideration of this portion was "Why was the Apostle speaking so largely about the Jews and yet addressing his remarks to the Romans—Gentiles"?

We thought, in answer to this question that it was probable that the Church in Rome contained a number of Jews. [There seems no reason to doubt that the Church of God in Rome did contain a number of Jews, the last chapter would prove this as Prisca and Aquila for instance. But the discussion of the relative positions of Jew and Gentile is not merely incidental, it is fundamental to his treatise. Mankind was divided into Jews (previously Israel) and Gentiles, those who were and those who were not God's people. As to the privileges and responsibilities of each in time the Apostle definitely speaks, and also as to their judgment in eternity.—J.M.] It was, no doubt, a difficulty for a "converted" Jew, who had been a very zealous keeper of the letter of the law to leave old prejudices behind; but the Apostle shows them, that whilst the Jewish nation had been favoured by God in the past yet He had proclaimed both Jew and Gentile to be "under sin."

We were reminded of the incident recorded in the 7th chapter of John, where the Lord says that although the Jews were zealous to follow the letter of the law, yet they were breaking it that very day, by having murder in their hearts.

The Apostle lays a terrible charge against the Jews in 2. 24. We thought that it is sadly possible for a similar charge to be laid to us if our lives are not "blameless" before the world. Chapter 3. 5-8 reminded us that men to-day think that God is unrighteous because He "visite*th with wrath," and it is a common thing to hear men say harsh things because of God's punishment of sin—especially with reference to Old Testament incidents.

Chapter 3. 10-18 are quoted from a number of Old Testament scriptures and at first sight might seem to be hard things to say about many men, yet when analysed we are bound to admit that it is a true picture of the human heart—"deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

The question was raised as to whether in the light of Philippians 3. 3, and Galatians 6. 16, we could claim to be Jews according to the spirit, and we thought that scripture justified this view. Have other Corners any thoughts about this?

G. E. SOULSBY.

From BRANTFORD.—This portion from verse 17 onwards reminds us more or less of the teaching of the Lord Jesus, especially to the Pharisees, who also outwardly appeared righteous, but inwardly were far from God.

We see the sad part of it in verses 21 to 23 when he who seeks to teach others needs teaching himself. Does this not show forth the teaching of the Lord Jesus in Luke 6. 39 to 42? From verses 25-29 we learn that circumcision must needs be accompanied with the doing and obeying of the law. It was suggested that those of the Gentiles (such as the heathen) who worship their Creator according to their knowledge shall be accepted, because each man shall be 'judged according to the light that he has received.

There is a solemn exhortation to us as children of God not to be so in outward appearance only, but to be subject in the heart as true disciples and seek to carry out the truth.

We pass on to chapter 3. and admire the Apostle's power in reasoning. We notice first of all how that the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God (see Acts 7. 38). And even if some Jews were proved unworthy of this great charge this does not make of none effect the faithfulness of God.

No, indeed, and we should be in the same spirit and mind as the Apostle, and remain true to our God. Let us hold fast to the Word of God for it is our only foundation when assailed by false teachers.

We next are caused to admit that God is righteous and also a righteous Judge. (Romans 3. 3 to 7).

In chapter 11. verses 32 and 33 we see God's purpose, in concluding all under sin. We learn from other scriptures, that, by the works of the law, no flesh is justified in the sight of God. Therefore God can only deal with man on the ground of mercy. As there is thus a world-wide condemnation, so also is there a world-wide offer of salvation. In verses 10 to 18 no less than eight Old Testament scriptures are quoted. Solomon could say, man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Here we see

him at his worst. How evident it is that a man is not justified by the works of the law. No reformation will suffice, 'tis life poor sinners, need.

J.T., J.B., R.M.

From BARROW.—In the previous section the writer of the epistle has, to a great extent, dealt with the Gentiles; but in the portion now under consideration, the condition of the Jew is under review. God's ancient people were truly privileged far above all other nations of the earth, having received from God, the law, the perfect standard. They had good reason to rest in this law, and to glory in God, as will be seen in Deuteronomy 4. 5 to 9. In the law was made known the will of God for the time then present, and through it they were instructed in the things that are excellent. These things gave them a wonderful advantage over the idol-worshipping Gentile, hence their responsibility was so much the greater. The law became their boast, and, forgetting the spirit of the commandment, they served in the letter. The weightier matters they left undone (see Luke 11. 42), despite their zeal for the law (Matthew 23. 15), and their high estimation of themselves (Romans 2. 19, 20).

The list of questions from verse 21 to 23 might well cause the Pharisaical Jew to examine himself again in the light of God's revealed will, even in the light of James 2. 10. In fact, one would think, from the arguments which followed, that they were in worse case than the Gentile who had no revelation save that of the works of creation. Circumcision was a sign of separation. It distinguished between the people of God, and the nations, yet the ordinance became as nothing if the law was not kept. The uncircumcised Gentile who kept the law was reckoned, by God, to be circumcised, and this involved much. The real circumcision is of the heart, and the real praise is of God, and not of men. (Romans 2. 29).

Chapter 3. vv. 1-8 show the wonderfully high position the Jew held, in comparison to the Gentile. Their chief advantage, as has already been pointed out, was in the fact "that they were entrusted with the oracles of God" (verse 2). (We note in passing, the word "entrusted," which seems to us to suggest the thought of to guard zealously, to do all in their powder to keep it inviolate.) Intrusted with "living oracles" (Acts 7. 39), "ordained by angels" (Acts 7. 53; Galatians 3. 19), "spoken through angels" (Acts 7. 53; Galatians 3. 19), "spoken through angels" (Hebrews 2. 2). Though all this was true, yet they kept it not, because some were without faith (see Hebrews 4. 2, and Isaiah 53. 1). But this did not affect the faithfulness of God. [The same principle applies to our day; see 2 Timothy 2. 13. The Lord will not deny His word.—J.M.]

In verses 5 and 7 the things set forward would appear to be understood by contrast. "Our unrighteousness"—"God's righteousness"; "My lie"—"The truth of God." Just as when two articles, one highly polished, and the other tarnished, are placed alongside each other, the dullness of the one shews out the brightness of the other; so their unrighteousness showed out, by contrast, the righteousness of God.

Verse 9 seems to be the summing up of the points brought forward from chapter 1. 18 to chapter 3. 8. The evidence adduced put both Jew and Gentile on the same footing, "are all under sin," and the quotations which follow to verse 18 are equally

true concerning both Jew and Gentile. Now, with the world guilty before God, the way has, as it were, been cleared* ready for the setting forth of the grand theme of the epistle—"justification by faith."

J. MCORMICK.

From GLASGOW.—The writer is proving to us the guilt of man. Firstly he treats of the Gentile and in our present section the Jew is brought before us. The Jew is being tried, God is Judge, and the law is witness (chapter 2. 17).

The failure of the Jew to attain and maintain the standard is unquestionable, the Gentile also bearing witness to this fact (verses 23-24). Various minds were expressed as to which portion of the word the Apostle was referring in these two verses. Three passages were suggested, two of which we give, 2 Samuel 12. 14; Ezekiel 36. 20, 23. At the close of the chapter we find the Jew proved to be as guilty every whit as the Gentile (verses 28; 29). What advantage then hath the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision? This difficulty arising in the mind after reading what has gone before is anticipated by the Apostle. A vital question involving the righteous character of God is fully answered in the following verses.

The Apostle is now engaged as a witness on God's behalf. As such he brings forward the "Oracles of God." This is the first and outstanding advantage. Most sacred as was this trust, God's righteous judgment was not thwarted thereby. God's character is not changed by man's attitude to His word. The measure of light granted by God is the measure of responsibility. God's character stands out in judgment, as in all His work, beyond suspicion. The citation from Psalm 51. 4 seems very fitting here. David, brought to know his guilt, charged not God with unrighteousness, but rather saw in his own folly that which would show out by contrast God's righteousness.

The verdict is impartial "All under sin" and the appeal made to the word of God confirms this. A black background indeed, waiting for the picture which follows.

R. SHAW.

From LEEDS, BRADFORD AND HALIFAX.—Verses 17-23 portray to us the utter impossibility of being justified by the law, in telling us of the shortcomings of the Jews, who studied the law so diligently and taught it so strictly, but could not keep it to the letter (2 Corinthians 3. 6; Matthew 23. 3; Romans 3. 23). The purpose of the law was to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3. 23-25).

What connection is there between abhorring idols and robbing temples? It does not seem feasible for Jew or pagan to rob temples (verse 22). [To "rob temples"—R.V.M.—to commit sacrilege. The same Greek word is used in Acts 19. 37. Other forms of sacrilege than plundering may be contained in the word, but it would appear that the thought contained in this verse is that there were certain Jews, who professed abhorrence of idols, yet could not resist the temptation to enter idol-temples in order to steal therefrom.]

Verse 24 manifests far-reaching effects of the transgressions of the Jews.

Chapter 2. 25 to 3. 2. Circumcision signified a separation to God and a setting apart from the nations and a doer of the

law to the letter, but this became a hollow mockery as their lives were not in harmony with it. Circumcision of the heart is the kind that counts. (Romans 4. 9-12).

Chapter 3. 2-18. How grandly God's nature is glorified in spite of our failures. His faithfulness will fulfil the promises contained in His oracles. If some are faithless He will raise up others of the seed of Abraham to whom He will perform all He has spoken. His righteousness when He deals with the unrighteous will yet be commended and approved by all. His truth is as eternal as His name and its glory is only enhanced by contrast with the lie for which it was substituted.

Signal as was the failure of the Jew with his far greater light, yet God concludes there is no difference between Jew and Gentile (Romans 3. 22 and 10. 12). He has shut up all under sin that He might have mercy upon all (Romans. 11. 32).

R. ROGERS.

From CLYDEBANK.—In the opening of this section we have brought before us the privileges of the Jew. Yet through his transgression of the law of God which is righteous and holy, he dishonoured God.

Circumcision was profitable to the Jew who kept the law of God. It was of the fathers, Abraham receiving the covenant, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had in uncircumcision. How lightly these privileges were appreciated by many of the Jews we find from the words of Luke 11. 52. We find also from the Lord's own words in Matthew 23. 27, 28 what the Jew was outwardly. A further advantage possessed by the Jew was the custody of the oracles of God. (Romans 3. 1, 2). See also Acts 7. 38 "Living oracles," Deuteronomy 4. 32, 33, and Numbers 7. 89. In the last verse the Voice is personified. We judge that the Jew had the whole revealed will of God from the book of Moses to Malachi, from the messengers through whom the oracles of Jehovah came.

The privilege of Israel was sevenfold (Romans 9. 4, 5). To these may be added an eighth advantage, namely, that from the Jews "as concerning the flesh," Christ came. The children of Israel are the only people with whom God made covenants, and with whom His glory dwelt; to whom He gave a law, and made promises and from whom He required service (Psalm 47, 19, 20).

The Jew then, was in a vastly more favourable position than the Gentiles who have no law. (chapter 2. 14). "He rested upon the law," was instructed out of the law, and had, in the law, the form of knowledge and the truth. The sad result of this unique advantage was that, while outwardly more moral than the Gentile, at heart he was as far from God, and as void of righteousness as was the poor Gentile dog. (Compare Isaiah 5. 1-7). "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek after God" (Psalm 14. 2), and "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor" (Isaiah 59. 16).

Chapter 3. 3. Please read Deuteronomy 32. 4 and Psalm 89. 8 in connection with the faithfulness of God. The Apostle also speaks of the righteousness of God, and the truth of God, and the judgment of God (verse 19).

If man can charge God with unrighteousness or question the indictment of verses 9 to 18, then he may challenge the throne of God. But, alas, the whole human race stands im-

peached before the throne of Supreme Justice. There is no advocate to plead man's case for every mouth is stopped, and all the world is brought under the judgment of God.

J. MCKAY, G. DYER.

REMARKS BY. J.M.

Paul having laid bare the state of the Gentile world as to its idolatry and darkness, and the ignorance of God which prevailed, and having shown how these things were followed by the most detestable sensuality and bestiality, he now, in this section, turns to the state of the Jewish people. In their case he reveals how their natural mind had led them into a state of shameless hypocrisy. After saying certain things characteristic of the Jew such as : " Resting- in the law," " Glorifying in God," " Knowing His will," " Approving the things that are excellent," " A guide to the blind," and so forth, he asks the question; " Thou therefore that teachest another teachest thou not thyself?" This question touches the Jewish character at the core.

The scribes and Pharisees of the Lord's day were characterised by " They say and do not." By them the law was not regarded of itself to be a sufficient burden, they must heap upon the shoulders of a people already labouring under rites and ceremonies. " the traditions of the elders " until the burdens became such as were grievous to be borne. Upon such teachers the Lord pronounced Woe ! woe ! woe ! What was true of the teachers became true of the taught until the dry rot of hypocrisy had spread to well-nigh the whole nation. Even Paul could speak of the things which were gain to him among men, among whom, as to the law, he was found blameless, though as to the real and Godward side of matters he tells us how the law (Romans 7. 7-4) through the sin of covetousness had "brought about his death " It slew me."

All this review of the condition of the Jew should have a loud voice to all who would teach others, that outward profession and position should always carry with it its fitting complement of a right condition of heart. This was seen in the Lord who " began both to do and to teach " (Acts 1.1). He absolutely attained in practise what He taught in doctrine, but we should struggle relatively to approximate to the divine doctrine which we teach, remembering that the doctrine should first act on the speaker then on the hearers.

Did the failure of the Jew bring to naught the faithfulness of God? That was impossible. If God's faithfulness to carry out His word were contingent upon the faithfulness of His people either in the Old or New Testament times, then the prospect would indeed be hopeless, and Satan would have triumphed. In the dark and apostate day of Jeremiah's prophesy He could say " I watch over my word to perform it " (Jeremiah 1. 12). God's word shall stand and His wards will live on and be fulfilled though men die. " He called them gods (elohim), unto whom the word of God came " (John 10. 35); yet, He says " Ye shall die like men," and in association with these words in Psalm 82, we have Aşaph further saying : " Arise, O God, judge the earth."

Having laid the charge against the Jew in chapter 2, and the Gentile in chapter 1. like a clever lawyer for the crown, Paul sums up the evidence proving his case from the sure testimony

of the Lord, culling quotations from seven or eight portions of the Old Testament. Well is it for the man who **thus** arraigned at the bar of God pleads guilty to the charge, and having chosen his Advocate leaves His defence entirely in His hands, He who is well able to deliver from so serious a charge. J.M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

QUESTIONS.—From TORONTO.—(1) Is the law, referred to in the second and third chapter of Romans "The law" that was written by God on two tables of stone, and to which 2 Corinthians 3. 7, undoubtedly refers, or is "the law" in Romans 2. and 3. something different from the Oracles of God (i.e., speakings)?

(2) (a) Why are "the Prophets" and "the law" referred to separately? (b) Could we combine these "two" and refer to them as "The oracles of God"?

ANSWER.—Re questions from Toronto as to the law, it seems quite evident that the law may refer to (1) The ten commandments given to Moses on Mount Horeb. (2) The law contained in the five books of Moses, the book of the law. (3) Also to the entire Old Testament scriptures—"Your law" (John 10. 34), and the Lord quoted from Psalm 82.; again "Their law," and He again quoted from the Psalms. This would agree with the "Oracles of God" in Romans 3. 2.

The Old Testament scriptures are at times spoken of as the Law and the Prophets and again the Lord uses a common subdivision of these scriptures as (1) The Law of Moses. (2) The Prophets. (3) The Psalms. (Luke 22. 44).

Note how in discussing the question of transgressing the law, Paul quotes from Isaiah 52. 5 in Romans 2. 24. Evidently in his mind the books of Moses do not stand separated from the rest of the oracles of God. J.M.

QUESTION.—From BRANTFORD.—Could we say that the Lord Jesus Himself is the "Way of Peace" (verse 17)?

ANSWER.—It is not necessary to this scripture that we personify the way of peace. The way of peace is the exact opposite of the way of the wicked, which is full of destruction and misery, full of clamour and confusion, having nothing of harmony and peacefulness in it.

"Go in peace," said the Lord to the woman, the sinner of the city, and to the woman with the issue of blood; their steps since they had known His forgiving; and cleansing power were henceforth to be in the way of peace; but the unregenerate sinner, knows not that way till the Lord turns his feet in thither. J.M.

LONDON, S.W.—Re note on Galatians 1. 15 in article of Barrow, p. 3. Has the significance of the change in the R.V. here been sufficiently considered. As Lightfoot observes the A.V. obscures, if it does not misinterpret, the sense. The Revisers remove the ambiguity by a comma and the word "even" after "separated me" thus preventing these words **from** coalescing too closely in meaning with the following clause **and** giving a temporal force **to** the preposition "from."

It seems inherently improbable that the Apostle should here intend to say, no more indeed than is true of all men, that he owed his birth to God. If it does not state what he was separated to, neither does it state what he was called to, but both are surely implied.

The meaning of " separated " in Romans 1. 1 is clear and this, in view of the close affinity of Romans and Galatians already noticed, more or less determines its sense here; especially as the subject matter concerns the Gospel in each case. The phrase " from my mother's womb " = " from my birth " (see Acts 3. 2 and 14. 8). The meaning of the passage is therefore " who set me apart [for His service] even from my birth." (Compare also Luke 1. 15; Judges 16. 17; and Jeremiah 1. 5).

S. BURROWS.

[I am pleased to see this contribution from our London, S.W. friends. This puts Galatians 1. 15 in a more helpful light, and was, I understand, the view our Barrow friends held. Evidently the separation of the Apostle to the Gospel may be viewed in three ways, or stages. (1) Separated in God's electing purpose. (2) Separated according to God's personal call to him. (3) Separated (with Barnabas) by those with whom he laboured (Acts 3¹) J M]

REMARKS.

Will Paisley friends please excuse us for not including* late paper on Section 2. Economy in space is only cause.

Friends are advised to look up scripture references quoted in papers, as full scriptural quotations, inserted by correspondents, are often cut out by Editors—again for economy in space only.

REQUEST FOR PRAYER.

Will our friends join us in prayer for our beloved co editor James Martin, who may have to undergo, ere long, a rather severe operation, that God may bring him through and that it will be successful.—J.M.

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 4.

Eighth Series.

April, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION IV. ROMANS 3. 19—5. 11.

From PAISLEY.—Most of our time and attention was occupied in considering what seems to be the salient feature of the latter part of chapter 3., viz., the manifestation of a righteousness of God (verses 21 and 22). The Mosaic law brought with it the knowledge of sin (verse 20), proving also to man his absolute failure. God now deals with man on the ground of mercy. The believer is "accounted righteous" on the merit of the work of Christ, who Himself fulfilled the law, when on earth; God's claims also being met by the self-same sacrifice. Therefore God is able righteously to justify man. This agrees with 2 Corinthians 5. 21. Faith, then, on the part of the sinner, secures for such a place in the sight of God, which could not be obtained by the works of the law (Galatians 2. 16). To this righteousness of God the law and the prophets (i.e., the Old Testament) bear witness, for therein we have a prophetic account of the birth, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the blessings accruing therefrom. Though unknown in other generations, the benefits of the cross work are now fully revealed (Ephesians 3b 5-6; Romans 16. 25-26; 1 Peter 1. 10-12) through the preaching of the Gospel. [We must be careful to distinguish between what was known and plainly taught in the Old Testament scriptures, that God would bless the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, according* to the Gospel preached to Abraham, and the revelation of the mystery which in other generations was not made known to the ~~s~~ffis of men. This mystery was hid in God from all ages. The **mystery** connected with the Body, God did not disclose to **men** in former times.—J.M.]

Chapter 4. gives a full account of the faith of Abraham. We are not told that Abraham was justified by works (as in James), but rather because of his faith. This principle of justification still obtains (chapter 4. 5 and 23-25). Works are excluded, so we are debtors to mercy alone. This is confirmed through David (Psalm 32. 1-2).

Chapter 5, resumes the chief theme of the epistle—**basic** Gospel truths. The love of God, once known **and** experienced, is the source of all joy and rejoicing under every circumstance of life.

The close of the section reminds us of the remarkable manner of our justification and reconciliation. Verse 10 emphasises the necessity of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We remember He said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John 14. 19).
S. THOMSON.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—The apostle has already told us in chapter 1, that the Gospel contains a righteousness of God. In the epistle to the Philippians he speaks of "a righteousness which is of the law." Israel was given a perfect law to keep, a perfect standard of righteousness; but instead of bringing them righteousness this law only condemned them. It brought to them the knowledge of sin. Instead of revealing good in man it shewed how sinful he was. If Israel failed to keep God's law in such an advantageous position, how much **more** guilty in God's sight would the Gentile have appeared.

Every mouth is stopped and all the world is brought under the judgment of God. Jew and Gentile alike **stand** in need of a righteousness, which the law could not provide. This great need is met by the Gospel of God.

This righteousness is apart from the law and yet is witnessed by the law and the prophets. The question arose as to where, in the law, this witness is found. Some thought that the expression "the law," here, comprised the whole of the book of Moses and brought forward the case of Abraham as a witness.¹ Others thought that the witness was found in the sacrifices, particularly in connection with the Day of Atonement. We have a witness from the prophets cited in chapter 4, in the quotation from Psalm 32. [The law and the prophets refer to the whole body of divine revelation in the Old Testament. Two instances are cited in chapter 4.—the justification of Abraham and the blessing of David as proving the evidence of the law on the one hand and the prophets on the other, to the righteousness of God which is through faith in Christ Jesus. See verses 23-25 as to how no scripture is private to any individual.—J.M.I.]

The righteousness revealed in the Gospel is reckoned or imputed to the believer as a result of the sacrifice of Christ.

Verse 25 shews that the sins of those who lived in Old Testament days were dealt with at the cross.

Verse 31 says that we establish the law by faith. This was thought to mean that, by believing God, we received a righteousness which had the witness of the law (see verse 21) and so established the law. [The law of Moses was given to a people whose great progenitor, Abraham, was justified by faith, **and** though it was added because of transgressions, it was never intended to nullify the principle of faith exemplified in Abraham "The just shall live by faith." The law was given as—shall we say—a temporary measure till Christ should come, who would confirm the promises made unto the fathers, who welcomed the promises by faith. Thus, faith beyond question establishes the law, though the law is not of faith.—J.M.]

Some preferred the reading of the authorised version of chapter 5, verse 1, while others thought "let us," to be the correct rendering. We should like help on this point. [It would

appear that the greater weight of MSS. and ancient versions is in favour of "let us have"—a single -stroke in the Greek MSS. makes the only visible difference between this reading and that accepted in the A.V., "we have." If this "peace with God" refers to that obtained on believing, the weight of argument, in the previous chapter, would favour "we have" (the indicative mood) an accomplished fact: but if the thought is "a peace that is obtained by a daily exercise of the believer's faith in fc^{\wedge} s God and Saviour," then "let us have" (the subjunctive mood) would appear to be the better reading.]

In verses 6, to 8 of chapter 5, we have the work of Christ completed for us in the past, but verses 9-11 tell us of something more. "Saved by His life." We take this to mean, His life at the ri[^]ht hand of God. Some thought this referred to His intercession, while others thought that the fact that He lives, is the guarantee that we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. [This salvation is shown by the Lord's words "Because I live ye shall live also," to be dependent on His life, not on His intercession. "Christ is our life" and therefore is our Saviour.—J.M.]

The words "let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God" brought to our minds the words of the Lord Jesus in John 17. "that they may behold My glory." Titus 2. 13, was also mentioned in this connection.

T. M. HYLAND.

From ATHERTON.—The thesis of 1. 17, viz., "That in the Gospel is revealed a righteousness by faith," the apostle seeks to prove conclusively in this portion of our study. He must first of all demonstrate clearly, that by no other means could justification be attained. The Gentile had nothing to rest upon, but the Jew rested upon the law; hence the apostle seeks to convince the Jew that none would be accounted righteous before God on the ground of obedience to the law. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Such was the finding of Job (see Job 14. 4). Why then was the law given? It was added because of transgressions (Galatians 3. 19), that the trespass might abound (Romans 5. 20). (See further Romans 7. 7; Galatians 3. 21). Hence the law has the effect of silencing every mouth, because neither Jew nor Gentile had been capable of obeying it and thus the whole world stood condemned.

The law and the prophets were witnesses of the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ which was to be made manifest.

David also in the 32nd Psalm speaks of the blessedness of the man whose sin is covered, and to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity. Hebrews 10. 38 "My righteous one shall live by faith" (quoted from the prophet Habakkuk 2. 4) brings again before us that righteousness which is by faith in the Son of God. All are acquitted freely by grace.

Verse 25 reminds us of the prayer of the publican of Luke 18. 13 "God be merciful (propitiated) to me the sinner." On the ground of the bloodstained mercy-seat (propitiatory) the sins of Israel of old were atoned for or passed over year by year, and so, to demonstrate His justice at the present time, God put forward His Son to be propitiatory for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world (1 John 2. 2 and 4. 10). (Hebrews 9. 12).

Chapter 4. To prove these things the apostle begins at

the very beginning, going beyond Moses right back to **Abraham**, as it was written "And Abraham believed God and it was reckoned (imputed) unto him for righteousness" (Genesis 15. 6). The keyword of this passage seems to be the word "reckoned" or "imputed," repeated eleven times in the chapter.

Imputed righteousness in Abraham's case did not come through circumcision but by faith, because the scripture concerning Abraham was used at a time before he was circumcised (verse 11). Again, the great promise to Abraham was given a long time prior to the law and would have been nullified if it were made to depend upon a subsequent law; and again, the law by bringing about a knowledge of sin wrought wrath and **not** promise. (See Galatians 3. 10-17). Hence in spite of the fact that the fulfilment of the promise was impossible, naturally, Abraham did not stagger at God's promise in unbelief, but became mighty in faith being absolutely convinced **that** whatever God had promised He would also carry it out (verses 18-21). "God is **not** a man that *He* should lie, neither the son of **man** that He should repent: Hath He said, and shall He not do it, or hath He spoken and shall "Be not make it good?" (Numbers 23. 19). Abraham's record is for our instruction (see verse 23). "For the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham saying, etc. (Galatians 3. 8 and 29).

Having proved his point, the apostle, in chapter 5. now dwells on the fruits of justification which may be summed up in the two words "peace" and "hope."

The Revised text "Let us have peace," is correct here, for this peace does not rest upon justification, for it means "reconciliation"; and justification does not bring us nigh. ("The blood of Christ has made us nigh," and again "He is our peace." Ephesians 2. 14.) Also compare verse 10 of this chapter.

In the light of verse 7, we would say everlasting-praise and thanks be to Jehovah who has given us the proof of His love, "so vast, so full and so free" in the death of His blessed Son for us when we were neither righteous nor good, but guilty, vile and worthless sinners. E. BIRCHALL.

From BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—The first verse of this section shews the world guilty, and brought under the judgment of **God**, for even "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (verse 20). Thus we see that as **far** as law-keeping is concerned man has no escape **from** the ruin to which he is hurrying. It was needful for the grace of God to be exerted in order that man might obtain a righteousness (not his own, but imputed) from God. This righteousness has been revealed, apart from the works of the law, although the law had borne witness **to** it, in His Son from Heaven.

When we consider the awful state of the human race by nature, as depicted in chapters 1. and 2., and then contemplate the holy and just character of God who dwells in unsullied light, our finite minds almost fail to appreciate the marvellous fact of justification. The solution is to be found at Golgotha where the justice of God was met in the person of His Own Son. We behold the sinless One made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Witness had been borne to God's character in Isaiah 45. 21 ^ . . . beside Me there is none else, a **just** God and a Saviour." His **just** character must **first** be satisfied ere **He**

can come out in saving grace. This is in keeping- with His character as revealed in the scriptures (see Deuteronomy 32. 4; Habakkuk 1. 13; Exodus 34. 7). All the anguish and woe of Golgotha bespeak the love of God, for it was there that the sword of divine justice smote the Shepherd (Zechariah 13. 7). On the ground of that work God, in grace, makes provision for every child of Adam's race, and offers, **not** only pardon, **but** justification, and **not** only in the present, but also justifies those who died in faith in the past (Hebrews 9. 15). We would suggest that no person can enter into the presence of God apart from justification. * Hence those who, at the death of Christ were in Abraham's bosom or Paradise, now justified by the cross-work would joyfully greet that great day spoken of in Ephesians 4. 8, when a host of justified ones followed in His train to be presented before His God and Father. [This seems to show that Abraham and others were not justified until the Lord had died, whereas Abraham was justified in that he believed God as to his seed being like the stars for multitude. But that Abraham's sins and the sins of others were laid on the Lord, the great expiatory Sacrifice, there is, or can be no question, for the blood of bulls and goats could never put away sins.—J.M.]

In what we have said, the main point is shown forth in Romans 3. 26, which seems to be the pivot scripture of justification truth. There can be no glorying by the justified ones, because it is all of grace through faith. Now God has not confined this truth to the Jew, but there being- one God, of Jews and Gentiles, He justifies both through faith (verse 30).

The 4th chapter sets before us two prominent points—first, that the Gentiles would be justified, and second, that if **must** be by faith. The line of argument in connection with the **first** point is exceedingly clever. The apostle shews that when Abraham's faith was reckoned unto him for righteousness, he was as yet uncircumcised. So that **it** was not reckoned according to his works but through faith. The promises which were at that time vouchsafed to Abraham are ours through faith, for according to verse 16 we are children of Abraham therefore heirs of the same promises.

Verses 18 to 21 give an indication of the extent of Abraham's faith, which we do well to consider, and imitate. Chapter 5. continues the subject and again brings us to the stupendous fact that the death of Christ is the all important factor in the justification of the believer (see verse 9), and that this is not a blessing for the present only, " but we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him."

We note that justification is closely allied to two other great Gospel truths—Redemption (chapter 3. 24), and Reconciliation (chapter 5. 10).

Now, having identified ourselves by faith with the foregoing we close with the Apostle's own words—" We also rejoice in God, through whom we received the reconciliation." (Romans 5. 11).

J. MCCORMICK.

From HALIFAX, LEEDS AND BRADFORD.—We had some difficulty in deciding what was the nature of the law in 3. 19. It was suggested that it referred to the law of nature (as in 1. 20), as the statements " Every mouth " and " all the world " would include the Gentiles who, we know, were not subject to the law of Moses.

On further deliberations, however, we saw that it was not so, but that it referred to the law of Moses, by which God tried a part of the human race under very favourable circumstances, and they, falling short of His righteous requirements, prove the whole to be sinners; since a part has the same nature as the whole.

It was then asked, "Do the words 'the righteousness of God' refer to:—(i.) The inherent personal righteousness of God. (ii.) The righteousness of the Lord Jesus as seen in His life below. (iii.) The righteousness of God's act in punishing sin in the person of Christ, when He was made sin for us. (iv.) Or something provided as a result of (i.), (ii.), and (iii.)."

We concluded the last view to be correct. It is a righteousness "of God" as to its character and source, (Philippians 3. 9), which is ours "in Christ," being imputed unto us through faith (2 Corinthians 5. 21; Romans 3. 22), and what Christ is now made unto us from God. (1 Corinthians 1. 30).

God passed over sins done in ages past in His forbearance, and the righteous judgment of sin at the cross fully maintains His righteous character. The satisfaction He there received on account of sin, enables Him also righteously to justify the ungodly who believe.

In verse 30 the R.V.M. was taken, "Out of faith," and "Through the faith," as giving a clearer meaning. [There is no doubt suggested in the phrase "if so be." It is an argumentative phrase assuming that it has been proved that "God is One." Therefore it does not appear that there is any distinction between "by faith" and "through faith," as far as the manner of God's act of justifying mankind is concerned. In fact the whole argument has been towards proving a "oneness" or "equality" of action on God's part. Yet possibly there may be the following shade of difference:—"By faith" meaning "in consequence of faith," gives God's reason for justifying: "through faith," meaning "by means of faith," demonstrates the believer's way of accepting this pardon.]

The circumcision had a law and sought righteousness by attempting to keep it, but justification can only come to them out of faith. The uncircumcision had no word from God by which to obtain righteousness, but now the faith expresses certain facts in its Gospel message, belief in which secures for them justification. God is one, an ineffable Unity, and His ways with men have no contradiction in them.

The next question which arose was, "Are the promises of God to the natural seed or to the spiritual seed of Abraham. Galatians 3. 29, with Romans 4. 16, 17 distinctly show that the apostle has the spiritual seed in mind. The blessing came to those who are justified by faith, as Abraham himself was. (Romans 4. 14).

In view of verses 13 and 14, we conclude that Abraham's seed according to the flesh get nothing. It was thought by some that the truth of the rapture of the Church, prior to coming wrath on the earth (e.g., Revelation 6. 16-17) is contained in the latter clause of chapter & verse 9. [The salvation here is from the wrath to which our sin had exposed us, and need not be associated with the rapture of the saints. Note how the Lord in 1 Thessalonians 1. 10 is spoken of as being the Deliverer from the wrath to come.—J.M.]

Please explain "we were reconciled" of Romans 5. 10, and "the reconciliation" we receive of verse 11. Do they express

exactly the same thought? [It seems evident that " We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son," " Being reconciled," and " we have now received the reconciliation " all refer to the same thing.—J.M.]
R. ROGERS.

From TORONTO.—The phrase—the law (verse 19)—may be regarded as including all the Old Testament scriptures, in which however, the Jew failed to find justification.

The whole world indeed, stands guilty. Yet it is with thankful hearts we notice that while the law condemned, both the law and the prophets bore witness to a righteousness of God which is obtained by all on the ground of faith (verses 21-22). It is of grace too, because of the redemption work of the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and was raised for our justification. Our justification is based upon infinite righteousness.

David also witnessed to this righteousness of God, apart from works. (Romans 4. 6-8). Boasting is excluded—by the law of faith.

No works of law have we to boast,
By nature ruined, guilty, lost,
Condemned already, but Thy hand
Provided what Thou didst demand.
We take the guilty sinner's name
The guilty sinner's Saviour claim.

Abraham is a further example of one to whom was imputed this righteousness of God through faith, apart from works. (Genesis 15. 6). He was strong in faith, regardless of the deadness of his own body and the deadness of Sarah's womb. " He believed in hope " against hope. Therefore there sprang even from one, and him as good as dead so many as the stars of heaven for multitude, and as the sand on the seashore, innumerable. (Hebrews 11. 12). A Father of many nations. Romans 4. 16, 17, 18. Abraham was fully persuaded that God would perform that which was promised (i.e., the seed and the inheritance).

S. NICHOL.

From LONDON, S.E.—The scriptures under consideration clearly demonstrate our fallen state "by nature. This weak and wicked plight the law revealed to man, but, on the other hand the law has been our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith (Galatians 3. 24). Verses 21-22 show that this righteousness must come from God. The righteousness of God has been made known in the person of His beloved Son, Who kept God's holy law and made it honourable.

" He honoured all His Father's laws,
Which we have disobeyed;
He bore our sins upon the cross
And our full ransom paid."

Through the sinless One and His finished work God can now reckon righteousness to every believer in Him, apart from the works of the law. Here we see God's sovereign grace abounding over sin. Through the obedience of the One shall the many be made righteous. (Romans 5. 19). This justification by faith applies to the whole human race, whether Jew or Gentile (verse 29). What is the force of the words " by " faith and "through " faith? (Verse 30.) [See Halifax paper.] Prior to the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, God was able to pardon a believer

in the full assurance **that the** One Whom *He* would send would be the perfect answer to His holy will. God's dealings with Abraham, chapter 4. verses 9-16, show that salvation **is** an act of unmerited favour on God's part, for Abraham did nothing, save "believe God. (Ephesians 2. 8.) Abraham's implicit faith in God is told out in verses 18-21. What an incentive to faith we have therein in the light of verses 24-25.

Chapter 5. speaking to justified believers: " Let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This is the portion of every redeemed one, yet we may know more of its blessed fulness " Now the God of hope fill you with all joy **and** peace in believing, that ye may abound **in** hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15. 13).

Verses 3-4. An exhortation to rejoice in tribulation ; knowing that God has purposes of grace in the proving of **our** faith. (See also James 1. 12.) God's desire is that we may be partakers of His holiness. " All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous, but grievous, yet afterwards it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto- them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness." (Hebrews 12. 11).

Verses 6 and 7 tell us of God's matchless love to us **in** all our sinner need.

" No man of greater love can boast
Than for his friend **to** die;
Thou for Thine enemies wast slain;
What love with Thine canst vie?"

This will be the theme of our rejoicings throughout all eternity. May God give us all the needed grace to enter into the fulness of such love while we are here in this scene. A blessed and hope inspiring portion this. GEO. PAIN.

From CLYDEBANK.—We had brought before us in this section the atoning work of Christ, as the divine basis on which we as guilty sinners could be pardoned, and clothed with the righteousness imputed to all who believe. The blessed Lord Jesus Christ met and fully satisfied all the claims of divine holiness **and** righteousness. The cross asserts God's right **to** bless His own boundless love.

With regard **to** verse 25 we would set down here **four** occurrences of this word propitiation :—

Romans 3. 25—Place of propitiation.

Hebrews 2. 17—To appease.

1 John 2. 2 and 4. 10—What appeases.

Luke 18. 13—God be propitiated.

The first suggests the Mercy-seat of pure gold, with Cherubim of glory. [" Whom God set forth a propitiation " : the idea conveyed to us by the apostle here is evidently the thought of the blood-stained Mercy-seat which finds its antitype **in** Christ and His redemptive work. Here men must meet with God, and here they may know eternal redemption, which was never possible through the blood of bulls or goats. **As** God passed over the sins of a year in the case of His people, so God passed over **sins** before the cross in view of the atoning work of Calvary.—J.M.I
[Propitiation, in this is the thought of expiation or to **give** satisfaction **for** wrongs rather than **to** appease God.]

The second speaks of the merciful and faithful High-Priest **in** the **presence of God** **an behalf** of His people.

The third brings before us the One whom God sent to be the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the whole world.

We had brought before us the righteousness revealed in the Gospel, and witnessed by the law and the prophets. We concluded that this righteousness is not that which belonged to the Lord Jesus either as Son of God or as Son of Man. We had a little discussion and difference on this point and we solicit help. [Christ was made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. The righteousness of God is evidently that which the Lord wrought for us on the cross, in consequence of which He is the righteousness of all believers.—J.M.]

We have also some difference of mind in regard to the closing word of our section, "reconciliation." One suggested that we could substitute the word "atonement" while others thought that when speaking of atonement it was always Godward. [The idea conveyed in the Hebrew word for "atonement" is "to cover." Hence it is used to Noah's action in covering his ark with pitch. It is used of the cover of the Ark of the Covenant, translated "Mercy-Seat" (the Propitiatory). It is very frequently used in connexion with the covering of sin by sacrifice, by which God could alone be satisfied. The blood of sacrifice was given upon the altar to make atonement for their souls. (Leviticus 17. 11.) Resulting from atonement made for the sinner's sin was forgiveness. "The priest shall make atonement for him as concerning his sin, and he shall be forgiven" (Leviticus 4. 26). Reconciliation is not equivalent to atonement but follows as a sequence, in that those who were once in a state of sin and in a state of alienation and enmity are through faith in the sacrifice reconciled,—Katallasso, = changed, they themselves are changed from being enemies, and also they are restored to favour with God, both their state and standing are changed. Such is the result of atonement or propitiation.—J.M.]

He is the One (like the scapegoat of the day of atonement) who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised up again for our justification. J. MCKAY, G. DYER.

From GLASGOW.—In verse 19 we have it plainly stated, that the law was designed to stop the mouths of all men, that all the world might become guilty in the sight of God, but now God unfolds a righteousness apart from the works of the law.

Verse 23 shows us that all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God. Chapters 1. 23 and 5. 2; Exodus 15. 11; and Acts 7. 55 were suggested as scriptures referring to His glory. By reason of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice, God can freely justify the believer, and at the same time satisfy the divine claims of justice, so that His law is not made void. Justification is of faith apart from the law. We had some discussion on verse 30 finding some difficulty in the expressions "by faith" and "through faith." [See Halifax.] It was suggested that the circumcision were justified out of faith in that which had been revealed to faith and that the uncircumcision were justified through faith in Jesus Christ.

Abraham, by this faith apart from his own works, received a righteousness of God. Verses 4 and 5 exclude the possibility of works having any part in justification. So Abraham is the father of all believers, circumcised or uncircumcised, under law or apart from law, for the promise was given to him in uncircumcision and before the giving of the law. In Abraham's faith we

have a **great** example, and, like him, we **have been** reckoned righteous. Christ was delivered **up** for **our trespasses** and was raised for our justification.

Chapter 5. 1-11. Following the conclusive argument in the previous chapter on justification by faith, the apostle, in this passage sets forth the love of God as displayed through *His* Son. There may **be** found men who would dare to lay down their own lives for that of a good **man** (John 15. 13), but this is **the** limit of man's love. Oh, the glorious love of God, **that** His Son should lay down His life as a sacrifice for those who **are** rightly called "ungodly," "sinners," and "enemies." No fewer **than seven** times is the person and work of the Lord Jesus brought before us in this short portion. How impossible **for** the believer in **the** Lord Jesus to perish! (See John 14. 19.) So **the** writer can afford to give the exhortation to the saints at **Rome**, in **the** light of the glory that shall **be** theirs, to rejoice in their tribulations (the common lot of every faithful child of God), which will work a more exceeding weight of glory in the end.

ALBERT E. MAGEE.

From BRANTFORD.—We know that the law was the standard, set by God, for His people of a past dispensation. It made nothing perfect, but rather brought home the knowledge of sin. Hence the sweeping statement of verse 23. That all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

God never sets a standard that no one can attain unto. The law was fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ while here in human flesh; for did He not say—"I came not to destroy **but** to fulfil the law." He was the only One who was able to do this, so God in His mercy provided a way by which men might be righteous before **Him**, apart from keeping the law. This way is through faith in Jesus Christ. It is sad to note that **many men are** trying to attain to righteousness by their own works, thus overlooking the only One through whom salvation is possible.

How noticeable and distinct are the words—"Whom God set forth" (verse 25).

In the following verses we find how God justifies the ungodly in a righteous manner. Abraham's unswerving belief in God had a great reward. The testimony of scripture is "It was reckoned unto him **for** righteousness." The apostle makes it clear that Abraham was justified **by** faith apart from works. **We** cannot glory before God because of any works of merit, **but** we can glory in the grace of God which justifieth **a man apart from** any works. As the apostle was writing this Epistle to the Romans, a great many of whom were doubtless Gentiles, he is careful to point out that the blessing of forgiveness of sin is not limited to the Jews only. For, says he, the faith of Abraham which brought God's blessing- was when he was in uncircumcision. Circumcision which he received at a later day was but **a** sign, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had while he was as yet uncircumcised. Thus he became the father of all them who believe, not only of the circumcision but also of the uncircumcision.

Nor was it through the law that Abraham or his seed received the promise that he should be heir of the world. But it was of faith through grace that even those who are not under the law may enjoy the privileges obtained through faith.

As we pass on to verses 23-25 we are brought face to face with the truth underlying the foundation of all **our** blessings.

It is summed up in the Death, Burial and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Has this any connection with John 8. 56? [Abraham saw by faith his Seed **by** whom the nations would be blessed **to** which the Lord evidently refers.—J.M.]

Our grand heritage is brought before us in chapter 5. verse 1; for the peace of atonement is ours **as** fruit of His work. The first mention of the *Holy Spirit* is in verse 5. *He* is brought before us as the inward witness.

A very good contrast is given in verse 7 how that for a good man some would even dare to die but Christ **died** for the ungodly. In verses 9 and 10 we have two truths brought forth. Justification in His blood and reconciliation to God through the death of His Son. Thus being reconciled, **we** can know the daily salvation, through His present life. "Because I live **ye** shall live also." This is surely cause for rejoicing in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. [This is not, I take it, a daily salvation from the evils around us and within, **but** salvation from destruction through a Saviour that lives.—J.M.]

J.T., J.B. AND R.M.

REMARKS BY J.M.

The Jew stands condemned, neither his flesh as a descendant of Abraham **in** which he gloried much, **nor** his law, in which he rested, can help him. This specimen **man** of humanity is hopeless, then what of the rest? All the world is "under the judgment of God." "All have sinned" is God's sweeping judgment. But hark! What is that? It is the voice of the law and the prophets. It is faint as it reaches us at the first, as from distant ages, but, lo, it increases in volume as prophet after prophet joins the band of heralds announcing the coming of the Lord our righteousness. Man may **be** freely justified, justified by blood, Romans 5. 0; Justified by grace, Romans 3. 24; Justified by faith, Romans 5. 1.

Propitiation has been made and God is satisfied. ' There is eternal liberation from sin through the price paid by Christ Jesus. In Him a just God and a condemned sinner may meet and God can justly justify the guilty and **yet be** just. Wondrous wisdom! Glorious grace! Who could have designed it but the Deity? and how eminently suited for us! **He** made expiation for the sins of men in generations before His death, and for the sins of **men** in His own day, and for ours, for those then unborn. **He** made a full atonement by which God can justify the ungodly.. God is One, and **He** justifies out of faith, the state out of which justification proceeds, and through the faith of the one who believes. "Out of faith" and "through faith" do not describe two modes of justification; the former shows the basis of justification (see Romans 1. 17, and 5. 1) the latter the means **by** which the believer (through his faith) lays hold upon divine righteousness. Thus human boasting is excluded.

The witness of two is true and two of the best witnesses **are** called **to** give evidence as to how righteousness is to be attained, which involves the forgiveness of sins. Abraham and David each bear witness in his own way. Their evidence is not through collusion, but springs from their experience. The pilgrim's find is a royal blessing, and such things were written for our sakes also. God who reckons righteousness to the believer cannot reckon sin **to** him.

Thus being justified out of faith we are to enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Peace, the essence and outflow of the state of reconciliation in which we are, is to **be** ours. "The terrors of law and of God" should no longer be **with** us. "Go in peace" said the Lord to the trembling woman who had been healed through touching the border of His garment. Christ has made peace by the blood of His Cross and it **is** ours, to enjoy it. We should have peace who are justified, then let us have what we should have. Our standing is in grace and let us rejoice in hope of glory. The Lord is the Giver of both grace and glory. Let us also rejoice in tribulation, for this is necessary to the forming of our character. Fire is necessary if iron is to be brought to a state for the service of man, not one fire **but** many, so tribulation is necessary to the believer so that he may be useful in the service of God and of this all are made partakers; some to a greater degree than others, because of the kind of instruments God has designed them to be. Space fails us to continue our remarks.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

QUESTION from BARROW.—(1) Romans 3. 31. In what way do we establish the law through faith?

ANSWER.—The law was not intended and could **not** be God's last word to men. It bore witness to the fact that Messiah was coming, the Prophet was yet to arise from among His brethren, whose message was to be believed. **The** Lord could say "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me*" (John 5. 46). So that faith in Christ and in His message is the establishing of the law and to disbelieve Christ is to disbelieve Moses in the law.

—J.M.

QUESTION from BARROW.—(2) Romans 4. 3. In what way was righteousness reckoned unto Abraham? Would we **be** correct in saying that it was laid to his account in the sense of one blessing out of the many which would, in a future day, **be** reckoned as his.

ANSWER.—If **man** cannot attain to righteousness **by** works, then, unless God finds another way to justify him, he **must** perish. Passing strange though it is, **man** has a fearful struggle against himself to believe God, a God who cannot lie. God honours man's faith by counting his faith to him for righteousness, this He does in grace; a righteousness without works, thus Abraham was just with God. Many other things Abraham received and much will yet be his no doubt, **but** such must not be confused with the righteousness which God gave him through his faith.

—J.M.

NOTICE.

The attention of young men is drawn to the notice in "Intelligence," for April, regarding "BIBLE READINGS ON THE GOSPEL," by Dr. Luxmoore. Many are aware of the personal interest Dr. Luxmoore took in young men, **and** how "Young Men's Corner" **was started by** him. No doubt each would like to have in book **form** his valuable ministry **on** the Gospel narratives. **His** notes, exposition **and** teaching are such that every young man **in** the Fellowship **is** recommended to possess **a** copy, which will greatly help to a more worthy appreciation of the Four Gospel Records.

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 5.

Eighth Series.

May, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION V. ROMANS a. 12-6. 23.

From PAISLEY.—The construction of the latter portion of chapter 5. is one of antithesis and balance : we have several pairs of things contrasted and compared. For instance, some of the things contrasted are:—Life and death, judgment and the free gift, righteousness and trespass, obedience and disobedience, the reigns of death and of grace, and so forth. Throughout the whole we see the first man Adam compared and contrasted with the last Adam. Each by his act began a new era. Adam was disobedient, and brought death into the world through his sin. Christ was obedient—even unto death (Philippians 2. 8)—and brought us life through His righteousness. [His one act of righteousness.] Almost every verse of this portion reminds us of (1) Adam's sin and its awful consequences of death and judgment, and of (2) Christ's righteous atoning act, and what it has brought us—the free gift of grace, eternal life (verse 21).

In chapter 6. is set forth the doctrine that we should not lightly regard sin, nor sin either wilfully or carelessly, even though we are under grace. At this point, the apostle guards against being misunderstood in his teaching concerning grace. The chapter, as a whole, shows the necessity of the manifestation of righteousness in our lives, this necessity being as binding as law; our privilege and blessing as saints bring a corresponding responsibility.

The early verses of chapter 6. treat of water-baptism. Therein the apostle shows the meaning of this act of public testimony : the subject openly declares himself a disciple of the Lord, willing to serve Him to the end. Since the mode of baptism (immersion), is after the manner of burial and resurrection, it also implies the crucifixion of our " old man," and the doing away with the body of sin, as being dead. We are raised to walk in newness of life

Since such is the manner of baptism, we ought not to let sin reign in our mortal bodies (verse 12). We are still subject to temptation through the desires of the flesh; and, if we allow these desires to influence us we shall bear the fruit of

sin. Therefore **we** are exhorted to suppress the sin in **our** members (cp. 1 Corinthians **9. 27**; note the phrase : " **I buffet my** body, and bring it into bondage "), and to " present ourselves to God " and our members " as instruments of righteousness unto God." [There is somewhat of a difference between 1 Corinthians **9. 27** and Romans **6.**; the latter has to do with the end of **the** body of sin and the end of the reign of **sin** in the mortal body. This ended for the believer at the Cross where our old man was crucified with Christ, so he is to reckon, and now he **is** dead to sin.. The Corinthian scripture has to do with putting the body under discipline, as a runner does to attain proficiency, so that he may win the race. If the runner does not abstain from that which is lawful for other men, all his hopes of being a winner will **be** destroyed, so also with the Christian—he needs to learn to deny himself.—J.M.] We surely feel ourselves encouraged to submit to this hortatory command by the words of verse 14 : " Sin shall not have dominion over you, etc." We observe that this has a distinct application to our present life.

The remainder of the chapter teaches* concerning service and servants as defined in verse 16. We were formerly servants of sin; but we were delivered from that bondage. We became servants of righteousness, being obedient from the heart to the doctrine given to us. As stated in 1 Corinthians 7. 22-23, we were bought with a price, and we are now the bondservants of our Lord. We are constrained to think that a just sense of the debt we owe to Christ, as our Redeemer, would make us, from the moment we were redeemed, willingly enter His service with zeal. We were freed from an unprofitable service (verses 21-23), which would ultimately have brought death, and were made servants to God, this service being a sphere of life and blessing. We rejoice to know that, though we are dearly purchased bondservants, we shall receive from our Master reward for our works of faithful service.

The whole chapter maintains the point that, whether we regard ourselves as freemen under grace, or as bondservants in service (and in truth we are both), we have in no way the least licence to sin. Nay; we are definitely called on to strive after righteousness, and lead a life corresponding to our profession.

JOHN BAIRD

From GLASGOW.—The apostle, having brought before the Romans the truth of justification, now speaks of the contrast between the Law and Grace. Adam's sin and its results contrasted with the atonement of the Lord Jesus and its results, seems to be the theme of the portion under discussion.

In verse 12 we have death as the result of sin. This death is both spiritual and natural. Sin was in the world from Adam until Moses, and death reigned in that period before the law. There were two thoughts about death reigning over those who had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression :— 1st, Adam had a command from God, and in disobeying it he became a transgressor. Those who lived before the law were sinners, for all have sinned, but they were not transgressors. [Paul does not say that those who sinned before the law were not transgressors, but what he does seek to convey to our minds is that persons less culpable than Adam (Adam, whose sin was one of rebellion against God) were not outside the scope of the reign of death. The infant dead too, share in the effects of the fall

undoubtedly.—J.M.] **Second**, it was thought that **this** spoke of the infant dead. Adam is a figure of the Lord Jesus Christ in the **sense** that by the trespass of the one, death reigned, and through the other grace reigns, bringing life to **the** many. **After** enumerating the dreadful results of sin, the apostle says that the law was given that the offence might abound (that is, become more manifest). Thus the law teaches us the hideousness of sin and was the schoolmaster of the Jew to bring him to Christ. In sin being thus manifested the sovereign grace of God has been displayed

Now then, seeing that grace abounds over sin, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? How can we do this, seeing that **our** old man has been crucified? The apostle reminds them that they who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. Were it not for sin, death would never have had a beginning in the human race. Adam's sin brought death and separation from God, so that by our identification with the Lord Jesus in His death we are **to** reckon ourselves dead **unto** sin.

Having died unto sin we were buried with Him by baptism, that, like as Christ was raised from the dead, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Letting sin reign in the mortal body seems to be the climax of yielding the members of the body as instruments of unrighteousness. Reckoning ourselves dead to sin we should, however, yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Sin has no dominion ever us because we are under grace and not under the law.

Verses 16-21 speak of our position as servants of sin, but we have something to be thankful for in that we have obeyed from the heart, the form of doctrine whereunto we were delivered.

Verse 21. The end of those things is death.

Verse 22. The end of those things is everlasting life.

A. MACGREGOR AND A. MCILREE.

From BARROW.—Romans 5. 12 points out to us a corrupt root. Therefore all that proceeds therefrom is bad also. The far-reaching effect of Adam's transgression cannot be over-estimated. One sin resulted in sickness, sorrow and death. Even before the law was given (and the law brings the knowledge of sin, Romans 3 20) death reigned. (See for example Genesis 5. and note the frequency of the words " And he died.") From verse 15 the paragraph appears to be a contrast between ^{sc} the trespass " and ' the gift," and also between the man " Adam " and the Man " Jesus Christ."

Although, through the trespass of **one** the **many** died, it is with satisfaction **we** note that " much **more** did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the **one Man**, Jesus Christ abound unto the many." These words, " much more," " abound " and kindred words have an important bearing on the theme of the paragraph. Also, although death reigned **from** Adam to Moses (verse 14) and sin reigned in death (verse 21), it is with joy that we read " even so might grace reign " (verse 21). Truly, the fruits of the accomplished work at Golgotha reach as far and abound more exceedingly than that one act of disobedience in Eden's garden.

In chapter 6. the truths connected with the death of Christ are brought before us, in relation to the believer's walk before God and man. As new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5. 17), we should have new thoughts and new aspirations. The old man

is dead (verse 6), having been crucified with Him; therefore it is our responsibility to discard the old **man**, and **put** on the new man (Ephesians 4. 22-24; Colossians 3. 9, 10). God reckons **us** dead with Christ, "even so reckon ye yourselves to be (lead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus " (verse 11).

We had an interesting discussion **as** to what verses 3 and 4 mean. It is generally accepted that this passage refers to baptism in water; and is one of the foundation scriptures used in connexion with the subject. **But** there are points in it which others thought might refer to baptism in the Holy Spirit. These points (upon which we invite criticism with a view to help), we will state briefly. The language used in verse 3 viz., "baptized into Christ Jesus," does not seem to indicate water baptism. (Note, it is **not** into the Name **as** in Matthew 28. 19). A parallel wording to this is found in Galatians 3. 27. "For **as** many of you as were baptized into Christ did **put** on Christ," and it was generally agreed that this latter scripture referred to baptism in the Holy Spirit. Again, the last clause of the 4th verse "so we might also walk in newness of life" presented a difficulty, and it was asked, Does **not** the believer walk in newness of life immediately after the new birth? otherwise if he can only walk thus, after baptism, it is suggested that there is, after all, some virtue in the immersion. This, we know is not **in** keeping with other scriptures such as 1 Peter 3. 21. Those who held the accepted interpretation suggested that verse 5 might **be** helpful, **but** others pointed out that baptism is **not** a figure of death, **but** of burial. The context of this paragraph, too, suggests the birth of a child of God, and goes on to shew that the old man has **been** crucified and so walk should be as becometh those who are united with Christ.

[Baptism "into Christ Jesus" is helpfully illustrated by "Baptized unto (into) Moses" 1 Corinthians 10. 2. It involves the thought that the baptized persons are now under new leadership and in consequence under divine authority. **The** same is involved in Galatians 3. 27 where the baptized ones (in water) are seen no longer under "the law," but subject to "the faith." Among the seed of Abraham, the children of promise, the heirs of God, there is neither Jew nor Greek, and so forth, **but** they are one in Christ Jesus. Baptism **in** Holy Spirit is not into death, but into the Body, which describes a state of life, but baptism in water is into Christ's death. This burial is to follow in consequence of the fact stated in verse 2 "We . . . died to sin," and again "Our old man was crucified with **Him**" verse 6. Burial should follow closely upon death even as Israel's baptism in the Red Sea followed closely upon the Passover. In **baptism** we become united with Christ in the likeness of His death and also in the likeness of His resurrection. Paul did not walk and preach before baptism, he prayed and waited till he was baptized then he walked before men and showed the change that had taken place and that by life and lip. Many, alas, think that baptism is non-essential, but when we think of the Lord, and also Paul, that they never entered on their life-work till they had been baptized, we should realise the importance God sets upon it.—J.M.]

In verse 12 the Romans are exhorted to let not sin reign in their mortal bodies (Psalm 19. 13 and 119. 133). There is no licence in the scriptures for sin. Many think that once they are saved from eternal doom, they will take the best out of this

life. This is a most ungrateful attitude and cannot be too severely condemned.

The subject matter of the last paragraph of Romans 6. shews us two masters to whom we may yield ourselves as bond-servants—sin on the one hand, and God on the other. In the service of the former there is no fruit, and the wages—death; in the service of God whose we are, having been bought with a price, we have fruit unto sanctification and no wages, but a wonderful gift, even eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

JOHN M'CORMICK.

From SUNDERLAND.—Verse 12 shows sin as a fact, and death as the result of sin. (Compare Romans 6. 23.) Our attention was specially drawn to verse 13, "that sin is not reckoned (or put to account) where there is no law." In this portion we see sin and death associated with the first head of the human race (Adam) (verse 12), and righteousness and life associated with our new Head, Christ Jesus (verse 17).

The following verses (15-21) show us the wonderful resources of God's grace in making a way out of the morass in which we were, viz., through the obedience of the One ("Yea, the death of the cross" Philippians 2. 8). We would call attention to the four reigns mentioned in these verses (a) the "reign of death" verses 14, 17; (b) the reign of "sin" (verse 21); (c) the reign of "grace" (verse 21), and (d) the reign in "life" (verse 17).

Chapter 6. The apostle condemn § the thought of a believer continuing in sin (verse 1). He also recalls to them their baptism (immersion), and its meaning, viz., that there were implied in it death (verse 3), burial (verse 4), resurrection and new life (verses 4 and 5). (Compare Philippians 3. 10, and 2 Corinthians 4. 10).

Verse 6 recalls to us the cross. We had a little difficulty as to the statements: "our old man," and "the body of sin." However, we saw that not only were our sins dealt with there (Isaiah 53. 5), but "the old man" that committed them also came under the sentence of the cross.

Paul could say "I have been crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2. 20).

My sin, oh the bliss of this glorious thought!

My sin not in part, but the whole,

Was nailed to His cross and I bear it no more;

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

We also see here the believer set free that he should no longer serve sin (verse 6), but contrariwise himself dead thereunto (verse 11). (See also 12. 1).

In this chapter we have a change of masters. We were the bondslaves of sin (verse 17), but now have become the bond-servants of righteousness (verse 18). We concluded the life of the believer ought to be one of obedience. (See 1 Samuel 15. 22).

N. STUBBS.

From LONDON, S.E.—Man, through the fall in Adam is entirely under the dominion of sin and death. So by nature men are "sinners," "without strength," "ungodly," and "enemies to God." In order to escape due condemnation and to receive a changed nature, man must be born again. Adam fell from his high estate and became subject to death, and separation from God.

Although sin is not imputed when there is no law, nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression. They suffered through guilt inherited.

Verse 14. Adam is shown to be a figure of Him that was to come. By Adam came death so through Jesus Christ came life. But although, through death, sin abounded, we thank God, that through grace, life in Him has abounded more exceedingly. Therefore the apostle asks: " Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound " Surely not! Although we are not under law we are, or ought to be, obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto we were delivered. By burial with Him in baptism we have become united with Him to walk in newness of life. We are free, but not for the purpose of using our freedom as we did in the past, but as servants of God, having fruit unto sanctification and the end eternal life.

For the wages of sin is death ; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord

A. TAYLOR.

From BRANTFORD.—In this portion we see the first and the last Adam contrasted, and the perfections of the last bring out the imperfections of the first. The 12th verse shows out the commencement of sin and death [in the human race] when Adam did that which he was commanded not to do. And since we are all descendants of the first Adam, therefore this judgment is upon us all.

We see in verse 13 that the sins done by man until the giving of the law were not reckoned, **for** there was no " Thou shalt," and " Thou shalt not." This, however, did not alter God's righteous judgment upon Adam that he should die, **for** we know that death reigned from Adam until Moses even upon them that did not commit such a serious sin as Adam.

From these verses we learn our sad inheritance **from** our forefather, the first Adam, trespasses, verse 15; condemnation, 16; death, 17; and disobedience, 19. How precious, on the other hand are our gifts through the last Adam, grace, verse 15; justification 16; abundance **of** grace and life, 17; and obedience, 19.

In the closing- words **of** chapter 5. the apostle reminds us that the law was brought in as **a** means whereby the trespass might abound. The law brought the knowledge of sin, and sin abounded under **the** law. But where sin abounded grace abounded more exceedingly. Therefore, it might have seemed reasonable for some to say: " Oh, well, the more we sin. the more there will be **a** manifestation of grace." The apostle **Paul** takes, exception to such **an** idea in 6. 1. " Shall we continue in sin **that** grace may abound?—God forbid." The person who is born of God has died to sin and ought not to be the bondservant **of** sin any longer. Going- further, he says those who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death and raised again to walk in newness of life.

This brings us a very solemn truth as to what the act of baptism really means. To the outward or naturally-minded man this act might seem foolish, but to God it is as **a** solemn vow. If we could realize how much value God puts **upon** this simple, yet outstanding act, **we** would want to be, and would be, better men in God's service. The apostle in these verses shows in no

unmistakeable way the wisdom of becoming a servant of God, and the folly of being a servant of sin and Satan. It is the heart that God desires—notice the words of verse 17. This surely is the secret of service acceptable to God. Heart service leads to a sanctified life, that which can be so useful, both towards God and man. To those who present their members as servants to sin, it means death, to those who present their members as servants to righteousness, it means life. (Compare 1 Peter 4. 2 and 3.) As we consider the comparisons in this chapter, we should be thankful that we are not under law but under grace, not under Satan but under God, not looking for death but eternal life.

J. T., J. B. AND R. M.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—Having written at length concerning the condition before God of the Gentiles, and then of the Jews, and set forth the Gospel of justification by faith, the apostle is now taken up with the wonderful differences the cross has brought about in the history of man. A series of comparisons and contrasts are made between Adam's trespass which brought death to the whole race of Adam, and the obedience of the second Adam which brought abundance of grace, and the free gift **unto** all men, unto justification of life. This passage leaves no doubt as to the reason for sin's presence in the world, showing plainly that sin is hereditary, being a legacy **left by** our first parents.

Although we understand the general trend of thought and teaching in these comparisons, there are several statements not clear to us. In verse 13, dealing with the period from Adam to Moses, we are told that sin is not imputed where there is no law, yet in the early chapters of Romans we have read of the judgment of God on the Gentiles as if sin had been imputed, evidently because of the violation of God's law in their conscience. It was, however, pointed **out** that the circumstance that there were no sin offerings until the law of Moses, may have some bearing on this matter.

In verse 20 we have God's purpose in giving the law; not that it was an experiment, but it was "added" or **it** "came in beside" that, the enormity of sin and God's remedy might be brought home to the hearts of His people, until the appointed time of the coming of the Sin Bearer.

Chapter 6. is an answer to the question "shall we continue in sin that grace may abound." The expression "we who died unto sin" seems **to** indicate an actual experience which took place when we put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was then that He redeemed us from the bondage **of** the taskmaster, sin no longer having dominion over us "ye were bondservants of sin . . . ye became bondservants of righteousness." One who has died naturally, is freed from sin, **and** similarly, we who have died with Christ have therefore died **unto** sin "for the death that He died, He died unto sin once" (verses 7, 8 and 10).

We see, further, what an important bearing the ordinance of baptism has on the question of continuing in sin. The divine meaning of that plain and simple command of the Lord Jesus to His disciples, in Matthew 28. is here revealed. It is **often** said that in **baptism**, we pass through, in figure, what the **Lord** Jesus passed through **in** reality. This chapter also shows us that we **pass** through the waters **of baptism because of** our **past experi-**

ence of having died unto sin. " We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death " (verse 4). This led to the suggestion that the previous verse " we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death " refers to baptism into the body as in 1 Corinthians 12, 13, but others thought that verse 4 explains how we were baptized into Christ Jesus. [See Barrow's paper.]

N. G. ADKINS.

From ATHERTON.—The subject of sin is taken up here, beginning at 5. 12, and its character, is revealed. The portion of scripture before us presents sin as an evil principle from which the human nature of Adam was free, originally, but to which it was exposed. So by the transgression of Adam, human nature became corrupt; sin gained an entrance and infected every part of it. Hence, death was the direct consequence of sin, for had not God said: " Thou shalt surely die " (Genesis 2. 16 and 17). Death henceforward ruled over man with despotic and universal power.

It needed the law to reveal the Adam nature " for apart from the law, sin was dead " and again, " through the law cometh the knowledge of sin " (Romans 3. 20). From the beginning of the human family right on to the giving of the law, sin was in the world, but was ineffective to make its presence, and nature known as sin. [Care will have to be taken to know what the apostle means by sin being in the world, but not reckoned to men before the time of the law. It was in this time that God destroyed the earth in Noah's day, and Sodom and Gomorrah in the time of Lot. God being a just God, He will not hold men accountable for what they do not know, but when by nature men learn what is right to do (Romans 2. 14) or when he raises a Noah to be a preacher of righteousness, and strives with men by His Spirit, or when Lot strove to administer justice in the gate of Sodom (a self-imposed task to which God, no doubt, never called him) and men follow the path of wrong doing then they are culpable.—J.M.] (Acts 17. 30 proves this fact conclusively, for these were the times of ignorance which God overlooked.)

Nevertheless sin was prevalent and although there was neither law nor command to cause the people to sin in the manner of Adam's transgression, yet death also reigned throughout this era of time. The apostle seems to sum up the history of mankind in three great moments connected with the lives of Adam, Moses and the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam introduced sin and death, Moses, by the law, imputes sin and the Lord Jesus puts away sin and death. (Compare Romans 8. 3.)

The last clause of verse 14 tells us that in Adam we have a figure of Him who was to come, the second Man, the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15.), and from verse 15 to the end of the chapter, the apostle is contrasting and comparing the results caused by the type and the antitype. He first dwells on the three points of difference. (1) The transgression of one single man, Adam, as contrasted with the free grace of God through one Man, Christ. (2) The condemnation of the whole human race to death as contrasted with free gift which brings about complete acquittal. (3) The entrance of death as contrasted with the reign in life. But with these differences there is also a parallel of resemblance; for God, seeing the corruption of the human nature, brings into existence a new creation, springing from a new source—a new

Man, Christ. (See 2 Corinthians 5. 17). In the case of **Adam** it was **an** act of disobedience; in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ it was **an** act of obedience. Hence we see that the "free gift" bestowed **by** the second **man** is contrasted with the "offence" of the first **Man**, in order to show that the benefits of Christ's "obedience" accruing to those receiving the abundance of the grace, **far** exceed (in a contrary direction) the consequences of the "disobedience" of **Adam** to those who inherit his corrupted nature.

In the opening **up** of chapter 6. the apostle concludes that it might be inferred **that** if grace superabounds over sin why should **not** the Christian continue in sin? Perish the thought! In the first portion of the chapter, he uses the figure of death, in the latter portion, **the** figure of emancipation, **to** illustrate the absolute severance between the Christian and sin. The life of the Christian being hid with Christ in God, his death with Christ is a death to sin and his resurrection with Christ a resurrection **to** life. The dipping under the waters of baptism is his union with Christ's death; his rising out **of** the waters **of** "baptism is a resurrection with Christ. We as Christians are to regard ourselves as dead to sin. So then the exhortation that we **must** no longer offer our faculties as instruments of wickedness for sin to use. The conclusion of the figure in verse 17 causes the apostle **to** re-ask the question of verse 1 in verse 15. "Not so," answers the apostle, and again, by a more obvious illustration, he shews clearly the decisive isolation of the new creature from sin. In doing so, he amplifies the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself when **He** said "No man can serve two masters" (Matthew 6. 24). For, he says, a man must either be a slave of sin which leads **to** death, or of obedience which leads to righteousness. Yet the work of Christ has brought about freedom from the tyranny of sin (Galatians 5. 1), "for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3. 17); and this freedom is consequent on the submission of the slave **of** sin **to** the gospel of God (that kind of teaching to which you were handed over). [What is the pattern of teaching to which we are delivered?] The fruit of the former slavery was shame and misery, the end of such things being death; but now emancipated from sin yet enslaved to God in perfect freedom the believer has fruit in holiness and the end eternal life. For the slave to sin earns as his wages, death; but the gift of God is free—eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

E. BIRCHALL.

REMARKS. .

In the beginning of this section sin and death in the human race are traced to their source. We do not require here to consider the deep mystery **of** the origin of sin. We are told that by one man sin entered the world. Eve **was** solicited to sin by the ancient serpent, who used the serpent of the field **as** his **tool**. What was this beast of the field doing in the garden? Adam's transgression was one **of** open-eyed rebellion against God, he was not deceived like his wife. The justice of God is

seen that, though sin was always sin **before** Him, **He** did not charge man with default when He gave him no-standard of life or conduct, that is, no such judgment was enacted as we read of in Hebrews 2. 2, "Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." This does **not** over-rule the apostle's statements as to the judgment of God based on what men knew of God as taught by nature and their own conscience, which led many, no doubt, to fear Him and to work righteousness. Death reigned (cruel monarch!) from Adam to Moses: the death knell is heard in a once fair scene, and hell began his feast upon the slain of men, in which he never says "Enough." One man only escaped by God's grace, a particular favour God showed to His habitual companion, Enoch.

Adam was a type of the Coming One, **but** there is this difference between the trespass and the free gift, **the** effect of the trespass passes to us by natural decent—the many died—but the free gift comes by the grace of God: while sin and death are the common heritage of all Adam's posterity, it is by grace, abundant grace, comes the gift of righteousness and those who receive it shall reign in life through the One Man—Jesus Christ. This reigning in life is the common portion of all believers and should not be confused with reigning with Him (2 Timothy 2. 12) the latter is based upon endurance, not on justification. We see that by the sin of Adam, one transgression, we all were made sinners, so by the one act of obedience, the Lord's atoning sacrifice, all can be made righteous.

Jerusalem sinners were the worst of sinners; here sin abounded, and here, too, grace did abound more exceedingly. Death reigned, sin reigned—dual monarchy, but now grace reigns.

Is grace to abound? Do we wish it to? If we do, how then can we continue in sin? Christ died unto -sin once by His own gracious and voluntary act, and we too in virtue of that died to sin. The old man—evil nature which we inherited, the body of sin, the flesh, the body of the flesh, the root from which all sin grows—was crucified with Christ, so God speaks, and so we are to reckon. We are not now in sin's domain, we are under grace, and because of this we are responsible to see that no such thing exists as sin reigning in our mortal body. The members of the believer are from henceforth to be used as instruments of righteousness in the service of God. The pattern of doctrine to which we were delivered seems to be one of death and resurrection. By death we have passed from under the reign of sin to be under grace—to live a new life in resurrection power, therein to be servants of God and to have fruit unto sanctification and the end of that is life, eternal life. This is what the Lord said about the narrow gate and the straitened way it leads to life. Let us strive to pursue this narrow way to the goal at the end, and never let us turn the grace of God into lasciviousness and think because we have been given such freedom in Christ **that** we may henceforth please ourselves. At the close of the chapter the apostle touches a fundamental principle, in proof or what he has been saying as to being servants of sin and servants of God, viz., "The wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." In such a way alone could eternal life reach men. By law-keeping men could not inherit it, so God through grace found another way—by Christ Jesus.

J.M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From ATHERTON.—**Re** question from London, S.E., Y.M.C. No. 3, Page 27.—The terms "the circumcision" and "the Israel of God" undoubtedly refer to the Fellowship of God's Son, yet it is questionable as to whether the term "Jews" could be rightly appropriated to ourselves or not. It seems clear, that, from God's point of view, only those of Israel whose position was such nationally, and whose condition was such spiritually, could claim this appellation in the true sense of the term. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (Romans 9. 6). "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, etc." (Romans 2. 28-29). Although God chose Israel for a praise and glory, to be a spiritual blessing to the whole earth, yet, His purposes in them as an earthly people were principally of an earthly character, with earthly privileges and blessings. God's purposes in us as a spiritual people, are of a spiritual character, with the attendant spiritual blessings and privileges; hence to apply the term "Jews" to ourselves would have the tendency to confuse that which is natural and that which is spiritual; and although we to-day carry out many things which Israel failed to do, yet, we have no grounds for the assumption that they are not the "true Israel."
E.B.

We must be careful to distinguish between things that differ. I. There was "Israel after the flesh" (1 Corinthians 10. 18), and there is the "Israel of God" (Galatians 6. 16). II. There is "Circumcision in the flesh made by hands" (Ephesians 2. 11), and there is "Circumcision . . . of the heart" (Romans 2. 29), otherwise "the circumcision of Christ" (Colossians 2. 11). III. Jews, the descendants of Judah, and those of Israel who were associated with them such as we read of in John 3. 1 and elsewhere. And the use of the term Jew in a metaphorical sense in Romans 2. 29, and Revelation 3. 9, in which sense the terms would not be confined to the natural descendants of Judah. Have our London friends used the word "true" in the sense in which true is used in such places as John 4. 23, 15. 1; Hebrews 8. 2.
J.M.

REQUEST FOR PRAYER.

Another pioneer in Young Men's Corner work has been called home. Dear A. F. Anderson's work is finished. We request prayer on behalf of his wife and children. Also—we trust there may be much exercise of heart, before our God, on account of these strange (to us) and sad home-calls.

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 6.

Eighth Series.

June, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION VI.—ROMANS 7. 1—8. 17.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—The law has dominion over a man while he lives, but if he dies, the law no longer has dominion over him. Similarly, those who were Jews were subject to the law while they lived.

To impress further the reality of this wonderful new creation the believer is likened unto a woman whose husband has died, making her free from the law of the deceased husband, and free to be joined to another. So then, the believer is made dead to the law through the body of Christ that he might be joined to Another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, that he might bring forth fruit unto God.

It is very evident, both from what we have already read in this epistle, and also from the epistle to the Galatians, that a very deep need existed of bringing home, especially to Jewish disciples, the utter futility of trying to serve God by keeping the law. We see from this chapter that the effect of the law coming to man, was that sin, so subtle in its working, even took that which was "holy, righteous and good," and used it as a ground for multiplying itself (verses 8 and 11). We find here the principle that the flesh is so thoroughly bad that man, whether he be sinner or saint, cannot justify himself or please God one whit by keeping the law, but only as he allows the Spirit of God to work in him and through him, can he bring forth fruit unto God. (Compare the parable of the Vine—John 15.; also the fruit—Galatians 5. 22).

This seventh chapter also shows us the dual nature of the believer. Verse 17 says "So now, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me" This is in agreement with what we get in 1 John 3. 9. On the other hand, in the flesh dwelleth no good thing; the flesh serves the law of sin. (Compare Galatians 5. 17).

The Apostle, having thoroughly established that God's verdict of man under law was one of condemnation, now opens in chapter 8. with the precious refreshing fruit of the work of

Christ:—" There is now therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." In the succeeding verses we see the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who are Christ's—the quickening of our mortal bodies, the leading of the Spirit of God, and the witness of the Holy Spirit with our spirit that we are children of God.

The burden of the Apostle's message here is that unless the children of God ceased to live after the flesh, they would die, spiritually, i.e., cease to be in living fellowship with God. The deeds of the flesh must be mortified (made dead) that the Spirit of God may quicken our bodies, and lead and order the life that we may truly live, not in our former spirit of bondage unto sin and death, but as healthy children of God, whom we can now by the Holy Spirit call Abba, Father.

N. G. ADKINS.

From BARROW.—The dominion of the law over a person, is only so long as the person is alive. This principle, set forth in Romans 7. 1-6, is illustrated in the life-relationship of husband and wife. The one who has been crucified with Christ, is dead to the law, and has become united to another, even to Him Who was raised from the dead. (Verse 4.) This was with the object in view that such an one might bring forth fruit unto God. (See Romans 6. 22.) So then, he enters upon a new service, in a new relationship, having been born anew, with no desire for the unfruitful works of darkness. The paragraph from verse 7 to 25 gave cause for some discussion. Two lines of thought were put forward and once again we would invite criticism on these things. These verses are generally accepted as referring to the constant warfare in the heart of the believer. We have each experienced the truth of the words " For the good which I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise." (Verse 19.)

There are here set forth two elements, the law of God, and the law of sin. The law of God we take to refer to the law as given to Moses, but though the Apostle says, he delighted in this after the inward man, yet he found that he was powerless to resist evil, apart from Jesus Christ our Lord (verse 25). In this paragraph, although the writer uses the first personal pronoun we suggest that he is speaking in a general way, although we doubt not, this was also his own real experience, at some time in his life .

On the other hand, it was suggested that this is the experience of an unsaved person, upon learning the law. Thus, when the commandment was made to bear on the actions of the individual, it shewed sin in all its sinfulness, the result being death to the individual. This is in keeping with the principle laid down in Romans 5. 13 and 3. 20. The person herein referred to is one whose mind was exercised in connexion with the law, as was the apostle Paul's before his conversion. " I am carnal, sold under sin " (verse 14) (it was argued) surely does not refer to a person who was saved, and is in striking contrast to what is found in Galatians 5. 1. It is quite possible for a person to delight in the law of God after the inward man, and still be unsaved. Moreover, the teaching of scripture suggests that once a person passes from death into life the law of Moses is finished with, the person having died thereto (see preceding* paragraph, and also the epistle to the Galatians). Hence the individual cries

as he realises his condition "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" Verse 24. The answer is verse 25, followed by the happy knowledge of the truth contained in chapter 8. 1,

[There are one or two statements in Romans 7. that are helpful in gripping the meaning of what the Apostle is saying. He says "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" verse 18. With this agrees the Lord's word in John 6. 63. "The flesh profiteth nothing." The state of an unregenerate man is one that in him altogether, without limiting evil to the flesh, there dwells no good thing. To say otherwise than this is to negate the Lord's utterance to Nicodemus "Ye must be born again." The new birth renders possible the words of Paul, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (v. 22). There is now a new mind in the individual, a mind no longer at enmity with God, but reconciled to God through the death of His Son. No unregenerated man ever delighted in the law, how could he?—love being the fulfilment of law. Romans 13. 10. Note the effect of the law reaching the unregenerate, verses 7-11. The entrance of the law brings death to the sinner, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life." The law by its legal code brought death to the sinner who was alive apart from the law. It had also a message of forgiveness and of quickening power in the promise of the Redeemer who was to come.

In the child of God only, and in no unregenerated person, are there two natures between which there is continual antagonism.—J.M.]

From this verse onwards the believer's warfare is set forth. It is not now a question of the law of sin and the law of God, but what is now placed before us is the mind of the flesh, and the mind of the spirit (verse 6), for the law of the spirit of life has given freedom (verse 2). The paragraph shews the contrast. The law of sin can bring nothing but death; but the spirit is life because of righteousness (verse 10). It reaches even further than this life and takes us to the resurrection, for "He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you." [The quickening of the mortal body is in this life.—J.M.]

As debtors to God because of the life He has given, we are now exhorted to mortify the deeds of the body, and to be led by the Spirit of God.

Some difficulty was experienced with regard to the adoption of verse 15. We understand that we are children of God by birth, John 1. 13. How then are we children by adoption? It has been said that this is a wrong translation, but we cannot say, and are prepared to accept the words as written. Is it possible that there are two lines of thought set forth in connexion with the children of God, by birth and by adoption? We would like help on this point.

[Children of God are such by regeneration not by adoption. Each child of God receives the Holy Spirit, called here the Spirit of adoption. Adoption literally means son-placing, so that the children of God are taught to look forward to the time when manifestly they will be seen in the place of sons with all the likeness to God, who begat them, that sonship involves. (See Romans 8. 1d, 23. Compare 1 John 3. 2.)—J.M.]

. This we **do** know, however, that we are children of God, **and if** children, **then** heirs, heirs of God, and joint **heirs' with** Christ, What a happy portion is ours!

J. M'CORMICK.

From ATHERTON.—In this portion the apostle unfolds the truth that **the** believing Jew, in dying with Christ, died **not** to gain only **but also** to the law. **He** explains this teaching by reference **to** the institution of marriage and the obligation which marriage imposes upon the woman. The law typifies the husband and the believer is like the widow, in that he is freed from the law in the **same way** that a widow is freed **from** obligation to her deceased husband. The only other way of escape from the **law** to the Jew, was **by** physical death (verse 1). **But** the death of Christ has made a great change, for **now** "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10. 4). (See also Galatians 3. 23; 4. 3-5; and Ephesians 2, 15.) The wife while her husband lived could **not be** joined to another **man**; so the Jew could not **be** under law and at the same time united **to** Christ.

Seeing then that the law brought about sin, condemnation, and death, the question naturally arises "Is the law sin?" **Not so**; the law is a good and holy thing; "for except for the law," says the Apostle, "I should have known nothing of sin as sin." The operation of the law created the consciousness of sin and the Apostle describing his own personal experience says that his understanding of the nature of sin was gained by means of the law, **in** which he had **been** carefully instructed and for which he was most zealous. (Acts 22. 3.)

He gives an example of sin, viz., the sin of lustfulness. Sin within made use of the law to work **out** and bring to the surface every **manner** of lust that was latent in the flesh. Paul was alive before he acquired the knowledge of the law; but upon that acquisition, he thoroughly understood that one could live through the law only by fulfilling its every requirement. Thus the law brought him not life but death. Hence the law is holy (as coming from God shewing forth His unchangeable character, being altogether holy), because **it** detects and brings to light that which is unholy. Did then this good and holy thing become death **to** the apostle? **Not** so, but sin did; for by means of the law sin is shown to be so exceedingly evil that it brought about death to him even utilizing that which was good, turning the holy, righteous and good thing to a destructive **purpose**.

The following verses (14-25) were the subject of much discussion and debate as to whether this was the Apostle's experience (1) as a religious Jew, zealous for the law, yet constantly practising sin because of his evil nature; **or** (2) as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing the conflict **between** the flesh (**the old man**) and the Spirit.

The arguments for **the** first view were as follows :—The conflict here spoken of is one that took place **in** the Apostle's own experience between the corrupted nature, the flesh, **and the mind** which has been fully instructed in the law of God and which endeavours through the flesh to keep it. [The only way **in** which **an** unregenerate Jew, Paul, or any other, could keep **the** law was a mere Pharisaical one, **an** outward ceremonial keeping. Of this outward standard of righteousness the apostle could say **that** he was found blameless. (Philippians 3. 6.) **On the other hand**

he shows in Romans 7. how sin, native to his hieing, **had** through the commandment " Thou shalt not covet " slain him.—J.M.J There is no thought of a new birth here and there seems to be the greatest contrast between the man of chapter 6. and the man of chapter 7. The man of chapter 7. is carnal, unable to do that which is spiritual. (See John 8. 34.) Also of the man in chapter 7. it is said that sin dwells in him and has absolute control of his actions; he knows nothing of freedom from sin but is forced to cry out for deliverance.

In contrast to these facts, the man of chapter 6. is free from the bondage of sin (verse 6), sin shall no longer have dominion over him (verse 14), and he knows deliverance from **sin** (verses 18 and 22).

[It is quite true that sin shall not have dominion over the believer, because he is not under law, and that he is to reckon himself dead to sin. Sin should not reign in his mortal body, but actually sin does dwell in his flesh, and if he had no power, but his own will, to carry out the mind of the new and inward man, then for him ever to fulfil the requirement of the law would be impossible." Death has made him free from sin (chapter 6.). Death has made him free from the law (chapter 7. 1-6). While the believer is thus free, yet sin still resides in his flesh opposing and resisting his doing the things in which he delights (chapter 7. 12-25).

Then how may we do the will of God? Only and solely by the quickening power of the Spirit of God (Romans 8.) ; only in the power of the Spirit can we fulfil the ordinance of the law.—J.M.]

The apostle's state here is one in which he does not gain a single victory. The apostle's Christian experience is not of such a character by any means for he could say " Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ " (1 Corinthians 11. 1). (See also 1 Corinthians 15. 57; 2 Timothy 4. 7-8).

In verses 21-25 the apostle shows his condition to be one of captivity wherein he was compelled, although against the strenuous yet ineffectual protest of his will, to render obedience • to the law of sin; hence the cry for deliverance (verse 24).

The Christian is not in a state of captivity but of glorious freedom. • Galatians 4. 26, 31 and 5. 1.

Thus now in chapter 8. 2 speaking- from his new position in Christ Jesus the apostle testifies that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set him free from the law of sin and death.

What was said in support of the second thought, i.e., that this was the apostle's actual Christian experience as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, was that here was the conflict that existed between the flesh and the Spirit (Galatians 5. 17), and although from God's standpoint the old man (the flesh) was crucified with Christ, yet, as seen here, wherever and whenever, there is the desire to good, evil is present.

Chapter 8. brings before us the fact that while there is a law (of sin and death) operating in the domain of the flesh and exercising its Sway over all who are in the flesh, there is also a law operating- in the domain of the Spirit by which all who are in Christ Jesus have been for ever liberated from the law of sin and death (verse 2). God sent forth His own Son to accomplish this **work** of redemption. In order to **do** this **He** assumed the " likeness of flesh of sin"; not the flesh of sin, the corrupted

human nature but became in the " likeness " of men. (Philippians 2. 7). (See also John 1. 14). **Thus He was manifested to become the Sin-offering and so " Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."** (2 Corinthians 5. 21).

Verses 3-4 shew **that God condemned sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled by the believer, because our walk is not according to the nature of the old man (the flesh) but according- to the nature of the new man (the Spirit).**

Verses 5-17 furnish us with some particulars of the walk in newness of life; the flesh, if complied with, captivates the **thoughts** of the believer bringing about spiritual death, whereas if the Spirit's leading and guidance is experienced, the thoughts of the believer are spiritual, bringing life and peace. (Also see 1 Timothy 5. 6.) **All who are led by God's Spirit are God's sons; the spirit of bondage becomes the spirit of sonship and the cry of fear, the cry of confident appeal to a Father in heaven.**

[This is a slip, is it not? The **spirit** of bondage cannot become the Spirit of adoption,—J.M.]

E. BIRCHALL.

From WEST RIDING.—The early verses of chapter 7. *give* an additional illustration of the statement made by the Apostle in verse 14 of chapter 6. We who were " baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death," and " were made dead to the law through the body of Christ," **just as** the wife is free from the marriage law on the death of her **husband.** The children of God are not free, however, from the presence of sin, **but it has not** the same power and dominion over them to entice **them to sin.**

Paul tells us in verses 7 to 13 how the law came to **man** and shewed **him his** sinful nature. He then continues (using " the first person for an illustration) to define the **unhappy** state of the unregenerate man. [Not the unregenerate **man.** See notes on Barrow and Atherton's papers.—J.M.] He explains **that though** the spirit may be willing to obey, the flesh is too weak and wicked to execute his will. The deliverance comes to men from **the curse of the law, by faith in Christ** which is the rock bed of our redemption from sin and the law (chapter 7. 24-25 and chapter 8. 1). Having described the sinful and condemned state of **man** under the law, **and the means of salvation, the Apostle proceeds to give a comparison between the life of the man in the flesh and the life of the man in Christ.**

In verse 14 we are reminded **that though we are children of God by faith we become sons of God when we are led by the Spirit** (Luke 6. 35; 2 Corinthians 6. 14-18). Thus led, we reflect in our lives the divine nature. There was some discussion as to the condition expressed in the little word " if " (the second " if " in verse 17), and the question arose **as to whether the condition is attached to " joint heirs with Christ " or to be " glorified with Him."** (Hebrews 3. 14, "If we hold fast"; 2 Timothy 2. 12). [" If so be that " is the translation of " eiper," which evidently is connected with the suffering- and glory. From the context the glory is evidently millennial and would connect with 2 Timothy 2. 12. The same word is translated in the **same way** in -Romans 8. 9. Note its conditional force.—J.M.]

R. ROGERS.

From SUNDERLAND.—The seventh chapter of Romans in the main treats of experience. -Verse 1 shows us that death sets a term to the dominion of law. Verses 2-3 show the operation of the law in relation to husband and wife. (This suggested to us that it is the will of God that a man and woman should be lawfully united, and should not live together otherwise). Here we saw the law as a husband (verse 6); in chapter 6. it was a master. Further, in chapter 6. we walk in newness of life, in the seventh, we serve in newness of spirit. We saw also that our service in the sixth was that of a bondservant (verse 18), here of a wife (verse 4).

What a complete clearance has been wrought for us both as to sin and law; to both of which we are dead through the death of Christ (Ephesians 2. 16; Colossians 1. 20). This is with the one object in view that we should be joined to another (2 Corinthians 11. 2 was referred to) "even to Him Who was raised from the dead; that we might bring forth fruit unto God." (See also chapter 6. 22).

A contrast was observed between the seventh and eight chapters. In the seventh, the Spirit of God is not mentioned while chapter eight brings Him before us again and again. Verse 2 showed us the power or force of our unconverted days "the law of sin and death," it also reveals the power or force that should characterize the believer, viz., "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." We thought it well to observe that the new life of the believer was on the ground of the condemnation of the old (verse 3). (See also 2 Corinthians 5. 17). The law could not do this, though it condemned man as a sinner. We thought verse 7 set forth the same truth as chapter 6. verse 6. We took to the cross and in the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, as bearing the judgment due to sin, we see "sin in the flesh condemned." Thus we are thankful to be able to speak of ourselves as "free" (verse 2). Galatians 5. 16 and 6. 7-8, were referred to, the latter as summing-up the issue of all our activities. It was said if we walked according to the Spirit we would give the desires of the flesh the place of death (verse 13), and so live, fulfilling what God had righteously required of men. May God help us so to be doing, learning to walk "even as He, the Lord Jesus walked." (1 John 2. 6.) Surely this is a higher standard than the law of Moses! May we be encouraged to press on. Philippians 3. 14.

N. STUBBS.

From PAISLEY.—We have in this section some precious truths revealed as to the position of those who put faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They are reckoned dead to the law, through the body of Christ. We take this to be the body of His flesh which was nailed to the cross. Thus when He died, God's righteous claims were met. The law never justified anyone in the sight of God, the opposite was effected, viz., the condemnation of man. Galatians chapter 3. verses 21 and 22 bring out the same point. That there was no looseness or liberty granted by God relative to keeping the law is clearly evident from Leviticus 18. 5, which is repeated in Ezekiel 20. verses 11, 13 and 21. Compare also James 2. 10-11.

The illustration given of the death of a husband shows now complete is the severance of the believer from the binding obliga

tions of the law; so that they can be joined to Him who was raised from the dead. Service in newness of the Spirit, is then possible, according to the will of God.

From verse 7 to 25 the individual experience is described, doubtless that which is common to all born again ones. These confessions from the apostle must have been a source of comfort to those of weaker faith. It also shows the need for self-control, because of the continual warfare between two opposite natures. Here is revealed the heart of one who has received and knows the workings of the Holy Spirit. Truly a different standpoint from that from which he once looked.

We spent some time discussing the signification of children of God and sons of God. It seems we have in chapter 8, a relationship existing, that of children or sons through faith. [In addition to relationship the name "sons" conveys the thought of character and likeness.—J.M.] These are they who are led by the Spirit of God. (See Galatians 4. verses 5, 6 and 7.) This place is inherited by birthright [What is meant here is rather vague. Romans 8. 14 shows us children of God who are controlled by the Spirit of God and such must in consequence manifest likeness to the God who leads them.—J.M.] in consequence of which the character can be ultimately manifested as in Matthew 5. verses 43-48; Luke 6. 35 and John 12. 36. There is also the prospect for such to have a place in the glory in keeping with their faithfulness or partaking of Christ's sufferings while on earth.

S. THOMSON.

From BRANTFORD.—In this section the illustration of marriage is brought forth to emphasise the truths that have been considered in the former section. How forcible then would this illustration come home to the Jew, who had known the rigour of the law. But now, being in submission to Christ as Head, they are in a position to bring forth fruit unto God. Such is the blessed and precious result of grace.

Once more in this epistle we have the words "What shall we say then" (verse 7). These words also appear in 6. 1. Before this, God had been speaking and every mouth had been stopped (Romans 3. 19), but now God is dealing not through law but by grace. In this dispensation of grace it is man's privilege to obey; in other words, he has a say (an option to obey or disobey).

We find great encouragement in verses 24 and 25, to see that, when the Apostle Paul fought the fight, he also needed the One to sustain and help him in his warfare, as do we. How necessary it is that we, as young men, take to heart the truth of verse 18, for in this is our safety.

Chapter 8. 1 undoubtedly refers to our standing in Christ. We find, as we read further on, that it is possible to be pleasing unto God as the result of being led by the Spirit.

It is also possible for us to attain unto being called "sons of God." This would require holy living (see 1 Peter 1. verses 15 to 17). How verse 17 seems to transport our thoughts to the eternal bliss that awaits all those who have suffered with Christ.

Compiled by R.M., J.T. and J. B.

From GLASGOW.—In the previous chapter it is plainly stated that there is granted a complete victory over sin to those

who are Christ's. But in chapter 7. we have depicted the state and condition of one under the law, who finds it impossible to satisfy the claims of the law upon him. The apostle uses an appropriate illustration by presenting the case of a married **man** and his wife. While he is alive she is bound to him by the law, but when he dies she is reckoned free, and can now be joined to another man if she so desires. So that when Christ died we may also reckon ourselves dead to the law, with the holy privilege of serving God in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter of the ceremonial law.

The law, by its holy requirements, sets forth the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Although the law was righteous, holy, and good, yet, because of the sinfulness of our nature, it could do no more than condemn and bring death. The apostle argues that there had been a time in his early days when he had lived in unimputed sin, the law of God being not yet understood by him; but when the law in all its holy claims presented itself immediately sin was found to revive in him, and, as it were, he died. His carnal desires were intensified by the law's restrictions. Setting himself forth as an illustration, he gives us the picture of a man who is really desirous in his soul of fulfilling the requirements of the law, but in spite of his desire to accomplish this, his carnal nature continually brings him into a state of bondage. [But how can a man serve God when sin has slain him and he is dead through his trespasses and sins? He needs reconciliation and quickening power.—J.M.] Into such a despairing state does he come through the weakness of the flesh warring against and prevailing over the better desires of the mind, that he is eventually compelled to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" So the law in itself can offer no consolation to the sinner, but causes him to seek deliverance from some other source, and, like the apostle, "he can turn his eyes to the One who is the end of the law for righteousness, and say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The seventh chapter is preparatory to the eighth, where those in Christ are "made free from the law of sin and of death," so that they may have a complete victory over every sinful passion through Christ dwelling in them. Although Paul introduces himself as the illustration in chapter 7. yet we understand him to have realised a complete victory over sin previously (as in chapter 6.) "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

WILLIAM STEWART, GEORGE MACADAM.

REMARKS.

One is reminded, in seeking to follow the spiritual reasoning of the apostle in connexion with the complete change which has been brought about through the reception of the Gospel, especially to the Jew, of the words of Peter, concerning the Epistles, of Paul: "In all his Epistles speaking in them some things hard to be understood." After we have both read and written, there is much, very much, that remains but dimly understood; yet if we see but men as trees walking we shall have made progress towards perfect sight.

The crucified Saviour is the cause of all the wonderful change. It is as Paul describes it in 2 Corinthians 8. 17, "Old things are passed away; behold, they are become new." Through His death we have become dead to sin and to the law. The impetus to the doing of God's will is not now "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not," but it is by union with the living Christ that the believer receives power for fruitbearing*. When God under law said to man "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not*" sin sprang up as a very serpent within man's breast and struck out with all its venom at God's commands, and man, poor man, in the toils of this dread serpent was slain. "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law." So law good and holy and just as it was did not suit a poor sinner like man, his last state became worse than his first. The entrance of the law was necessary, however, to show to man what a ruined creature he was, and how exceedingly sinful sin was in God's sight.

Paul uses himself in chapter 7. as an illustration of the operation of sin. I. First he tells us how he was alive apart from the law once. II. Then the commandment came and he was slain. III. Then he says that while the law is spiritual he himself is carnal, sold under sin. Sold into slavery, the slavery of sin: sin was his master. Yet strange to say a willing slave in the service of sin. Such is man by nature, serving sin with a will to do it, as truly as the demoniac of the Gospels willed to be in the control of the demons which dwelt within him.

Then comes the time when spiritual deliverance reaches us and man is redeemed. This change I see in chapter 7. from verse 15. He now hates the service of sin, he hates the things he once enjoyed, that is, with his mind, which is now reconciled and at peace with God. Though spiritually free, yet there is a fearful entail of sin left in man's flesh. What weakness is his through this! As he looks upon himself he is a seeming enigma; often he is found doing the thing that he hates, but it is not himself that does it, but sin in his flesh. There are now two natures in one person; an inward man who delights in the law of God; the true ego, and an outward—expressed in the words: "In me, that is in my flesh." The residue of the old nature still exists in his flesh, which resists and opposes the desires of the new man. His state is one as of a living man bound to a dead body which is loathsome and odious. He calls out—"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" He thanks God that deliverance will be through the Lord Jesus Christ. He brings his argument to conclusion with the words: "So then I myself (his true self) with the mind serve the law of God and with the flesh the law of sin."

The flesh is discovered to us in all its native ugliness, capable only of sin. Yet wondrous grace the blessed Lord chose to become in the likeness of sinful flesh and to be an offering for sin. How the riches of His grace shine out in this! There was no entail of sin in His incarnation. Sin in its root is condemned and sin in its fruit has been atoned for.

Space fail us to pursue the subject into chapter 8., but suffice it to say that only by the power of the Spirit dwelling in the new man can man fulfil the requirement of the law. By the Spirit his mortal body can be quickened, by the Spirit he may mortify the deeds of the body, and by the Spirit he may be led. All these and other things are possible to him only by the energy of the Holy Spirit who indwells him.

J.M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

QUESTION.—Romans 8. 10. "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." We should like help on the meaning of this verse. Is the "spirit" here referred to, the Spirit of God or **our** own spirit?

ANSWER.—Christ is in the believer through the Spirit who is called "The Spirit of Christ." It cannot mean here physical death. The words must have a spiritual meaning and show the complete change which has come about in the believers relationship to his own body. The body that once called for insatiable service—"what we shall eat, what we shall drink, wherewithal we shall be clothed" and which we served in all its lusts and appetites, that body is dead because of sin through the presence of Christ. Now the spirit of the believer regains its true place, the God-given place for the human spirit. The believer being now in a state of righteousness, (he once was in a state of sin) his happy spirit is free to enter into happy communion with Christ who is in him, and this in reality is life.—J.M.

QUESTION.—Romans 3. 31. In what way do we establish the law through faith?

ANSWER.—In accepting the righteousness which is provided in the One who has kept the law and made it honourable, the believer consents to the law that it is holy and righteous and good and acknowledges its just demands. He recognises the absolute necessity that the law's demands must be fulfilled and, therefore, places his faith in the One who has fully met its claims.

R.T.H.H.

NOTICE.

Friends are reminded that the second moiety of payment for current Young Men's Corner is now due. This is 1/6 per copy.

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER

No. 7.

Eighth Series.

July, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION VII.—ROMANS 8. 18—8. 39.

From **ATHERTON**.—The opening verse of this portion of our study is inseparably linked up with the preceding verses, showing that the immediate consequence of faith in Christ involves suffering on His behalf. The saints at Philippi are also reminded of this. (Philippians 1. 29.) The apostle deems such suffering as not worth considering compared with the glory soon to be disclosed. This glory is unconditional, for all in Christ shall be manifested with Him in glory. (Colossians 3. 4.) In this age, however, the life of all creation is in anguish and bondage—the common heritage in Adam—the ground too, being accursed of God. (Genesis 3. 17.) Hence we see the effect of the one transgression :—man in the thralldom of sin, and creation in the thralldom of decay and waste. The which is, all in the divine purpose and prerogative of God that through the last Adam, blessings unbounded should flow to man and to the whole creation alike. We see in that millennial day the wilderness changed (Isaiah 35. 1, 2), and the animal creation at rest (see Isaiah 11. 6-8). Even the child of God although possessing the Spirit as a foretaste of bliss, shares in the groaning misery of creation waiting for full sonship in the redemption of his body. Salvation from sin's penalty is passed, salvation from sin's power is now continuing and salvation from sin's presence is awaited when Christ shall fashion the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of His glory (Philippians 3. 21).

Verse 24 was the cause of a little discussion, the past tense of the verb in the Revised text causing a little difficulty. The conclusion however, was arrived at, that faith and hope are inseparably linked together, " Faith being the assurance of things hoped for " (Hebrews 11. 1). Hope is not possession, but implies future fruition; it is faith in Christ directed to the future. [" In hope we were saved " may more accurately convey the thought here rather than " by hope." We are saved by, or through faith from the consequences of our sins (Ephesians 2. 8), but we are saved—in a condition or state of hope, for the Gospel pre-

sents to us the fairest of prospects, not only in the heavens (Colossians 1. 5) but also here on earth, as in this chapter.—[J.M.] So we wait for the fulfilment of our blessed hope (Titus 2. 13). Meanwhile the blessed Holy Spirit helps our weakness in prayer to God, by His yearnings that are too deep and fervent for human language to express

This subject of the intercession of the Holy Spirit **raised** the question as to why there should be the necessity for the two Intercessors :—The Holy Spirit (verse 26) and the Son (verse 34). (Compare John 14. 16 with 1 John 2. 1.) It was thought that the Holy Spirit intercedes on our account in accordance with God's holy will, with regard to our needs. On the other hand, the Son pleads for us in respect of sin, interceding **on** account of the iniquity of our holy things. We also need Him to plead our cause because of the accuser of the brethren " which accuseth them before our God day and night " (Revelation 12. 10). The accusations of the great adversary of souls must needs be met on righteous grounds and so the Son the great Advocate for our defence steps forth to plead the value and atoning efficacy of His shed blood on Calvary. We would like to be clear on this matter of the two Advocates, by asking the question " In what sense does the Holy Spirit make intercession for us? " [Children of God as such have two Comforters : our blessed Lord who is with the Father and the Holy Spirit who is with us and in us. Our friends have referred to the Lord interceding on account of the iniquity of the holy things, this is an allusion to the priesthood of Aaron. While we have two Comforters, there is but one High Priest and the priestly work of the Lord must not be confused with His work as Advocate. The priesthood of the Lord is associated with the people of God and with the house of God, whereas it is God's weak little children who need and have Comforters. Our weakness arises from sin in the flesh. Because we are so weak and so ignorant, not knowing how to pray **and** what to ask, the Spirit makes intercession to God from within according to God's will. How often we have known those deep inward movements and groanings which we learn from this passage are beyond our power to produce.—J.M.]

Verses 31-39 bring before us the marvellous love of God expressed in the gift of His dear Son. If we are in the eternal purposes of God, predestined, called, acquitted and glorified, who shall impeach those whom God has chosen? There is not one, for neither will God who has acquitted us freely by His grace lay anything to our charge nor will Christ condemn. Christ having set His unfathomable love upon the Church gave Himself up for her (Ephesians 5. 25). Truly as the Song of Songs would remind us, " many . . . waters could not quench His love, neither could the floods drown it," and no power, circumstance or any other creation can ever sever us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? our Lord.

E. BIRCHALL.

From GLASGOW.—With the Gospel of

NO CONDEMNATION

ringing in our hearts, we turn to chapter 8. 18—to the reckoning-of one fit to reckon, Paul the aged. " Of the cup of " the sufferings of this present time " he had drunk deeply; but he drank

in the spirit of Him " Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising shame." So we find the Apostle as in verse 25, patient in tribulation, remembering, no doubt, the words of John 16. 33.

" The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," a universal fact, even in our day. The whole animate creation is subject to vanity and is in the bondage of corruption. And so this bondage-bound creation is striving after liberty; liberty from the blight and wither of corruption; and liberated it will be, but not until that Day, when it shall see the glory of the Lord, the excellency of our God (Isaiah 35. 1-2) ; when the sons of God will be revealed, and the children of God will be known by their glory.

In such a stricken scene the sinner finds himself; and even when he is saved, and sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise; his identification with the creation in its groaning is not severed; for he now groans within himself as he waits for his adoption. The created things are waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God; he is waiting as a child of God to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. It is noteworthy that such a one HAS through grace the firstfruits of the Spirit; (which last would seem to us to embrace all the blessings which are coming to us as children of God).

The Apostle is quick to remind us that in the person of the Holy Spirit we have a sure source of strength and support, and he exclaims, " We know not how to pray as we ought " ;—and this is surely the first thing— a child of God seeks to do. " Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss." (James 4. 3) ; but the Spirit in those unutterable intercessions— makes no mistakes, for he asks " According— to the will of God."

A happy people are they who love God ! Foreknown, fore-ordained, called, justified, glorified. What* a divinely complete salvation! How could any one contemplate a link in such a chain snapping? How could things work together for such, (brethren " for whom Christ died ") other than for good? God is for us and naught else counts. " All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." And so with the Gospel of

NO SEPARATION

before him, the Apostle pens the soul-stirring words which conclude our section. " Christ Jesus . . . died . . . raised from the dead, . . . at the right hand of God." What a triple cord! The only One who could condemn has justified us ; and now the most determined onslaughts of the hosts of darkness only make us more conscious of, and cast upon, " the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." His love to us cannot cease; things quite beyond our control—death, life, angels, principalities, etc., cannot separate us therefrom. And confident of this, may we seek grace and strength that nothing which is of the earth and pertaining to the flesh, whether tribulation or persecution will in any way lessen our love for Him.

J. L. FERGUSON.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—The first part of our section deals with suffering, and arises out of the last verse of the previous section (verse 17).

It is evident that these sufferings, and the glory that follows them, are of a special character. They are the outcome of being identified with Him in doing the will of God. It is true that all who are Christ's will be glorified, (see verse 30 and Philippians 3. 21), but we are reminded that in the resurrection, one star will differ from another in glory. Only those who endure with Him shall reign with Him (2 Timothy 2. 12) and it is to him that overcometh will it be given to sit down in His throne. (Revelation 3. 21.) We remember also David's mighty men and we remember too, Jonathan, and his wrong-choice and sad end.

The Apostle lived continually in the light of the coming glory, and as he contemplates this, the sufferings of the present time are insignificant, not worthy to be compared therewith, and serve but to work for us, more and more exceedingly, an eternal weight of glory. (2 Corinthians 4. 17.) For the revealing of this glory the whole creation is waiting. We wondered what was the scope of the creation here mentioned. It certainly includes man and beast, and plant life, all of which are under a curse and are a vain thing in the sight of God. Everything—under the sun is vanity. [This expression creation does not, I think, include mankind, and would extend to animate creation. It is somewhat difficult to conceive inanimate creation all groaning and travailing in pain.—J.M.] This revealing—will be when earth's rightful King will reign in righteousness (Isaiah 32.); the curse shall be removed from the earth and the wilderness shall become a fruitful field. The fruits of the Cross of Christ will reach out even to the earth itself.

Joyful now the wide creation
Rests in undisturbed repose,
Blest in Jesus' full salvation,
Sorrow now nor thralldom knows.

Sin in the flesh has brought us very low. The whole creation groans, we ourselves groan who have the Holy Spirit, the Spirit groans and intercedes for us, and Christ Jesus Himself makes intercession for us at the right hand of God. But there is hope, for by hope are we saved. [See note in Atherton's paper.—J.M.] Paul's cry "who shall deliver me from the body of this death" is one of hopelessness as far as man is concerned, but through the love of God in Christ Jesus, he could patiently wait for the hope, which the knowledge of Christ has set before him—the redemption of the body.

"Whom He foreknew, them He also foreordained" (verse 29). We note that God first "foreknew," then His purposes in us follow on, "foreordained, called, justified and glorified," showing— that the basis of these latter things was God's foreknowledge.

It is a most wonderful thought that God has foreordained us to be conformed to the image of His Son, but it is blessedly possible for us to anticipate this while here on earth, as the lines of the hymn beautifully express—

" Like Thee in faith, in meekness, love,
" In every heavenly grace;
" From glory unto glory changed
" Till we behold Thy face."

The Apostle now seems to look back over all that he has written, and is amazed at the wonderful grace and love of God towards us. He asks "What shall we say to these things,"—

our justification by faith, our sanctification, and future glorification? Surely God is for us, having done so much for us through the costly redemption wrought by His beloved Son. What a note of triumph and assurance is contained in verses 31 to the end. ^k"More than conquerors through Him that loved us." Nothing can "separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

N. G. ADKINS.

From WEST RIDING.—In verses 18-21 of chapter 8. the apostle speaks of the millennial glory of which we shall be partakers with Christ. (1 Peter 4. 13; and 5. 1.)

In this period the Arm of Jehovah will be stretched out, first, for the salvation of those who recognise Him as Lord and King, instead of following the Antichrist, and later in judgment on those who refuse Him.

Verse 20. If there were not a Saviour in God's picture, then the whole creation would be vanity. The day is coming, however, when the calf and the young lion shall eat together, and when that happy period of a thousand years is finished "the rest of the dead" (Revelation 20. 5) will be judged.

Verse 22. This body is a hindrance and a burden to us, therefore we groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our bodies. Now we are saved from the penalty of sin, and saved from the power of sin, but then we shall be saved from the presence of sin.

Verse 23. We have now the Spirit of adoption, but we have not yet Deceived the adoption, i.e., our glorified position as sons of God.

Verse 26. The words "In like manner," seem to us to be associated with the words of verse 16, where it is recorded, "The Spirit himself beareth witness." ["And in like manner" is joined to the words which immediately precede them. Hope joined with patience are undoubted helps to us in our weakness. We hope and patiently wait for better things. Hope buoys up the human spirit and the Holy Spirit also helps us in the bearing of our burden under which we groan.—J.M.]

In verse 26 we learn that He also helpeth our infirmities. If this is correct, then verses 18-25 is a parenthesis, suggested to the apostle's mind, by the "glory" of verse 17. We noted that it is not simply we who pray, but the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us, according to the will of God, and thus our prayers are acceptable in spite of our ignorance; and not only does He who dwells in us, intercede for us, but we have One at the right hand of God, of whose person and work the Holy Spirit ever reminds us, similarly engaged on our account.

Verses 28-30. Knowing that God hates sin, we rest assured that nothing that is truly evil can overtake us. All His actions are intended to conform us to the image of His Son. [Our being conformed to the image of God's Son in Romans 8. 29 is not a gradual process, but that which will take place at the coming of the Lord.—J.M.]

In the light of verses 31 and 32 it is not possible that any one or anything can be successfully employed against us, because God is so wonderfully for us. He will withhold no good thing from us. Since God has justified, no one can condemn. The reason of this is found in the fact of Christ's death, resurrection,

and intercession, at the right hand of God. As there is no condemnation, so there is to be no separation even in the deepest and darkest trials of life. No forces of darkness, nor death, nor powers of any kind, can separate us from the love which God hath toward us in Christ Jesus.

R. ROGERS.

From LONDON, S.E.—We now come to the truths relating to suffering and glory. We know how our Lord Jesus Christ Himself suffered for us, leaving- you an example, that ye should follow His steps (1 Peter 2. 21); and what a perfect example we have in Him. to" endure suffering with all meekness. (Read Hebrews 5. 8, 12. 2, and Philippians 1_B 29, 3. 14). In verse 20 does the creation refer to mankind only, or is the word used in a more general sense? [See note in Liverpool and Birkenhead's paper.—J.M.] The redemption of the body is associated with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will fashion us like unto His glorious Body, for when we see Him we shall be like Him. (1 John 3. 2).

In verse 26 we see the Holy Spirit's intercessory work in making known our needs before the throne of grace, according to the will of God. Truly we can say, "Blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." (Ephesians 1. 3.) Verse 28 reminds us of Psalm 84. 11.

Verse 29 tells of our calling according to the purpose and will of God—"Foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son." We know that we have been chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, and justified freely from all things, we wait to be conformed fully to His likeness at His glorious appearing. In the next paragraphs, verses 31-35, the apostle exhorts us to survey our justified position in God's sight, and rejoice that Satan is powerless to bring any charge of guilt against God's redeemed. (Compare Zechariah 3. 4.)

"In vain doth Satan then oppose,
"For God is stronger than His foes."

The all-sufficient work of Atonement—Christ's death—His resurrection—His exaltation—has fully satisfied God's righteous requirements, and He now appears before the face of God for us.

Verse 35. No separation! We think of His blessed words in John 10. 28. God Who loves us with an everlasting love has given us the victory through His Beloved Son. Thanks be unto God for His Unspeakable Gift.

GEO. PAIN.

[We regret that owing to lack of space belated contribution to part VI. has unavoidably been omitted.—Editors.]

From BRANTFORD.—Death is not the end of all, for, in verse 18, we read concerning- "the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward"—a glory in which the whole creation will have a part. Instead of the groanings, there will be the joy in having the curse removed.

Despite our many faults we are able by the Holy Spirit's help and guidance to become more pleasing- to our God. The blessed result of loving God is seen in our becoming conformed to the image of His Son. [We are foreordained to be conformed

to the image of His Son; this conformation takes place at the Lord's return and is not a gradual thing accomplished through loving- God.—J.M.]

God knows whether we ask in the Spirit or not, for He searcheth the hearts, and knoweth that the Spirit will ask according to His (God's) will (verse 27). [Asking here is not in the Spirit nor is it expressed in words. The intercession of the Spirit is with groanings which cannot be expressed.—J.M.]

It is possible to be led by the Spirit (see verse 14), and overcome the difficulties that beset our pathway. In this we remember there is a Mercy-Seat, and an ever-listening God, and a Mediator between God and us. (1 Timothy 2. 5.) [Mediator, Priest and Advocate describe different phases of the Lord's work—J.M.]

Verses 31 to 30. What greater proof could there be of the fact that God is for us than the "delivering" over, to wicked hands, of the precious body of His Son. [It was not simply the body, but He spared not His own Son.—J.M.]

It is God's will to give us in addition to His greatest Gift all things that pertain to life and godliness, with the object that we should be conformed to the image of His Son. [See note in West Riding's paper.—J.M.] How thankful we should be for the truth of verse 34, that He, as an Intercessor, is still active on our behalf. We believe that He helps us day by day, as the Melchizedek Priest, in that He has something to do with the renewing of our mind (2 Corinthians 4. 16). Is there a present application of the truth of Romans 7. verses 23 and 24, in this same connection? [See note in Atherton's paper on the Advocate and Priest. Romans 7. shows the state of mind of one who is reconciled to God. That mind requires renewal (not as to its state toward God), because it is only in a renewed mind that transformation is possible. (See Romans 12. 1, 2.)—J.M.] What a triumphant climax is reached in verse 39. May we all enjoy to the full this glorious fact. The Love of God.
R.M., J.T., J.B.

From BARROW.—With a mind, able to appreciate things in their true value, the apostle opens the paragraph under consideration with the thought of suffering-. He himself had experienced suffering- in a very marked degree (see Acts 20. 23 and 24; 2 Corinthians 11. 10-33). But he counts these as unworthy of comparison with the glory that shall be revealed to us-ward. Peter strikes a note somewhat similar to this in 1 Peter 4. 13 and 14 where the exhortation to those who suffer is—rejoice, that at the revelation of His glory ye may rejoice with exceeding-joy. Suffering seems to be the believers' legacy. "Christ suffered . . . follow His steps" (1 Peter 2. 21). "Christ suffered . . . arm ye yourselves also with the same mind" (1 Peter 4. 1). It is a hard school, but to those exercised thereby it is profitable not only in this life, but also in the future for "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Timothy 2. 12).

This thought of reigning with Him is carried into verse 19 where we read of "the revealing of the sons of God." This occasioned the question as to when this revealing takes place. We note that it is not the revealing of the Son of God, but of the sons. We were of the opinion that this does not refer to the rapture of the church, but to the time when the Lord Jesus will come to set up His kingdom on earth. The term, sons of God,

is particularly interesting in this connexion. The Holy Spirit is very careful in the terms that have been used in scripture and the thought of "sons of God" seems to be distinct from the term "children of God." While we have in mind that we are all "sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3. 26) God generally speaks of sons in a very special way, which is connected as a rule with obedience. (A striking-example of this is to be found in 2 Corinthians 6. 18.) We suggest that in the light of 2 Timothy 2. 12 quoted above, not all believers will reign with Christ on earth, but only those who have, because of their walk and obedience, earned the designation sons of God. But will all believers come to earth with Him? not to reign but to be with Him. [I am not certain that we can carry the conditional view of being glorified with Him of verse 17 into verse 18. "If so be that we suffer with Him" is the condition laid down to our being-glorified with Him. In verse 18 it is "The glory which shall be revealed to us-ward." This glory I am disposed to think will be revealed to all the children of God, who shall by that means obtain their adoption and conformity to the image of God's Son (i.e., as the glorified Man, Christ Jesus, and He shall be the First-born among many brethren). The revelation of glory to us shall render possible the revelation or the sons of God to a groaning creation.

It is certainly a point in which there is a certain amount of obscurity. Yet I am inclined to think that all the children of God, who at Christ's coming shall receive their adoption and be sons, will be with the Lord at His return to earth, but all who have not suffered with Him will not reign with Him.—J.M.]

Now the creation which was subjected to vanity and corruption, is to be delivered in that great day. The bondage of corruption will give place to liberty. Some suggested that the creation here spoken of included both animate and inanimate creation. The curse of Genesis 3. 17-18 was contrasted with the blessing of Isaiah 35. 1. Others thought it referred only to the animate, creation, animal and human, in support of which Isaiah 11. 6 to 9, and 65. 25, were read. [See note in Liverpool and Birkenhead's paper.—J.M.]

Verse 23. In that day, too, He will "fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of His glory" Philippians 3. 21. Then will our salvation be complete. Blessed hope!

Our infirmities are well known to the Holy Spirit, therefore He is our Helper in prayer. He knows "better than we the things we have need of, therefore He maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Not only so, but He makes intercession according to the will of God.

Verses 31 to 39 seem to close the present theme, viz., the Gospel of God as it concerns the world as a whole. And in these verses the security of the believer is emphasized. It is interesting to note the stages in this paragraph. (1) We have God the Father for us, or, on our side (see Psalm 118. 6). (2) His Son Who died for us. (3) And because He has died and risen again "who shall lay anything- to the charge of God's elect?" (4) And because we are justified "Who is he that shall condemn?" (5) and because He maketh intercession for us "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Nothing. Blessed be God:

J. MCORMICK.

From PAISLEY.—In this section we find many precious truths; outstanding ones are:—(1) The glory which shall be revealed to us; (2) Our sure and certain hope; (3) The foreknowledge of God; (4) Our eternal place in the love of God. Besides these, and interwoven with them, are many other points in which we are caused to appreciate more and more the wisdom and counsel of God. We have in verses 18-25 a description of the state of things as they have been since the fall of man, and as they will remain till the revelation of the sons of God. The earth, and all in it, are under a curse on account of sin, which has ever brought woe, misery, sufferings, etc. This will continue only till a certain fixed time, viz., the revealing of the sons of God (verse 19). Sons of God are spoken of throughout the ages; but this verse seems to refer to the time when we shall return with our Lord, after that we have been caught up to Him in the air—which is the "redemption of the body" for which we wait. This return is the beginning- of a new era, a time of peace, blessing and happiness—in thought, we here pass over the period of tribulation which the earth will undergo. Scriptures referred to in connexion with this paragraph were 1 Peter I. 3-5; Colossians 3. 4; Acts 3. 21; Philippians 3. 20-21; also Psalm 72. which evidently speaks of the millennium.

We noted a close relationship between our sufferings here and our future glory (compare 2 Corinthians 4. 17).

Some time was occupied in discussing the difference between the intercessions spoken of in verses 26 and 34. Our inability to pray as we ought renders it necessary for the Holy Spirit to intercede on our behalf before God: He holds this office by God's appointment (verse 27). ["According to the will of God" refers to the "intercession" of the Holy Spirit, and not that God has exercised His will in appointing Him.] Difference of opinion was expressed as to whether the Holy Spirit presents our prayers to God directly or by the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. [It is not the question of our prayers here, but of the Holy Spirit's intercession with inexpressible groanings, i.e., groanings which we cannot express in words.—J.M.] But we are all sure that when we offer praise and homage to God as on the Lordly morning, these are presented by the Lord Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest (Hebrews 9. 24). In this passage, the intercession of the Lord Jesus seems to be His presence at the right hand of God as the raised and living One.

Verses 28-30 caused us to remark that foreordination, as found in this and other Scriptures, does not warrant fatalism. Nothing happens to us by chance; our manner of life determines what befalls us. [While it is true that as a man soweth, so shall he also reap, yet we must not confuse this with foreordination. God foreordained those whom He foreknew to be conformed to the image of His Son.—J.M.] We would have nothing to live for, and the Scriptures would lose much of their preciousness to us, if we were to accept such teaching as some take from these verses. On the other hand, in them is revealed the fact that, even in eternity past, God had planned our salvation through His Son, and also His purposes for the future. Moreover, these verses are amongst those portions of the divine record in which God has refuted in anticipation the hideous doctrines of this age.

From SUNDERLAND.—Very much interest was shown here touching the words "sons of God" (verse 19) someone asking "Are we sons of God now?" Reference was made to verses 16-17, where the "Spirit" fully owns us as children of God! One remarked that our being sons, fully, is future (Hebrews 2. 10), though we now have the spirit of sonship (verse 15, Galatians 4. 5-6). 1 John 3. 2 was read, it being pointed out that we are called children of God (not sons). It was remarked we all have the Spirit now as the earnest (verse 23) and that the glory is future. [Matthew 5. 43-48; Romans 8. 14, 9. 26; 2 Corinthians 6. 18; Galatians 3. 26, all show that we may be sons of God to-day.—J.M.] Creation waiteth for this wonderful display (verse 19), ourselves also (verse 23). In this hope we are [were] saved (verse 24), and while we wait the Spirit helps our infirmities and intercedes for us (verse 26).

Verses 26 and 34 show us two Intercessors—the indwelling Holy Spirit and Christ Jesus in heaven. (Compare John 14. 16-17). We suggest that the Son and Spirit are engaged primarily in intercession for the saints, i.e., those in the Community of His Son (see verse 27). [The two Comforters—the Son and the Spirit, intercede I judge for God's children—all who are justified by grace. To every believer the Holy Spirit is given (John 7. 39), and God's children have an Advocate with the Father (1 John 2. 1). God's will, of course, is that all His children should be in the Fellowship, but we must not fail to recognize what is proper to the children of God. This does not touch the question of the priesthood of the Lord which is referred to elsewhere.—J.M.]

Connecting 1 Corinthians 2. 9-12 with verses 28 to 30, we suggest that the foreordaining, etc., applies only to those who love God and to none outside the Community, [Foreordination is based on foreknowledge, and it is altogether too restricted a view to take of this verse to limit it to the Fellowship, in fact, it is confusing things that differ. All who have obeyed the Gospel call and are justified, and in the purpose of God are glorified, will one day be conformed to the image of God's Son. The image of God's Son to which we shall be conformed is that expressed in the glorified Man, Christ Jesus. Note how He is the First-born among many brethren.—J.M.] for such there can be no separation. Will all born again ones be more than conquerors, even those whom He denies. 2 Timothy 2. 12-13? [The apostle is here speaking of the love of Christ and he asks who shall separate us therefrom and he mentions things which have led men to deny the love of Christ—tribulation, anguish, persecution, but he with Christ's faithful followers, because of the greatness of His love for them, are willing to be killed all the day long, and in all these sufferings, of being killed every day and all the day, they are more than conquerors, truly a seeming paradox. This verse does not contemplate those who deny the claims of His love.—J.M.]

Verses 38-39 give us Paul's own persuasion and surely we are ready to quote the same as our persuasion. The love of God gave us much thought "God is love," 1 John 4. 8, the source from which all His activities toward us have sprung. Romans 5. 6, 7, 8, was referred to as showing its manifestation in the death of His only begotten Son; such is the measure of it: and from such love nothing "shall be able to separate us." "To God all praise and glory."

N. STUBBS.

REMARKS.

It is beyond us to know **the** perfectness of the **state** of tilings which existed in the world before the fall. Many questions **may be asked** and many conjectures **made**. In the main we see Adam **as** creation's over-lord, having- dominion given him by God over fish, fowl and every living thing, **and** living and moving on **an** uncursed earth. Then came the fall, the earth was cursed, and the animals evidently revolted from being under Adam, as Adam had revolted from being under God. God subjected the system of creation which He had placed under Adam to vanity in the light of the coming of the last Adam. He is the true Heir of all the lost possessions of Adam, but to those who believe in His Name and in His claim to such He gives the right to become children of God. These He makes co-heirs with Himself. In the day of His coming these shall see His glory not as spectators, but as subjects, by it they shall be conformed to His image, and having received full sonship as sons they will be revealed. This will involve deliverance for a groaning creation. This seems to be animate creation exclusive of the human race, creation which had no choice in the matter of its subjugation to vanity. If we broaden out creation here to inanimate creation it seems difficult to conceive how this can groan and travail in pain.

We, too, groan within ourselves and the Spirit makes intercession with groanings inexpressible. It is a relief for the burdened to groan.

Hope and patience help us for they revive our spirit and cause us to look forward, and in like manner also the Spirit helpeth our weakness. He that searcheth the hearts finds in the hearts of His saints the Spirit interceding according to His will.

Upon the loom of life our web is being woven by an all-wise weaver. We may not see why this thread should be here and that there, but all things work together, the pattern is perfect, and the sum of all the work is good.

Nothing happens by chance to those who are Christ's, much of blessing depends upon ourselves, but we have here that which is foreordained and will take place whatever happens—our being conformed to the image of His Son. He foreknew us, and He foreordained us to this destiny. He foreordained and He called (by the Gospel); He justified and He glorified. (This is an act still in His purpose, but which at the Lord's coming shall be realised): who then can bring anything to the charge of God's elect? He has chosen and He has justified and in proof of the deep designs of eternal love He spared not His own Son. This is His answer to every accuser, and His assurance to us of the fact that He is for us.

We have two Intercessors or Comforters—the Son and the Spirit. Such must not be confused with the Mediator or the High Priest. It may be briefly stated that the Mediator is between God and men—all men. The Comforters are the Helpers of the children of God. The High Priest is connected with the people and house of God, and is God's provision for a people in their offering divine service.

In verses 35-37 we have the experimental side of the love of Christ, what men endured through the love of Christ and in their sore sufferings they were more than conquerors, apparent defeat

was to them victory. Then the apostle states what may be regarded as the summing up of the triumph of the Gospel in that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Nothing can break the magnetic power of His love. Once we are drawn to Him there we are held and nothing can break the contact or come in between to insulate us so that His love will lose its effect. Happy and satisfied are all who are thus persuaded. J.M.

NEW SUBJECT.

In order to give all an opportunity of suggesting a subject for 1928 study (D.V.) in Young Men's Corner, we would request that prayerful thought be given to the matter now, and suggestions forwarded as soon as possible.—Ed.

YOUNG MENS CORNER.

No. 8.

Eighth Series.

August, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION VIII. ROMANS 9. 1—10. 21.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—In the previous chapter the apostle rejoices in what God has wrought for both Jews and Gentiles through his ministry, and asks triumphantly, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" The picture is different in the opening of the ninth chapter. His heart is saddened as he realises that, in the main, his brethren according to the flesh have rejected the Gospel of Christ.

Despite what one might think to the contrary, the apostle's love for Israel was so great that he could even go so far as to say that he could wish himself accursed from Christ for their sake. What an example of unselfish and undying love reflecting somewhat of the spirit of the blessed Master Himself for us. Nothing less than the same spirit towards those of our own nation is needed now.

Privilege surrounded Israel in the past; the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, the fathers, yea, and even of whom came Christ (concerning the flesh), were theirs, all reminding us of the words of the Lord Jesus "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." But Israel's failure did not bring the word and promises of God to nought. The apostle here is careful to show clearly from the scriptures that there are two classes of Israelites as God views them: (1) the children of the flesh, seen in Ishmael and Esau, and (2) the children of God's promise, as seen in Isaac and Jacob (Galatians 3. 28-29). The Lord Jesus had previously pointed this out to the Jews (see John 8. 39).

The question of election again came up here. To some, the illustration of the potter having a right over the clay, seemed rather to confirm predestination. Others fell back on what we found in the last chapter (8. 29), i.e., God's foreknowledge being the basis of His purposes. The illustration of the potter is to

show God's sovereign right, **not to create, but to mould** and use a man for His all-wise purposes (see 2 Timothy 2. 21). God knew **that** Pharaoh and Esau would turn out **to be vessels of wrath** fitted for destruction (Exodus 3. 19, 5. 2; Genesis 25, 23-34), and **He** used them as such to make His power known. **On** the other, hand He showed His glory **to such vessels of mercy as Moses, and Jacob** (Exodus 33. 17-23; Genesis 28. 13) and even to **us** who were strangers, and not God's people, as prophesied by Hosea and Isaiah. [We should not class Pharaoh and Esau together: different lessons are to be learned from each.—J.M.]

Chapter 10. is a further word on the righteousness of faith as previously unfolded in chapters 3. and 4., and here again we see the apostle's skilful use of the Old Testament Scriptures. None of Israel could make the excuse that the commandment was beyond the range of their understanding. God said that His word was brought very near to them, in their mouth and in their heart that they may do it. (Deuteronomy 30. 14). In like manner the Gospel of God concerning the righteousness of faith was not only brought very near to Israel through the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, but was also witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. This righteousness of faith was heart work, belief in God's message concerning His Son; this wrought in men the new birth. The confession with the mouth (of Jesus as Lord) is the outcome of belief in the heart, and the salvation it brings is that of the life (salvation from sin's power) for such confession has a sanctifying and separating effect in the life.

[The salvation of chapter 10. is that which is mentioned in verse 1, " My heart's desire . . . is . . . that they may be saved " ; consequently it must be salvation from the penalty of sin of which the apostle writes.—J.M.]

N. G. ADKINS.

From GLASGOW.—Having summed up the glorious position of the redeemed the great apostle, as if in contrast, expresses his heart's yearnings and concern for his kinsmen according to the flesh. His heart bleeds for them as he recounts their advantages and their privileged position of kinship (according to the flesh) with Jesus Christ. And now, as he views their hardened condition he proceeds to prove that God's word had not come to nought; for he declares that " They are not all Israel, which are of Israel." To prove this, the reader is carried back in mind to the Hebrews' great progenitor, even Abraham, whose children, the apostle points out, were not all reckoned for seed. Not only so, but Isaac's children, even before they were born, were separated by God as to their divine relationship, although that furnished no excuse for Esau's attitude towards his birthright. Paul then queries " Is there unrighteousness with God?" Again he vindicates God's character, and refers his readers to God's word to Moses, " I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, etc." So then " It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy."

The question arose, " How could we reconcile the Who-soever of the Gospel with those statements?" We think the Gospel is not contemplated in this train of reasoning, but the theme of the chapter appeared to be an election with regard to service. Pharaoh's history is now brought forward to illustrate God's will as being absolute and supreme, and the conclusion is

arrived at " So then, **He** hath mercy on whom *He* will, and whom *He* will **He** hardeneth." The questions of **verse 19** are then anticipated by the apostle. With a last sweeping statement the apostle places God on the highest pinnacle as the Creator, and man in his relative position as the creature, and the clay lips are dumb. Chapter 1. deals, with men answering to **verse 22**, chapter **9**.—men to whom God had shewn His wrath and made His power known. Contrariwise to such as are described in **verse 23**, " Even us,"—**He** willed to make known the riches of His glory.

The writer reiterates his desire concerning Israel, testifying that they had a zeal for God, which was misdirected because of ignorance, **for** they sought to gain righteousness by works and **not** by faith. From scripture he shews how temporary is the righteousness which is of the law, only lasting so long as it is kept. On the contrary, the salvation of the believer is eternal. The salvation of **verse 9**, chapter 10. is both of the soul and life of the individual, viz., (1) with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; (2) with the mouth confession is made unto salvation [The question of the salvation of the believer's life is not dealt with here. What is before the apostle is the state of Israel and their need of salvation from God's judgment. They are self-righteous and will not submit to God's righteousness. **Yet** they are in a privileged position in that the word of faith is nigh them in their mouth and heart; so that if they confess with the mouth and believe in their heart then they will be saved. This is undoubtedly the salvation of the believing sinner.—J.M.]

Calling to mind the scripture " Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved," he then indicates the sequence of events in the proclamation of the Gospel. But did they not all hear? Certainly, the Gentiles heard (**verse 18**), and the Jews could not plead ignorance, on the ground of hearing no message (**verses 19, 20**).

WM. ARCHIBALD.

From PAISLEY.—Chapter **9**, begins by the apostle stating his personal feelings towards the Jews. **He** evidently had an intense desire for their weal. **He** sorrows at their misplaced zeal, especially when he considers that theirs are the good things mentioned in **verses 4 and 5**. The beginning of chapter 10. seems to echo these same sentiments. The final verses of **chapter 9**, and the initial verses of chapter 10. show that the Jews missed the mark by seeking to establish their own righteousness and by forgetting the righteousness which is of faith.

In 'chapter 9. the position of the children of promise is clearly set forth. The choosing of Jacob and the rejecting of Esau clearly demonstrate that not all Abraham's children, according to the flesh, are the children promised. It is God's purpose however, to bring the Jews back to Himself by provoking them to jealousy; (**Hosea 2. 23**, and **Romans 10. 19-21**) : the preaching of the Gospel evidently helping to this end (**chapter 11. 13-14**).

The statements with regard to Pharaoh show that God rules the events of history. Some seemed to find difficulty in that Pharaoh was raised up for a purpose which meant his ultimate destruction; but **Genesis 15. 14** and other scriptures, referring to the treatment the Israelites received from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, indicate that the judgment was merited by those upon

whom it fell (verse 22). In this connexion the apostle vindicates God's righteousness, asserting that it is God's right to do these things, and we dare not challenge Him. *He is the Potter and the creature is the clay.*

The character of Israel and their attitude towards God are striking and emphatic, "a disobedient and gainsaying people." Despite their outstanding privileges, the great blessings they never obtained. Such scriptures as Matthew 15. 8; John 1. 11 and 1 Peter 2. 8 fully confirm this sad picture of God's chosen people. But we are caused to admire the sound reason brought forward by the apostle in quoting from the scriptures, which testified of the Lord Jesus Christ. He says elsewhere, concerning the Jews, "They judged themselves unworthy of eternal life." Nevertheless we see that God is dealing with all mankind in -grace. The message of salvation has gone forth, and believing faith exercised by either Jew or Greek, ensures the gift of eternal life. God is no respecter of persons. The same Lord is Lord of all and is rich unto all that call upon Him.

JOHN BAIRD, S. THOMSON.

From LONDON, S.E.—The subject of election is dealt with by **the** apostle in chapter 9. and the first question which presented itself to us was "Is Election born of Foreknowledge?"

Many men to-day adopt a fatalistic attitude by thinking that if it is in God's purpose for them to be saved, they will be, and they thus excuse themselves from taking heed to the Gospel message. It is, therefore essential that we, as young-men, should have a clear understanding of this question, and we should like to have the thoughts of others on the matter.

Our own view seemed to be that election is born of foreknowledge. Because of His omniscience God knows exactly what will happen, but this in no way affects man's free will, for the word is to "Whosoever" (chapter 10. verse 13). We are saved by grace (Ephesians 2. 5), and election is also entirely of grace and not by merit, as the apostle proceeds to shew. After expressing his deep concern for the salvation of his kinsmen according to the flesh, he mentions some of the advantages that the children of Israel had—the adoption, the glory, the covenants, etc., and the promises (verse 4). But they have been put aside, **and** although it may appear that God's purposes have been frustrated, yet by the very means of that (apparent) frustration the true Israel was brought forth.

Isaac's descendants were the children of promise, because Isaac was the promised one, and the descendants of Ishmael were children of the flesh. Similarly in this dispensation of grace, believers in Christ are children of promise because our Isaac was the Promised One (Genesis 3. for example), and the Children of Israel after the flesh are set on one side as Ishmael and Esau were.

God hardened Pharaoh's heart after Pharaoh had himself hardened it and, because God always sees and knows the end from the beginning, He is able to deal with human hearts and lives as the potter deals with the clay.

The "Stone of stumbling" to the Jew, was Christ, and yet their own prophets foretold His coming. They failed to recognise, in Him, the Promised One, and for that reason and in spite of the many advantages they had, they failed, and the Gentile may now have the blessing on exactly the same ground as the Jew—faith.

Verse 9 of chapter 10. is often **quoted** in the Gospel as being for unbelievers, but it was thought by some that, this letter being to believers, this verse must apply to such. From an examination of the whole paragraph, however, it seems, clear that the apostle is shewing the Roman saints how every one must be saved, not by the law, but by belief and confession, the latter being- an immediate sign of the former.

In conclusion we felt that verses 14 and 15 (chapter 10.) were of particular import to ourselves as young men, that we may be ready to hear the Word from the Master and then to tell forth His message to others.

(ANONYMOUS.)

From BARROW.—In the section under discussion, the thought of predestination seems to prevail, though man's responsibility is also introduced. The apostle's concern for Israel, is keen (see Romans 9. 3; 10. 1; 11. 14), yet he gives the Jew a very high standing. In their blindness, however, they refused the One Who was indeed the fulfilment of all the promises they had received—God manifest in flesh. But although the Jew claimed to be the most privileged people, and also claimed God as their Father (John 8. 41), the apostle goes on to prove that it is only the children of promise that are reckoned as the children of God. (Compare Galatians 4. 22-31). Abraham had other children in addition to Isaac, but the word had gone forth " In Isaac shall thy seed be called " (Genesis 21. 12). In this we see the work of God in election. The thought is further carried out in reference to Jacob and Esau, concerning whom, before their birth God said: "The elder shall serve the younger" (Genesis 25. 23). The purposes of God, however, extend to the Gentiles in the spirit of the promise " In Thee shall all the nations be blessed " (Galatians 3. 8).

It might well be said that the theme of predestination is entirely Godward and refers to things over which man has no control, yet God in His dealings with man grants him ample opportunity to repent (compare Genesis 6. 3), this telling of man's responsibility. This line of thought is brought before us in Romans 9. 14-18. The case of Pharaoh is a striking example of this truth. Firstly he hardened his heart (Exodus 9. 34), as a result his heart was hardened (verse 35), and ultimately Jehovah said " I have hardened his heart " (chapter 10. 1). So that man is entirely without excuse. He cannot lift his voice against the Creator and say " Why doth He still find fault ". (Romans 9. 19).

The theme of chapter 9., we suggest, is preparatory to the subject of the "bringing in of the Gentiles (chapters 9. 10, and 11.). The points emphasised are (1) They are not all Israel which are of Israel, and (2) God's prerogative to take up whom He will in keeping with His own will and purpose. The Jew, having had opportunity to embrace the truth which God sent to him, and having refused, are, for the time being, as a nation, put to one side, and as concerning the Gentiles it has been said:

" I will call that My people which was not My people

And her beloved which was not beloved," etc.

While concerning- Israel, it is only the remnant that shall be saved, because they stumbled at the stone of stumbling, and sought righteousness by works instead of by faith, whereas God had said: " Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling **and a**

rock of offence; and he that believeth on Him shall not be **put** to shame " (Romans 9. 33).

Chapter! 10. continues the argument that righteousness is not to **be** found in lawkeeping, **or** works of any description. The Jew had a zeal for God, but their zeal was directed on wrong lines, for Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth. They failed to learn that the law was **a** thing of the past, and that Christ Jesus Himself, Who is set forth as the Author and the Essence of the Gospel, has to be received by faith. Faith accepts that which is not seen, and therefore does not ask " Who shall ascend into heaven?" (verse 6), **or** " Who shall descend into the abyss?" (verse 7). But it does say: " The word is nigh thee, etc.," verse 8. It accepts the message,—the word of faith which tells that Christ is in heaven and that He descended into the abyss. It is interesting to note that verses **6 to 8** bear a striking resemblance to Deuteronomy **30. 11 to 14**, and it would seem that the apostle had this scripture in mind when he wrote this portion of the epistle.

Seeing then, that this righteousness is obtained **by** faith, the Gentiles who had no law, are brought within its scope, " for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek " : therefore the word is " Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved " (verse 13). This latter verse would seem to refer to the believer. The word is, " How shall they call on **Him** in Whom they have not believed?" (verse **4**) so then they were believers before they called.

The bringing in of the Gentiles was not a teaching wholly confined to the New Testament, as the apostle shews by his quotations from the Old Testament (see Romans 9. **25, 26^e**, and 10. 19, 20). Also in speaking to those in Antioch in Pisidia he says " Seeing ye thrust it (the word of God) from you, and judge yourselves unworthy **of** eternal life, lo, we turn **to** the Gentiles " (Acts 13. **46**). The theme thus brought forward is continued in the 11th chapter but this must be left for a future paper.

J. MCCORMICK.

From BRANTFORD.—At the commencement of this portion the apostle Paul shows much concern as to the spiritual welfare of his brethren according to flesh, in that he expresses the wish that he were severed from Christ for the sake of his earthly brethren. We know that none can redeem his brother nor give to God a ransom for him, thus the apostle's only avenue of help lay in prayer. We too, have our own responsibility to pray, not only for our own brethren, but for all men.

[This is not prayer which we all should be exercised about—prayer for the lost, but if it could be for His brethren's restoration to God's favour that he himself were accused from Christ. That **He** could wish such a thing is most amazing.—J.M.]

Verses 14 to 24. This portion starts out with a **very** direct question to those **to** whom this epistle is written. The quotation (from Exodus 33. 19) shows forth God's absolute sovereignty.

Solemn indeed, is the lesson shown forth in verses 17-18 with regard to Pharaoh, who, despising- the living God, first hardened his own heart, then God hardened it further.

The apostle seeks still further to emphasise the fact that man is entirely unable to thwart **or** change God's will. Man **is** as clay in the potter's hands. The apostle seems to have had in **mind**, when writing thus, such Old Testament Scriptures as

Isaiah 29. 16, 45. 9, 64. 8. And so if we, who are God's children, desire to be vessels fit for His sovereign use, we must be as pliable as clay in His hand, shunning the " fashioning " spoken of in 1 Peter 1. 14. May we learn to say like the Master " **Not** my will but Thine be done." It is **truly** encouraging to realise that it is possible for us to become vessels **upon** whom God can show forth His glory.

Chapter 10. As we notice the pathetic supplication of verse 1, we are reminded of the Lord's words concerning Jerusalem in Matthew 23. How often would He have gathered them, as a hen gathereth her chickens, but alas, they would **not!** Verse 2. The apostle himself, having lived in the straitest sect of Jews' religion, a Pharisee, gives them credit for their zeal. Only had they followed the example set by Elihu in Job 36. 3, they would have been prevented from trusting in themselves for righteousness. Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness to everyone that believeth. Righteousness has thus been brought within the reach of all, who accept by faith, the sacrifice offered on the Cross.

We believe that verses 27 and 28 of chapter 9. have a future application and we would suggest the remnant spoken of here is the 144,000 of Revelation 14. [The apostle's **use** of Isaiah's words is undoubtedly to the remnant of Israel saved at the beginning of this dispensation, but that the scripture will have a future fulfilment we would not doubt, or a past fulfilment. It is I think doubtful if the 144,000 is the remnant of Israel sealed as seen in Revelation 7. 4-8. Certainly if there is a chronological sequence of events in chapter 14. Mount Zion here must be Mount Zion which is above, and if it is Mount Zion about then this 144,000" is not that of chapter 7.] We further suggest that chapter 10. 13 refers to this time also, but we believe it refers to this dispensation as well.

Although verse 16 seems to refer to Israel, yet because of their unbelief the call has gone out into all the earth. This both Moses and Isaiah by their prophetic sayings confirm.

J.B., J.T., R.M.

From ATHERTON.—The opening verses of chapter 9. shew the apostle's deep grief at the unbelief of his brethren, his natural kinsfolk; and such is the yearning of his soul toward those who were hardening their hearts against the Gospel that he could pray to be himself anathema from Christ on their account. This expression raised a little discussion as to its exact interpretation—the word " anathema " meaning " set apart, separated, consecrated, devoted or accursed." It seems that the apostle is demonstrating his readiness even to suffer eternal separation from Christ if thereby he could cause his brethren to be saved. Some seemed to think that this expression was a parallel to the words of Moses in Exodus 32. 32. Others thought the apostle's declaration to be something deeper and beyond the desire of Moses. We would like further help on this important matter. [Two lines of argument have been taken by interpreters, **the** one the apostle's wish at the time in which he wrote, and the other the wish as that which existed in his Pharisaic blindness when he strove for the well-being of his nation, as he thought, against the inroads of the sect of the Nazarenes among the Jewish people. The former seems to be the true meaning, his desire at the time in which he wrote. So intense was his longing for his **brethren**

that they might be restored to divine favour, that he, the apostle of the Gentiles, who saw clearly the change which had taken place in God's dispensational dealings could wish that he were accursed from Christ for their sake. There need be no effort made to minimise the strength of the word anathema here—a curse, and that from Christ. Terrible and awful to contemplate, and as to the reality of the desire he tells us that he spoke the truth in Christ, with which his conscience bore witness in the Holy Spirit. It shows how completely Paul had resigned himself to the well-being of man.—J.M.] Although we know that such a request as the apostle's is by the very order and arrangement of things impossible, yet it gives us an insight into the love and affection of the apostle for his brethren even in spite of much hatred and persecution on their part toward him.

The apostle goes on to prove that in spite of the fact that the covenant and the promises were to the Jews, the Gentiles were stepping in to claim these blessings, known only to faith, while the Jews, because of obstinate hardness of heart and unbelief, were not entering into their privileges, but were being rejected by God.

Had then the word of God failed? Was God forgetting that they were the people of His choice? Not so, for, says the apostle, all who are Jews naturally are not Jews spiritually, and therefore not heirs of the promise. To be of the seed of Abraham was nothing in itself, for Abraham had many sons but only the son of Sarah was recognised in the promise. (Genesis 21, 12). Further, even of the two sons of Isaac, one was utterly rejected in the electing purpose of God, not according to merit, but absolutely independent of such. And this is qualified in the strongest way by the prophet Malachi "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith Jehovah: Yet I loved Jacob; but Esau I hated." Hence here we have the principle of foreordination, that God will call those whom He willeth to call, a call which is effectual. He will shew mercy to whosoever He will and He has absolute right to love and to hate. (Compare Pharaoh, Exodus 9. 16). So then the Jew cannot put forward any exclusive claim. The sovereignty of God is such that man is in the hands of God as the clay in the potter's hands, to be moulded as He desireth. He may make out of the same lump, one vessel for a noble and another for an ignoble use. Hence out of both Jews and Gentiles, God has called such as He hath chosen to call. The rejection or passing over of the Jews for the time being, was predicted in the Old Testament writings. It is illustrated by the language of two portions of scripture in Hosea. And again by two portions of scripture in Isaiah, where the prophet foretells the rejection of the mass of Israel but that there was to be the preservation of a remnant.

The conclusion then arrived at is, that so entirely is election a matter of God's free grace that the Gentiles, though not in pursuit of righteousness, yet laid hold of justification by faith; while the Jews, though in pursuit of a law which was itself righteous, did not attain to justification and that because whatever might have been the working of Divine election, their rejection was entirely their own fault, for they chose to aim at an impossible justification by works and rejected the justification by faith. Again Isaiah proves the apostle's argument, for they stumbled at Christ Who might have been to them a firm Rock of foundation. (John 1. 11 and 12.)

Hence the apostle's desire is that they should lay hold of God's salvation through His Son; for they had an enthusiasm for God but **it** was **an** unenlightened one. God's plan of righteousness is righteousness through Christ Who is the consummation of law. The righteousness **at** which the law aims is accomplished **in** Him and the law leads to Him.

The apostle then contrasts the statement of Moses **that** he who obeyed the ordinances of the law should live thereby with those other words which are spoken of God's righteousness in Christ and concerning the nearness of the words of salvation, with the words found in Deuteronomy concerning the law. Only by **a** complete fulfilment of the law **in** every point could righteousness by that means be attained, but the righteousness of faith needs nothing so tedious or laborious. This was the Gospel which the apostle preached, **a** Gospel the nearness and accessibility **of** which is made very evident by the two quotations from Isaiah and Joel which prove that every one no matter whether Jew or Gentile could know this salvation simply through faith **in** the risen Lord.

There was a little discussion on verse 9 **as to** what "confession" is referred **to** here. Some thought, from the context of the verse, that this confession was **a** condition of salvation **and** hence must have reference to the confession of the sinner toward God in the acknowledgment of his **sins**. Others thought it might have reference **to** the outward confession of the saved person upon believing as in verse 10 "confession unto salvation," and it was also suggested that it might refer to salvation **in** the fullest sense **of** the term, to know which salvation there **must** be the outward confession before men.

[Verse 10 is a re-statement of the truth of verse 9. There should be an agreement between the heart and mouth of every one who is saved by grace, belief in the heart and confession **by** the mouth. There may be just as extra emphasis **put upon** the need for confession in the case of the Jew and Paul is writing specially of Israel here. In the light of this it might be profitable to draw attention to Peter's message to the Jew in Acts 2, where outward confession in baptism was linked with repentance. This stands in contrast to his words to the Gentiles in Acts 10. -J.M.]

But had the Jews enjoyed a real opportunity of hearing the Gospel? The apostle proves by this series of questions that every necessary step had been fulfilled—the hearing, the preachers, the mission of those whose feet were beautiful **upon** the mountains and who preached the Glad Tidings of peace; **but** alas! faith had been wanting. They did not all hearken unto the Gospel although the words of the preachers had come out to all the world. They had been warned by Moses that God would stir up their jealousy and kindle their anger by means of those Gentiles whom in their exclusive arrogance they despised as "no nation" and Isaiah again condemns the self will **and** antagonism of Israel. Thus they did not reject the Gospel through lack of hearing or for want of warning, but rather that they were self-willed and rebellious, while the Gentiles were brought into the place of nearness which should have been theirs.

E. BIRCHALL.

From WEST RIDING.—In the commencement of chapter 9. the apostle writes very touchingly regarding the state of his kins-

men, the Jews, who followed after a law of righteousness **but** did not arrive at that law because they sought it not by faith but as it were by works (verse 32). In effect he says he could lay down his spiritual life for his brethren's sake, yea, he could even wish himself back in his unregenerate state if thereby he might bring them to Christ. Their condition causes him such great sorrow that he sincerely expresses the wish that he might be accursed from Christ for their sake.

A question was then asked as to whether the fact that the promises were given to the Jews made those who received the faith nearer to God than us. Although the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God we believe they will be in no wise nearer to God than Gentile believers (Galatians 3. 27-29 ; Ephesians 2. 14-15).

Another question was raised as to whether the description of the Jews, in verses 4 and 5 is wholly in relation to the past, or does it contemplate also the spiritual blessings which the saved remnant of Israel shall inherit. [The things in verses 4 and 5 were true of Paul's kinsmen according to the flesh " who **are** Israelites." Yet he makes it quite plain that Israel meant a spiritual people not simply the naturally born descendants of Jacob. The true Israelite was divinely chosen and must have the experience of a spiritual birth. No reference need be made here to the portion of the saved remnant of Israel in this dispensation or to a future time.—J.M.] It was thought that it included the spiritual blessings also

Verses 6-8. All God's promises to Abraham will be fulfilled—even in Christ (see Galatians 3. 16-22, 29).

In verses 11 and 13 we see the wisdom of God's choice when we think of the ways of Esau and the behaviour of his "descendants the Edomites." (See Amos 1. 11 and Obadiah 17-23.)

Verses 14-18. None will have any claim to His mercy which He will exercise according to His own perfect will.

Verses 17-26. In spite of the knowledge of God which should have been acquired in the days of Joseph, a Pharaoh which knew not Joseph despised the long-suffering of God and became a vessel of wrath, manifesting in his sad end the power of the God he opposed. Similarly to-day God's long-suffering mercy lingers until the very last one has been raised up • on whom He will make known the riches of His glory."

The stumbling block referred to in verse 33 is Christ.

R. ROGERS.

REMARKS.

Paul, in the full knowledge of the course which the purposes of God had taken and that he had been called to be the apostle to the Gentiles, tells us how strong his desire was for the salvation of his race. 'Tis but the outcome of the love of Christ in His heart. The Lord became a curse **for** the law-breakers of Israel, He bore their punishment. The words in Romans 9. 3, and Galatians 3. 13 are nevertheless not the same. The same self-sacrifice which was in the Lord out of love for others is seen in the apostle.

Many, many had been the advantages and privileges of Israel, and, no doubt, the greatest of all the honours conferred on Israel is expressed in the words : " Of whom is Christ as concern-

ing the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Paul seems to emphasise the Lord's Deity here; Christ is God blessed for ever; not that He is blessed of God for ever, the latter fact is true in another sense.

It is evident that the apostle wishes to tell us emphatically in chapter 9. that God is above all circumstances and is not limited in His dealings with men according as events transpire, such is man's limitation. God is sovereign in His dealing and He has absolute freedom of action according to His own will. Any other view of the Divine Being is unworthy of Him. "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among them that dwell on the earth: and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou" (Daniel 4. 35). So spake Nebuchadnezzar truly. His judgments may be inscrutable to us but they are not unrighteous. He chose Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not that they were the only men who were saved in their day, but He chose them because He had purposes in them. He revealed Himself to them, that He might reveal Himself through them. Others He rejected as being unsuitable for His purpose. In some He showed His mercy, that in the mercy shown to them others might obtain mercy (Romans 11. 31), and others He raised to show His power, that the rest of men might fear before the judge of all the earth (on the principle of Deuteronomy 13. 11 and 1 Timothy 5. 20). Behind all God's doings in His mercy and judgment is His unfathomable love. The blessing of the many is behind His sovereign dealings with those in whom He showed His dealings in judgment and mercy. In Pharaoh He made known His power to all the earth and in Israel His mercy, that many nations might come and seek the mercy of the God of Israel.

While chapter 9. deals with God's sovereign operations among men, chapter 10. shows man's responsibility and both these things are in harmony. Men must believe God's message to them of mercy and judgment, to this end they must hear it and if they are to hear it then someone must tell them. Of old it was "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." (Isaiah 45. 22). To-day it is the same; "The same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon Him" (Romans 10. 12). He must have universal Lordship if He is to be a world-wide Saviour. But men may be disobedient and gainsaying- as Israel, and disbelieve the Message and perish. Let us so regard ourselves as vessels of mercy and follow the course indicated by Paul "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ shew forth all His long suffering, for an ensample of them which should hereafter believe on Him unto eternal life." (1 Timothy 1. 16).—J.M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From PAISLEY.—Re remarks from Atherton Corner on page 38, saying the Revised text is correct in Romans 5. 1. This is questionable, as what is set forth in these verses 1-11 is mainly the position into which the believer is brought, not exhortation. Our peace in believing does not depend on our spiritual condition. Some questions arise which would place us in a difficulty if the Revised was correct. See also 2 Corinthians 5. 17-21.

S. THOMSON.

[The difficulty here arises from the word used in the original, whether in this word the short vowel "o" is used or the long. Such authorities as Tischendorf, Tregelles and Alford believe it should be the long vowel and render it "we should have peace." The Revisers follow this reading in their text and it seems to indicate to us that by faith we ought to enjoy peace with God, a peace made by the Lord Jesus Christ, by the blood of His Cross. We do not make peace by our believing but we enjoy through our faith the peace which is made and is offered to us by Christ in the Gospel.—J.M.]

From LONDON, S.W.—We are sorry to have used words the meaning of which should not be understood (see page 19). It does not follow that if the power of the Gospel is not intrinsic its power cannot be felt extrinsically. A £1 Treasury note for instance has no intrinsic value or power but its extrinsic power is in point of fact precisely the same as that of a golden sovereign which has intrinsic value or power. Or, to take an instance from another sphere, we may say an electric motor has no intrinsic power; this does not mean that it has no power, or that its power cannot be felt, extrinsically; but simply that its power is derived, not inherent: it is not an independent source of power but depends on the generating station for its supply: and, of course, we could not say the generating station had failed, or had no intrinsic power, if we neglected or refused to turn the switch. So with the Gospel, its power to save is absolutely dependent on the Risen Saviour and the immediate work of the blessed Holy Spirit. God is pleased to work through the Gospel, it is His instrument, designed by Him and eminently fitted to the end for which it was planned; and therefore God's power unto salvation. It is He—He alone—who saves. The statement that the Gospel has intrinsic power is, so far as it is possible to give any meaning to the words at all, the position of Modernism with its denial of all direct action by God, alike in Nature and in Grace.

S. BURROWS.

[The ideas borrowed by our friends are incorrect because the illustrations do not fit the case. We are always safe to follow the illustrations and similitudes used in the Scriptures. The Gospel is compared to seed, and in seed there is life, therefore intrinsic power, but not power which can be effective apart from the God of creation. Note how it is quickened (it does not quicken itself) 1 Corinthians 15. 36, and also how God gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3. 7). God's oracles are living-oracles (Acts 7. 38), and His Word a living Word (Hebrews 4. 12), and active as well, full of active energy, therefore it is efficient and powerful, but what person, who has any spiritual wisdom, will ever think of disassociating it from its Author or from the Divine Spirit who breathes in those sacred words?—J.M.]

From LONDON, S.W.—Then ^{li} imply " and " prove " (see note at foot of page 19) are not synonymous, even in the accepted sense of that term. " To imply " is to " wrap up " or " enfold." Thus the Hebrew word " Elohim " being neither singular nor dual in form, but plural and connected with a singular verb implies or enfolds the doctrine of the Trinity, but it does not prove it. In the present case (Romans 1. 3) the Apostle had another word to hand which denotes natural birth but he avoids it

and uses instead the more unusual word " became." So too in Galatians 4. 4, in this case the very phrase " born [naturally] of a woman " must have been more or less familiar to him for it is found some four times in the book of Job (lxx.) (see also Matthew 11. 11 and Luke 7. 28) but again he uses " became." Again in Philippians 2. 7 " becoming in the likeness of men " (R.V.M.) are we not then justified in believing- that the Apostle had at the back of his mind the facts concerning the Lord's birth which consciously or unconsciously prevented him using the word denoting natural birth? If so, even though it may not prove either the Virgin Birth or the Lord's Pre-existence, it at least justifies us as believers in regarding these facts as enfolded or implied in the word used, especially having regard to the meaning of the word which, as we have already seen, naturally fits it to this end, and to the subject of the verb " His Son " in the first two instances, and in the third " Jesus Christ Who being in the form of God" But may we not go further than this? Paul's use of " became " instead of " [naturally] born " in these Scriptures forms a strong line of argument against those Modernists who deny the Virgin Birth and assert that Paul knew nothing of it. We must not lightly throw this away.

S. BURROWS.

[We need not set aside Greek authorities and question that birth is in the word used in Romans 1. 3. The Revisers have thought fit to alter " was made " of the A.V. to " was born." Again in Galatians 4. 4 " made " is rendered " born." The word in Romans, as our friends know is a form of the word " ginomai " and its use in John 8. 58 and its contrast with the verb " to be = eimi " is very helpful in understanding its meaning. " Before Abraham was (was born R.V. margin) I Am." It is emphatic " I Am," I pre-existed and lived as the Eternal " I Am " before Abraham's day, but Abraham became, he was born and had no prior existence. If "ginomai " involves pre-existence we shall have to recast our thoughts about John 1. as to what some speak of *as* the eternity of matter and as to the previous existence of human beings. " In the beginning was (verb to be) the Word," and " all things were made (became) through Him " and " There was (became) a man sent from God," the two last statements stand in sharp contrast to the first."—J.M.]

CALL TO PRAYER.

Young Men's Corner will much miss the learned help of departed brother J. Hawkins. May such visitations not leave us unmoved, but **may we** seek more unto our God **for** guidance and help. Remember in prayer, please, those dear ones who mourn their loss. Hebrews 13. 7-8.—Ed.

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 9. Eighth Series. September, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION IX. ROMANS 11. 1—12. 2.

From BRANTFORD.—One outstanding feature in the opening verses of chapter 11. is the fact of " God's righteous judgment in dealing with the nation of Israel." We find the Apostle Paul himself, as a living proof of the fact that God did not cast off his people Israel.

God is a gracious God and did not bring upon Israel the things mentioned in verse 8 until they had themselves turned away from Him. (See 1 Samuel 12. 22 to 25.) In connection with verse 7 we were caused to inquire, what was it that Israel sought yet did not receive? We would suggest the answer to this is found in chapter 9. verses 30 to 33.

Verse 20 shows us clearly the cause of the Jews' rejection and the Gentiles' acceptance. Much precious truth is brought before us in the figure of the Olive Tree. As we think of the Root being holy and the branches likewise holy, we are reminded of the blessed truth that we are made holy in that One. " The fatness of the olive tree " suggests to our mind the truth of Philippians 4. 19.

We believe that the olive tree and the fruit would speak of witness-bearing. In verse 25 the apostle assures his readers that the hardening which befell Israel, was not for all time but only in part, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

The fact that the nation of Israel is only temporarily set aside is again revealed in verse 28, the words of which tell us of the esteem that God still has for those who served Him faithfully in the past.

We are beloved for Christ's Sake. The mercy of God is offered to all. This causes the Apostle to exclaim, " O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! etc." In the light of **this we are asked** to give ourselves to God. It is when we are transformed that we learn what the Will of God is. To him that ordereth his **manner** of life aright will **he** shown the salvation of God.

J.T., J.B., R.M.

From BARROW.—In chapter 11. the theme is continued, viz., the setting aside of the Jews, and the bringing in of the Gentiles. It also shews that though Israel as a nation had rejected the counsel of God, yet there is still a remnant according to election. This is proved in the first verse, for Paul, an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, is among those who have received of God's grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. Elijah made a great mistake when he pleaded with God against Israel. He was fully persuaded that there was but one man who had not bowed the knee to Baal. What a revelation it must have been to him to hear the words recorded in 1 Kings 19. lei. So then, even in that dark, dark day, God had a testimony [Were the seven thousand men a testimony? Was it not rather what God saw? Something that was hid from the eyes of men?—J.M.] for Himself in Israel. True, it was small, but even in the small thing the God of heaven could find pleasure. Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning. As there was a small chosen remnant among- Israel in the old dispensation, even so in the new, according to the election of grace. (Romans 11. 5.) It is here again that we find the unerring choice of God, and the principle of chapter 9. 18 is again seen at work in chapter 11. 7.

To those who were hardened God gave a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this very day. They stumbled at the Stone of stumbling, and by their fall, salvation is come unto the Gentiles (verse 11). God's purposes will be brought to fruition in spite of man. and thus we see the fulfilment of the words—"to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1. 16, 2. 9 and 10.)

Then the Apostle directly addresses the Gentile believers. The time has come for a warning "Glory not. Be not high minded, but fear." Then he gives us the beautiful picture of the olive tree. A good olive tree is depicted to us. This suggests to us Christ with the Jews as the branches, partaking- of the root, and of the fatness of the olive tree. [Is it not doubtful to compare the olive tree to Christ, seeing that branches were broken off which were Israelites who were unbelievers. In that case you would have unbelievers who were in Christ as to fruitbearing. This, I think, is far from the truth.—J.M.] A truly remarkable picture when we remember that it was olive oil, beaten, that was used for the light of the tabernacle; and the light suggests to us, testimony. So, then, the Jews became testimony bearers for God, not only in the past dispensation, but also up to a certain point in the present. Then the time came when the Jews, rejecting the Messiah, were broken off, and Paul could say, "Lo we turn to the Gentiles." We also remember, that to graft the branch of one tree into another tree, an incision must first be made in the tree. This brought to us memories of that One Who was wounded, bruised and chastised ere the branch of the wild olive (the Gentile) could be grafted into the good olive tree. And now the Gentiles, along- with the Jew, have the honoured, and priceless privilege of being testimony bearers for God in the present day. But! "glory not over the branches"; we must ever' remember that it is the root (Christ) from which we derive all our fatness. . And again we are to remember that they were broken off because of unbelief, but we stand by faith (verse 20). "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any one of you an evil

heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God." (Hebrews 3. 12).

Then once more we are taken into the future when Israel will again be taken up as God's people. In that glorious time when the Deliverer shall come out of Zion, to turn ungodliness away from Jacob, then in the fulness of their meaning- will the words be quoted " Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion " (Psalm 2. 6).

In all this, we have seen God's purposes in Christ, as they have ripened from the remote past right into the future; and as we pause to consider the immensity of the issues, and **the** marvellous wisdom displayed we are led to exclaim " Amen " to the Apostle's words as recorded in verses 33-36.

Chapter 12. I seems to suggest that we should carefully consider what has been written in the preceding eleven chapters; and as a result of what has been done for us through Christ, we are asked to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. The apostle could not ask more, and it was impossible to ask less: It is for us to consider the question: Is the sacrifice too great? It is reasonable; the scripture says so. Let us think about it seriously, for therein God is well pleased.

J. MCCORMICK.

From GLASGOW.—Despite the disobedience of Israel, the Apostle asserts that God has not cast off His people, and he presents himself as a proof. God's love for Israel is also seen even after all their wickedness, in that he preserved for Himself " seven thousand men " in Elijah's day. So the Apostle says " Even at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

Verse 7. What Israel sought, namely, " righteousness," they did not obtain because of unbelief. The quotation from Psalm 69 shows the time of the hardening of their hearts. It was because of their rejection of the One whom God had sent.

Verse 11. We thought that their " stumbling " was at the Lord's birth, His life, His words (Matthew 13. 57), and their " fall," we thought, was when they crucified Him.

" And if their fall has been the riches of the world how much more their fulness?" refers to the millennial age, when the whole world shall be blest through the nation of Israel under the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses. 13 and 14 remind us of the Apostle's words in chapter 9. 3.

Verse 16 was not clearly understood. Might the firstfruit be believing- Jews, the firstfruit of a nation that will yet be saved (verse 26)? [The firstfruit of anything- is of the same kind and quality as the remainder; so that if the firstfruit (a part of the whole) is holy so must the whole be. A holy remnant is the harbinger of a holy nation—a saved Israel.] The root, we thought, to refer to the Lord Jesus, and the branches to those who abide in Him. (John 15. 4 and 5.) Some of the natural branches had been broken off, and we, Gentiles, outside of the promises, and as the Apostle says, " a wild olive," were grafted in to partake of the root of the fatness of the olive tree. (Ephesians 2. 11-13). But we are warned " Be not highminded, but fear." It was pointed out that while the fruit of the good olive was

useful, the fruit of the wild olive was of no **profit to man**. [No, I do not think that the olive tree is the Lord Jesus, for then, as I have indicated in Barrow's paper, you have the greater part of the Jewish people growing in Him, even though they are unbelievers. The olive tree must refer to Israel in the place of privilege—God's holy nation of the past, just as the "lump," of verse 16 is God's holy nation of the future. God did not destroy the entire tree, but he broke off, in judgment, the unbelieving branches, and grafted in the believing Gentiles into the place of privilege where they could draw from the fatness of the olive tree. What God has done is contrary to nature, therefore it is a work of grace. This teaches us of the work of God in Government, in which we learn both His goodness and severity.—J.M.]

Verses 25-26 show that during the present age Israel as a nation has been hardened, but shall yet be saved when "There shall come **out** of Zion the Deliverer."

Verse 28 points out that while Israel were enemies of the Gospel, yet this was to the advantage of the Gentiles (Acts 13. 45-47).

Verse 29 presented some difficulty. Does it mean that the gifts and calling of God will never be repented of by Him? [God never repents when He calls a man, though that **man** may disobey in part, or entirely, God's call; nor yet does He repent of gifts He gives, though men may not value them as they ought.—J.M.]

Verse 32. None had found righteousness through the law because none had kept the law, and so, God has shut up all (Jew and Gentile), unto disobedience, not that He might visit with wrath, but that He might have mercy upon all. In considering God's ways with men, the Apostle is constrained to say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out!"

Chapter 12. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. G.J.

From LONDON, S.E.—The words of Moses, of Isaiah, and of David (verses 8-10), would appear to suggest that God had turned away from His chosen people. But the Apostle is quick to oppose such a thought. He reminds us that Elijah in his day imagined that he was the only true Israelite left, while God had preserved seven thousand, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. So at the time of the Apostle's letter there existed a remnant, (according to the election of grace) of His chosen people.

Difficulty was experienced in determining whether the word "Israel" in verse 26 means the "Jewish people" or "the true Israel" of chapter 9. 6. We think it is the latter. [That there will be Jews cast into outer darkness in the judgment when the Lord returns to earth, the Lord's words in the Gospels make clear, but Israel will be saved, a complete nation of twelve tribes, not a remnant.—J.M.]

We suggest the "olive tree" represents God's Israel and **the** teaching is that believing Jews are left in **the** olive tree, and believing- Gentiles are grafted in; yet unbelieving Gentiles will not be spared **and** unbelieving Jews will be cast out. (See Matthew •* 11-12).

Behold God's goodness, for He is willing to graft those broken off natural branches in again, provided they continue not in unbelief.

As the Apostle contemplates God's gracious and merciful dealings with the human race, a fulness of gratitude wells up in his heart and he gives utterance to his thoughts in the wonderful words of verses 33 to 36. Then in chapter 12. 1-2, he entreats believers, that having regard to such wonderful grace and mercy, they ought to yield themselves wholly to the service of the One to whom they belong.

A. TAYLOR.

From PAISLEY.—Chapters 9. and 10. treat of the present separation between God and His people, the Jews; these two chapters state the cause and consequences of this separation. In chapter 11. the apostle shows that God did not cast off His people for ever, but only till " the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." The apostle begins by establishing the fact that, even as in Elijah's day, there still was a remnant for God among the Jews, but a " remnant according to the election of grace." We think that " election " in verses 5 and 7 refers to those chosen by God from among the Jews who were saved through faith in Jesus Christ; the apostle himself is an example (verse 1). But, " election " in verse 28 seems to refer to the choosing of the Jews as a race (compare chapter 9. 4, 5).

Our position, as a testimony for God, is illustrated by the figure of the olive tree. The olive tree is holy—according to the teaching of verse 16, having a holy origin (see question) and a holy root (the fathers),—but some branches were removed on account of unbelief. Then we, who were branches of the wild olive, were grafted in to receive the fatness originally intended for the natural branches, now cut off. The grafted branches may be removed just as easily as the natural branches; hence we, Gentiles, should not exalt over the Jews (verse 18); for, if we fail as they did, we shall meet with like treatment; and they, if they repent and believe, will be grafted in again.

When the covenant in verses 26, 27 is fulfilled, God will have achieved his purpose of having mercy upon all. It is wonderful that God should harden some of His people, that the Gentiles should receive His blessing. The deep things of this chapter impart a sense of God's wisdom: this is emphasized by verses 33-36.

In the light of what he has said in chapter 11. the apostle entreats us to devote ourselves to the service of God. We are also exhorted not to be like the world. We had a little difficulty as to the meaning of " the renewing of your mind." We read Titus 3. 4, 5; Psalm 51. 10; 2 Corinthians 10. 3-5; we feel that the last reference bears on the same point as verse 2 of chapter 12. more so, than the Titus scripture. [It is the same word in Romans 12. 2 as in Titus 3. 5, but in Titus it is a work done in regeneration once for all, but in Romans it requires continuous repetition. The verbal form of the word will be found in 2 Corinthians 4. 16, and Colossians 3. 10 where the force of the Romans' scripture will be explained.—J.M.]

It is our responsibility to perform this renewing. Without separation from the world we cannot know the will of God: but if we fulfil this exhortation we shall have His will revealed to us; then will we be able to render acceptable service.

JOHN BAIRD.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—Lest **some** might object that the Apostle's argument was against such a scripture as Psalm 94. 14, "The Lord will not cast off His people," he now goes on to deal with this matter.

He brings forward two points to prove that God had not cast Israel off. 1st, That he himself was an Israelite and yet had known God's favour. 2nd, That even in the dark days of Elijah, when the greater part of Israel were steeped in idolatry, God revealed to the prophet that, unknown to him, there was a faithful remnant of 7,000 men.

So now, at this present time there is a remnant, proof that God still favoured Israel. Not that they had earned it, it was according to the election of grace. From this remnant (for the Apostles were all Israelites) was the message of salvation sent to the Gentiles. So then God had not cast off His people.

But it was only a remnant that believed, for Israel, as a nation, had rejected the Messiah. What Israel sought for but missed, was obtained by the little remnant that accepted the Messiah. To the rest, because of their rejection, God sent a spirit of stupor, a blindness which caused them to stumble. This was not sent that they might fall. Their trespass was to be the means of opening the door of salvation to the Gentiles, with the hope that this might provoke Israel to jealousy, that some of them might be saved.

The doctrine here taught was carried out by the Apostles as we read in the Acts. (See, for instance, Acts 13. 46.)

If by Israel's trespass such blessing has come to the Gentiles, how much more will the nations be blessed through Israel in the time of their fulness. The Apostle now seeks to impress upon the Gentiles the great lesson of Israel's failure. He reminds them that they are dealing with the same God that has dealt so severely with Israel. "Glory not," . . . "Be not highminded but fear" . . . "Be not wise in your own conceits," are words of warning to the Gentiles. We had a good deal of discussion about the olive tree and submit the following for criticism.

The good olive tree is the nation of Israel (see Jeremiah 11. 16). As a nation Israel had failed by their unbelief. **Behold** God then say of this tree "Cut it down"? No! Some of its branches were broken off, the root and the stump were still left. The broken off branches represent the rejected nation of Israel. What remains of the good olive tree represents the remnant of Israel who had disassociated themselves from action of the nation. Into this remnant were grafted the Gentiles who had obtained mercy, and they became partakers of the root and fatness of the olive tree, they who were by nature a wild olive tree. God's purpose is to graft in again the branches, which He cut off.

This He will do again, at that time when they turn from their unbelief even as it is written "There shall come forth a Deliverer out of Zion; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Then all Israel, as a nation, shall be saved. This we took to be the time "of their fulness"—the fulness of the Gentiles being the end of the present dispensation.

As we are able, in our little measure, to enter into these wonderful things we can join with the summing up of the Apostle "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! . . . To Him be the glory for ever. Amen."

The Apostle now turns to the practical application of these things in beseeching us for our bodies as living sacrifices to God.

The transformation, by the renewing of our minds reminded us of 2 Corinthians 3. 18, which shows us that it is by beholding as in a mirror (margin) that we are transformed. The mirror is God's word.

T. M. HYLAND.

From ATHERTON.—The Apostle now in chapter 11. enters upon the gladder and nobler task of explaining- that God has not entirely forsaken and rejected His people, but will again take them up for His praise and glory.

Israel alone had been the people of God " the holy nation," in a day past, but because of their being a self-willed and fault-finding- people collectively, God set them aside and in His good pleasure took up another people to be a collective testimony for Himself. Has Israel been entirely cut off? " Away with the thought " says the Apostle, offering himself as a proof. He further uses the analogy of the 7,000 men whom God reserved for Himself, and who in the days of Elijah had not followed after Baal. Even as then, the Apostle shows that he is not the only one to have obtained mercy, but at the present time there still exists a remnant of Israel elected by grace according to the mercy of God; of which remnant, truly " reserved for Himself " (saved by faith and not of works), we have a visible expression in the 120 gathered together in Acts 1. to which number, 3,000 souls were added on the day of Pentecost and many more later. But how came it about that the majority of Israel missed the mark? Because of intense hardness of heart, a deliberate callousness spoken of by Isaiah of old. (Compare Deuteronomy 29. 4; Isaiah 6. 9-10; John 8. 43, etc.) This also finds its illustration amid the prayer of David for the humiliation and bewilderment of his enemies " Let their eyes be darkened " (Psalm 69. 22-23). But this spiritual blindness is not final, Israel has not stumbled irretrievably, for in the eternal purposes of God by their lapse has salvation reached the Gentiles, this also being intended to stimulate their own hearts Godward.

At verse 13 the apostle addresses the Gentiles, glorying- in his mission that thereby he might, stir the Jews to emulation, that at least, some might be saved. He then uses the metaphor of the olive tree to prove that there is to be this restoration of Israel. The root of the olive tree is the source of its fruitfulness, but if some of its branches lose their fruitfulness and become withered [The branches were broken off not cut off showing the severity of God in judgment upon the unbelief of those who disbelieved.—J.M.] they are lopped off and are replaced by grafts of the wild olive which then share the richness of the tree. This operation is contrary to nature and essentially a Divine operation, the usual course [in modern methods] according to nature being to graft the fruitful branch into the wild stock. Here we get the reverse, the wild fruitless branch is grafted into the good and fruitful tree.

There were one or two suggestions as to what the root spoke of, some suggesting it to represent God, from whom all blessings come, who is the source of all life and through whom both Jew and Gentile were privileged to share His grace. Others thought it might have reference to Christ, a rod of the stem of Jesse. (Isaiah 11. 1) and another suggestion was that it **might** refer to the eternal purposes of God in which the Jew was now

being **pruned** away and **the** Gentile grafted in. [See Birkenhead's paper as to the meaning of the Olive.—J.M.]

Hence now the Gentiles might be apt to boast of their position and be tempted to glory over the Jews. Little cause had they to boast; for the rich fruitfulness of the Gentiles was drawn from the root of the tree to which they did not belong originally. Hence they were exhorted not to grow conceited but tremble rather, lest the severity of God should come upon them and they too be cut **off**.

The apostle in verses **25** and **26** is referring to a time yet future when the partial hardening of Israel should terminate with the fulness of the Gentiles coming in, i.e., when the last Gentile has been gathered into the body. At the advent of the Son of Man all Israel will be saved; this being made possible, it was suggested, by the fact that all the Jews with the mark of the beast will have been slain, hence the remainder will be saved.

The apostle, contemplating the universality of free redeeming grace, bursts into a **psalm** of praise and prophesy:—O the depth of the wealth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable His judgments, how trackless His footsteps! Even from everlasting to everlasting. (Isaiah **40**. 13-14 and Job **41**. 11), for even as God Himself said "Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is of Myself."

On the grounds of such wonderful truths **and** such solemn warnings uttered in the previous verses, the apostle now pleads in the opening verses of chapter 12. for a practical, living faith, **on** the **part** of the recipients of such love **and** mercy, a presentation of every faculty **to** God as a living and holy sacrifice acceptable **to** Him. And again not conforming to the present age, but being transformed by the entire renewal of the mind, learning by experience what God's will is, namely, all that is good **and** acceptable **to** Him. What a need of such exhortations **in** the present day, that we might, **as** beloved children, walk worthily of our high vocation, habitually discriminating the will of God **and** putting **it** into practice in this age of the rejection of the divine will **and** word. **E. BIRCHALL.**

From SUNDERLAND.—The apostle continues to show how God is faithful, **as** touching *His* promises to Israel. Such promises secured for **Israel** earthly blessings, but the richer blessings of the Gospel could only be obtained by the Jew, **by** faith **on** a gracious basis. The **spirit** of stupor, etc., of verse **8**, however, **was** the result of their **own** actions, **in** closing their eyes, and stopping their ears.

Verses **2-3**. It was remarked that while God may speak against **His** own people, yet He does not suffer **His** servants **so** to do. (Compare 1 Peter 5. 3.) Israel, although raised up **by** God to be a testimony in the earth (Deuteronomy 7. 6-9) have failed, hence some of the branches have been broken **off**, **and** the Gentiles **as** wild olive branches have been grafted in. When the present testimony is ended then Israel will be restored **to** God's favour (Jeremiah 31. 31-34), and exalted above the nations under the benign sway of their Messiah King. (Zephaniah 3. 13-20; Isaiah 60.).

Verses 30-31 were referred to **as** showing the free **and** sovereign mercy of God to Jew **and** Gentile alike, **apart** from which neither could have been saved.

The intreaty at the opening of chapter 12. shows how deeply affected the apostle was as he contemplated the mercies, or compassions of God. It would be well for us to be likewise affected. Nothing practical can possibly issue from our lives, otherwise, for all is involved in the presenting of our bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. (See also' Romans 6. 12-13). The transformation by the renewing of the mind should be seen in all our ways, in our homes, and in our speech as well.

It was recalled here that in chapter 3. all our members were recorded as in the service of sin; in chapter 6. (verse 18) they are said to have become servants of righteousness; in chapter 8. (verse 10) the body is considered dead because of sin; and in chapter 12. our body is seen alive and we are exhorted to present it a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. By doing so we will prove what is the good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

N. STUBBS.

From WEST RIDING.—We learn in chapter 11. that God has not utterly cast off His people, but that there still is a remnant, according to the election of grace. Luke 13. 1-9 was read, whence the idea of casting off possibly came. Nationally they were cast aside but this is only temporary, not final—they will be received again, verse 15. Individually, they are not cast off.

Apart from the remnant mentioned here, which is in connection with the Gospel, Israel, as descendants of Abraham, can never cease to exist. Does the "hardening" of verse 7 mean a judicial hardening? [There "were distinct acts of God in election and also of hardening in Israel, a hardening which ended in the rejection and death of the Lord. Following- this, those whose hearts were hardened, continued in a path of bitterness and enmity against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. God saved an elect remnant and through these the Gospel flowed to the Gentiles. Yet it seems to have been God's desire that the mercy which was shown to the Gentiles might provoke them (the Jews) to jealousy and that they might know God's mercy. The hardening of Israel was purposeful.—J.M.] Individually, have they not the same opportunity and freedom to believe as any other people? As a people they stumbled and fell when they crucified Christ; that was their sin. On the other hand, it was His "giving" of His life which was the Ransom. Their fall led to their national disintegration, but this in turn led to the spreading of the Gospel to the Gentiles. Then there is a promise of greater blessing still, to the Gentile nations when Israel shall be restored again, verse 12. "Riches" here seems to mean "rich in opportunity." [It seems to mean much more than that.]

It was suggested by our dear departed friend Mr. Hawkins that the olive tree signified "grace," as the fig tree signified "rule," and the vine "service and fruit-bearing." Grafting into the olive tree brings the Gentiles within the sphere of the grace of God. It does not contemplate eternal union with Christ, from which there can be no severance. This position of favour with all its opportunities, the Gentiles have, in the Sovereign grace of God, through the righteous work of the cross (Romans 5. 21) its object being the reconciliation of the world, (verse 15, and Titus 2. 11.) [The reconciliation of verse 15 is not through the cross work, but through the casting off of Israel the Gentile world is in a state of reconciliation—a state of nearness in

which it never was before, and when Israel is restored never will be again.—J.M.] If that objective is not reached, it is **not** God's fault. Continued unbelief on the part of the Gentiles [It is not Gentiles in general that are grafted into the olive tree but believing- Gentiles of whom it is said: "Thou standest by thy faith." Such as are grafted in can never be in the rebellion against God with the Man of sin; they will be gone from the scene ere that. Furthermore should we not distinguish between the end of "the fulness of the Gentiles" and the end of "the times of the Gentiles?"—J.M.] will lead to their being cut off from the position of grace and opportunity of blessing. Then left to their own choice they will head the rebellion against God and ally themselves with the Man of sin and know God's severity. (Verse 22.)

Verses 18 to 20 show it is wrong- to glory over the natural branches (Israel), and say they were broken off that we might be grafted in. It was by disobedience or unbelief they were cut off, and the Gentiles will fall in the same manner and so prove the truth of the words "there is no difference." (Romans "3. 22 and 23.) It was asked "did the fulness of the Gentiles" in verse 25 embrace the wonderful work of grace seen in Revelation 7. 9 to 14"? It was suggested the "fulness of the Gentiles" possibly meant "when they had received a fulness, a surfeit of the grace of God and became high-minded." There is a high-water mark of God's grace as well as of God's judgment. ["The fulness of the Gentiles" is a term which describes the riches of the Gentiles in this dispensation of grace, on whose behalf the apostle Paul, as the apostle of the Gentiles, had a special stewardship. It closes, I judge, with the Lord's coming to the air. Those saved as seen in Revelation 7. 9-14 are in a time when God's purposes in connexion with Israel are running their course at a time immediately prior to the Deliverer coming out of Zion.—J.M.]

In verse 26 we suggest that "all Israel" is not every Israelite, but children of the promise.

Verses 28-32 state that the Jews, as a nation, deserve our enmity as Christ's rejectors in that they slew the Prince of Life; yet are we debtors unto them in that the "fathers" brought us the blessing. [? If this is the meaning of "enemies for your sake," instead of enemies to God?]

In verses 33 to 35 we see how God's greatness differs from man's. "Of Him," suggests the source, and "through Him" the means, while "unto Him" we ascribe the glory.

Paul returns now to his exhortation begun in chapter 9. and continued in chapter 10. He asks them (the Jews) to give themselves, as the Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; and to transform themselves by the renewing- of their minds in the holy scriptures "If ye abide in My word then are ye truly My disciples" (John 8. 31.)

R. ROGERS.

REMARKS.

In Romans 11. the apostle visualizes the dispensational dealings of God—how God in sovereign power and wisdom has dealt with Israel and the Gentiles, and how He will again, in a future time, deal again with Israel. As he winds up his" dis-

course **on** these things it calls forth a burst **of** praise from his **heart in** that sublime utterance : " O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God ! To Him be the glory **for** ever. Amen."

With wisdom utterly beyond man, God has wrought in all the intricacies of hardening men, yet leaving these very men without excuse. This will be seen in the Lord's words to Pilate:

" Thou wouldest have no power against Me except it were given thee from above, therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin."

Pilate committed sin in his treatment of the Lord, yet he could not have condemned Him but for authority given him from above. Human minds cannot truly balance these statements, far less could they have conceived the truth of them. Again we have the same divine wisdom seen in Acts 2. 23 :

" Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay."

Such is the wisdom of the Mind that lies behind the facts of Romans 11.

God did not cast off His people entirely ; there was a saved remnant according to the election of grace. This ejet remnant we see in the Acts ; for the work of God in this dispensation began in this Jewish remnant. Solemn are the words of both Isaiah and David in regard to those who in their unbelief of the Message were hardened ; yet this very state of hardness God used to the effecting of His purposes among the Gentiles.

The record of the crimes of the Jewish people Paul epitomizes in 1 Thessalonians 2. 15-16:

" Who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drave out us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men ; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved ; to fill up their sins alway : but wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."

They stumbled and fell, they were cast off and broken off, they experienced the dire severity of God : now it is the riches of the world, the riches and fulness of the Gentiles. By their being cast away the world stands in a near place—the reconciling of the world, does not mean that the world is reconciled to God through the death of Christ, but that through the casting off of Israel God is dealing directly with the world through His Son without Israel being- in between. The time will come, however, when Israel will be received back and that will be as life from the dead—an Israel raised to life as seen in the vision of the valley of dry bones. (Ezekiel 37.).

The grafting in is not of the Gentiles, believers and unbelievers, but of those only who believed, such were grafted into the olive and shared with the natural branches—believing Israelites, the fatness of their spiritual possessions. The scriptures of the Israelite became the common possession of both Jew and Gentile and they mutually shared in their comfort and promises. It evidently is not the eternal standing- and portion of believers in Christ (referred to Ephesians 3. 4-6) that is spoken of here; for it is said : " Thou standest by thy faith " and then follows the exhortation, " Be not high-minded but fear." Again if the Gentile believer did not continue in God's goodness, " Thou also shalt be cut off."

Though the Jew is seen in hardness and disobedience it seems that he was not in that state abandoned to perdition, there

was a possibility of his obtaining mercy, that this is the purpose of God is clearly seen in the words :—

^c "For God hath shut up all unto disobedience that He might have mercy upon all." J.M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From PAISLEY.—QUESTION.—As to verse 16, what is signified by the words "firstfruits" and "root"? Do these words refer to different things, or different aspects of the same things?

JOHN BAIRD.

ANSWER.—See note in Glasgow's paper. Firstfruit involves a harvest yet to be, and the firstfruit must be the same in kind as the harvest. A root is something that had its origin before the branches, and if the natural branches that remained in the olive were believing Israelites, they sprang from a root of like nature which was before their time,—a holy root, of which faith was an outstanding characteristic. The "lump" evidently looks forward to a believing Israel in the future and the root to a believing Israel in the past.—J.M.

NOTICE.—NEW SUBJECT.

Editors will be pleased if friends will send their suggestions re a new subject for 1928 (D.V.) as soon as possible. So far only one suggestion has been received. This invitation is to all young men (and old) in the Fellowship, who are interested in our studies, whether or not they come together as a Corner and irrespective of the fact whether they send in a paper monthly or not. Mutual help in these studies is necessary. Much as we value J.M.'s criticisms and remarks, we trust that we shall not allow all the weight to fall on his shoulders.

We would heartily commend young men to give practical attention to the notices re the publication of departed Dr. Luxmoore's book "Bible Readings on the Gospels," and other helpful publications.

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 10.

Eighth Series.

October, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION X.—ROMANS 12. 3—13. 4.

From **ATHERTON**.—At this juncture in the epistle, from the 12th chapter onward, there seems to be a marked break in the trend of the letter and it would appear that the apostle had now accomplished the main object for which he wrote. But to this, as to all his letters, he adds those noble, practical exhortations propounded upon the secure basis of the doctrinal principles which he has expounded. It would seem that it is from the verses of the previous chapter (verses 20-22) that the writer is now caused to issue the warning note of chapter 12. 3, that the Gentiles might in **DO** wise fall under the same condemnation as the Jew (see chapter 11.). "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he/fall" (1 Corinthians 10. 12). He first of all urges that they should not be puffed up with pride and vain glory, valuing themselves unduly.

In the ordinary affairs of life a man brought into an exalted position, having hitherto occupied lowlier positions, is apt to think much more highly of himself than a man who has been born in high society. Hence the Gentile might be the one to become far more self-conceited by reason of his God-given position than the Jew. [Pride might operate in the Jew because of his ancestry. There is no accounting for the working of pride. Note how the apostle addresses himself "to every man" that is among you.—J.M.]

In verses 4 and 5 we have the metaphor of the body and the members, showing that there is diversity and yet complete unity. Even so in the Church the Body is involved variety and yet unity; for as one has well said "The Spirit resolves the Variety into unity, introduces variety into the unity and reconciles unity to itself through variety." (Compare 1 Corinthians 12. 12-27).

This passage brings before us the truth "to every man his gift," not attempting any and everything, but being happily engaged in his own work. We are not to seek to stretch out

to the great things, but even as Elisha in his ploughing, and Gideon in his threshing, humbly to seek to fulfil that which we are able to accomplish by the grace of God. (For the Apostle himself compare 2 Corinthians 12. 11, and Galatians 2. 6).

In the following verses (9-16) are diverse exhortations to brotherly love and brotherly conduct; love with sincerity of heart, true mutual affection which will have the effect of deferring to one another in point of precedence. (See 1 Peter 5. 5.) "Each counting other better than himself," gives us the same principle, even as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself humbled Himself, becoming a bond-slave; and such is the path to honour and great glory. This is the mind, the spirit which should be in us as disciples of our blessed Lord. (See Philippians 2.).

The 13th chapter enters upon a very earnest exhortation for every individual saint to be obedient to the ruling authorities, this being based upon the repeated statement that these are ordained of God. This precept is without exception; for we render acceptable service to God by such submission; on the other hand, rebellion against authority incurs sentence, because the resistance is against the appointment of God. To this rule, Daniel and his fellows prove the exception, for "they must needs obey God rather than man." (See also Acts 4. 19 and 5. 29.) The object of such language from the pen of the apostle seems to be to shew the necessary suppression of evil, and for this purpose these men in authority are God's servants. Hence for the Lord's sake must the Christian submit to every ordinance of man to the king and governors, etc. (1 Peter 2. 13-14.) (For a further duty towards rulers see 1 Timothy 2. 1-3.)

In Isaiah 10. 5-8 we see a proud king subject to God and used by Him to execute His divine purposes without even knowing it. God ruleth in the kingdom of men, giving it to whomsoever He will. (Daniel 4. 32 and 2. 21.)

Subjection is meet not merely for fear of punishment but also for conscience sake, the demand of a good conscience toward God; for this reason also must there be the prompt payment of all debts and dues. This question of payment of civil dues leads the apostle naturally to speak of the payment of other dues. "Leave no debt unpaid," he would seem to say, "except the standing debt of mutual love"; this is our solemn responsibility, loving because He first loved us and this is the sure proof of divine sonship (1 John 4. 7-8.) By so doing we fulfil the royal law; we walk after the spirit and the requirement of the law is fulfilled in us. (Romans 8. 4.) No new commandment is this but rather a commandment of old (Leviticus 19. 18) even from the beginning. The practical precepts taught in this chapter become still more imperative when a reflection is taken on the quickly passing time; the night is very far advanced and the day of Christ is about to dawn. Hence let us live and love, realizing the situation; for the complete salvation of God is now much more proximate than when we first trusted Christ. A closer walk and more Christ-like life means preparation and readiness to receive the coming One; hence the powerful appeal of the Apostle that it is high time to nut away the deeds of darkness which "belong to such as are of the night, and to put on the armour of light; nay, even further, to put on as a close fitting robe., by close spiritual communion, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

E. BIRCHALL.

From BRANTFORD.—It seems to us the vital truth that the Apostle is teaching here, is our relation one to the other. How necessary it is that we as members of the Body should be in harmony one with the other, and not be exalted in our own eyes. To this, end let us keep our eyes on the Pattern Servant, who is the Head of the Body. Thus these exhortations (verses 9-21) will not be found irksome by us in our carrying them out. The appeal is to individuals, the result is seen in the assemblies.

Verse 13. This verse brings before us one way of pleasing God. Even if we are unable to do this service, yet, if our heart is willing, God finds great pleasure in us. (2 Corinthians 8. 12). There is another way of being of service to each other that comes under verse 12, and possibly under this 13th verse, that is of praying one for the other. (See Hebrews 13. 18-19). How much indeed we need one another's prayers!

Verse 14. A very different side of our Christian warfare is this—a very hard thing to carry out! Yet, we believe, it was far harder in the days when this letter was written. Also we think of the love of our Master when on the cross He prayed that God would forgive His murderers. Then at a little later date we have Stephen an early martyr, praying amid the hurling stones that the sin of his murder might not be laid to "he charge of his enemies. What power the love of God has?

Verse 15. Still another phase in our spiritual journeyings! In connection with this lesson we might read 1 Corinthians 12. 14-26 and Hebrews 13. 3. We would also refer to the example of our Master in John 11. weeping by the tomb, also rejoicing in the little Bethany family reunion.

Verse 16. The theme of this verse is humility. How essential this is in connexion with our walk before God. Unity will exist where strife and jealousy might have held sway. We would draw attention to the number of times the first clause of this verse is repeated by the Apostle, viz.:—Romans 15. 5; 2 Corinthians 13. 11; Philippians 2. 2 and 4. 2; (also 1 Peter 3. 8). In connexion with this subject, for an example we might refer to John 13. 3 to 12. How much do we fall short of God's teaching found in these few verses. The last clause should also be made mention of as this is the second occurrence in this epistle. (Compare Proverbs 26, 12 and 16. 18-19).

Verse 17. The opening theme of this verse is similar to verse 14. With regard to the latter portion we know from 2 Corinthians 8. 21 that the Apostle practised what he has written here. We should so order our lives always that we bring no reproach upon the Name.

Verse 19 teaches that it is not for us to avenge any wrongs done unto us. We have a Shepherd who watches over us, and who will not see His sheep smitten with impunity. (Matthew 18. 6.) Verses 20 and 21 outline our behaviour towards our enemies.

In these few verses we have noticed that the one essential thing—that we must strive after is "Love." For its source, please read 1 John 4. 7-8.

Let us apply this lesson to ourselves; and let us shew love to our fellow men. (Proverbs 25. 21-22.) If we could realise God's love for a soul then our zeal for serving God in the Gospel would be more like the Apostle's, who never let an opportunity pass by. (Mark 12. 29-30; John 13. 34.)

These exhortations of chapter 12. may be classified as "Practical truths." Such portions are of great importance in the moulding of the character of those who are disciples of the Lord Jesus.

Romans 13. We believe there is an important truth in this 1st verse. There is no power but of God. Whether that power is directed in a right or wrong- manner, does not alter the fact of the source being from God. How pointedly was Pilate reminded of this fact! (See John 19. 10 and 11)/ We may be wrongfully brought to suffer, for conscience sake, but if this is the Lord's will we will only be following the Master's footsteps. A practical illustration of the truth of rendering tribute to whom tribute is due is found in Matthew 22. 15-22. In 1 Peter 2. 17 there is a principle given, namely, to fear God and then honour the King. We see from Acts 4. 17-21, also chapter 5. 27-29, that Peter and John placed the fear of God first, no matter what it cost.

Verse 8 reminds us of the new commandment that we love one another, and also the Lord's own words, "If ye love Me ye will keep My commandments." Love is the large fly-wheel that balances our lives, both Godward and manward. The chapter closes with exhortations "to awake," "to cast off," and "to put on." We would suggest the way to do this would be to try, as much as in us lies, to imitate the Life of the Lord Jesus. We noticed how similar the language is in 1 Thessalonians 5. 1-10.

J.T., J.B., R.M.

From GLASGOW.—The Apostle introduces to us in the 12th chapter the principal duties of the believer. The exhortations are short and pithy, briefly summing up what is good, and what God requires of us who are in "Christ Jesus." The exhortations in this chapter may be summed up thus: "Our duty to God, to ourselves, to our fellow-man." All this is essential to giving God pleasure in our service for him. Compare verses 4-5 with 1 Corinthians 12. 12-31. No man hath ought to glory in self. Members of the Body ought to have a care one for another. Possibly we need more exhortation to show love in a godly, ordered manner, to those members of the Body who are in the sects. [This is no doubt quite true, we need to pray for their deliverance and to seek to correct their false ideas of the will of God, but we must also be careful that love for them is not construed into fellowship with them; the latter must be carefully avoided.—J.M.] Our duty to our brethren and fellow-man is summed up in one word "Love." Therefore the Apostle mentions this first. "Let love be without hypocrisy."

Chapter 13. We are here taught how to conduct ourselves towards the higher powers, that is, those who are in authority over us on earth. (See 1 Peter 2. 17.) There is no power but of God—the most unjust and oppressive Government in the world has no power but what is given it from above. (Compare John 19. 11.) [I am not sure that I could go as far as our friends do here. Have not the Powers that he overstepped their God-given province at times and God has had to punish them for it? I think this is so. The word is really Authorities, and he that withstandeth the Authority in the execution of justice among men withstands the ordinance of God.—J.M.]

The Powers that be **are** ordained of God, **and** their power is an ordinance of God. Is this the same in this connection as an " ordinance of man " in 1 Peter 2, 13? [1 Peter 2. 13, 14 seems to present the matter of our subjection to rulers from the other point of view than that shown in Romans 13. Kings and governors are viewed as human institutions or creations by Peter, and we are to be subject to them in their official positions for the Lord's sake. The Romans 13. view is that the authority vested in the king, and such as share under him the responsibility of government is of God. In all things they are to be obeyed, except when they overstep their responsibility and call upon those within their sphere of authority to break the higher law of God.—J.M.] It behoves us to live quietly and peaceably in whatsoever sphere God has placed us—with due regard to the civil powers which God has set over us. (1 Timothy 2. 1-3.) With verse 3 read 1 Timothy 1. 9. " Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," a fine closing- word of exhortation to this section.

W. DOUGLAS, J. FOTHERINGHAM.

From LONDON, S.E.—Following on after the exhortation to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, we find the wonderful truth unfolded that we, who are many, are one Body and that we have each our appropriate place therein to fill. The Christian should not over-rate his abilities, but on the other hand he should give due regard to the gift which God has given him. " To think soberly " would seem to imply the consideration of our gift from the point of view of its value in the work of the Lord. This quiet meditation will reveal (no doubt with the aid of the Holy Spirit), the position and office for which we are fitted. When our work is thus manifested to us our part should be to enter whole-heartedly into that work, as is shewn in verses 6 to 8 of chapter 12.

Some general exhortations follow, and it seems that verses 9 to 21 could very well be summed up in the one word " Love." There seems also a marked similarity between these verses and the words of the Lord in Matthew, chapter 5. (the Sermon on the Mount).

The question of the Christian's position, relative to the powers that be, is next dealt with. Those who are in authority are ordained of God.—they may not be men of godly behaviour but this does not nullify the fact that their power is from God. The responsibility is theirs to rule well, and failure in this respect will constitute a slight upon the favours bestowed on them and will no doubt bring- retribution in its train. The Christian should not be of a revolutionary disposition but should submit to the powers that be—such powers (when well used) have no terrors except for law-breakers. Verse 7 of chapter 13. recalls the words of the Lord—" Render unto Ca?sar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the thing's that are God's."

Then follows the summing-up of the Law—Love to our neighbour—a wonderful translation of the thunderings of Mount Sinai.

We are reminded in verse 11 of the approach of the time when we shall experience salvation from the presence of sin—this salvation draws nearer day by day insomuch as the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

We wondered whether- the " night which is far spent " refers to this dispensation, and the " day at hand " to the coming

glory. Some however, suggest that a break occurs after **verse 11**, the ensuing verses being a general exhortation to be alert and working for the Lord during our day and opportunity, which is now at hand. (See also 1 Corinthians 15. 34.) [We are sons of the light and also sons of the day, and as soldiers of the King we should not be living- in riot and drunkenness, but we should be clad with the armour of light and standing in our ranks to greet with joy the break of that day of unfading glory. This salvation is nearer than when we first believed. This has without doubt reference to the Lord's return.—J.M.]

The closing- words of the chapter " Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," show very clearly what our aim and object should be and success in this direction will bring about in us the condition which obtained in the case of the Apostle Paul, who could say " I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

R. C. WESTON.

From BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—The 12th chapter of Romans could well be described as the believers' code of laws, though these laws are not presented in the same phraseology as the law given through Moses. The latter was couched in such terms as—" Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." It is interesting, therefore, to note the moderate language used in this section of the epistle—"I beseech you." Love begets love; thus, with our minds upon the One Who loved us unto death, we read the exhortations of the chapter. Firstly we are requested not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think (verse 3). This perhaps is very seasonable, for with the advance of education, men, especially young men, are apt to be carried away with a sense of self-importance. Proverbs 3. 4 and Jeremiah 9. 23-24 are interesting- in this connexion with Romans 12. 16.

The work of God is not to be done negligently, neither are we to despise those with less gift than others. Each has his own sphere of labour, and each is necessary to the building-up of the Body of Christ. (See 1 Corinthians 12. 12-31 and Ephesians 4. 11-16). From verse 9 to the end of the chapter the exhortations are of a very personal character and space forbids us dealing with all. In these exhortations love is the keynote. Love should be the impelling force behind all our actions. If we lived more in an atmosphere of love, we should also know of the joy that can *he* experienced by giving practical effect to verses 14, 17, 19 and 20. (See also Matthew 5. 44-46 and 1 Peter 3. 9).

When we consider our brethren our love should be more intense, for towards such we are to be " tenderly affectioned, one to another," and this should be displayed in the carrying out of verse 13. (Compare with Romans 15. 25 to 27; 1 Corinthians 16. 1 to 3; 2 Corinthians 9., etc.).

Chapter 13. opens with our responsibility toward the higher powers to whom we must needs be in subjection for conscience sake (verse 5). The powers that be are ordained of God, and are God's ministers (Daniel 4. 17, 25, 32). It is also our responsibility to Dray for them (Ezra 6. 10; 1 Timothy 2. 2) and to render to them their dues, etc. (Compare Matthew 17. 24 to 27 and 22. 21.) The whole paragraph should be compared with 1 Peter 2. 13 to 17.

Verses 8 to 10 again bring love to the forefront. " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." No man ever hated his

own flesh. This is indeed a high standard of love. If we are inclined to ask, "And who is my neighbour?" a study of Luke 10. 25 to 37 will greatly help.

Sleep is for sons of night,
We are children of the light.

Therefore it is high time to awake out of sleep, to cast off slothfulness, to cast off the works of darkness, to put on the armour of light, to walk honestly, and to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (verses 11 to 14). (1 Thessalonians 5. 5 to 11; Ephesians 4. 24; Colossians 3. 10.) May we in closing quote 2 Peter 1. 8, "If these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

J. MCCORMICK.

From WEST RIDING.—In verse 3 we learn that though we are justified by faith, exempt from condemnation, foreknown, foreordained, children of the promise, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, and partakers through faith in Christ of the free gift of God, eternal life, these things must neither make us high-minded nor hypocritical (verse 9), nor ambitious nor conceited (verse 16). On the contrary they should cause us to be humble-minded and to think soberly according to the capacity for grasping the truth which "God hath dealt to each," condescending to the lowly things (verse 16), and preferring others above ourselves (verse 10). Faith lays hold of and gives substance to the unseen things of God. "The measure of faith" is the extent to which He will allow us to lay hold of the divine things. Verses 4 and 5. We should try to be content to fill that sphere which God has made for us.

An assembly of God should express in character the Body of Christ, each one taking his own part. Verse 11. We should like to ask, "Can any degree of diligence be regarded as slothfulness or does it here imply, not a characteristic, but services or diligences for the Lord?" [This exhortation seems to say that in our industry and earnestness in the Lord's things we are not to be slothful. Diligence and slothfulness are extremes. It is a little difficult to grasp the meaning of the question.—J.M.]

We shall never do anything very praiseworthy unless we have that fervency of spirit and diligence. Dr. Luxmoore used to say no man will accomplish anything unless he is mad on it.

It was then suggested that "communicating" in verse 13 meant distributing supplies. Galatians 6. 1-6, and Hebrews 13. 16 were read. In reference to the same verse it was thought that we ought to pursue (R.V.M.) hospitality.

Verses 17-21. These verses differ from the preceding ones in that they bear on our relations with the world. We shall only be able to do these things (love our enemies and render good for evil) by trusting in the strength which comes from the Head of the Body, the Lord Jesus Christ.

R. ROGERS.

From CARDIFF.—It was suggested that chapter 12. directly follows chapter 8. The word "beseech" is a striking contrast to the Old Testament "command." In Philemon 1. 9 we find the reason for the word "beseech"—"For love's sake." In the epistle to the Romans there are three outstanding "therefores." See Romans 5. 1; 8. 1; 12. 1, which we suggest are

(in order) the "therefore" of salvation, sanctification **and** service. This beseeching and exhorting is more or less confined to the New Testament. We believe the mercies of God mentioned are those we read of in the previous chapters such as being dead to sin and law.

In verse 2 the proving of the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, we, suggest, not only implies the knowledge of His will, but also the doing.

Verse 3. God hates pride, and in this verse we are exhorted to think soberly. With this we linked verses 10 and 16.

Verse 6. The gifts mentioned are God-given. Compare the parable of the talents [Matthew 25. 15]. One had only one talent, but he had one. May we each find our particular gift (or gifts) and seek grace from God to use it. It is our duty to be faithful, and God graciously gives us the honour to serve Him, as He has given the measure of faith. God gives the faith to use these gifts.

Verse 11. The thought here is—be not lazy, use the present opportunity—do all with diligence. Our manner of doing service is taken into account.

Verse 9. It seems strange to suggest hypocrisy with love, but it is possible. We must be sincere. "Shrink from evil and be glued to that which is good," seems to be the thought here.

Verse 15. It is harder to rejoice with the rejoicing than the reverse. If one has triumphed and we have lost there is something in us which holds us back. We suggest "If it be possible" refers to the attitude of those around, and "as much as in you lieth" to the individual attitude—in this matter of peaceful living.

Verse 21 can only be carried out as God gives the grace.

We suggest that Romans 12. shews the practical side of 1 Corinthians 13.

E. TOMS.

From SUNDERLAND.—Here we come to practical righteousness, the walk of those who have been made the recipients of the grace of God (verse 3). This grace alone will enable us to have low thoughts of ourselves and to think soberly.

We linked on verse 16 with verse 3, as together they encourage us to a humble walk. (Micah 6. 8.)

Verses 4-5. Here is emphasised not so much the doctrine of the "one body," as the working- of all the members thereof in unison. (Compare 1 Corinthians 12. 12.)

Verses 6 to 8 remind us that whatever our sphere of service may be, whether prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, ruling, giving, or shewing¹ mercy (seven graces) we must perform that service *with* diligence and with cheerfulness. The thought of our close relationship in the "One body" is a fitting-background to the plain precepts that follow. The words of verse 17 are important, and should exercise us increasingly in the common things of everyday life. One remarked how ready the flesh is to return evil for evil, and how the flesh in each of us would avenge itself, but the words of the Spirit to us are

"Avenge not yourselves, beloved." Reference was made to 1 Peter 2. 23 and an illustration drawn from Luke 22. 51. Oh to be more like Him! Man, if left to himself would not act as indicated in verses 19 and 20. (Read Galatians 5. 22-23).

Chapter 13. Further directions concerning the pathway (on earth) of the heaven-born man are given and what his conduct to governments should be. He is taught to regard the powers that be as appointed of God, to whom he must be loyal, even for conscience sake. This precept does not warrant our taking any place or part in the world's politics. We were reminded of the words of the Lord Jesus in John 17. 16).

Verse 8 encourages prompt payment of all debts. "Owe no man anything, save to love one another." Here is a debt, however, never fully paid, for it is to love one another, as He hath loved us (John 13. 34).

Verses 11-14. We thought this word an arousing call to holiness and most suitable to our day. (Compare 1 Peter .1. 15.) What a change there would be in our conduct, if we were really to awake to expect our Lord day by day. Very soon we shall be for ever with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4. 16-17.) He said, "Yea I come quickly." Amen: come, Lord Jesus. (Revelation 22. 20.)

N. STUBBS.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From LONDON, S.W.—Note on Romans 5. 1. As the Reviser's reading here has occasioned some difficulty a somewhat fuller treatment of the subject may be permitted. The question is:—Are we to read *echomen* "let us have peace," as R.V., or *echomen* "we have peace" as A.V. or R.M.? The external evidence, i.e., MSS., ancient versions, etc., is overwhelmingly in favour of the former; on the other hand the internal evidence, i.e., what seems to suit the context best, is strongly in favour of the latter. Chapter 5. is in the doctrinal part of Romans and Paul does not usually combine teaching and exhortation in the same context. (We except Hebrews). But there are a few exceptions, e.g., chapter 6. 12 of this same epistle. The matter is further complicated by the fact that long o and short o are frequently interchanged in the MSS, e.g., in this very word in Galatians 6. 10 "as we have opportunity" where, however, the context is decisive in favour of short o. The American Company retained "we have" in the text of Romans 5. 1 and placed "let us have" in the margin. On the whole then we cannot regard the question as determined either way, and if "we have" is preferred as being more in keeping with the context the margin may be read here. It should, however, be clearly understood that the R.V. reading presents no doctrinal difficulty. The basic idea of the Greek tense is kind of action rather than time. The present tense generally indicates continued action (durative action is the technical term). Here we have a durative present and we may therefore render "let us keep on having peace"; or better, as Dr. Moulton renders it "let us enjoy the possession of peace," and if we keep to the text of the R.V. the full significance of the word "have" should not be forgotten.

S. BURROWS.

REMARKS.

No one can fulfil the many exhortations which the apostle gives in chapters 12. and 13. who has not first of all given heed to his words with reference to presenting his body a living sacrifice to God. If there be holding back in this there can be no progress in the will of God, and no true appreciation of the doctrine as to Christian conduct which the apostle brings before his readers.

The body of the believer is the instrument through which the will of God is to be done. This is the Lord's by right of redemption.

"Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price; glorify God therefore in your body." (1 Corinthians 6. 19,"20.)

Despite the fact that we are redeemed it is possible for us to use our bodies as though they belonged to ourselves, and through them to do our own will. It is also gravely possible for the believer to dishonour his body which has become temple of the Holy Spirit. God's will is that the believer should yield his body a living sacrifice to Him and this is his reasonable service. If this is done then he may proceed further in chapter 12., but not unless.

If we have offered our body a living sacrifice, then we shall wish that only that shall be fulfilled in us which is according to the will of God. Each man has his own peculiar fitness for the work of God, and to this end God has dealt to each a measure of faith (verse 3) and also grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Ephesians 4. 7). The faith and grace necessary to the apostolic gift were in measure greater than those given to a man who filled a sphere of lesser responsibility.

It is a healthy occupation to seek to find out what we are best fitted for, and not to suppose that we are so versatile as to be able to adapt ourselves to everything in the Lord's work, and that with distinction. As God has fitted the members of the human body to perform essential functions, as the eye for seeing and the ear for hearing and so forth, so also has He endowed the members of Christ, and each one has not to think more highly of himself than he ought. The apostle does not appear to think it necessary to exhort against our under-estimating ourselves; this is but rarely met with.

Different gifts are mentioned as characteristic of certain persons—prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling and also, it would seem, showing mercy. Such as have the gift of prophecy are to prophesy "according to the analogy of the faith." The text of the R.V. puts "our faith," and in doing so the reader is referred back to the measure of faith (of verse 3) given to each man. The marginal reading is "the faith," and this means "the rule of faith," "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." If the prophesying is to be according to the measure of the prophet's individual faith why should this be associated with prophecy only? for to each man was given a measure of faith. For myself, I view it as "the faith" and not "our faith."

He that giveth is to do so with liberality, not in a stinted way—open-hearted and open-handed giving. Such a giver is loved of God.

He that ruleth is to do so with diligence. Slackness in rule results generally in a state of confusion in assemblies and it spreads dissatisfaction and discontent.

" For that the Leaders took the lead in Israel,
For that the people offered themselves willingly,
Bless ye the Lord." (Judges 5. 2.)

He that showeth mercy is to do so with cheerfulness. Mercy is to be shown with such goodwill that he who receives it knows that he has really been shown mercy. Sometimes mercy is shown in such a grudging way that the receiver hardly knows whether he has received it or not.

Chapter 12. verses 9-21 contain general exhortations to Christian conduct, which no one can truly read without realising that the teaching is divine, and only such as have been renewed by grace and have presented their bodies a living sacrifice can hope to fulfil. Even the best stumble in many things. The exhortations are tersely given and with such a clearness that the meaning needs no exposition; emphasis will do.

Having dealt in chapter 12. with I. God's claim upon the bodies of His saints, II. the estimate that each one should have of his own gift from God, III. exhortations to general behaviour, the apostle turns in chapter 13. to our responsibility to Authorities to which the saints are to be subject. The ruler in the administration of justice is a minister (diakonos—a servant) of God and we enjoy much liberty by means of such. Rulers are " ministers of God's service attending- continually upon this very thing." For this reason we are to

" Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute;
custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

This clearly defines the behaviour of the Christian.

We are also to see that we pay our debts, all debts but one—the debt of love which we owe to our neighbour; a debt divinely imposed and from which we shall never be discharged here or hereafter, and the more we pay we shall feel the more deeply in debt. It is only loveless souls that feel no such debt. The whole law is summed up in one word " Love "; this shows the motive which was to prompt the actions enjoined in the Decalogue.

Finally he shows the Christian's attitude in the dark night of this world. He should be seen clad with the armour of light, a soldier, alert and waiting for the dawn of day. As a soldier he should neither be asleep nor should he be spending his time in revelry. If the Lord Jesus Christ is put on there will be no provision made for the flesh. May we become increasingly like Him!
J.M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

From BRANTFORD, CANADA.—" Two of our young brethren during their two weeks' holiday went nearly 500 miles on their cycles, visiting several small towns and distributed about 3,700 Gospel Tracts. Their tour was a blessing to themselves and evidence that the Lord was with them was manifested in a marked way." Our friends hope that this may stir up the zeal of others that they may go and do likewise. Such and similar work should be the outcome of our studies.—[Eds.]

REMARKS AND NEW SUBJECT.

The Editors make a further appeal to friends in Young Men's Corners to try and increase the issue of the booklet. We are closing this year financially sound. We trust much spiritual gain has been the portion of not a few who have been interested and engaged in the study of the Epistle to the Romans. Helpful suggestions and criticisms are always welcomed, and every opportunity taken of sharing these with readers and friends. We are very conscious of failings, but endeavour to encourage ourselves and each other to persistent study of the Scriptures. Private letters from some of our friends show that help has been obtained and profitable times enjoyed. Oftentimes the publication fails to reflect these good times, but it is a joy to think that this co-ordinated study has been the cause, indirectly perhaps, of such good times.

Will friends please send at once to Mr. James Martin, 39, Prior's Path, Abbotsmead, Barrow-in-Furness, an estimate of their needs, as regards number of Y.M.C. booklets that will be required monthly for 1928. For bound copies of the present study for 1927, of which we think only 100 will be issued, orders might be sent at once to Mr. J. Robertson, 9, Gibson Street, Edinburgh. The price will be 1 - per copy. All monies in connexion with Y.M.C.—both for volumes and monthly publications—should be sent to Mr. J. Robertson, of above address.

Suggestions for 1928 subject have been very varied, but at least three Corners have indicated a desire for a study of the Gospel according to John. This being the choice of the greatest number of friends, expression is given to the desire in choosing JOHN'S GOSPEL as our subject for 1928 (D.V.). It is hoped to distribute syllabuses to correspondents at an early date, also it will be our endeavour (D.V.), if friends will try to send their papers up to scheduled time, to issue each monthly number in its proper month. Please remember to leave a two-inch margin and to write on one side of paper only.—[Eds.]

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 11. Eighth Series. November, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION X.—ROMANS 12. 3—13. 4.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—The Apostle in the first two verses of chapter 12. beseeches the Romans to present their bodies a living sacrifice to God . . . that they might prove what was the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

In verse 3, apparently in answer to the enquiry, which would naturally arise in each heart, as to what was required by that will, he sets forth in detail the things which go to the fulfilling of the same. Several thoughts were expressed in connexion with this statement. (1) The apostle spoke in a gracious manner. [There is no doubt about the graciousness of the apostle's speech, but here, he evidently has before him that of which he speaks in Romans 1.5. " Through whom we received grace and apostleship "—grace necessary to the apostolic office which he filled.—J.M.] (2) He used this expression to indicate his authority for the words which follow. This grace was analogous to that which enabled him to build (1 Corinthians 3. 10), and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ (Ephesians 3. 8. See also Ephesians 4. 7-8). The first essential set forth is humility. This is the exact opposite to the natural characteristics of man. Let him " think soberly according as God has dealt to each man a measure of faith." Two thoughts were voiced in connexion with this expression, (1) that mankind has received from God the capacity to put faith in a given person or thing, (2) that God has dealt to certain of His children in this dispensation a greater measure of faith (or faithfulness?) than to others. [Faith here is evidently connected with different kinds of gifts—the greater the gift the greater the faith that is necessary. Faith here is measured; God has divided to each a measure of faith, hence faith here is a gift from God. This view of faith must not be confused with that of Ephesians 2. 8, where God's gift is

not faith but that which is by grace, namely, salvation.—J.M.] Paul next uses a simile. As each member in the human body has its function or work, so let each saint contribute his quota in connexion with God's service. In a human body the eyes, the ears, the hands do their own appointed work, so let each member of the body of Christ do that work for which it has been gifted. Teaching addresses itself to the understanding, exhortation to the heart and will.

Let love be without hypocrisy. Alas ! how necessary this word is. The apostle touches on many points which are necessary in a life which is to be well-pleasing- to God, (teaching, exhorting and advising) as to how a Christian should conduct his affections, how to be patient in tribulation, steadfast in prayer and in the use of hospitality.

" Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not Avenge not yourselves Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord." What wondrous teaching is here ! Let us follow the example of our Master who, " when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered threatened not, but committed His cause to Him who jud^heth righteously." He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. Oh ! the power of the words in verse 20 applied in actual life.

In verses 8 to 10 of chapter 13. we have wonderful instruction as to how a saint may fulfil the law. We all desire to be well-pleasing to God ; therefore, let us love ! All commandments, manward, may be summed up in these words, " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Let us do these things, for the night is far spent and the day is at hand. We desire to do the will of God. " Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

E. WILLIAMS.

SECTION XL—ROMANS 14. 1—15. 13.

From WEST RIDING.—Verses 1-3. We noticed here that believers, were classified into two categories (1) those who are strong in faith and eat meats, and (2) those who are weak in faith and eat vegetables (herbs). It was thought that the meat in these verses was that which had been sacrificed to idols and the one strong in faith was the one who could eat in faith all things, as food from God and give God thanks (verse 6 and 1 Corinthians 8. 4-8). [The question of the meat being sacrificed to an idol does not arise in this chapter as in 1 Corinthians chapters 8. and 10. The matter seems to be rather that which was settled in Peter's case by the vision he had of the sheet being- let down from heaven, wherein were all manner of beasts, clean and unclean, according to the Levitical law, and he heard the voice which said : " What God hath cleansed make not thou common." So Paul also is persuaded in the Lord Jesus " that nothing is unclean of itself."—J.M.]

It was then suggested that " receiving " in verse 1 referred to associating one with another and not " receiving into the fellowship." We are to associate with both weak in faith and strong in faith, but not with those who are neither one nor the other and who come with " doubtful disputations " and vain fruitless arguments, unwilling to hear what the scriptures say. [The word is that they were not to receive ₁ to doubtful disputations." They were not to receive the weak brother for the purpose of wrangling and disputing with him upon doubtful matters,

especially those things **upon** which he was weak, which, instead of helping him, might be a means of his destruction. The **Lord** was able to make him to stand.—J.M.]

•In 1 Corinthians 13., faith is inseparably linked with love and love cannot be associated with condemning or setting **at** nought our brother for eating or not eating (verse **15** and 1 Corinthians 8. 9-13).

It was considered that all mankind, saved and unsaved, were contemplated in verse **11**. The saved will **be** judged according to their works and will be required to render **an** account of their stewardship. It is God's prerogative **to** judge all men.

["The judgment seat of God" rather than "of Christ" of the A.V. seems to be the correct rendering here; but there seems to be no doubt that "the judgment seat of God" is "the judgment-seat of Christ" of 2 Corinthians **5. 10**, where we shall give account of ourselves as to our service, and we have no commission **to** judge the servant of Another.—J.M.]

"Destroy not" in verse 15 was defined as meaning, "Do not ruin his life for God, by driving him back into the world." Mark **7. 14-23** was read relating to all meats being clean, and also Acts **10. 15**.

The last clause of verse 23 summarises the teaching of the whole chapter. (See Colossians **3. 17**).

In contemplating chapter 15. we thought that in addition to endeavouring to avoid offending the weak in faith we should be very careful that others are not dishonoured but rather edified by our conduct. (Psalm **69. 6**). Those who fall when they have once confessed bring an evil name on the fellowship. (**2 Peter 2. 2**).

The comfort of God is as deep and inexhaustible as God Himself, and we wait with patience to hear the Master's approval.

If we follow the God breathed instructions contained in these two chapters we shall approach the happy state suggested in the words "that with one accord ye may, with **one** mouth glorify the God and Father of **our** Lord Jesus Christ." This is the desire of the Christ for us and it is only as we are of one mind in the things of God that we can do this.

Verse 7. We should receive one another to our hearts.

Verse 8. He became a servant to confirm the promises made to the fathers, which promises involved the blessing of the Gentiles, so that Jew and Gentile should together glorify God with one accord and one mouth.

We noticed that hope is mentioned three times in verses **4, 12** and **13**. Hope is also mentioned in chapters **5.** and **8.**; we hope for that which we have not seen but we are waiting with patience for it. We hope for approval **from** the Lord Jesus and **we** hope to see the fruit of our labours.

Hope buoys us up and carries us on but the hope of the unbeliever shall perish.

R. ROGERS

From **ATHERTON**.—This portion of **our** study brings before us the truth that there are degrees of faith. What is the cause of this? Reference to chapter 12., verses 3 and 6 provides the answer. God has allotted to each one a measure of faith at conversion, given according to the measure of the **gift** of Christ (Ephesians **4. 7**). [There may be **a** measure of truth in what is

here stated, but I hardly think that it just touches the issue which Paul, here in chapter 14., seeks to clear up. The lack of faith here arises, no doubt, from the teaching- to which this weak brother was subject before he was saved, as, for instance, the Jew trained according to the ceremonies of the Levitical law. Failing to grasp the dispensational change that had taken place, how that the difference, which once existed between the Jew and Gentile, and between clean and unclean beasts, was now abolished, he laboured under the disadvantage of a weak faith. But his faith would increase as he receives more light, for the Lord was able to cause him to stand.—J.M.] This faith also differs after conversion according to the obedience to the will and commands of God. The weak faith will be tested on a stronger point and so there will be the divine growth from strength to strength even as grew those mighty ones in the picture gallery of faith (Hebrews 11.). Faith is distinct from love, as proved by reference to 1 Corinthians 13. 2 ; yet apart from love, is valueless.

Reference was made to Naaman how that when he was healed of his leprosy he was converted, which fact is proved in that he asked for two mules' burden of earth to take with him whereon, no doubt, to offer sacrifices unto Jehovah. However, in contrast to his declaration that, henceforth, to other gods would no sacrifice be offered, he asks for pardon when he should go into the house of Rimmon with his master leaning- on his arm. He would have to go into the house of this false god, and not only so, but would have to bow when his master bowed. Such conduct we may not consider to be ideal; yet Elisha says, " Go in peace " (2 Kings 5. 17-19). This attitude of Elisha may be explained by reference to Philippians 1. 6, viz., that God who had begun this good work in the heart of Naaman would perfect it.

Therefore in this 14th chapter we see the strong- and the weak in faith ; hence arose the necessity for the apostle to point out that in reference to clean and unclean meats there was no set rule of conduct; because one had faith to eat all things and another faith only to eat vegetables, yet it was not wrong- to differ from one another. Every one must be persuaded in his own mind what course to take, but it was suggested that in connexion with the Gentiles, the word in Acts 15. 29 never seems to have been revoked and hence is equally applicable to-day. [I am glad that this is touched upon here. To abstain from the things mentioned in Acts 15. 29 is a matter of necessity and note how the apostles and elders wrote : " It seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us." We have in other matters to remember that meat will not commend us to God and there is no fixed law as to what we should or should not eat, save that we are not to eat what would offend the religious conscience of another.—J.M.]

The motive is the chief thing that counts with God. Hence those who condemn are guilty and alas ! how often it is the case that we attribute the lowest motives to other brethren.

We see from Tames 4. 11-12 that by judging a brother we set a standard of our own and as;ime the functions of the law-giver and the judge. Hence the solemn reminder that all must appear before the judgment-seat !

The question was raised as to whether this scripture was rendered correctly by the Revisers as " the judgment-seat of God." It was thought that the Authorised Version was correct here

(" The judgment-seat of Christ ") because the Revisers follow the general teaching of one universal judgment as taught by the sects and that all, whether saved or unsaved, must appear before God to be judged.

[Those best able to judge of such matters are in favour of " of God " and not " of Christ," but there is no thought that this passage teaches a general judgment of saint and sinner. Though it is " the judgment-seat of God " there seems no necessity to distinguish between this and " the judgment-seat of Christ." This is not a throne, but a judgment-seat (a Bema) and must not be confused with the great white throne.—J.M.]

Verses 13-23 show that the heart and conscience play an important part in this matter of meat; the conscience indicates the path to be taken, and one taking meat in doubt stands condemned. (See 1 John 3. 21.)

Verses 13, 15 and 21 raised an important point. Supposing a brother for the sake of a weak brother refrained from eating such things in his presence as would be a stumbling block to such an one and yet being strong in faith ate these things when his brother was absent, would not this give the impression of hypocrisy? The weak brother would undoubtedly get to know that such things were taking place and hence a greater stumbling block would be raised. Does the apostle mean that because of the weakness of this brother such things should not be partaken of at all? [The principle is " The faith which, thou hast, have thou to thyself before God." No one could be considered a hypocrite who in the absence of the weak brother ate what he was perfectly free to eat with a good conscience. Wisdom was profitable to direct in these somewhat difficult circumstances.—J.M.] If so, what impression would the apostle give toward the Jews; for while in their presence he refrained from certain meats because of their consciences, but when in the presence of the Gentiles became as a Gentile that he might gain the more?

The 15th chapter seems to deal with the question as to why we should act thus; acting like the weak brothers rather than give offence. This seems to answer the question we have just asked that we are not to please ourselves even as Christ sought not His own pleasure, but exemplified the scripture, " The reproaches of them that reproach Thee are fallen on Me " (Psalm 69. 9).

Such things as these were written for our learning; that we should no longer fix our attention simply on our own interests but also on those of others (Philippians 2. 4). We should manifest a Christ-like sympathy and unselfishness in welcoming each other, even as He also has done, to the promotion of the glory of God. Although the Lord Jesus Christ was a Jew by birth and this in fulfilment of the covenant made to the forefathers, thus vindicating God's truthfulness and faithfulness, yet, His love and pity extended to the Gentiles, shewing great kindness to both: and that the Gentiles were to be embraced is proved by an appeal to the Law (Deuteronomy 32. 43), the Psalms (Psalms 18. 49, and 117. 1), and the prophets (Isaiah 11. 1 and 10). Hence the strong in faith are to extend to their weaker brethren such kindness even as in the example set by the Lord Himself to the end that joy, peace and an abundance of hope may be their portion and blessing.

From BARROW.—The eating of meats and the abstinence therefrom seem to have occupied, to a great extent, the minds of believers in the early churches. This, no doubt, was due to the fact that in the various assemblies there were Jews and Gentiles. One can understand, in some measure at least, that the Jew would have a conscience with regard to things which, according to the law, were unclean; yet which, in the light of New Testament revelation, were "created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth." (1 Timothy 4. 3, 4; see also Mark 7. 19; Acts 10. 15). The Gentiles, on the other hand, according to the decrees given through the Apostles and Elders, were to "abstain from the pollutions of idols, . . . and from what is strangled, and from blood."

The question, however, in the opening verses of Romans 14. does not seem to be one of abstinence from certain kinds of meat, but from all meat. The one who thus refuses to partake of flesh is said to be weak in faith. It would appear that the person referred to had an extremely tender conscience and rather than wound his own feelings he would not eat meat. The apostle does not condemn him for this, but takes the opportunity of exhorting the strong to help the weak. (Romans 15. 1).

It is suggested that the force of the word "receive" is "to receive one into the Assembly." Others have suggested that it means "to receive as a friend," in the sense that they are not to stand aloof from him. Which of these thoughts is correct? [The receiving- here does not seem to carry the thought of receiving into the Fellowship (as our West Riding friends rightly state), but receiving- "one another." The weak brother is not to be received and then disputed with upon doubtful points and matters which will not be to his edification. The strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please themselves.—J.M.] Even though there may be such an one who is weak in faith, we are neither to judge him nor his doubtful thoughts. To his own Lord he standeth or faileth. The chief point in matters of this kind is, "Let each man be fully assured in his own mind." (Verse 5.) We have also to remember that we must all stand before the judgment-seat of God, and each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

The fact that in any Assembly there are generally those who may be termed weak, and also those who may be strong should make us take the more heed to the word of exhortation "that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling" (verse 13).^{*} We suppose that the principle which here obtains in association with meats would also be applicable in other legitimate cases. We must be careful, however, not to take the principle beyond that which is scripturally lawful, else it would be possible to do that which is contrary to the will of God and yet to quote with a contented mind the words, "The faith which thou hast, have it to thyself before God."

The apostle's aim was to strengthen the weak, and in so doing he would rather refrain from all meat than cause any to stumble. All that has been written has been with the object of edifying (chapter 15. 2), and being thus built up they may be of ONE mind, "that with ONE accord ye may with ONE mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." This seems to be the highest object that we can attain as a collective people, namely, to glorify the highest Person in His highest Name, even

that of " the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is to such an One that, collectively, we should offer our praise and adoration. How necessary it is, then, that we should be of the same mind, that praise may be acceptable unto Him. We are reminded of 2 Chronicles. 5. 13, 14, " It came even to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as ONE, to make ONE sound to be heard in praising and thanking Jehovah; and when they lifted up their voice (singular) . . . the glory of Jehovah filled the house of God." What a unity! Perfect harmony, no discord, and what a result! May it be ours as a Holy Priesthood in God's House, to be thus united in praise, acceptable to God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

J. MCCORMICK.

From GLASGOW.—The faith of those saints in Rome was spoken of throughout the world. The apostle desired that they should prove the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, and points out that God hath dealt to every man a measure of faith.

In chapter 14. 1 he lays down sober and guiding principles regarding the relations between the stronger and weaker in faith. The natural tendency of those who are strong is to be intolerant of weakness in another. The balance is to be kept by the contemplation that " God has received him " (chapter 14. 3). On this basis none has the right to count a brother unworthy of company because of what is termed in chapter 15. verse 1 " an infirmity."

Further, the question is raised as to the authority of any to judge the Lord's " household servant " (margin) and we find the blessed truth emphasised that the Lord Himself is intimately connected and concerned with every act and circumstance. This extends to life and death because of His own death and resurrection.

Something more humbling remains. " We shall all stand " and " give account." Having displaced, with this statement, all ground for criticism, the writer takes the other point of view and states that nothing is unclean of itself. The value set on the weak brother by Christ was His own life. Is it to be valued by the standard of meat?

By independent action in the matter of meats there is a risk run of destroying the work of God, and of the freedom of the kingdom of God being- evil spoken of. Thus the apostle proceeds with exhortation that they should seek to edify instead of breaking down and prays for likemindedness according to the example of the One who pleased not Himself.

This state is the ideal one for the fulfilment of the purpose for which they had been called together, namely, " To glorify God, even the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ." In proof of the purpose, the words of the prophets are quoted shewing- the theme of the epistle, the outflowing- of God's mercy to the Jew first and also to the Gentile.

J. A. ARCHIBALD.

From BRANTFORD.—The long- suffering of God is manifested in the truth of verse 1, in that those who are weak in faith are to be received. The apostle here treats of a common human failure—that of judging one another. How easy it is to come to

conclusions in our judgment of each other, and how many **times** in judging we misjudge.

God alone knows the motives which prompt the actions, and we do well to refrain from judging, in view of the scripture, "• judge not that ye be not judged." If we wish to exercise ourselves in judgment, we have perfect liberty to judge how we may be of service in removing stumbling blocks from each other's pathway.

Paul was convinced in his own mind that nothing was unclean of itself, but if anyone believed anything- to be unclean, to him it was unclean.

In the days of Paul, brethren were wont to be grieved if another was known to eat meat. It is quite clear from the apostle's reasoning- that the meat of itself was clean, but if anyone was addicted to the eating of meat when he knew that a weaker brother was stumbled thereby, he did his weaker brother a wrong, and by his indulgence he showed that he was not walking in love but as a self-pleaser. This selfish attitude had quite a serious effect betimes on those who were weak, in that they were destroyed. Paul pleads for self-sacrifice on the part of the strong, that the weak one might be preserved. Thus, while we might be doing- what in itself is quite good, it may be unwise to do so, and evil might be spoken of our action. We are told what the kingdom of God is : righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. It is not to be found in indulgence of the flesh such as in eating and drinking.

There are things which tend to promote peace and these are the things we are exhorted to think of and follow after. If we are peaceably disposed there will be the tendency to seek to edify one another. By satisfying our own ends it is possible to overthrow the work of God in another. This is indeed a solemn possibility and we are caused to remember the Lord's own words, " There shall be occasions of stumbling but woe to those through whom they shall come."

The great truth set out here is self-denial in that which may not be expedient, for the preservation of others. Such self-denial is good in the sight of God. If what we are doing is in faith, we have cause to be happy. But if there is a measure of doubt, our hearts condemn us because we are not acting in faith, and if it is not of faith it is sin.

Chapter 15. 1-14. It is very instructive to notice how the Apostle Paul drives home his reasoning, namely, by bringing that beautiful life before all. The wisdom of this cannot be withstood, whether it be to prove the claims of the Lordship of Christ (as chapter 14. verses 7-9 so clearly teach) or to point Him out as the Great Example, the One who pleased not Himself (chapter 15. 'verse 3). In this connexion we might look at Philippians 2. 1-8. No one could look at the life of the **Lord Jesus** and gainsay the truth that He pleased not Himself. We have often been caused to rejoice by the well-known words of verse 4. It is worthy of notice that after the words " through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures " there is a reference in the next verse to the God of patience and of comfort. This would perhaps convey the thought that God is behind His word, and longing to see His desires accomplished through His word. One of His desires, as verse 6 shows, is that Unity may exist among brethren and if this is attained God will be glorified. Unity is strength:—discord is weakness. As we think of verse 7

we can surely say of Christ, "He frankly forgave **us** all our debt; yes, He joyfully and unreservedly received us." **As** He has done, **so** we ought to do. The verses that follow reveal to us the richness of God's Mercy both to Jew and Gentile, and confirm the promise given to Abraham, **as** Romans 4. 16-17 teach.

If we are strong **in** the Lord we will be able to help those who are weak. This is a privilege granted to all in God's assembly. Strong young men can help young men who are weak.

J.T., J.B. and R.M.

From LONDON, S.E.—For the purpose of discussion we subdivided the portion into three further sections:—

- (1) (Chapter 14. 1-12.) The position viewed from two standpoints.
- (2) (Chapter 14. **13** to chapter 15. 8.) Freedom limited, —to display love one to another.
- (3) (Chapter 15. 8-13.) The Jews and the Gentiles viewed together.

Generally, this portion reminded us of 1 Corinthians 8. 1— " Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth " (or " buildeth up.")

We learn to respect one another, **to** judge none and to stumble none—we should view one another as the Lord does—He loves each one, so should we love one another. (1 John 3.)

The portion before **us** is written for the special benefit of those who use their liberties too freely, **to** the stumbling of their weaker brethren who cannot so use their liberty. " All things are lawful but all things are not expedient." (1 Corinthians 10. 23.)

The " strong " one is not to shun his " weak " brother because he is weak but rather to help him.

The Apostle points out that no food is unclean except to those who consider it **so** and we were again referred to 1 Corinthians to. **in** this connexion. The question was raised by some as to whether the weak and the strong here mentioned typify the Jews and the Gentiles. This thought was prompted by the remembrance of a remark **on an** earlier portion that there were doubtless both Jews and Gentiles in the Roman Assembly to whom the Apostle was writing. The Jews, for example, would have more tender consciences than the Gentiles **on** the question of meats, etc., because they had the commandment concerning these in the Law and it has been remarked that the " grave clothes would take rather long to unloose." We should, however, like **to** have other views on this question of the weak and the strong,—Jew and Gentile.

In our third section we have Truth and Mercy brought before us.—Truth to the Jew; Mercy to the Gentile. God had pledged Himself—(we say it reverently)—to the Jew, but to the Gentile it is " all of Grace."

Our closing thought was from verses 12 and 13 (chapter 15.) that **we** have the " hope " of an assured future with the Ruling Christ.

G. E. SOULSBY

From SUNDERLAND.—We were reminded here of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 7. 1 and each felt how careful we ought to be in such matters as eating and drinking, esteeming one day above another, and in judging one another.

Verse 10. It is not a question here of being brought into judgment for sin or sins (see Romans 8. 1 and John 5. 24). The solemn fact that all will stand before God, who makes no mistakes, should preserve us from the hurtful habit of judging one another.

Verse 13. We thought the great point here is serving Christ, acceptably to God.

Verses 17-19. Much interest was shown here touching the words "the Kingdom of God," and reference was made to many Scriptures. May the desire of verse 19 be ours! Thus we will refrain from anything, whether eating flesh or drinking wine, wherein a brother may have an occasion of stumbling (verse 21). It is very wholesome for each to remember that "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Compare the second clause of verse 22 with 1 John 3. 21. We thought verse 1 of chapter 15. showed how gentle we ought to be. 2 Corinthians 10. 1 and Galatians 6. 2 were referred to in this connexion. We thought the teaching of verse 2 of the highest order. Verse 3 gives us the perfect example. Galatians 6. 10 was read here as showing every man to be our neighbour. "Let us therefore work that which is good toward all men"; of course the household of the faith has a special claim upon us. It is very needful at all times to strive after this unity which is "according to Christ Jesus," who Himself has received us to the glory of God (verse 7). We ought to remember this in receiving one another.

In verses 9 to 12 the apostle quotes Old Testament Scriptures to show that in God's purposes grace was reserved for the Gentiles. The apostle's supplication in verse 13 would seem to us to suggest the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5. 2) and may we increasingly come to know God as the God of Patience "and the " God of Hope."

N. STUBBS.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—In continuing that portion of the epistle which deals with the daily conduct of the saints, the apostle writes at length on a matter which was a source of constant dispute in the early churches, namely, the question of meats and observance of days. A similar condition, we note, obtained in the Church at Corinth. (1 Corinthians 8.).

It is, of course, well known that these differences arose through the bringing together into the one assembly and one community two widely diverse classes (Jews and Gentiles), the Jews finding it hard to forsake the ritual of the law, while the Gentiles naturally would not feel bound by any such observance.

So acute was the feeling on the question of meats, it would seem, that not only did individuals judge and set against one another, but it was becoming a hindrance to reception. While the apostle agrees that such as are weak in faith should not be received into meetings where decisions on doubtful matters are being made, such as, for example, the meeting of the apostles and elders of Acts 15, he shows that such should not be excluded from fellowship.

The first, and most important reason is that God has received him. This seems to be the main thought throughout the portion we are considering, summing up with the irresistible exhortation, " Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God." The other reasons adduced are consequent upon this kindness of God. There is the principle, true even in earthly things, that each servant to his own lord standeth or faileth; then there is the individual's freedom, of action, whether it be the regarding of days, eating or eating not, the guiding principle in all these things being " as unto the Lord "; and finally we are reminded of the judgment-seat of God, where each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

We would learn that these are matters which call for mutual forbearance amongst brethren, and each should realise that not all have attained to the same degree of faith.

We observe the loving and patient counsel in these verses, characterised by the oft repeated word " let " and we see that disputes such as these adversely affect the most important of Christian graces, " For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love."

Then again, meats do not commend us to God, for the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Only in such an atmosphere of peace can we edify (that is, build up) one another; in fact, having the welfare of others at heart, instead of self-pleasing, is the one sure way of bringing to an end such futile disputings.

We are here reminded (chapter 15. 3) of the example of the Lord Jesus, who pleased not Himself, of Whom it was written, " The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on Me " (Philippians 2. 2-8). It was suggested that the following verse, which we often hear quoted—" For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning "—was written primarily to show the Gentiles that, although they were not called upon to keep the ordinances of the Law of Moses, they were not to ignore the Scriptures or any part of them, because, being God-breathed, all were written for our learning.

The apostle fittingly concludes this exhortation with quotations from the Scriptures, very precious to the Gentiles, showing that although Christ of necessity came of the seed of Abraham, the heart of the Lord Jesus was full of joy as he contemplated the nearness to Him of the redeemed Gentiles and their praise to God for His mercy.

N. G. ADKINS.

REMARKS.

The apostle in this section of the Roman epistle deals with the question of the eating of meats. He says :—

" I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself."

The Lord Jesus during his earthly ministry had settled this matter:—

^{li} Perceive ye not, that whatsoever from without goeth into the man it, cannot defile him; because it goeth not

into his heart, **but** into his belly, and goeth **out** into the draught? This He said, making all meats clean." Mark 7. 18, 19.

Peter, though an apostle, had evidently not grasped the meaning of the Lord's words and ere he would go to the house of a Gentile the Lord had to show him the dispensational change that had taken place, by the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, wherein were all manner of beasts, clean and unclean, that he was not to call that common or unclean what God had cleansed.

God is treating all men alike in this dispensation and with this change comes the change of Levitical law with reference to clean and unclean things. There has been a change all round.

It was difficult for the Jew trained under the law to adjust himself to the new order of things. So also with the Gentile who had been used to the idol; it appeared in his eyes an outrageous thing that anyone should eat meat which had been offered in sacrifice to an idol (1 Corinthians 8. 10.) Thus the brother who had knowledge must consider the weakness of his Jewish brother on the one hand as to his use of meats, and also of his Gentile brother] in the matter of things sacrificed to an idol, though he could with a good conscience eat, both of meats unclean under the Levitical law, and of things sacrificed to an idol. For both things he could give God thanks and eat to the glory of God. What men are used to in their unconverted days has often an influence, great or small, after the grace of God reaches them; even so was it in the days in which the Scriptures were written.

The question of meat offered to an idol does not arise in Romans 14. Some evidently were so weak that they abstained from meat altogether. These weak brethren must be considered and their tender consciences must not be outraged by what seemed to them gross impiety on the part of those whose faith was strong enough to eat all edible meats without question.

The reception of Romans 14. 1 seems to be the same as Romans 15. 7 which evidently is not ecclesiastical reception, the reception by the church of one coming into the Fellowship; nor yet can we say that it is simply social reception, the reception of one another in the exercising- of Christian hospitality. I rather associate the words with 1 Corinthians 11. 18, 33, "When ye come together in church," "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another."¹ This reception of one another may indicate the warmth of Christian fellowship exhibited in the coming together of the saints in the early days. It may be that our coming together is too formal and stiff, with no real receiving of one another to each other's heart. (The word *proslambano*=receive seems to involve this warmth of Christian love and kindness for each other.)

The weak brother is to enjoy the same welcome as that given to the stronger brethren and should be made to feel quite at home. His weakness of faith should not provide reason why he should be pilloried, or be like a weak fowl in a fowl-run an object at which every other fowl may peck. Other matters should be treated of for the weak brother's edification rather than of that which makes him always self-conscious. He is **not** to be received to be wrangled with in doubtful disputations.

The matter of eating should be left to the individual.

" **Let not** him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not, and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth."

Yet the strong in faith must use their strength not to be a stumbling block **but** to bear the infirmities of the weak.

The Lord has given us liberty in what we may eat, or days we may observe, and what is done in meats or days, what strictures or vows believers may put themselves under, it is **to** the Lord they do it, and their conduct in such matters does not contain any doctrine for others that they must walk after a like fashion. In such matters we must not judge one another, our responsibility is only and solely to the Lord and to Him, at His judgment-seat, we must give an account. This, of course, does not affect judgment of other matters of which 1 Corinthians 5. speaks. Compare the Lord's lordship by death and resurrection in verse 9 with John 12, 31, 32.

We are, therefore, not to destroy with meat the brother for whom Christ died, for it is not on the matter of eating and drinking that we are together. We are together **to** carry out the will of God; so we read:

" For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

This statement here does not, of course, affect the Remembrance of the Lord, which never was to be regarded as a thing of appetite, nor yet was it in the Lord's mind that we should take the elements of bread and wine into an empty stomach. It was instituted when the disciples had eaten of the paschal supper and the Apostle asks the question, when he has referred to the disorder of the Corinthians' eating, " One is hungry and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?"

Our being together as God's people to-day is **not** for eating and drinking, but to give effect to Divine righteousness, wherein the will of God for His people is expressed. This cannot be given effect to by people scattered and separated from one another. God has legislated for a together people, and a man who in the sphere of the rule of God serves Christ is well-pleasing to God and approved of men. The whole structure of this chapter shows a together people involving responsibility to God and to one another.

Subjection to authority precedes the offering of praise to God and for the offering of praise collectively there **must** be unity of mind ere there can be unity of action—**of** one accord. The God of patience and of comfort must cause minds to flow together (alas, many minds are flowing together to-day, but not by the operation of the God of patience, but by the father of lies, and this leads to men flowing together with one accord in that which is evil) ere there can be one accord among God's people. Note, how it is the God of patience that accomplishes this and how patiently, through a course of many years, he has wrought. Can we not learn from this to bear patiently with weak brethren not so well instructed as we may think ourselves to be? See, too, how this unity of mind is to be according **to** Christ Jesus. One mind, one accord renders it possible that with one mouth, the mouth of the assembly, we may glorify

the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Here Jews and Gentiles** are seen standing united, united in mind in the things that count, though in matters of detail the faith of each may be weak, "but on all vital and fundamental matters united as one man, and of one soul. One community life existed. The love each has for each must not be discounted by the weaknesses of the other. Christ had come a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that promises made to the fathers in olden time might be confirmed and, in these promises, blessing was not to be the portion of the circumcision only but also the Gentiles might rejoice in, and glorify God for, His mercy. J.M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—1. What is meant by the words "give place unto wrath" in Romans 12. 19? 2. Have all powers, been ordained of God, and are they still so ordained, bearing in mind such a ruler as Nero, in connexion with the statements made in verses 3 and 4 of chapter 13. of the Epistle to the Romans?

ANSWER.—1. The marginal reading of the R.V. gives the sense here—"Give place unto the wrath of God." **We** are not to avenge ourselves, because vengeance belongs, **not** to us, but to God.—J.M.

ANSWER.—2. There should be **no** doubt as to the Roman power being ordained of God. Think of the Lord's words to Pontius Pilate (in the days of Tiberius Caesar), "Thou wouldest have no power (authority) against Me, except it were given thee from above." (John 19. 11.) Rulers may go beyond their province in the execution of law and justice among men, and God may have to visit them with the rod of correction, **but** there should be no question of our recognition of them, even though the rulers may be bad rulers. J.M.

From BRANTFORD.—1. Are those who are referred to in chapter 14. verse 1, as being weak in faith, the same as the weak, mentioned in chapter 15. and verse 1, or is the latter bodily weakness? 2. Would the term in Romans 14. 10, "The judgment-seat of God," include all divine judgments, as for instance, "The judgment-seat of Christ" (2 Corinthians 5. 10)?

ANSWER.—1. The weak in both verses (chapter 14. 1 and 15. 1) refer to the same persons. It is weakness arising from a deficiency of faith. Note how chapter 14. ends, and the contrast drawn between doubts and faith. The same kind of weakness is spoken of in 1 Corinthians 8. 10-12. J.M.

ANSWER.—2. In the context in which "the judgment-seat of God" is found, it **quite** evidently has to do with the judgment of those who are the Lord's. Note "We must all stand." It is not the throne of God but the judgment-seat, so that there does not seem any reason why any difference should be drawn between the judgment-seats of Romans 14. 10 and 2 Corinthians 5. 10. J.M.

NEW SUBJECT FOR 1923.

The Gospel according to John has been chosen as that requested by the greatest number of young men at present engaged in the study. We hope to send out copies of the syllabus for 1928, shortly. May we yet again remind correspondents, that articles should be written on one side of the paper only, and an ample margin, say two inches, provided on the left hand side of the page? We would also encourage correspondents to endeavour to have their written contributions in the hands of Mr. J. Martin, 39, Prior's Path, Abbotsmead, Barrow-in-Furness, Lanes., by the dates which will be mentioned in the syllabus. An endeavour will be made to have the publication in the hands of friends in the month of issue. A further request—Will those in arrears with regards to their financial contributions, please send same, as early as possible, to Mr. J. Robertson, 9, Gibson Street, Edinburgh?

A limited number of bound volumes of 1927 Study will be issued. The cost for these will be 1/-. Orders and money to be sent to Mr. J. Robertson.

It is estimated that the cost of publication for 1928 (D.V.) will be about the same as for 1927, viz., 3/- per copy per annum. A further communication will be made (D.V.) in December Issue.—[Eds.]

YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 12. Eighth Series. December, 1927.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SECTION XL—ROMANS 14. 1—15. 13.

From TORONTO.—The apostle now turns to the question of eating, a subject which holds an important place in the divine arrangement, though the disciples of the Lord are not subjected to carnal ordinances. Under the old economy,*the Jew was subject to such. A careful distinction between the clean and the unclean had to be observed. He was restricted in his "eating." Upon the Gentile (who was not under the law) no limitation was placed. [Except in what was agreed to at the Council of apostles and elders; see Acts 15. 28, 29.—J.M.J] The apostle tells us in verse 14, that he is "persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean of itself; save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean to him it is unclean." This then is the pivot upon which rests our relation one to another. (See verse 7.) While the truth of God is "that nothing is unclean of itself," and "that every creature of God is good and nothing is to be rejected," (1 Timothy 4. 3, 4) some had conscientious scruples, doubtless from their former manner of life, regarding "eating." The apostle exhorts those who had no such scruples to receive such as had, only not to "doubtful disputations." To the strong the instruction is, "Bear the infirmities of the weak"; to the weak, the apostle says, "Judge not." In our discussion we came to the conclusion that responsibility rests upon each, that whether "we eat" or "eat not," we should receive each other even as Christ Jesus received us. This seems to us to be the kernel of this section, "for the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

In chapter 15. **we** have the example of Christ (verse 3), **and** the value **of** the **Holy** Scripture (verse 4). Further the very desire of our Lord Jesus Christ, that there should be unity, is expressed, and we are reminded that we should not please ourselves (see also Galatians 6. 2). And if, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, the prayer and object of verses 6 and 7 are realised, what a recompense it will be for any personal liberty that may have been sacrificed. In all our ways **may** this be the guiding thought, that we please not ourselves, but others, walking in love, so fulfilling the law of Christ. He that herein serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men. (See also Tames 2. 8.)

S. NICHOLL.

SECTION XII.—ROMANS 15. 14—16. 27.

From GLASGOW.—The apostle is persuaded that those **to** whom he wrote were full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and, in addition, able to admonish one another. The question now arises, "What then was the necessity for writing?" In verse 15 he states that his purpose is to put **them** in remembrance of what they had already heard. His ultimate aim was to make the offering- up of the Gentiles acceptable, being sanctified **by** the Holy Spirit. **We** suggest, that the offering **up** mentioned here is the sacrifice of the Gentiles, as found in chapter 12. 1, 2. [No, the offering up of the Gentiles is not the presenting- **by** each believer of his body as a living sacrifice. Note, how in Romans 12. 1 *the* apostle beseeches each to present his body, whereas in Romans 15. 16 the apostle speaks of himself as **a** public servant, ministering- in temple or priestly service the Gospel of God, and those who were reached by his means through the Gospel are spoken of as an offering. It is not the thanksgiving of the saved Gentiles that is referred to, but the saved Gentiles themselves.—J.M.]

Now on his way to Jerusalem, the apostle purposed going to Spain via Rome. Little did he think when he wrote **to** the saints that he would be bound hands and feet **at** Jerusalem, and that under the care of Roman guards he would meet **them**. We wonder how many of those whom he saluted encouraged **him** on his entry into Rome: for it was said of him, "when he saw the brethren he thanked God and took courage."

As a last warning, he puts them on their guard against those who were causing divisions contrary to the doctrine. Rejoicing in their implicit obedience, he counselled them to be **wise** to that which was good, and simple to that which was evil, assuring them that the God of peace would bruise Satan under their feet shortly.

In closing, the apostle ascribes glory to the One who was able to establish them, in keeping with his Gospel through Jesus Christ. Amen.

WILLIAM A. PARK.
JOHN ROBERTS.

From BRANTFORD.—What **a** high commendation **is** given **to** the saints at Rome, in the opening verses of this section! Yet, although their knowledge was so extensive, **we** see the necessity for **a** stirring up **of** their memories, something that is constantly required of us all, whether we know much **or** little.

In verse 16 the apostle is writing concerning his service, its sphere, and its desired object. He could well speak of himself as an example to be followed, for his thoughts and words were so wrapped up in that which his Master had done for him, that he could not dare to speak of anything else. His service carried him over quite an extensive area, probably having a radius of nearly a thousand miles, preaching the Gospel of God and sowing the good Seed of the Word in fresh ground.

How highly does the apostle speak of the churches in Macedonia! for in 2 Corinthians 8. we read that they were so moved for their fellow saints, though Jews, that they Rave freely beyond their power. How like the example of the blessed Lord Jesus! who impoverished Himself that we all might be rich with Him eternally.

The value of prayer is once again brought before us. The apostle truly realized how essential prayer was for the service in which he was engaged.

Romans 16. 1-16. The opening of this chapter brings before us Phoebe, a deaconess (R.V.M.) of the church at Cencreae. Paul esteemed her as one who had served him, and as one who had been a succourer of many. His desire was that she might have the fullest fellowship amongst the saints at Rome. Prisca and Aquila are also mentioned by Paul, to whom he gives credit for risking their lives on his behalf on a former occasion. The church at their house was saluted by him, so it is evident that at least some of the Romans met at their house. Epauetus is spoken of as "the first fruits of Asia unto Christ." Thus are enumerated, one after another, those who were labourers together unto the extension of the Kingdom of God, men whose deeds called forth the approval of the apostle. How much more so of the Lord Himself who knew them thoroughly! So we are encouraged as we remember our labour is not vain in the Lord. He also exhorts the saints to salute one another with a holy kiss, and closes this portion by passing on to them the salute of all the churches of Christ. We would suggest that the handsake of to-day answers to the holy kiss of those early days. Is there a possibility that the persons mentioned in verses 17 and 18, who were causing- stumbling, were outside the Assembly of God?

We could well believe that the apostle's gracious manner in warning would help them to take heed to his advice. Truly the shepherd character is revealed in a marked degree in this whole chapter. How near to his heart they were! For not only does he forewarn them, but he rejoices over them, prays for them, encourages them and sends greetings to them. What an example is thus shown for shepherds! The latter clause of verse 19 reminds us very forcibly of the Great Shepherd's words in Matthew 10. 16.

Verse 20. We would suggest a reason for this title, the God of peace, being used is that the enemy of peace is Satan. He cannot destroy us, though he may seek to **mar** our conditional peace. We might well rejoice, in anticipation of the time when we shall be immune from attacks of Satan, when our bodies of humiliation will be changed like unto His Glorious Body. The closing- of the Epistle is very much like the opening- (see verses 1-15 of the first chapter). Probably the reason for Tertius writing the Epistle was the Apostle Paul's poor eyesight. (See Galatians 4. 13-15; 6. 11.)

From PAISLEY.—In the opening verse of this section we have presented the general condition of the church in Rome. The testimony thus borne shows they were carrying out **the** will of God from "the heart, though evidently there were some exceptions (chapter 16. 17). We see Divine order, in which there is time and place for the exercise of the various gifts; this agrees very closely with the truth of 1 Corinthians 14. 33. Being so spiritually minded the apostle is emboldened to write, putting them in remembrance, a needful practice in the things of God, for instance, the feast of remembrance. Many are stirred **up** to greater zeal by being- put in remembrance; (see also 2 Peter 1. 12 and 13). Perhaps this is shown here, for "the offering **up** of the Gentiles " appears to be the place they occupy in the purposes of God; as Israel was, the Gentiles now are. Meantime, some of the branches have been broken off, because of disobedience; they forfeited their privileges.

Verses 19-21 of chapter 10. bear witness that God had made these things known beforehand. The phrase, "the obedience of the Gentiles " (verse 18) carries a similar thought. We wondered if there was anything in common with the exhortation of chapter 12. 1. Another scripture we looked at was 1 Peter 2. 9-10, "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession . . . which in time past were no people, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." [The apostle is not here dealing with God's governmental dealings as in Romans 11. nor yet with the **truth** contained in Romans 12. 1, but with his office (verses 15, 16) and his work (verses 17-21). By the grace of God he was made a minister or public servant of Christ Jesus to minister as a priest the Gospel. In the fulfilment of God's purpose in him **he** fully preached the Gospel from Jerusalem and round about ("round about" covers a vast tract of country) even to Illyricum.—J.M.]

We noted the apostle's longing desire to visit Rome', but he was hindered, his work in stablishing the disciples, we suggest, occupying his time. (Acts 18. 23 and 19. 10.) A striking feature is the knowledge he has that he has completed his ministry in those regions; the last clauses of verse 19 make this clear. So he sets off for Jerusalem with a contribution for the poor saints there. As we picture the apostle in this apparently humble capacity, we again think of Him who said, "I am in the midst of you as one that serveth." (Luke 22. 27.)

The Gentiles being debtors to the Jews, because of sharing their spiritual things, may have had the desire to send relief; but it was an obligation which could not be lightly regarded. It is evidence of a spirit of love and fellowship.

Having- passed through many trials at the hands of the Jews (and see Matthew 10. 36) the apostle fervently seeks the prayers of the brethren for his deliverance.

The 16th chanter deals with the common fellowship of those together of God. The apostle evidently has a personal knowledge of each one he mentions.

The concluding portion contains a warning against false teaching- which reminds us of 2 Corinthians t1. 13-15. **There** is an indication that some have crept in privily. Satan has his means to destroy the work of God, but the great Deceiver will shortly be dealt with by God Himself.

So a bright and glorious prospect is set before the saints in the fitting- conclusion to the epistle, ascribing all the glory to God.

S. THOMSON.

From LONDON, S.E.—The apostle seems to be pleased with the spiritual condition of the saints in Rome, so much so, that he says, "I am persuaded that ye are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, also able to admonish one another." Oh that assemblies might be found in such a condition as to earn such commendable words!

Keep us, Lord, oh! keep us cleaving
To thyself, and still believing,
Till the hour of our receiving •
Promised joys in Heaven.

It is worthy of note that Paul takes no credit to himself, but gives God all the glory for the power given him to enable him to carry the Gospel into so many places, especially those where other workers had not been—"That he might not build on another man's foundation." The apostle was indeed a pioneer.

Verses 14 to 22 seem to be an explanation as to why he had not been to Rome before.

In verses 23 to 29 he unfolds to them his purposes concerning his future journeys, one being to convey the bounty collected by the saints of Macedonia and Achaia, unto the needy saints in Jerusalem, which to him must have been a pleasant task.

It is also encouraging to notice that Paul seeks the prayers of the saints for he had much danger to anticipate from the unbelieving Jews at Jerusalem. This should surely inspire us in our day to be more constant in prayer to God, especially on behalf of those who devote their lives to His service. We should deem it a precious privilege.

We are not quite clear as to the meaning of the latter clause of verse 16, "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Perhaps you can help us. [See note in Glasgow's paper.]

Chapter 16. Verses 17 and 18 are a solemn warning- and should serve to keep us loyal to Him who has called us and to cause us to take heed to the exhortation in 1 Corinthians 1. 10:—"Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

H. F. SOULSBY.

From WEST RIDING.—The thought was expressed that in verse 16 the apostle spoke of himself under the figure of a priest at the altar, offering a sacrifice to God, the sacrifice being the Gentiles who believed the Gospel. [The apostle does not say this quite, but that he was as a priest ministering the Gospel of God. The effect of this ministration was that the Gentiles (saved through the Gospel) might be an acceptable offering being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. This kind of priestly service is shown by Peter as that of the Royal Priesthood.—J.M.] He served with the desire that the fruit of his work might be as an offering without blemish, acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

To this end he laboured (Colossians 1. 28, 29) and he desired that they, who believed the Gospel, should walk worthily of the Gospel. It was in the pursuit of this aim that he wrote to the Romans, for though their faith was proclaimed throughout

the whole world (1. 8), and their "obedience was come abroad unto all men" (16. 19), it was necessary that they should be stirred up, by being put again in remembrance so that "the obedience of the Gentiles" might be fulfilled in their case also.

Others thought that the latter part of verse 16 spoke of the spiritual sacrifices, offered up by believing Gentiles unto God through the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2. 5.) [No, it is the Gentiles themselves, and not their spiritual sacrifices, concerning whom the apostle writes.—J.M.]

There was* power working in him in his preaching the Gospel. (Colossians 1. 29).

Verse 20. He could not stay in Rome where another minister of God had planted. He might call at Rome on his way to Spain, but the work of establishment would be left to those servants of God who were in Rome as he "had no more any place in these regions" after the foundation had been well laid. [The words in inverted commas don't appear to have any allusion to Rome at all.]

Verse 31. He had a fear that there might be still something of the old feeling, that anything from the uncircumcised was unclean, resulting in some hesitancy to accept these gifts from the Gentiles, thus failing to appreciate that they were fellow citizens, fellow heirs, and fellow partakers with them.

Chapter 16. 1. As a deaconess (R.V.M.), Phoebe was one whose heart was stirred up to serve the saints. She counted it an honour to use hospitality, and diligently to follow every good work. (1 Peter 4. 9; 1 Timothy 5. 10).

We are not told why she was going to Rome, but whatever her need, she had a claim to their assistance (verse 2). She had been a succourer of Paul so that he needed not to be burdensome.

Verse 4. How many of us to-day would be strong enough in faith and courage to risk our lives if called upon, as **did** Aquila and Prisca. They may have saved his life during those anxious times in Corinth, when the Corinthian Jews "opposed themselves and blasphemed." (See Act 18. 6-12.) "All the churches of the Gentiles" was considered to mean churches which were chiefly composed of Gentiles, including those "churches of Christ" (see verse 16) in houses mentioned in verses 5, 10, 14 and 15.

Verse 6. We noticed that Mary was credited with having laboured for them, but not in the ministry of the word.

Does Paul speak of these Greeks and Romans and Jews as his kinsmen because they were Roman citizens by birth, like himself, or because they had obtained citizenship by the payment of a large price (Acts 22. 28)? (Andronicus, v. 7, Roman; Herodion, v. 11, Jew; Jason, v. 21, Greek). [Isn't it rather that they were blood relations of his?] Or was it for some other reason?

Verse 7. We thought that the words "who **are** of note," must have referred to men like Judas and Silas (Acts 15. 25-27) of whom little is written, but who had hazarded their lives for the Name's sake and had been chosen to minister the word. ["Who are of note among the apostles" may have two meanings, (1) men who were reckoned among the apostles and noted among them, viewing the word "apostle" in its wider meaning—than applying to the twelve and Paul, (2) men who were spoken of and celebrated among the apostles because of

their faithfulness and zeal in the Lord's things. This may be seen in the fact of their being called by the apostle " my fellow-prisoners," a somewhat strange description, Paul being at liberty at the time of the writing of the epistle. I incline to the latter meaning of the words.—J.M.] Paul manifests his love by his careful remembrance in mentioning- all their names and services.

Verse 17. We noted here that they must turn from those who cause division, and who give occasions of stumbling.

Verse 25. We could not see that there was any difference between the meaning of the two phrases " according to my Gospel " and " the preaching of Jesus Christ " and we thought that the conjunction ought to have been "even" instead of " and." We also thought that the comma should have been placed after the word " Gospel," and left out after the word " Christ."

" According to the revelation . . . now manifested " is in contrast with the time when He shall be preached more as a coming- King than as a crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour. [Paul claimed to have received his Gospel not from man, nor was he taught it, but it came to him by revelation of Jesus Christ. To him were revealed things that were kept hidden from all generations and ages, such as, that the Gentiles were fellows-heirs, fellow-members of the Body and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. Yet, while this was so, the Scriptures revealed the coming of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ was preached by men who had not had a revelation so outstanding as the apostle had, with which his stewardship was connected. (Compare Galatians 1. 11-12, with Ephesians 3. 2-11.) Note how verse 26 speaks of the revelation of the mystery—^{li} But made manifest now, and by the Scriptures of the prophets." God has revealed now what He had kept hidden and the prophetic Scriptures add their witness. This manifestation of the mystery and also prophetic witness-bearing- are according to the commandment of the Eternal God. I do not understand the prophetic Scriptures here to be the writings of New Testament prophets, and, if this were so, we would require to ask, where are these Scriptures now?—J.M.]

Verse 26. It was suggested that Paul was contemplating New Testament prophets in this verse (Ephesians 3.); it was asked if that expresses the apostle's thought more exactly. It was a special feature of the Gospel that it was preached in different days in different ways in agreement with the different purposes of God in those days.

Verse 20. Is this written in reference to the time when we are taken away from this scene? [I take it this bruising of Satan will take place when the God of peace will make for His saints a settled peace after their days of warfare with the Devil. The battle will go on as long- as we are here, but the triumph of the saints' is assured in the end. Some have thought that this bruising would take place at the judgment-seat of Christ, but, for myself, I prefer to leave the time in the realm of the things that are not specifically defined, as evidently the apostle does when he uses the word " shortly."—J.M.] Satan will be crushed beneath the feet of the saints, though in this clay. He is endeavouring to make divisions and cause stumbling blocks. But the God of peace will ensure to us victory.

R. ROGERS.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—The last portion of this epistle contains many interesting details which give an insight into the character of the Apostle Paul, and into the object of his life's work. In the previous portion he had said that Christ has been made a minister of the circumcision and that through the work of Christ the Gentiles, too, might glorify God. Now the apostle, deeply conscious of his own high calling, again reminds the saints that he is a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God (verse 16). He had heard the words of the Lord Jesus, "Go, and I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles," and, recalling his past labours, he could rejoice in the fact, that, through the grace of God given to him, he had fully preached the Gospel of Christ, from Jerusalem, even unto Illyricum—a province adjoining the west of Macedonia. His work was as the arduous toil of a settler on virgin ground, preaching* the Gospel where Christ was not already named—a planter, a foundation layer, that he might not build upon another man's foundation. He could now say he had no more place in these regions, having fulfilled his mission.

The apostle is writing from Corinth. He was about to return to Jerusalem for the last time, and he takes this opportunity of telling the saints at Rome of the care which the Gentile churches of Macedonia and Achaia have for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem in contributing to their temporal needs.

Great purpose of heart had characterised the journeyings of the apostle, but there are one or two things which make us wonder whether his determined plans for the future were just right. We cannot doubt that his intention to go to Spain was in the furtherance of the work of the Gospel, but we think it is significant (having in mind what eventually transpired) that he does not say he will do this "if the Lord will" (see Tames 4. 15); and also in view of what the disciples at Tyre said to him in the Spirit, that he should not set foot in Jerusalem, and the words of the prophet Agabus at Caesarea. (Acts 21. 4 and 11). May we learn from this mistake, if a mistake it was. [The words of the disciples at Tyre are evidently in keeping with Acts 20. 23. Evidently the disciples wished to save the apostle from suffering, because of the love they had for him. It was not that the words of these disciples countermanded what Paul understood to be the Lord's will: "Behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem," and nothing could turn him from what he knew was the Lord's will, neither the tears of disciples nor prophets' vision, nor bonds, imprisonment, nor death itself. It is evident from 1 Thessalonians 2. 18 that Satan hindered the apostle sometimes.—J.M.]

Rome being the imperial city of the empire, it would be the centre of attraction for traders and travellers: hence the long list of names of brethren and sisters in the final chapter, many of whom the apostle must have met in his journeys. These salutations also reveal how thoroughly acquainted the apostle was, not only with the characters and service of many of the saints, but also with their movements, showing that he was both a shepherd and a leader of men. The Acts of the Apostles find this and other epistles written by the apostle also bear this out.

Such expressions as "the church that is in their house" and "the brethren that are with them" indicate that there were several companies of saints meeting in various places in the city of Rome.

In spite of all the good things for which he is able to commend the saints (their obedience having come abroad unto all men) he has to exhort them to mark those who are causing the divisions amongst them, and it may be, this is what he refers to, when he says that the God of peace shall bruise Satan under their feet shortly. The imposters who had come amongst them were as thorns in their flesh, messengers of Satan, and it is quite likely that the apostle's coming to Rome would be to the church's salvation in this matter.

His desire, in closing, is that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be with the saints, the grace which is the token in all his epistles.

It is a fitting conclusion to the wonderful Gospel of justification by faith which he has now committed to writing, that he should ascribe all the glory, through Jesus Christ, to the only wise God, the Originator of this Gospel, which is now manifested through the Scriptures and preached by him, an apostle and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

N. G. ADKINS.

From CARDIFF.—Upon verse 16 was spent a considerable portion of time, and many thoughts were expressed, which we have enumerated below, and upon which we should like help. [See note in Glasgow's paper.]

(a) In view of verses 8-11 of this chapter where the apostle seems to be reviewing the "calling" of the Gentiles, it seems that in verse 16 he has summed up his views and that the "offering up of the Gentiles" means "the bringing in" of the Gentiles.

(b) Since the earlier theme had been that ^{cc} the Jews had judged themselves unworthy of eternal life (Acts 13. 46) it would appear that the apostle is now speaking of "the offering up" as the "calling of the Gentiles." Not only did he thus survey the ingathering of the Gentiles but he looked on to the time when the last should be gathered in. In this sense, he sought to make his Gentile converts acceptable, in that he "shrank not from declaring the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20. 27), desiring that they "might offer service, well-pleasing to God." (Hebrews 12. 28.)

(c) In verse 31 the apostle expresses the hope that his ministrations may be acceptable to the saints in Jerusalem. It was thought that this referred to the gift collected by him from Macedonia and Achaia, and therefore the "offering up" might be thus explained.

(d) Would it be the spiritual sacrifices of the Gentiles (in the light of Malachi 1. 11)?

(e) One translator, in speaking upon the word "ministering," (R.V.M. "ministering in sacrifice") describes it "as a sacred or priestly service, a sacred work." Taking into account the construction of the verse it was thought that the apostle figuratively stood as a priest "waving" or presenting his offering, firstfruits unto the Lord. The priest (e.g., Numbers 15.) before offering his oblation, fitted and prepared it. It would be interesting to know whether Leviticus 23. 17 has any bearing upon this verse.

From BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—The Church of God in Rome was evidently in a nourishing spiritual condition, being full of

goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another. "To admonish" is "to warn," not threateningly, but lovingly, and the question is raised, "Is it the duty of every individual to admonish a brother or sister whom he thinks is walking disorderly, or is this the work of overseeing men alone?" It was generally agreed that to admonish one another is a work of love which can be exercised by individuals within certain limits; outside those limits the work falls on those who seek to lead in the Assembly. The whole principle is dealt with in Matthew 18. 15-17, (see also Colossians 3. 16; 1 Thessalonians 5. 12-14; 2 Thessalonians 3. 15; Titus 3. 10).

Verse 16. The word "ministering" here, we understand is not "deaconing" but "acting as a priest," i.e., ministering the Gospel of God. Some difficulty was experienced in connexion with "the offering up of the Gentiles" as to whether this was in the present time, or when the saints stand at the judgment-seat of Christ. Some thought that this was a present act, and the salvation of the Gentiles, through the Gospel, went up to God as a sweet-smelling savour. On the other hand, it was suggested that the offering up was an act which will take place in a future day in the sense that at the judgment-seat of Christ the apostle would lead forth, as it were, the Gentiles, and present them to Christ as an offering well-pleasing to Him. (See 1 Thessalonians 2. 19; Colossians 1. 28.) [I think that the apostle's priestly act in ministering the Gospel was during the time when he fully preached the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum. Based upon this ministry of the Gospel was the offering up of the Gentiles who were reached by the apostle's preaching. The future does not seem to be in contemplation. -J.M.]

The apostle was in the true sense of the word a pioneer, his desire being to preach the Gospel where Christ had never been named. Hence from Jerusalem even to Illyricum he had fully preached the Gospel, and now his desire was to go to Spain; whether he ever reached there is a matter of conjecture. At the time of writing the epistle he was on his way to Jerusalem, carrying the bounty of the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to the needy among the saints at Jerusalem. (See 1 Corinthians 16. 1-3; 2 Corinthians 8. 1-4 and chapter 9.; Acts 24. 17.)

The 16th chapter opens with a letter of commendation. These letters were just as important in the early churches as they are to-day. Many there be to-day who move about without these letters, whether only on a visit or to reside in a different town; this to our mind is most unscriptural. We remember that Apollos received a letter from the church in Ephesus to that in Corinth (Acts 18. 27). The epistle to Philemon is a letter of commendation. Even those who were to accompany the apostle to Jerusalem with the gift from Corinth were to be "approved" by letters (1 Corinthians 16. 3, 4), as though the word of the apostle were not sufficient. For the apostle himself there was no need for such a letter (see 2 Corinthians 3. 1). We note that the letter of commendation in Romans 16. 1 points out that Phoebe was a servant of the Church and also that she had been a succourer of many, including the apostle. This suggests to us that those used to doing service in their home assembly should carry letters giving such information, not necessarily for the whole assembly to which they are commended, but for the guidance of those who arrange for the work in the assem-

blies. If this were done, much confusion and error would be avoided.

The list of salutations which follow make very interesting reading and it is noteworthy that women **find** prominent mention:—"Mary who bestowed much labour **on you**" (verse 6); "Tryphaena and Tryphosa who labour (present tense) in the Lord," and "Persis the beloved who laboured (past **tense**) much in the Lord" (verse 12).

There is also the suggestion that in **Rome** there were more than one Assembly of saints (verse 5). "Salute the Church that is in their house"; (verse 14) "the brethren that are with them," and (verse 15) "All the saints that are with them."

From verse 17, it would seem that, although the Romans as a whole were in a good condition, there were those who were causing divisions and occasions of stumbling. In almost all the epistles of Paul a reference is made to some who have thus caused trouble in the various churches (note 1 Corinthians 1. 10; Galatians 5. 10, 12; 2 Thessalonians 3. 6, 11; 1 Timothy 1. 19, 20, etc.); hence his frequent remarks, exhorting the early disciples to admonish, to mark, and to withdraw from such, with the ultimate end in view, that the offenders should be restored.

We would like help on the 20th verse; does this refer to a time yet future or was it to be their experience as a church? For example, if they dealt with those who were erring and causing the divisions and stumbling, would they experience the fact that Satan had been bruised under their feet? [See note in West Riding paper.]

In verse 23 we have internal evidence that the epistle was written from Corinth. Gaius was a Corinthian (1 Corinthians 1. 14), Erastus is mentioned in Acts 19. 22 and 2 Timothy 4. 20 says, "Erastus abode at Corinth." We assume that this Erastus is the same person in each case. The epistle closes fittingly with a doxology "to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen."

J. MCCORMICK.

From **ATHERTON**.—The apostle in this section of our study begins by giving expression to the assurance in his heart of the confidence which he places in them and gives us an insight into the condition of the Roman saints. (Compare Colossians 2. 5.) Such goodness, knowledge and competence as they possessed could only be attained by a close study of the sacred writings and in humility, each giving place the one to the other, encouraging and strengthening themselves in the will of God. We feel to-day the need of such practical things as these that we may "grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ," "rooted and builded up in Him." We cannot too greatly emphasize the need of careful, prayerful and regular study of God's precious word, that Timothy-like we may give diligence to present ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, holding a straight course in the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2. 15, R.V.M.)

However, says the apostle, the boldness of his letter is by way of stimulating the recollection of the saints to the fact that, as "the apostle to the Gentiles," his great desire is to fulfil to the utmost this ministry. God entrusted him as an approved servant of Christ Jesus with this glorious Gospel—(compare

1 Thessalonians 2. 4 and 1 Timothy 1. 11)—and here he calls it a priestly ministry or service because he was desirous of being instrumental in presenting, as it were, the Gentiles as an acceptable offering to God. It was suggested that here the apostle had in mind the aspect of the burnt offering, the sweet-smelling savour of which brought joy and satisfaction to the heart of God. [I am doubtful if this is what is before the apostle's mind that the Gentiles were a burnt offering. Is it not rather the thought of an offering as contained in Isaiah 66. 20, when the scattered of the children of Israel will be brought by the Gentiles to God's holy mountain? Gentiles were reached through the Gospel and became an offering acceptable to God, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.—J.M.]

It was thought that in verse 18 the apostle is desirous to be found claiming no glory which was due to the labours of others. But his humble boast (giving all glory to God) is that he had unreservedly preached the Gospel of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and abundant blessing had resulted.

In his zeal and earnestness he had proceeded to sound out the message in new regions, thus causing to be fulfilled the scripture written by Isaiah of old, "That which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they understand" (Isaiah 52. 15). By so doing- he had been prevented again and again from coming to see the saints in Rome, and at the moment of writing he was about to go to Jerusalem, conveying to the poor saints there a temporal gift from the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia. This, says he, is after all but a small recognition of the debt they, the Gentiles, owed to them of Jerusalem for the spiritual blessings received from them. "For salvation is from the T^ows" (John 4. 22). (See also Acts 1. 8.)

The 16th chapter is one of various salutations from the apostle to individual saints and included is the commendation of Phoebe, a sister of the Church of God at Cenchreae. This brings to our notice the scriptural principle and great importance and necessity of "Notes of commendation," when saints are wont to visit other assemblies. Hence they can, under such conditions, be received "worthily of the saints." We are of the opinion that there is a tendency to neglect the fulfilment of this highly commendable principle in many cases to-day.

Prisca and Aquila are of special note amongst those saluted, because they had had much fellowship with the apostle in his ministry and journeyings, also having endangered their own lives for his sake. This man and his wife were servants of the Lord Jesus Christ in the proclamation of the glorious Gospel-message and were worthy associates of the apostle.

It was thought that the phrase "of note among the apostles," in verse 7, conveyed the idea that such were held in high esteem by the apostles.

"Salute one another with a holy kiss" (verse 16). It was said that this was customary in the east and though such was the case yet the obedience thereto must be from a pure motive, i.e., love from the heart without dissimulation. The emphasis is on the word holy, defining- the character of the kiss; and it was suggested that although this is not customary among us to-day, yet there is that which should take its place, i.e., the greeting of each other by the shake of the hand. For this practice see 2 Kings 10. 15; and we would emphasize the words "Is

thine heart right, as. my heart is with thy heart?" Of course, if out of a pure heart we were unable to shake hands with anyone, then we should rather refrain from so doing until whatsoever hindered was removed, until as brother to brother We could say, "My heart is right with thy heart. Give me thy hand."

Verse 19 gives a thought which also we would do well to give heed to—"Wise unto good and innocent unto evil." It is not the business of the Christian to pry into the evil of the world, nor into the wickedness existing in the people of the world, but the things that are true, just, pure, lovable, of good repute and virtuous (Philippians 4. 8), should occupy our minds and be continually cherished in our hearts to the exclusion of aught beside.

The apostle closes his epistle with a beautiful doxology of praise and adoration to Him, the only wise, all loving God, for all His wondrous grace and mercy revealed in the Gospel of His blessed Son and we would reiterate these blessed words out of hearts touched and won by such love, "to Him be the glory through all the ages. Amen." Amen.

E. BIRCHALL.

REMARKS.

This section begins with what is characteristic of the apostle's writings—the acknowledgment of all that is praise-worthy in those to whom he wrote. He spoke of the Roman saints as: I. being full of goodness, II. filled with all knowledge. In consequence, they were able to admonish one another. Any one who would give an admonition should remember that goodness, as well as knowledge, is necessary if the admonition is to be effectual. He would be a foolish man who would reject an admonition, if he knew that the person who admonished him sought only his good. In admonition, knowledge is necessary, but don't let us forget the goodness.

Though the saints in Rome were able to admonish one another, yet for this very cause the apostle wrote the more boldly, adding his admonitions to their admonitions, by putting them in remembrance and that because of the office he filled. God's grace (not the vote of the people) made him an apostle, or, as he here describes it, a "public servant" of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, and he ministered, as a priest, the Gospel of God. The conception he places before the mind in connexion with the preaching of the Gospel is a most exalted one. It is like to that statement of his in Romans 1. 9, "God is my witness whom I SERVE in my spirit in the Gospel of His Son." He served in the Gospel in divine service. He uses a word which speaks of "service" which should only be rendered to God. The effect of the apostle's ministering the Gospel was seen in God's receiving an acceptable offering, in the persons of the Gentiles, who were reached by the Message. Elsewhere we have drawn attention to an offering of like kind in Isaiah 66. 20; there it is the scattered ones of the nation of Israel, but here, in Romans, it is Gentiles.

Having dealt with his apostleship to the Gentiles (verses 15, 16), he now turns to the work he has done, and he gloried in Christ Jesus, in what He had wrought through him for the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, (WORD refers to

the Gospel he proclaimed, and DEED to the signs and wonders wrought in the power of the Holy Spirit.)

The apostle made it his aim to preach Christ where there was no assembly of God. (Compare 1 Corinthians 3. 10.) The Gospel and the foundation are not synonymous. His view of preaching Christ where He was not already named seems to agree with his purpose to visit Spain, and his going to Rome was to be but a step in the way thither. At present, he had the prospective journey to Jerusalem before him, of which a good deal is said in the Acts and elsewhere. Even at such an early-stage of the journey he had qualms as to how the disobedient in Judaea would treat him, when he reached Jerusalem, and we know, as he neared the end of the journey, how he had witness borne to him again and again as to how they would receive him. Yet he anticipates a safe issue and looks forward to going to Rome, and together with the saints there finding rest, so much of his arduous life-work having been accomplished.

The closing chapter begins with a letter of commendation, from the Church of God in Cenchreae, to the Church in Rome, on behalf of Phoebe, who was a deaconess of the Cenchreae assembly. She was worthy to be assisted because she had been a succourer of many, and of Paul himself. She is to be received in a manner as saints ought to exercise in such matters.

The greetings in chapter 16. show how well acquainted the apostle was with many in the Church in Rome, many of whom may have been saved elsewhere through his ministry and had found their way to Rome; for instance, Epaenetus, whom Paul calls "my beloved," is called the "firstfruits of Asia unto Christ." Paul evidently had many relatives in the Fellowship:—Andronicus and Junias in Rome who were saved before the apostle was; also Herodian; Lucius, Jason and Sosipater in Corinth (or Achaia), and whether Paul refers to his own mother in verse 13, or the affectionate regard in which he held the mother of Rufus, is not quite clear to me, it may be the latter. At any rate, several of the apostle's relations were in the Fellowship in those wonderful early days. All these greetings breathe of Christian esteem, and show the value the apostle set upon one and another who served the Lord faithfully, and in several cases we read of those who opened their houses as meeting places of the Church in Rome. Prisca and Aquila, a worthy couple, and well-known to all readers of their Bibles, are among such, as also Asyncritus, and Philologus, and the rest.

While all this is very pleasant, the Church in Rome was not free from disturbing elements, "them that are causing the divisions"; such were to be marked and turned from. They were at the Devil's work and wrought according to the Devil's method—"by their smooth and fair speech." But the triumph of God's faithful saints is assured, for "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." As for the Roman saints in their day, so for us in ours, this is future. "God . . . shall bruise"—when? "Shortly"! So we fight and wait for that moment of triumph.

Paul as he closes strikes the same note in closing as he did when he began, when he says of the Gospel that it "is made known unto all nations unto obedience of faith." This God demands from all men and connected with this obedience of faith is the universal Lordship of Christ. "The same Loi^ is Lord of all and is rich unto all that call upon Him,"

I am sure that we all, who during the past twelve months have followed these studies, have been much helped of God, and I trust the lessons we have learned may abide with us throughout the days of our earthly service. If we have learned but a very little of the will of God, we have (remembering the eternal character of divine truth) been more than amply repaid for the time and pains which the Coiner meetings and these studies have taken. J.M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From BRANTFORD.—1. Romans 16. 13. Is the Rufus here mentioned the same as we read of in Mark 15. 21 ?

2. Have we any record that the Apostle Paul went to Spain ?

ANSWER 1. It is possible that Rufus here may have been the son of Simon of Cyrene, but it is impossible to be definite on the point.—J.M.

ANSWER 2. Whether the apostle was able to fulfil his purpose and go to Spain we cannot say. Romans 15. seems to contain the only reference to this prospective journey of the apostle.—J.M.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE GOSPEL OF GOD.

ANALYSIS.

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1 The Address. 1. 1-7.

(a) The Writer, his work and equipment. 1. 1-6.

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2 Paul and the Saints at Rome. 1. 8-15.

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- IV. CONCLUSION. 15. 14-16. 25. " UNTO HIM."
 1 Personal. 15. 14-33.
 2 Salutations. 16. 1-24.
 3 Doxology, v. 25.

The Apostle's own summary of his letter is given in the concluding doxology.

S. BURROWS.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR
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<i>£ a. d.</i>	<i>J. a. d.</i>
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issues. . . . £39 2 7	sues. £47 13 6
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close of 1927 carried	Balance from last
forward to next year... 24 1 6	year. 13 0 1
^24 1 6	^24 1 6

Audited and found correct,

J. L. FERGUSON.

Glasgow. 10th December, 1927.

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