

Revised

THE MEANING

OF THE

CHRISTADELPHIAN MOVEMENT,

AS APPARENT IN

THE REPORT

OF

A FOUR DAYS' GATHERING OF CHRISTADELPHIANS

From various parts of the country, in Birmingham,

ON

SATURDAY, SUNDAY, MONDAY, AND TUESDAY,

AUGUST 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th, 1872.

1872.

LONDON: CHRISTADELPHIAN BOOK DEPOT, 151, UPPER STREET,
BUNTINGHURST.

BIRMINGHAM: THE CHRISTADELPHIAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY,
ATHENÆUM ROOMS, TEMPLE ROW.

THE MEANING OF THE CHRISTADELPHIAN MOVEMENT.

THIS is the age of "movements," and the Christadelphian movement is one of them, but it differs from them all in several important respects. The movements of the day are intended to accomplish present objects by present instrumentalities. They begin and end within the compass of mortal effort, whereas the Christadelphian movement, while intended to arrest a present attention and to lead to certain present action, proposes the acquisition of a future benefit in the channel of a revealed purpose which God alone can fulfil.

It consists of the activity of many persons in different parts of the country, who believe that Jesus of Nazareth—who was crucified by the Romans, at the instigation of the Jews, under the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate, in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, over 1800 years ago—rose from the dead; authorised a message to the nations by the hands of his apostles; ascended to heaven; and will return at the appointed time to resume the work then inaugurated. These persons have no hope of any regeneration of the world apart from the return of Christ. They regard the salvation of mankind as hopeless without God's interference in the promised form. They take no part in the world's schemes of reform. The only achievement they aim at, as regards themselves, and all those who come under their influence, is, the obtaining of a right to personal participation in the glory to be revealed at the second appearing of Christ; which, on the authority of the written word of Christ and his apostles, they believe to be

possible by a belief of the promises (which constitute the gospel or glad tidings) and obedience of the commandments which Christ has left for the observance of all disciples till he come. Compliance with these two conditions involves, in their judgment, a repudiation of the so-called "orthodox" religious creeds, which they believe to be largely compounded of Pagan philosophy and priestly fable; and a separation from all the religious systems of the day, Roman, Anglican, and dissent.

The source of their conviction, the basis of their hopes, is the BIBLE, which they believe to be the word of God, and which they accept in its entirety, and read in the light of history, and the laws of the language in which it was originally written. They regard "Old" and "New" Testament as ONE, and both necessary to a correct apprehension of the MESSIANIC SCHEME. They believe man to be mortal, and that his only hope lies in a belief and obedience of the gospel promulgated by the apostles in the first century—a course commencing with the understanding of the truth, induction by baptism (in water, by immersion,) into the name of Christ, and continuing through life in a strict submission to the precepts of Christ.

They have been brought to their present condition by having had their attention called to the Bible, whose teachings, on examination, they found to be different from what they had been trained to believe. They have been brought out of all sects. They adopt the name "Christadelphian," as expressive

of a believer's position as one of CHRIST'S BRETHREN; and as a necessary distinction from the mass of so-called Christian professors. The benefit they have themselves received, they desire to extend to others, and, therefore, one and all unite in a "movement" in which all take part to open the eyes of their neighbours, if haply they may lay hold of eternal life.

Their work being polemic in its first stage, their character and objects are liable to be, and are, in fact, generally misunderstood. They are accused of being "infidels" because they feel bound, on the authority of the Bible, to assail many doctrines which are held to be true, but which they believe to be, and are prepared to prove to be, totally false. They believe there is no salvation apart from an understanding and belief of the purpose of God, as enunciated in the Gospel, and an obedience of all the commandments. In this belief they are desirous of commending to all honest men the things they hold, and for this reason, are anxious that such should understand them in their true character. It is thought that no better opportunity could be afforded the sincere enquirer of becoming acquainted with their spirit and purpose than by putting in his hand this report of a four days' gathering of Christadelphians from various parts of Britain, which took place in Birmingham on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, August 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th, 1872; wherein they are exhibited in the attitude of fraternal conference, seeking to bring their convictions practically to bear, in a mutual purifying of themselves for the Lord's use at his coming, and encouragement in the arduous work inaugurated by the apostles, of taking out from among the Gentiles a people for his name.

The following places, in addition to Birmingham, were represented: Baltimore, U.S., Bewdley, Bridgnorth, Cheltenham, Derby, Devonport, Dorchester, Dudley, Edinburgh, Fazeley,

Frome, Glasgow, Grantham, Halifax, Huddersfield, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Lowdham, Maldon, Manchester, Mumbles, New Pitsligo, Nottingham, Oldbury, Stathern, Stourbridge, Stratford-on-Avon, Swansea, Tewkesbury, Warwick, Weston-super-Mare, Whitby, Wisbeach, Astwood Bank.

R. ROBERTS.

SATURDAY EVENING.

At half-past seven, the brethren came together for a meeting in the Athenaeum, at which the proceedings were "opened" with words of welcome. Brother Turner occupied the chair.

The brethren sang together hymn 211, "Hark, 'tis the watchman's cry," after which Rom. xvi. was read. Brother Turner then engaged in prayer.

Brother TURNER then said his duty that evening was an easy and a pleasant one. He had simply to call upon other brethren to give the visitors a hearty welcome; yet, though his name was not down in the programme for a speech, he should think himself remiss in his duty if he did not also say a few words of welcome. The prevailing sentiment in his heart at that moment was an overpowering sense of the goodness of God. He felt so grateful that he hardly knew how to express his feelings. Just to think what was the position of the truth a few years ago, and to look at it now! How grateful they had need to be to God that the truth had been so powerful in bringing so many together. Ten years ago, nine-tenths of the brethren and sisters there present were Gentiles, without God and without hope in the world. He was in that position himself, and when he looked round, oh, how thankful he felt to God for the mighty work that had been accomplished in so short a time; for when they looked upon the brethren and sisters present, they did not see all. Those present, though a great number, were only representatives of other brethren and sisters elsewhere; they were only a few out of a great many. How much encouragement, therefore, there was for them to persevere. Let them go on with increased earnestness. Sometimes they were apt to flag a little, because they did not see the work going on altogether to their satisfaction; but the fact was, they had their minds so earnestly fixed on what they were about, that they had no time to look about them to see

what was being accomplished. On occasions like that, however, they could, as it were, pause to look, and they saw there was much to be thankful for. Ten years ago, such a meeting would have been an impossibility; but there they were, and the visitors had the hearty welcome of their brethren and sisters in Birmingham. They welcomed them from the depths of their hearts. They did not know how to express their joy at seeing them, because they were more to them than all the world besides. They were their brethren and sisters. They had their love, and could not help loving them in return. They were all engaged in the same great work—calling the Gentiles from death into life and glory. They had all the world for enemies, and might well say to each other, as far as friendship was concerned, "To whom can we go if we cannot come to you, and you to us?" True, they had God, and in welcoming them, the Birmingham brethren felt they were welcoming Christ: "Forasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." There were many brethren and sisters in Birmingham who were poor, having to work hard for low wages, and having large families to maintain, but who, nevertheless, would do their utmost to make the visitors comfortable; yet if they had only the power to do as their hearts prompted, they would use them as well again. Let the visiting brethren and sisters take the will for the deed. They had their hearts. There was only one sentiment in calling them together; it was that they might be strengthened in their most holy faith, and be better prepared for the battle in time to come; and also that they might get closer together and understand each other better. With these few words, he would now call upon the brother whose name stood first on the list.

Brother SHUTTLEWORTH (of Birmingham) then addressed the meeting. He said he had exceeding great pleasure in bidding the visitors welcome to Birmingham, not that he himself was a native of Birmingham; he had several homes; but it belonged to a brother of Christ to bid his brethren and sisters welcome wherever he might be. He was sure that so far as numbers were concerned and the spectacle of many gathered together from different parts of the country, he never set his eyes on such a picture before. They had come to rejoice together—not at Jerusalem, but in anticipation of Jerusalem; for they all

hoped to have their feet one day within the holy city. At present they were in the wilderness, and they all of them to a large extent knew what wilderness life was if they had been in the truth a few years; and this only made it the more fitting that they should have a season of this sort—a sort of oasis in the desert—a time of refreshing—a green spot in the history of the truth where they could see each others' faces, and communicate with each other, instruct each other, and further each other's efforts in advancing the truth. That gathering was of a very different character from the gatherings so frequent among the systems and sects around, out of which they had all come. It was different in this that they all, both collectively and individually, had felt the power of the gospel not only as a sentimental sensation, but as a moral impulse. They all knew in whom they had believed; they knew and were able to define *what* they had believed, and more than that, they were able to prove what they believed, from the least to the greatest. Therefore, they came together on a footing such as Christ was described to be, in the saying "we are built upon a rock." In being built upon Christ, they are built upon an immovable foundation. Now to be built upon such a rock as this, comprehended such an understanding of Christ as they had. They gloried not in having had ability of themselves to find the truth (for they had not found it of themselves), but they gloried in that they had received it of the grace of God; that it had been preserved to them for 1,800 years, and that it had been their happy lot, living in these times of the Gentiles, to have fallen in with it, when the understanding of it was scarcely a thing to be met with. This circumstance was not of their making at all. They had had nothing at all to do with it, so far as the first beginning was concerned. They must every one recognise, and doubtless would do so, that all this mercy was of God. They had their standing of God. Not only did they begin of God when they were immersed in water, and took upon them the name of the Lord Jesus, but God had had to do with the circumstances and the various vicissitudes through which they had passed, and by which they had come to the knowledge of the truth. They, therefore, came together to rejoice before God, not only that they saw each others' faces in the flesh, which of itself was enough to create much thankfulness, but that in God's mercy, they had seen the

way of the truth, and the salvation which was in Zion, which was of Christ Jesus, and in the hope of which they were walking in Christ's commands. They neither gloried in their wisdom nor their strength, but if wise men, they gloried in the Lord, in whom they occupied a position which was immovable, like the kingdom which is hoped for, of which Paul says "it cannot be moved." Wherever there was a brother who thoroughly comprehended the truth and embraced it, he was just as immovable as the kingdom. That class might differ in their yield of fruit. They might bring forth thirty, sixty, or a hundred-fold, but there was one characteristic feature in which they all rejoiced—all the true brethren and sisters of Christ were of the honest-hearted class; not honest merely in the Gentile sense, of not taking anything that belonged to another; but honest in a higher sense—honest toward God. This was a kind of honesty not recognised by the Gentiles, and this was the standing into which the brethren had come. They were not come together to compliment each other on their knowledge and understanding, but because of the blessed hope which they had received of God, because of the joyful sound in which they rejoiced. There was no music so sweet as the truth. But few people had any ear for it; it was only a certain class that appreciated it and yielded to it, and this was the class who constituted the name Christadelphian in our day. They gloried in the joyful sound of the truth, and were, therefore, joyful in each other's presence in anticipation of the greater and more extensive gathering, when they should come from east and west, and north and south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were all on a level in respect to the principle on which they should enter into the kingdom of God. That principle was the principle of faith and obedience. There was one law in this matter for Jew and Gentile, rich and poor. God was no respecter of persons. All who passed through the door of the kingdom would pass through because of their love and obedience—loving God with all their heart, and soul, and strength, and their neighbours as themselves—upon which two commandments, as Christ declared, hung all the law and the prophets. They were there that evening because of their adoption of those two commandments; therefore, they were filled with joy unspeakable, not because of that

present occasion as to what it was of itself, but because of its connection with that glorious future when God's children would be gathered from all parts of the earth and all ages. God did not find the requisite amount of material in any one age: there was so much wood, and hay, and stubble. In many ages, he would find all he wanted, and then the rest would go to the dross—all the wicked of the earth would be destroyed. The earth would then be in the indisputable possession of those who would derive their right from God. This was their hope, and their realization of it depended upon their holding fast the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end. It behoved them, therefore, to help each other along, and exhort each other, that they might not fall by the way. They were commanded to strengthen the feeble knees and lift up the hands that hung down. If they did not these things, God would not be pleased. Mere professions of obedience would amount to nothing in that day; they must give their hearts, and their hands would follow. The heart was the beginning of all things, and directed the whole man, and where the treasure was the heart would be also. Now, their treasure was Christ. They had no other treasure. There was nothing to be desired under heaven but what was to be found in Christ: love, and mercy, and wisdom, and riches, and honour, and glory, and righteousness, and incorruptibility, and every good thing. This was the purifying time for them that they might win Christ. This was the time of discipline in which they must be tried as true sons of Abraham, and after the manner in which Abraham was tried in a sense; for though they might not be called upon to put to death their only sons, they might have to pluck out their right eye, and cut off pleasant things which might prove hindrances in the way of life. It behoved them to look at the grave side of this matter. Paul spoke of the terrors of the Lord. These were terrors for those who obeyed not the gospel. God would destroy them. Let them then leave nothing undone that might be done. Let them not put off till tomorrow what they could do today. The coming of the Lord would be the grand culmination of things which had begun even now. They had begun to see the religious systems totter and fall; they had come to see a state of things in which these were all in earthquakes together. The time was coming when they would be

completely overthrown, to be found no more at all, but to give place to the glorious constitution of things, in which, with a divine centre, the laws of Christ would become the law and maxims of the world, and there would be glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and goodwill among men.

Brother MEAKIN was next called upon. He said, as one of the Birmingham ecclesia appointed on their behalf, to bid the visitors welcome, he did so with no little amount of pleasurable feeling. It was indeed pleasing to see so many fresh faces of individuals who were of like precious faith with themselves. They were all of one mind and of one family. They were all striving to one end. They had all come to drink at the same fountain; they had all come to understand the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, of which, a few years ago, most of them were entirely ignorant, and from which, at first, some of them—he could speak for himself as one—turned away. God, in his providence—thanks be to His name—had brought them to see those glorious things and to rejoice in them. The brethren and sisters present on that occasion were a proof that those who had been scattered throughout the country had been hard at work; they had been sowing the good seed and the good seed had taken root, and that good seed received into the heart was the thing that had brought them together that evening. They were assembled as the family of Abraham. They were not his children after the flesh, but after the spirit, having received the faith of Abraham into their hearts and become sons of God by the adoption. Thus they had become heirs of the promises. They must, however, remember the words of Jesus to Israel after the flesh—that if they were children of Abraham, they would do the works of Abraham. The question for them to consider was, Did they do the works of Abraham? Were they of Abraham's faith? Did that faith work in them to love and to do the pleasure of God? If not, although they might have believed the truth—although they might be Christadelphians in name, they were not true brethren of Christ. They would be known by their fruits. They had a standard by which to judge themselves. They had God's blessed book, which they had come to comprehend in all its bearings. With this for their guide, they could judge for themselves

and determine whether they were what they professed to be or no. There was a time when they could not read that blessed book as they could now. They were brought up in opposition to its teachings, and were prevented from seeing the glorious things it contained. But they had had the veil lifted from their eyes. They had come to the full assurance of faith and understanding that they were of the promised seed, by having believed the things which Abraham believed, and having obeyed God's commands as far as had been required of them. But this position of knowledge had its drawbacks, so far as the present world was concerned. If they had been faithful, they experienced that it cut off from friends; it separated from fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, and even children. But, knowing the truth was the power of God unto salvation, they were supported under all the difficulties that it might expose them to, and were determined to let nothing cheat them of the great prize it assured to them at the end—eternal life in the kingdom of God. They ought to be thankful for the opportunity of suffering for righteousness' sake, for thousands before them had been denied that opportunity. They ought to be thankful that a man had been raised up in these latter days, that the work of Christ might be resumed. For a long series of ages, the flesh had prevailed. The nations had been subject to the strong delusion which Paul predicted would come on them, because they believed not the truth, but God had, in our day, raised up a man who had been instrumental in lifting the veil from their eyes. They could not help, in such an assembly as that, calling that individual to mind, and thinking how he would have rejoiced could he have seen what they now beheld. Their minds wandered even farther back to the time when Christ's apostles lost their lives in defence of the truth. It was joyful to think that they were the brethren of those apostles, and that they could shortly hope to see them in their presence. They, with many saints, had been sleeping in the dust of the earth for ages, but they would shortly rise, and would they not rejoice when they saw so many Gentiles brought into the fold of Christ through their means! Would those assembled not be crowns of rejoicing in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God! Yea, verily, let them take courage, and work

more and more for the truth, knowing their labour was not in vain in the Lord.

Brother WITCOMB (secretary of the Birmingham ecclesia) said that, simply and shortly, but very sincerely, he would say for the ecclesia in Birmingham that they were very glad to see the brethren and sisters from a distance present, and were very grateful to the Almighty for the interesting spectacle of their presence. He hoped they would appreciate most fully, and enjoy most thoroughly, the entertainment which the Birmingham brethren had been at some pains to provide. The provision had been made with but one view and one aim—the spiritual benefit of all concerned. The principle which had actuated them had been, that the one body of which they were all members was worthy of all honour, and of all that could be done for it. They had met together; their time and their occupation had been marked out for them, and they had made a beginning that evening in accordance with the pretty pink programme which he supposed most of them possessed. He himself felt somewhat awkward in occupying the position he did, inasmuch as when the gathering was first broached, he was one of about three or four who opposed it. They opposed it on the ground that it was too good and too great a luxury to be indulged in at present. They thought that while the present nature was paramount and liable to temptations, they might not trust themselves to such a luxury. But they had felt assured as they had gone on. Certain lions that stood in the way had been driven away, and certain mountains in the distance, when fairly tackled, had turned out very small indeed. One of the things that they looked at almost with despair, was the accommodation which would be required for such a number of visitors, from those who had so little power of providing for themselves. However, that difficulty vanished also, and the result had exceeded their greatest expectations. Brother Whitcomb concluded by running over the details of the programme.

Brother SMITH (the treasurer of the ecclesia) said he gave the visitors a cordial welcome in conjunction with the other brethren and sisters. It filled his heart with rapture to see such a meeting, which he never anticipated. He, like many among them, could look back only a short distance of time in connection

with the truth. Before that very short period, they were like the rest of the Gentile world—children of Adam, under the bondage of sin and death, without Christ, alienated from the life of God, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, which was the condition of the outside world around us. What had brought them together that night? The power of God's truth; the gospel of Jesus Christ. If they had never known that, they should never have met together that evening; they should never have known each other in the flesh. They were now assembled together as one common brotherhood, members of one family, Christ's brethren and sisters, and the sons and daughters of the Almighty. Be it theirs to continue steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, that at the appearing of Jesus Christ, they might meet together in joy. He looked upon that as a preliminary meeting to the great assembly that should surround the Lord in that day, gathered out of every nation and kingdom and tongue, and prayed that it might be their happy lot to have a share in that greater gathering.

Brother TOWNSEND was glad with the rest of his brethren to give the visitors a hearty welcome to Birmingham. He apprehended by their presence that they were heartily and sincerely in love with the truth. They were come together to rejoice in the freedom they derived from the possession of the truth, which was a freedom from the law of sin and death. They rejoiced in their hope. They were called at present by the gospel out of the great Gentile wilderness in which they found themselves, and which wilderness, they knew, was anything but a desirable place to live in: they could speak from experience of that. They were each and every one called to be representatives of light in the earth, and they must do the utmost in their power to glorify the name of God, by the exhibition of that light which would be a saving power to others, as it had been to themselves. The Birmingham brethren were poor and had nothing to boast of, but being filled with the love of Christ, they had invited their brethren elsewhere to come and see them, and in the same love, those brethren had responded to the call. He felt quite rejoiced in bidding them welcome. What a calling they were called to! He could only hope they would attain to the great

salvation.

Brother ROBERTS would not add many words to what had been already said, because the time precluded it, and because it was not needful. He certainly joined heartily with previous speakers in extending to the visitors the poor privilege of a Birmingham welcome. He could not but feel it to be a poor affair. With their eyes fixed on that to which they were aspiring, and for which they had been asked by the truth to hope for, there did not appear, in the present time, to be anything worthy to rejoice in, even the highest and greatest. Real joy was only to be realised when believers walked in the truth. It would have been a joyful evening if the Master had come and made an appointment for them to meet him. It would have been a meeting of a different character certainly—a very solemn meeting, but to the majority assembled, doubtless a very glad some meeting. Certainly to all true brethren it would be glad some, and none were true brethren who did not realise those things which had been spoken that night, and come up to that realisation in their life and conversation. If they were faithful in the least, they would be glad; if they were unfaithful, though now surrounded with plenty and honour, they would have their misgivings in that day, when called into the presence of the Judge to give an account. They would be afraid. There was no need for fear, if the love of Christ was a reality. Brother Roberts concluded by explaining the principle on which the programme had been drawn. This concluded the speeches of

WELCOME.

Brother BOSHER (of London) responded on behalf of the visitors. He was thinking, as the brethren were speaking, how appropriate it was they should be assembled where they were. Supposing the ecclesias had been asked where they should like to hold such a meeting, where else did they think they would have said? For several reasons, it seemed to him it must be the place where they then were. Geographically, Birmingham was something like the centre of a circle; if they all stood round in a ring, their faces would be towards it; it was, in other senses, the centre to which their faces turned, almost instinctively, in connection with the truth in all its personal history in relation to themselves, and in all its

history as it had developed itself in our day. Everything must have its centre, and the truth had its centre. Its great centre was Christ; its local centre, in relation to our day, was in Birmingham, which was the centre of our little island, and convenient on that account. If they came from east, west, north or south, to meet at the nearest point for all, you must meet in Birmingham or thereabouts. Then it had become so in the providence of God. There was one little sentence in the chapter that was read (Rom. xvi.) that fixed itself upon his mind in relation to this meeting. Paul desired his greetings to be presented to some of the brethren who were "in Christ before him." Well, they had assembled that evening to see brethren that were "in Christ before them." If these had not been in Christ, so far as human history is concerned, in all probability they should not have been. So that in coming to Birmingham in response to their invitation, it seemed to him like coming home. It was hardly needful for the brethren to tell them that they loved them, and it was hardly needful for the visitors to respond and say that they loved them. It was one of the great impulses of our nature to love that which was kindred to them. Love beget love, and the love which flowed from the Deity, who had planted the principle within them, in alliance with his thoughts and purposes, was the highest type of love that could animate the human breast. They felt love in the days of error and darkness, but never did all the affections and intellect, all the powers of the mind come forth as they had done since the truth had laid hold of them. It would be strange if they did not feel the budding of response of love to the brethren, to whom as instruments they owed their hope of immortality in the presence of the Deity. Another thought struck him. In the Acts of the "Apostles" it was said of the apostles, that being let loose they went to their own people." Well, there were a good many there to-night, but he could tell them the reason why there were not more—they were not let loose. He had heard of two or three that had the chain fastened round them just as they were going to start, and if they could have got loose, they would have been found there. He, as representing some of the brethren in London, would make this as their apology, that they were not loose, and they could not break the chain, and he was sure that

there were many more in other ecclesias who would have been there if it had not been for the same cause. It was a great privilege to be let loose for a season. Considering the many ties that bound them, it was a wonder that so many could get loose, and he was sure there were thousands who had read the works that had gone out from Birmingham, who would have liked to have a peep at this extraordinary people, and there were many people who had read the works, and been convinced by them, and had had their faith brought into sympathy with them whose minds were continually turned in that direction. It was no unusual thing for him to see strange faces, because as a traveller, he was always going about the country, but it was not always that he looked on strange faces with so much pleasure. It was a great joy for him to meet brethren and sisters from so many parts, whom, apart from the gathering, he would not have had the opportunity of seeing. Brother Boshier then proceeded

to relate a conversation he had, on the previous day in London, with a Wesleyan minister, who had come to London to attend the Annual Methodist Conference. The minister, who was blind, literally as well as figuratively, informed him of the custom of the Wesleyan Conference, of reading John Wesley's will before the "legal hundred" was constituted; and in connection with this incident, brother Boshier remarked, What a contrast to this was the Fraternal Gathering in Birmingham. They had not come to settle the will of John Wesley, nor of John Thomas, nor of any other man, but to try to bring each other nearer into conformity to the will of Christ, that they may reflect his image in the hope that, by-and-by, they may be transformed to his perfect image, when he himself should come.

Brother J. J. ANDREW (of London) having joined in the response, the Anthem "God be merciful unto us" was sung, and the meeting terminated.

SUNDAY.

MORNING.

The brethren assembled in the Temperance Hall for the breaking of bread at ten. The visitors and the Birmingham ecclesia made a company of over 300 brethren and sisters, whose participation together in the appointed memorial was a scene not to be soon forgotten. Its impressiveness was felt by all—by some even to tears. The brethren were seated in six sections, with a brother to wait on each. For these, six cups and six plates had been provided to obviate the delay which would have been caused by the use of one cup and plate for so great an assembly; but all six cups were supplied by the presiding brother from one large cup on the table, and all six plates from "one bread" on a large plate, so that the unity of the symbol were maintained.

The meeting was commenced by singing Hymn 151: "Hail to the brightness," after which

The 4th chapter of Ephesians was read.

The interval for general announcements was occupied by the following intimations: that, as might not be generally known, a brother was present from the United States, having crossed the Atlantic for the purpose of attending the Gathering (brother

Hezekiah Taylor, of Baltimore, Md.); that sister Wall, of Birmingham, while proceeding to meet brethren at the station, had been thrown from a conveyance, and suffered fracture of the skull, causing her removal to the Hospital; that a sick sister (Davis, Birmingham) was almost beyond hope of recovery; that a brother prevented from attending, sent a cheque for £2 2s. as an act of fellowship and contribution toward the expenses; and finally that the custom of announcing at this time the names of visitors present would be omitted, owing to the greatness of the number, and because a complete list could not yet be given, but would appear in the *Christadelphian*.

Brother BOSHER, of London, (presiding) engaged in prayer.

The brethren sang together Anthem 48: "Whom have I in heaven."

Brother Boshier having read Luke xxiv: and 1st Cor. xi. 23, said "This institution, my dear brethren and sisters, round which we have gathered this morning as the centre point of our service, is a very ancient one. Of course, I need not say it is 1800 years old and more, in its present unadorned aspect, as we observe it this day. But it goes farther back than that. Its origin lays hold on the Passover, which Jesus met with his twelve apostles as Jews to celebrate, according to God's appointment. By this we are reminded that ever since God has had a chosen people, he has had a memorial institution amongst them. It is most

interesting for us to realise the circumstances under which this ordinance was first instituted. The greatest of these circumstances was the presence of our Lord and Master. Most of us occupy lonely positions, in our several parts of the country. We do not meet often in a multitude as we do this morning. We have to meet with our wives and threes, sixes and sevens, and, sometimes tens and twelves, in hidden and obscure places, and in upper rooms. Yet, under these circumstances, have we enjoyed the things signified by these symbols in a way a mind not enlightened in the truth cannot understand. In addition, we have realised the thought that we have acted up to the similitude of the original, which was a simple supper in an obscure room, unobserved by the world, quite a little insignificant affair. It seems, this morning, as if we had outgrown that condition of things. The brethren and sisters have gathered here this morning from east, and west, and north, and south, to sit down together to observe this feast of commemoration with those of the same faith and hope of the gospel. It was said, last night, who could have expected, a few years ago, that under any circumstances, such a gathering could have been got together. But here we are, the largest company of believers that has been seen in this age and generation. We have met together, not from a mere ebullition of feeling, but from the enlightenment of the Spirit of Truth stamped upon our minds, and obedience to the Great Master brought before us in these symbols this morning. But let us take heed in our large gathering that we "be not high-minded, but fear." Living upon the very verge of the Gentile age, we form, as it were, the last link of that historic chain that binds us to that meeting of which we have been reading in the gospel of Luke. Yet should the Lord delay his coming for any length of time, many may depart from the faith as in the apostolic age. We have no guarantee against it, brethren and sisters; human nature is the same now as ever. There have been many times when the churches have had a good start, but have grown weary and turned aside into the fables and disobedience of the world. Let us endeavour, as we appear before these symbols this morning, each for ourselves and all for each, to realise what they convey to the mind. I need not go over them now. You know them as well as I do. The time is precious to us, and it is not needful that I should go over the first principles of these things before you. But, dear brethren and sisters, with all the power you have, bring your sympathies to bear upon this ordinance, and realise what it is, that this may be to us a feast of remembrance and of sympathy and communion with our living Head, who is soon to return

to fulfil what he told his disciples—that he would no more partake of it until that day should come when he should rejoice with them in the kingdom of God. The apostle said the Lord Jesus said so the same night in which he was betrayed. What a wonderful fact that brings to our mind! Think of a person about to be given over to death—death even in its easiest form—with death before him on the morrow; think of him going out to hold a feast with his friends, and we realise the trying circumstances under which the Lord partook of this supper. He knew what was before him—not an easy death, but a death of the most painful and excruciating character—that he was to pour out his soul unto death, and endure an agony which caused great drops of blood to come through his skin and fall down to the ground. In anticipation of that death, he instituted this feast. Oh how precious it is to us, even in the thought, that under such circumstances, he could make provision for us. Yet he has shewn his wisdom, and sympathy, and understanding of human nature, in causing such an institution that would bring him so vividly before our minds, and enable us to remember him in all ages till he comes.

Brother Handley gave thanks for the bread, which was distributed by six brethren to the assembly. Brother Turner then gave thanks for the cup, which was distributed likewise. Collections were then made for the expenses of the Fraternal Gathering, realising over £16; and for the spread of the truth, realising over £8.

The brethren then sang together Hymn 116: "Twas on that dark."

Brother HANDLEY (of Maldon) was then called upon to address the brethren. He said: I had no anticipation, six months ago, of seeing so large an assembly of brethren and sisters meeting round the Lord's table to break bread and drink wine, discerning what they were about. Thank God for this. We do discern the Lord's body. It is impossible for anyone to do this, or to perceive the true significance of this ordinance, who believes in the immortality of the soul; who believes the wages of sin to be eternal torment. All that it denotes is, that a body was broken to put away sin. Thank God, we discern this, that it was the *body* of man that fell under the sentence—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Another body is broken, and bears the load. We reap the benefit; thank God for it. Then, I rejoice to meet you as volunteers to-day. You have not been summoned here by the Judge of quick and dead; you came here as volunteers. To the great meeting to which we are looking toward, we shall be compelled to go. So as a company of volunteers, I hope we shall be benefited; and as we shall all have to stand at the judging of the quick and the dead, let us see

if we cannot get some advantage from this Gathering, and help each other on. That is my object, and if I can say anything for the benefit of others, I go home rejoicing. We sing a very pretty piece sometimes—"Who shall abide in Thy holy hill, and who shall stand in the holy place?" It is in the 24th psalm—a very pretty psalm; but what is the answer? "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart." Are we willing to abide by that? The general idea is that the Christadelphian's religion is in his head; it never gets into the heart unless it does get into the head; the head is the thoroughfare to the heart. But because we have got our religion into our heads, people think we have got it only there. That is a mistake; all Christadelphians—that is, all true Christadelphians—have got it in their heart as well. Christadelphians have been the same from the commencement. When God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name, what effect had the truth on the Gentiles? Just the same as now. Let Peter explain what effect it had: "God put no difference between us (the Jews who had received the truth on the day of Pentecost) and them (the Gentiles who received it sometime after), *purifying their hearts by faith.*"—(Acts xv. 9.) The first Gentile Christadelphians were pure in heart; and their hearts were purified by believing the truth. The truth is of a purifying nature. A man hears the truth, and he thinks "That is a beautiful thing; I will have that; what will it cost me?" Everything offensive to God; and he puts that away. It is right that he should do so, because Jesus says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Does the system of truth have this effect upon all? Let us hear what John says: (1 John iii., first three verses)—"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." That is a great hope. What effect had the hope on the people of that day? The next verse tells us: "Every man that hath this hope, purifieth himself even as he is pure." They who think the Christadelphians carry all their religion in their head only, make a mistake. It is in the head it is true; but it goes through the head; they are not like a good many of the sects who cannot explain what they believe, because they have not got it into their heads; they are dark in the matter. You see the necessity of being pure in heart—purity in all your proceedings. These are just the sort of characters we try to be. If we had been summoned to this as the judgment seat, if there had been any short-comings, we should have looked into

them before our appearance. Now as we are assembled together, we can look into the matter, and exhort each other that we must be pure in heart. James says, (iii. 11.)—"Can a fountain out of the same place send forth both sweet water and bitter?" No, but the people have got an idea that you cannot tell what is in the heart. Oh yes, you can. You may go to a well that is closed over, and can you tell what sort of water it is? You could if there were a pump on the top, by working the handle a bit; and so with the other matters. Jesus tells us that a good man out of the good treasures of the heart bringeth forth good things. So you may know a man's heart, if he opens his mouth much; there is sure to be something bubbling out of his mouth that will tell you the state of his heart. Well, I have great pleasure in meeting so many whose hearts are purified by a knowledge of the truth, whose hope of seeing the Lord as he is, has a purifying effect on all their lives. You hope to see him, don't you? but if you are walking with unclean hands, with a double-minded, or unstable, or deceitful heart, at the coming of the Lord you will be rejected. We must overcome it, if we would sit down with him, for it is written, "If you say that you abide in him"—and that is what Christadelphians say—"you also ought to walk even as he walked." The Lord help you.

Brother SMITH (of Edinburgh) next spoke. He said, "Beloved brethren and sisters, it is with very great pleasure which I cannot express, that I meet so many of you here this morning; but I cannot but look forward to the great day to which we all look with a certain degree of rejoicing, yet with trembling; and I ask myself, "Shall all the faces that are here pass the scrutiny of the Judge that day?" I think of the Lord's disciples, when Christ told them that one of them should betray him; they all said, "Is it I?" Now this should be our position. We know there are some who shall not pass that judgment seat; those are some who shall be cast away. Shall it be I? If we keep our minds dwelling on these things, what kind of condition will our minds be in? Will we not be humble, broken in spirit, ready to receive instruction and warning from every source?

In connection with the proceedings of the day, our brother read Ephesians iv. In this chapter Paul declares himself the prisoner of the Lord, and beseeches the Ephesians, and, of course, ourselves also, to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Now, what is our calling? Do we all individually realise the exalted nature of our calling? If we do, we shall indeed be continually reflecting upon the scrutiny of that day, because the calling is so very high; the dignity to which we are called in the future is very great—so great that

the Eternal Being who has created all things for His own glory, will not admit to any whom He considers unworthy of administering the glory of the future. Keeping this in mind, we shall be continually scrutinising ourselves. But then we must have a basis of scrutiny by which we can try ourselves; and the object of the calling is to separate us from the darkness of the world, and bring us into the light of Christ. In the third chapter of this epistle, sixth verse, Paul says, and "God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together, in heavenly (or high) places—exalted positions—in Christ Jesus." Now, in partaking of these elements, we have been declaring by our actions—and all of us by our immersion have previously declared—that we have died with the Lord Jesus. We have been partaking of these memorials, which are to show forth that death. Paul says that we who are exalted to such high dignity at the present time, are sitting together with Christ by relationship to him, to his Father, that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his kindness towards us through Christ. Well, then, in consideration of this exceedingly high calling, Paul points us to our duty. He says, in the 2nd verse, "With all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another." Now, I see around me many who, I am certain, have not long put on the sacred name. There are amongst us some who have borne the burden and heat of the day; they have proved themselves tried servants of the Lord; but even they have cause to walk warily, and with fear and trembling; for even Paul was afraid lest he himself, after having proclaimed the truth to others, might become a castaway. There are none safe this side the appearing of the Lord; all are liable to fall. And we feel the necessity of this meekness, lowliness, forbearing one another in love. There has been a great deal said, yesterday night and to-day, also in reference to love. It is a word that is very common in all our mouths, but I believe that to a certain extent it is not understood. Taking all the ecclesias throughout the country, together, as we see them, and as we see actions individually of brother to brother, we find many times things that are not in harmony with love, because the flesh is uppermost; it is ever ready to assert itself, which the truth is not. Now, there is great danger when thus gathered together, that we may forget this; a halo of love seems, as it were, floating over our heads and filling us, carrying away, to some extent, our judgment and reason. We require to ask ourselves whether this love is altogether of the understanding of the truth of God, or whether it may not be mixed with these right, pleasant and, in their right place,

good feelings of the flesh, which come merely by and from association. The love of God is sometimes a very severe thing. We had an example of it in the case of the Lord Jesus, who had to submit to a cruel end for the furtherance of the love of God. He was the expression of the character of his Father; he exhibited the greatest compassion, the greatest love and forbearing with certain classes with whom he came in contact; but we find he uttered very hard sayings to even those who were his followers, sayings which they were unable to bear. Love requires the truth to be spoken, and in great part consists in speaking the truth. Let every man speak the truth to his neighbour. Peter speaks of it as being "love unfeigned." Paul speaks of it as being "without dissimulation." Peter, again, enjoins us in harmony with this love, to be pitiful, to be courteous. The majority of believers have been quarried out of very rough material. Looking at society, it is not the enlightened, the educated, the upper classes, that come under the power of the truth, but, in the majority of cases, the poor and the low—the rough part of the social strata—and it is not the nature of this material, in its rough condition, to be courteous or to be kindly and affectionate, for although there is a great deal of love amongst the lower classes of society, there is a great deal of coarseness and vulgarity. Now, we require to be polished by the refining power of our calling, to enable us to fulfil the condition of the Apostle Peter, to be courteous, to be kind. We shall then far exceed the artificial kindness of the higher classes of society; for with all their fine manners, there is little genuine goodness. They only appear to prefer one before another; their love is hypocrisy; they are essentially selfish. We have been separated for a higher exercise and higher attainments. We are in the process of purification. We are being prepared as stones for a great building, after the type of the plan adopted by Solomon when he built the temple of Jehovah. You will remember what is stated, that there was no sound of hammer or chisel heard in the building of it. All the stones and wood had been prepared at a distance, and were brought there and noiselessly put together. Now, we are at a distance from the well-known temple which the son of David is to rear, and he is now engaged in preparing the materials for the building. He is the foundation stone of the temple, and he is quarrying us out as polished stones, as precious stones, to take various positions in the building. There are to be different stones in different positions in that temple. There will be some in a very elevated position, shining with greater lustre than others. It is for us to polish ourselves, as well as

for the quarrier to polish us. In this we differ from literal stones. We are living stones that can assist in the operation. The circumstances through which God is bringing us tend to polish us; but we have to polish ourselves by the word of the truth, to prepare ourselves that we may be fit ornaments of that glorious temple. According to our labour just now, so shall our reward be; if we polish ourselves sufficiently, we shall have a place of honour allotted to us. Let us not lose sight of the glory of the Christ.

Brother J. J. ANDREW (of London) next spoke. He said: Dear brethren and sisters, one of our brethren now lying in the dust of the earth, whom having not seen, we love, when an ambassador in the city of Rome, which was then the centre of Paganism, as it has since become the centre of Papalism, wrote to a number of brethren of like precious faith, situated in different parts of the Roman Empire, a number of epistles. In addition to epistles of a personal character which he wrote to Timothy and Philemon, he also wrote epistles to communities, to congregations of brethren and sisters resident in certain cities. Amongst those were the brethren and sisters in the district of Galatia, and in the cities of Philippi, Ephesus and Colosse. In these epistles, as those who are familiar with them are well aware, Paul had to speak in a very different manner. To the Galatians, for instance, he had to administer sharp rebukes. "Who hath bewitched you?" says he, "that ye should not obey the truth?" To the Ephesians and Colossians, the apostle speaks in great praise. Those two epistles are very similar, not only in the ideas which they contain, but in the phrases in which the ideas are clothed. We have already this morning had a chapter from the Ephesians, a chapter full of instruction to us, both individually and collectively. The epistle to the Colossians is somewhat similar. To the believers residing in that place, the apostle has to say, 1st chapter, 3rd verse, "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you since we heard of your faith in Jesus Christ, and of your love which ye have for all the saints." The apostle unfortunately could not write in such a strain as that, to the brethren in Galatia. Thus will it be when we are summoned to the great gathering of the future. Christ as the judge will have to address words to some who are unfaithful, similar to those which Paul wrote to the Galatians, but to others he will be able to say he has great joy for the love which they have manifested during their probationary career, to all the saints. If this is not the case with us when we are gathered at that great day, we shall not be received into the everlasting kingdom of God. The apostle goes on in his epistle to the Colossians to give the instructions how they were to conduct themselves. Although

they were walking consistently at the time, nevertheless, he says in the 2nd chapter, "This I say lest any man should beguile you with enticing words." The same thing applies to us at the present day. Let us then take admonition from what Paul says. The apostle proceeds in the next two or three verses to express his joy at beholding their order and the steadfastness of their faith in Christ. Then, says he, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." Now it is quite evident that the apostle Paul could never have written these verses to a community holding half-a-dozen or more different, views respecting the person, nature, and mission of Jesus Christ: to have told them to walk in him, as they had received him, if they had not been united in doctrine on that point, would have been practically to confirm them in their several errors. Therefore, we may conclude that there was with them, but one Lord, one faith, one hope, one gospel; we may conclude that the Colossians were united with respect to the doctrine of Christ. Therefore, says he, "Walk in him as ye have received him," "rooted and built in him." You will notice that in these few words there are three metaphors—to walk in Christ; to be rooted in Christ; and to be built up in Christ. To walk in Christ is to walk the way which he walked; it is also to have him as a companion. We cannot do these two things unless we travel the same road he travelled. He has arrived at his destination; we are still journeying, not exactly to the locality which he has gone to, but we are journeying to that nature which he now possesses—the glorious gift of incorruptibility. We are also to be rooted in him. In some parts of the New Testament, in one of the parables of Christ particularly, those to whom the gospel is preached are compared to the earth, or the ground in which the seed of the kingdom takes root and grows; but in this metaphor you will see that Christ is represented as the ground, and we are represented as trees or plants, which derive our nourishment from him. Now it is well known that certain kinds of plants, flowers, and trees require a particular sort of soil. So it is in relation to spiritual things. The ground of which Christ is composed only produces one kind of plant—a plant which bears the fruit of the spirit; and if there are any plants amongst us which are not bearing the fruit of the spirit, it is evident from their walk and conversation, from their deportment, that they are not rooted in Christ, deriving their nourishment, their sap, from him, and sending forth their roots constantly, so that they may become more and more interlaced, intertwined with him. But then we are also to be built up in him. By being built up in

Christ, we may understand the manifestation of gifts which he manifested; and what were they? Numerous ones—humility, fidelity, patience, compassion, benevolence, love, courage; self-denial, harmlessness, prayerfulness, in the world yet not of it. Now if we are built up in him, we make use of these materials, and his virtues are manifested, or shine in us. Now supposing the Colossians followed the exhortation of the apostle, what do you think their condition would be? They would be united together; there would be no divisions, no animosities, no jealousies, no bickerings amongst them of any kind whatever. They could be constant in their attendance at the Lord's table; not there simply as a matter of being present, but they would be able to discern the Lord's body in the emblems of which they partook; they would partake of the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Then if there should arise any difference between them they would adopt the scriptural method of having it settled by going to the brother who was most intimately affected in the case, and not go and talk about it to others. Then they could manifest hospitality, and when they met together on such occasions it would not be for the purpose of gossiping, or to talk idly about the affairs of the world, or business, but it would be for the purpose of refreshing their hearts and minds with the things which they had learned and the things which they were hoping. Those amongst them who were aged in the truth as well as years, of either sex, would be ready to give their advice to the younger ones; and the young would give attention to the words of wisdom which came from the aged. Wives would obey their husbands; husbands would love their wives, even as Christ himself has loved the church; servants would obey and honour their masters, and masters would be kind to their servants. They would thus be an enlightened community. They would not hide their light; they would be as a light set on a hill. They would not compromise the truth, but would be constantly seeking ways and means by which they might extend the truth, not only to tend it outside, but also increase the practical efficiency of those among them. Then they would adopt what Paul says in the 9th verse of the 1st chapter: "they shall be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." You see that the way to walk worthy, of which we have had mention this morning, is to be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. The brethren here sing anthem 45: "Blessed are the people."

Brother ELLIS (of Liverpool) was the next speaker. He said: Brethren and sisters, had I the choice of my own mind, I should prefer to sit and hear, although nothing affords me greater pleasure than to speak to my brethren. It occurred to me that I could not do better than call attention to an exhortation by the Apostle Paul, who has been so largely quoted to-day. I refer to one addressed to his Hebrew brethren, as we find it in the 3rd chapter of the epistle: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also was Moses in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house." The distinction between Jesus and Moses consists in this: Moses was honoured by the Almighty to build the pattern of the house; Jesus, the Christ, was honoured to build the habitation which is to last for ever: and the Apostle adds here, "For every house is builded by some one"—certainly the house did not build itself—"but he that built it"—who is the builder of all—"is God," is Deity, is power in manifestation, because the word Deity is associated always with power, with a maker, framer, constructor, or builder. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." You notice the condition introduced by the word "if." The Apostle is guarded in what he says. We are his house—we have been invited to be partakers in his kingdom and his glory, and we shall all be incorporated or built into the house, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. The Almighty is a great builder; He doesn't like to destroy: destruction has always been his strange work. Building is what he has intended, and he has taken a long time to build, that is, in the building of this house, because this is to be the house that is not to be pulled down. These 6,000 years have been occupied in selecting, preparing, and arranging those who shall form this permanent house or building of the Deity; as He says, "I will dwell in them"—or among them—"walk in them, be their God; and

they shall be my people." When God dwells in man or in certain persons, this passage will be realised. God will be all things, that is, the all things promised in the all men and women who have believed the promises; they form the ground-work or the basis of the building. Then you notice, as has already been referred to, that the stones of this building are living stones. The first one was a living stone, chosen of God and precious, laid by Him, established by Him; and the rest of the stones are like him, because if they are to be built on the foundation, they must harmonise with the foundation, otherwise they would mar the building. On this account we are invited here by the apostle, to "consider"—think of, look at, compare, discern—"the apostle and high priest of our confession." There is a model you are to work to. There were some persons who did not work to it, and you know we are all unskilful workers when we begin, and perhaps we have not acquired much skill yet. The Corinthians when they began to build were no exception to the rule; they compared themselves with themselves; they began to look at one another. The apostle said "You should compare yourselves with Jesus; you are not wise." You won't see a great many things in your brethren that you would like to imitate or would like to see reproduced. If you begin to look at your brethren, you will have some things to find fault with. Now these have not a salutary effect upon the mind. Inasmuch as a man's mind becomes assimilated to the object of his worship, so the object or the model he sets before him ought to be of the most perfect type. If we are, therefore, to be skilful in making ourselves those who shall be approved of God, who shall be accounted worthy to be permanent stones in the great building which God is to rear, let us take this exhortation of the apostle. The apostle James says, using the same idea, that "He who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues therein"—he must not look one day and then look no more for a long time. These must be to us matters of reflection, of comparison. We must look at the object we have had brought vividly before us and for which we are gathered here this morning—the remembering of the Christ's death till he come. Not but that this morning reminds us also of the resurrection, and therefore, of the element which the apostle introduces here, "the

rejoicing of the hope." There is associated with death that which causes grief, but when we pass beyond the death into the time when he rose again, then we are able to be associated with him in his rejoicing. In the apostle Paul's letter to the Romans he expresses in one word this confidence which forms the ground work of the rejoicing. In Romans iv. 23, he says "Now it was not written for his sake alone that righteousness was imputed to Abraham, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, for he was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

Brother EDWARD TURNER (of Nottingham) said: After what has gone before, I almost feel that it is beyond my power to do more than echo a few of those excellent things which you have heard. Nevertheless, being reminded by some of those things of a few words of him of whom it is said he spake as never man spake, I shall read a few of those words which you will find in the 15th chapter of John's Gospel, and then proceed to give utterance to the thoughts which they suggest: "I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean, through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me." It is not possible for me to express all the thoughts which are already beginning to rise in the mind suggested by those words. I would say first of all that the figure brought before us is at once simple and beautiful—that of the vine well clothed with fruit-bearing branches. It is a familiar figure to us, and certainly it is beautiful, for what figure could be more beautiful to the eye and to all the senses which come under the head of appreciation of beauty, than a richly clad vine? Now the next thought is this, that we are part of that vine; as the Lord says, we are the branches, but what I should like to say is, that although the Master himself does not in this place point it out, it should not suffice us to be merely branches in the vine; for I suppose that every gardener knows that one side of the tree may bear fruit and the other be clothed with greenery and

yet bear no fruit at all. We may be the branches on that side of the tree; we may look verdant and vigorous, and yet bear no fruit. If the branches bear no fruit, what follows? The husbandman immediately begins to apply the pruning knife; it is a severe operation, for the little life which they possess is devoured by fire—they are cast into the fire. I should perhaps be insulting the judgment of some of my brethren if I were to go so far as to point out the application of that; that at the judgment seat, when we go there, those branches that have not borne fruit will be cut off and next cast into the fire. But this is not all. You know it is possible for a tree to yield a good crop of fruit, but fruit which never comes to perfection, always green, always green, always sour. Well we require to be placed beneath the warmth, the genial influences of the sun of righteousness, that we may not only bring forth fruit, but that it may become large, and ripe, and luscious in the Spirit's mouth. It is possible, though we are in this tree, to carry fruit which may be compared with the apples of Sodom, to vinegar in a man's nose, or ashes in his mouth. There is another thought: "Every branch which bears fruit"—and I believe the meaning of that is, every branch that bears the right kind of fruit, and fruit unto perfection—"must needs be trimmed and pruned that it may bring forth more fruit." That applies to us; and how are we pruned? We soon find it out, if we persistently stand upon this word, set it forth to the world at large, and endeavour to set it forth in our walk and conversation. I say, there comes a sharp trimming and pruning; but look at the result; look at what is in the mind of the Spirit by this process. It is that having borne fruit, we may bring forth more fruit. Now, we have had a good many figures of speech this morning, and I seem rather to be smitten with what is current. But dropping these figures for a moment, I will present to you the same thoughts in plain terms, by asking your attention to what Paul says in the first chapter of Ephesians. Writing to the ecclesia as an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, he desired that grace might be unto them, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, and so forth.

The part which we have had before us, in the figure of the vine and its branches, and the fruit ripe and unripe, lies concealed under two little words contained in the first verse, namely, "saints" and "faithful." I am sure it is not an accidental distinction that is here made in employing those two terms. It is an easy thing for a man to become a saint, but it is not an easy thing for a man to become a faithful brother. There may be saints as wicked as the sanctified ones of the Medes and Persians, who were murderers; you may be a saint without being a faithful brother, but you cannot be a faithful brother without being a saint. My object is to set before your minds that we are to aspire to become faithful brethren and not merely saints; and to do that you must take home and put into practice all those excellent exhortations—the sum and substance of them at least—which have been spoken in your hearing this morning.

Brother ROBERTS next addressed the meeting: He said, beloved brethren and sisters, it is recorded in connection with Paul's inland journey to Rome, that after the shipwreck on the island of Melita, when he came as far as Apia Forum, or the three taverns, the brethren from Rome met him; and "when he saw them, he thanked God and took courage." The practical interest that Paul felt in the brethren is also manifest from different expressions which we find scattered throughout his letters—where he thanks God for them and makes special commendatory mention of their zeal and labour in the truth. It is very natural for us all on such an occasion as this, to feel this sentiment strongly. Allusion has been made to what has been done in so short a time. Certainly, the result far surpasses any anticipations that were entertained ten years ago. The situation then was a situation of almost entire barrenness. The truth had taken root here and there, but was scarcely making any progress, there was not much fruitfulness on the part of those who had accepted it. There was much of what brother Handley referred to when he spoke of Christadelphians having their doctrines in their heads. The public are mistaken in thinking it is not in their hearts as well; and brother Handley was quite right in saying it must be in the head before it can get to the heart, but it is quite true that it is possible to

theoretically apprehend the principles of the spirit, and to be able to enunciate them clearly, and defend them successfully, while at the same time uninfluenced by those principles in their practical application to character, life, and conduct. In the days I refer to, this was more commonly illustrated than now. The truth has advanced to a higher point of development so far as its influence on believers is concerned. There are more believers than there were and a higher consecration among those who are believers. Yet one is afraid to rejoice too much. There comes a draw-back in our joy, and that is the one suggested by Christ when he says, "Many are called, but few are chosen." We in our collective capacity this morning may be said to represent the called of the 19th century in this country, and we have the authority of Jesus for saying, that from amongst those who are the called, there will be but a comparative handful chosen. Now upon what principle is the choice to be made? That principle is so plainly stated, that we need be under no mistake about it. That principle has been abundantly illustrated in the remarks made this morning. I will not occupy any time in seeking to define it, beyond very briefly laying hold of one or two apostolic statements. The gospel has been designed for the special purpose of taking out from among the Gentiles a people for the name of Jesus, whose peculiarities as individuals are defined in unmistakable lines and colours in the writings of the Spirit—a peculiar people likeminded with their elder brother. He is the pattern, and because we have not the privilege of his personal ministration, because we have not the privilege of being addressed by men fresh from his presence, and who might give a living exemplification of his spirit, there is a possibility of misapprehending that spirit, of our coming short of that model. We have the mind of Christ only in written characters, and we all know how possible it is for a man to partially apprehend what he reads. We know it is inevitable that a few points only of what is written will be taken in, and, afterwards, we discover underneath forms of speech, at first, perhaps, unnoticed, something of great importance to comprehend. Upon that obvious principle, there is a possibility of the work of the truth being a partial work. What we have to do is not merely to get some

divine principles from the mass of rubbish which has overlain them for centuries: we must not rest contented with the merely intellectual process of comprehending the doctrines of the truth, and expounding and preparing to contend for them. We must see to it that in our own individual hearts, we rise up to those principles, of which the doctrines are but the embodiment. What are those principles? God's purpose from the beginning, and in all the manifestations of His purpose, and in its final triumph, is a purpose of purity and kindness. It is the love of God from which the truth has sprung, and it is the love of God which will animate all those who shall be found established in connection with the truth, in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God. The will of God is the basis of all its developments. I liked the expression made use of by brother Shuttleworth last night. He spoke about the common honesty between man and man, as being well recognised, but remarked that there was little honesty to God. It is very true. God is cheated on the right hand and on the left, even by those who profess subjection to Him. And there is a common kind of love, a love of animal origin, which sinners feel in association one with another in their projects. We are to love one another also; but there is a higher love, which is the subject of what Christ calls the first and the great commandment. If that be left out, all other love is in vain: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." This must be the governing sentiment, the mainspring of action. It is to be seen so far as we can recognise it in outward manifestation, in the men who work on and work ever, under all circumstances, with God in view. If you take a man's life to pieces who is acting from that principle, you would, as it were, find a something inside not visible to those outside, and not to be found in the other classes, you would see a very different picture from that man who is acting from short-sighted considerations. Now, while we have to rejoice at being associated with the revival of apostolic work in this century, let us see that we carry it on to its perfection; let us see that we don't turn out those green tufts which brother Turney spoke of: mere doctrinarian activities pugilistically manifested. Let

as be men and women who are actuated by the love of Christ, and who do his will. If any man be not a doer of his will, he deceiveth his own self; and that will is about the last thing people come to comprehend. It is a comparatively easy thing to recognise the doctrine of the kingdom; it is a comparatively easy thing to see through the immense imposture of immortalism; it is easy to understand the promises made to Abraham. What is wanted is a race of men and women who not only understand the purposes of God, but know His will and make it their law in their life and conversation. All our labour is in vain, if it fail in producing this result.

The meeting concluded with the singing of anthem 16; "Now unto Him," and prayer.

SUNDAY EVENING.

A public meeting was held in the Temperance Hall (Brother Boshier presiding), in which several hundreds were assembled. Proceedings opened with the singing of the 38th Anthem: "Come unto me." Brother Boshier then read the 103rd Psalm, after which he engaged in prayer. The brethren then sang together Hymn 156: "Father of faithful Abraham;"

AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE THE GREAT WANT OF THE AGE.

Brother E. TURNER (Nottingham) then lectured: He said, Those present had been invited to come together to hear some very ancient things, and things which stood upon the best of all authority. In discoursing of these, it was probable he would have somewhat to say which at first night sound rather unpleasant in their ears, but he besought them to bear in mind that he did not desire to say things of a painful nature, or even to put things that were true in a painful form, whenever it was possible to do otherwise. He came before them to talk about the subject pronounced on the programme and to endeavour to shew that an understanding of the Bible was the great want of the age, especially as seen with respect to two things: first the wide-spread ignorance of the "one hope," and second, the like ignorance of the import of the blood of Christ. In one thing he thought they would all agree, that ignorance with

respect to true religion was the most dangerous of all kinds of ignorance. They might perhaps ask what was true religion; and in asking that question, they might be reminded of what the apostle James said. James appeared to put the matter in a very small compass. They had better turn to the passage, for though they might all be familiar with it, there was one little point upon which he desired to lay some stress. It was the 27th verse of the 1st chapter of James: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless, and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Now, what he wanted to say was just this: that they might visit all the fatherless in their city, and they might assist all the widows in all the cities of the land, but unless they observed the words of the last line of the passage, unless they got at a practical understanding of what James meant by the phrase "keep himself unspotted from the world," their religion after all was but a little Platonic morality. Now they would be able to see what he was driving at. He was anxious to rivet upon their minds the superlative importance of understanding religion aright, in other words the superlative importance of a definite, clear, and correct understanding of the scriptures. Let him add to those words of James a few words of the apostle Paul, which he was sure could not fail to put the matter before their minds in a very striking light. In writing to the Ephesians (chapter iv. verses 17 and 18) Paul had the following words: "This I say therefore and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Now if he were to go before their town and say in a direct manner that the greater part of its religious population were in that state of ignorance—that they were walking in the vanity of their minds, that their understandings were beclouded, and that consequently they were alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart—many of his hearers would most likely take umbrage. But what if he should be able by argument, and by the testimony which descended from the throne of light, to show them that the allegation was true. How then? The issue would not be between his hearers and himself, but between his hearers and a higher source.

It was worthy of repetition that ignorance of that religion which Paul expounded, placed a man in that position of alienation from the life of God. By and bye he hoped, as far as time permitted, they would as it were see the apostle at several places and hear him expounding the "one hope," and speaking of the import of the blood of Christ. It would then be for his hearers to make the application of what they learned to themselves individually.

There was one other thing he was anxious to mention at this point. If he had shown them what an important thing it was to have the understanding illuminated by the Scriptures, let him add thereto another thing of great importance, and that was a good memory. Let them not be alarmed, because it was a thing which Paul urged upon them, when he said in the 15th chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians, "Ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you." Some of them might say "I have not got a good memory." To that he would answer: "If your memory be exercised, it will. I am sure, be sufficiently good to retain those things which Paul preached." But all memories, however good, were very leaky, and though they might get those things pretty well fixed in them, yet, unless they be repeated line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, through the very nature of the human mind the things would filter out and no profit would result. There were then two things: First, the necessity of having a correct understanding of what was pure religion, and, second, the necessity of keeping the things they had received fast in the memory. Now, as to the obtaining of the first thing necessary, there was only one source to which they could go with any satisfaction, and that was the Bible. They must allow that book to furnish its own propositions and its own proofs, and to be its own propounder of the doctrines which it taught. They had all read the 119th Psalm, wherein they were frequently told what was the power of the divine testimony. Why, in one part of the Psalm, it was said that it would make a man wiser than the ancients. They must also have read that "death and life were in the power of the tongue;" that was, in the power of speech. Let them apply themselves, then, to this source in order to get an understanding of the subject under consideration.

THE ONE HOPE.

Having made those general remarks upon the subject of ignorance and understanding, he would come to the definite parts of the subject. He and his friends had been so bold as to tell them upon the placards that there was a wide-spread ignorance upon the subject of the "One Hope," and the import of "the blood of Christ." He would first speak about the "One hope." If someone were that night to descend from the moon—if there were any inhabitants there—and alight in the midst of what was called the Christian world, having in his possession Paul's writings, what did they think would be the impression on the mind of their visitor? Did they think that he would say to himself that that "Christian world," as it was termed, was a world imbued with one hope? He could not say so and speak the truth, and he (the speaker) questioned whether he would be correct if he were to say it was a Christian world having a hundred hopes. Their hopes were in some sense, and as they held, in an important sense, different the one from the other. But as soon as they got between the covers of the Bible, the question which was so important was upon the threshold made very simple by an announcement from the mouth of inspiration, that the hope was *one*, not two. Now, they had nothing to do with the hopes and shades of opinion outside, but for that night they were concerned only with *One hope*, and with what Paul set forth as the one hope; with this information they would be able to decide whether in small numbers or large, the religious world was ignorant of that one hope. If they were ignorant, then there must follow Paul's conclusion, that they were alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Lest he should offend any of his hearers (and he had no desire so to do), he would try to adopt the Pauline course of taking them in the rear, and catching them with guile, so that they might be forced to make their own applications and form their own conclusions.

What then did Paul set forth as the one hope? It was at this point they must begin to learn what pure religion was; without this a man might become spotted every day and be like a leopard by Saturday, whereas, they were to keep themselves unspotted from the world. He would first take them to the last chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, a most

interesting chapter. They there found the apostle Paul speaking about "THE hope," and put a little extra emphasis upon the finite article, in order that they might couple it with Paul's other expression "the one hope." None of them would suppose that in the 29th chapter of Acts, when Paul was speaking of a different hope from the one of which he spoke in the 13th chapter of Ephesians, where he said emphatically "there is one hope." No one here was no doubt it was the same hope which was before the apostle's mind in each case. What had he then to say about it? Paul had travelled as far as Rome, and he called the chief of the Jews together and addressed them thus: "For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you, because that for *the hope of Israel* I am bound with this chain." Now in Ephesians, they had the phrase "one hope," whereas in the passage just quoted, a little but important word was put in, namely the word "Israel." Mind Paul was not talking of Gentiles, but to Jews after the flesh, those to whom the covenants were given and to whom the promises were made; those people in whom Jehovah took such remarkable interest, inasmuch that he never fit to separate them (for in their origin they were but a parcel of brickmakers) from all the world. Those were the people, and Paul said that "the hope" was their hope "the hope of Israel," and for that, he was bound with a chain. Now to proceed a step further. It was said at the end of the chapter, that in expounding this hope he was "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence." All those things were in Paul's mouth, the teaching of one and the same thing. He would add to what was readily quoted another statement to be found in the 26th chapter of the Acts. At the 6th verse the apostle said, "And now stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers;" and it was unto the fathers of Israel. Then Paul's hope had to do with a certain promise, which promise was very easy to understand. They had, doubtless, heard it iterated and reiterated within those walls scores and hundreds of times. In brief, the promise made to Abraham, very many centuries before the birth of the great seed—the Christ—that to him and to that seed should be given the land in which the others were strangers and sojourners, and that in them all families of the earth

should be blessed. He wished them all to ask themselves at that point whether their respective hopes laid hold of that position; whether their hearts had been fixed upon the promises made of God unto the Hebrew fathers; whether they were in the ardent expectation that Jesus Christ would return from the heavens to raise Abraham from the dead, to give him the land bounded by the Euphrates on the one hand and the Nile on the other, and to make him master of the world; for Paul, in expounding those promises, told them that Abraham was "the heir of the world."—(Rom. iv. 13). It was necessary that they should understand the matter. There were certain other words from the pen of the Apostle Paul, which he would here read. Eph. ii., beginning at the 11th verse: "Wherefore, remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who were called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Ah, what a deplorable position that was to be in, especially for a man calling himself a Christian. If they were ignorant of the covenant of promise; blind with regard to the future commonwealth which would be erected in the land of Palestine, as couched in the terms of the promise, what followed? However devout they might be, however they might be accustomed to speak of Jesus as their dear and precious Jesus, and to talk about his "pardoning grace," and his "atoning blood," and so forth, they were, according to Paul, without Christ and without God in the world. He would ask them to consider in all seriousness and sincerity, whether the popular teachings were those which Paul was found teaching in Ephesus and Corinth, and wherever he travelled in Europe and Asia. Were the things taught in the present day analogous to the setting up of a commonwealth upon the land of Israel and widening out its power till it embraced the whole globe? The spiritual guides of the people taught them to look away altogether from this terrestrial ball, which was one of the mighty works of Almighty Deity, and some of them could go the absurd length of supposing that it was to be blasted like a bombshell, leaving nothing but a few pounds of ashes to float away in the immensity of space. He asked whether those things which were

set forth Sunday after Sunday in their pulpits could with any show of reason be held in harmony with the project marked out in the Scriptures. It did not matter where they went with the apostle, they found him setting forth the very same things. At Corinth they found him expounding and teaching the people the things concerning the kingdom of God for eighteen months; at Ephesus for a longer period; while in Rome two years at his own hired house they found him also teaching the same thing—the "Hope of Israel;" the "hope of the promises made of God to the fathers;" or a kingdom to be established under the whole heavens.

They now came to another point which struck him at that moment. It was a very important one, and was brought out in the 26th chapter of the Acts, in the 18th verse, the apostle was told by Jesus that the purpose of his mission to the Gentiles was "to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Now, the thoughtful would at once ask what it was concerning which Paul discoursed in order to open the eyes of the people? The answer was to be found in the 6th and 7th verses of the same chapter: "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews." So that when a spiritual guide undertook in the manner of Paul to open the eyes of his contemporaries, what had he to do but to make plain to them the things which constituted the hope of the promises made unto the fathers? He might talk what else he pleased, but the result of his harangue would be that their eyes would be closed and sealed, for Paul received no other commission than this: these things were to act as eyesalve to the hearers, so that they might see and be brought out of darkness, and placed in a position of marvellous light. He would repeat the words: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins." He knew that in that town, as in his, a great deal was made of such expressions as "forgiveness of sins," the "grace of

God," &c, and far be it from him to make light of them when properly understood, but what he wished to urge upon them was that Paul in offering those things to the people, offered them as a result of the understanding of the hope of the promises made of God unto the fathers: and that therefore, without a clear understanding of that hope and those promises, there could be no such thing as forgiveness of sins.

THE IMPORT OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

He might talk at greater length under that head, but he must pass on to the second part of his subject, namely the import of the blood of Christ; concerning which he should endeavour to show that the blood of Christ was inseparably connected with the one hope; and that apart from that one hope, the blood of Christ could be nothing at all either to his bearers or himself. In order to support that proposition, he would refer them to the first epistle of John and the first chapter. In the 7th verse they found a very important statement indeed. The apostle said in the 6th verse "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth, but (verse vii.) IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Now what he wanted to impress upon them in the strongest possible manner, was the cardinal point of the verse, "If we walk in the light," then certain things followed, otherwise those things did not follow. As he said in his original proposition, the blood of Christ could be nothing to them apart from the one hope. What the "light" was, they had seen in the most distinct manner possible from the statements of Paul. The light meant knowledge of the covenants made to the fathers of Israel, and let them observe how that light shined in Jesus Christ. Was not Christ always talking of those covenants and promises, by the way side sometimes, at the mouth of a well in the temple, and in the villages, going all over his own country talking of nothing else than those things; in other words preaching the kingdom of God; saying, when desired to stay in one city, No! "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent."—(Luke iv. 43.) If they shut their eyes to those things and glided by them, they missed the purpose for which the Christ was sent into the world. It al

ended upon their walking in the light to whether the blood of Christ had any purifying power upon their hearts. When they heard their ministers laying sledge hammer stress upon the blood of Christ—did not know how it was in Birmingham, in Nottingham if a chapel was not well attended, it was insinuated that the minister did not preach the blood—"preach the blood" 'it's the blood which draws'—when they hear their ministers talking in that strain they would do well to remember that it is no use preaching the blood of Christ, they were ignorant of the purpose for which that blood was shed. He would now turn back again to Paul's writings; he examines the second chapter, in which the apostle spoke of some who were nigh—nigh something or somewhere—and of some who were or who had been afar off from that which the others were nigh. Those who were nigh were said to be "in Christ Jesus." They were in Christ Jesus from whom they received the light of which he had been speaking, because they had "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine" which the Apostles had delivered to them. The verses read: "In Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, in the law of commandments contained ordinances; for to make in himself of vain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached the gospel to you which were afar off—(that is, the Gentiles)—and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Now, he had quoted this testimony with the object, first of all of showing that the blood of Christ, about which so much was said from their pulpits and sacred desks, was to unite two classes of persons—one class nigh to something, and the other class afar off from something—and to break down a middle wall

of partition which once existed between and, of course, divided these two classes. He wished to ask them a plain question: What was the blood of Christ said to do by their ministers and spiritual guides? It was said to make atonement for deathless souls, and to float them away on the down of angels' wings to "realms of endless day." Not a word was said concerning God's purposes in the popular teaching, which, by the way, was only Pagan teaching, although Christian epithets were attached to it. What was the good of preaching that the blood of Christ did what the ministers said it did, when they found the Apostle talking about no such thing? When they heard popular preachers declaiming about the blood of Christ, let them remember that Paul affirmed the purpose of it to be to bring men nigh to the commonwealth of Israel, and give them citizenship with the saints in the heavenlies of His kingdom. Whereas, to affirm of it any of the popular things, was to deny the teaching of the Apostle. What had been alleged was the case both with regard to Jews and Gentiles. It might be as well to say, with regard to the Gentiles, that they were in every sense afar off from the commonwealth of Israel, because Jehovah had made no communication to them of his intention to establish a commonwealth in Israel—a glorious kingdom, comprising all people, nations, and languages. So in the strongest sense, the Gentiles were afar off, and was it not so with the Christian Gentiles that night, that in teaching the things they did, they were immensely afar off? Immensely afar off; for in their philosophy they hoped to go "beyond the bounds of time and space." They certainly could not go farther from the commonwealth of Israel than beyond space. They were far from the commonwealth of Israel, and much as they might talk about the blood of Christ, devoutly as they might declaim about Jesus, and so forth, yet it availed nothing. He rejoiced, however, that amid all the ignorance which existed, that there was a devout and prayerful spirit. But he would like to see something added to it, and without which it was useless. It would be a very easy thing for him to enumerate the things which Christian Gentiles set forth, which were, strictly speaking, the things which the Pagans set forth. They sometimes heard it said by ministers, that they wanted more of Plato and Socrates. He would tell them what that meant. It meant that they

wanted less of Paul, and Peter, and James. For if they went to Grecian seats of learning, which were the models to-day of their ecclesiastical seminaries, what did they find? That "by their wisdom, they knew not God." When Paul went down there he condemned it all; and were they to suppose that if he set his foot, in the present day, in Oxford, Cambridge, or London, he would withhold his condemnation, because the same things were called by Bible names? No; Paul would soon strip them of all their gauzy falsehoods and deceit, and show the people the vanity of the things which he so emphatically condemned in his day and generation.

Now, the Jews were nigh to something from which the Gentiles were far off. They were nationally and legally nigh, because they had received the covenants and documents—parchments, as it were, signed and sealed, to the effect that Jehovah did intend to establish a commonwealth, spoken of so distinctly in those covenants. But though they were nigh it was necessary that Paul should talk to them about the blood of Christ, for though they were very intelligent upon the subject, in a general sense, they could not see how it was to be revealed through the Man of Nazareth. Paul, therefore, would not have to spend much time in expounding to the Jews the kingdom of God, but he had to talk to them about the Christ. In some cases, Paul spoke for hours to the Jews about Christ, without saying any thing at all about Jesus. Now, that was what Protestant preachers should talk about. He did not mean to say they should not pronounce the word Jesus, but that they should preach Christ, *i.e.*, should shew what were Christ's claims. They should discourse about Christ officially, and tell the people what he was going to do when he came the second time. To preach those things was to preach Christ; but to harangue about Jesus by the hour, and to omit those things was not to preach Christ, and could not be to preach him crucified. Paul, in preaching to the Jews, tried to take them in the rear, he entered into their feelings, their likes, and dislikes, and tried to lead them back, and show them that the man of Nazareth was the Christ, and that through the shedding of his blood, as a spotless man, their covenants were sealed. In addressing Gentiles, however, Paul began to speak in the most rudimentary manner

about God that made the world, about Him in whom they lived and moved and had their being, and then about the resurrection of a dead man who was to rule the world in righteousness. Such were not the things set forth by the clergy, they preached other things by which men were to lay hold of eternal life, which, paradoxically, they were said to be already in possession of. That was how the word of God was handled and corrupted by men who had easy times and full pay. That was what they got from 28 bishops, who had an aggregate income of £155,000, but who trod upon the toes of others of their own order by putting them on starving pay, and making them do all the work. He would say with emphasis, "Turn away from these things, and for once in your life make a hearty study of the Scriptures of truth." Let them do as the Bereans did, and if they aspired to true nobility of soul, study the word of God; let that word be their meat and drink, and in proportion as they realised its teachings, let them go with the courage of a lion but the meekness of a lamb, to freely offer it to their contemporaries. In conclusion he exhorted them, with all his heart, and soul, and strength, to give their attention to these subjects, so that the blood of Christ might by faith be sprinkled upon their hearts, that it might be said of them, that they had walked in the light, and the blood of Christ might cleanse them from all sin, so that when Christ came to establish the commonwealth of which he had been speaking, they might hear him say to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the ages."

THE DIVINE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE DAY.

Brother ROBERTS, of Birmingham, then delivered a lecture on "the divinely appointed solution of the various social and political problems at present vexing the minds of men." He said it would not be denied that there were many problems sorely perplexing the public mind. The man must be very much asleep, or somewhat incompetent to observe what was passing around him, who was otherwise minded. If they took those problems one by one, they would find that they covered the whole economy of existence, from its very beginning in their experience to its close, and to that

which lay beyond. If they took for instance the very first question of all, viz., that of food and raiment, they found that in this country, pauperism was increasing upon a scale which was alarming thoughtful statesmen, and the perplexing nature of the case was that that pauperism was concurrent with an almost unparalleled development of material wealth. There was great commercial prosperity and great increase of riches on the right and on the left, but so miserable was the constitution of society, that with the vast majority of English people, the great anxiety was how they were to get enough to eat and enough to put on. Then they had the question of education. That question was also beset with many difficulties, and the very first difficulty that stood in the way was, that the industrial necessities of the people were so imperative, that there was no time left for education. Time was so occupied in labour for the bare necessities of existence that there was neither the leisure nor the strength left that were necessary for the culture of the mind. Then if they went into society, they found that smouldering discontent which was represented in a tangible form in the Communism of Paris, and which at the present time was rapidly spreading throughout the world. Then, when they went into the higher sphere of society, they found amongst educated people many things that were sorely puzzling to them. They found for instance, the question getting rife, whether Republicanism or constitutional government, was the best adapted to promote the welfare of mankind. That question had on both sides many difficulties that were severely felt by the thoughtful portion of society; or men, who perhaps from some different points of view, would be Republican, were not forgetful of the somewhat miserable example of Republicanism which they had on the other side of the Atlantic, where society was eaten up with money-making and politics, and where there was a comparative neglect of those higher occupations which constituted the ultimate object of existence. On the other hand, they were not unaware of the necessity of taking some steps to meet the uprising current of discontent which was forcing its way from the basement of society. Then they had the ecclesiastical question, which they might take in its concrete form as presented at the present moment in the

controversy between Berlin and Rome. They had to face ecclesiastical Rome in Europe, numbering many millions of adherents, putting forth pretensions which, if carried out, resulted in the most unsupportable tyranny, and which no sensible man could fail to perceive were allied with ignorance, and entirely destitute of a true basis. Then, if they went further, they found society breaking rapidly into a state of chaos, so far as individual religious conviction was concerned. They found all extremes represented. They found somewhat clearheaded and intellectual men of science standing apart from all connection with the Bible and all religion, studying fossils, shells, drifts, and spots on the sun, and a great many other things which might be interesting, but which, so far as their bearing upon individual welfare was concerned, were entirely fruitless subjects of study. They found such men saying there was no hope. They did not say so in so many words; they spoke the pleasant language of deceit, talking vaguely of a "superior power," and the possibility of a future existence. But what was there in all their teaching that a man could lay hold of? On what could they anchor their hope? There was no answer of comfort from mere "nature." They might go to the sea-shore, and ask the winds and waves; they might contemplate the revolutions of the starry bodies in the sky, but they would fail to derive any well grounded expectation that they would live again, or that there should be anything better for mankind than the present miserable tale of vanity, which was going on from generation to generation. The solution of all those various puzzling problems was to be found in the Bible. "But," someone might ask, "do you present the Bible as a public answer to those public problems? Do you introduce the Bible into the arena of legislative controversy? Do you propose to bring it into school boards and parochial boards, and into Parliament, with the idea that it is capable of settling their strifes, and leading them to an effectual settlement of the problems in hand?" To that he answered, No, not at all; but what he meant was, that to all who feared God, there was this answer in the name of the Bible, that there was no hope in the world at all, and that their wisest policy was to identify themselves with the man who had been constituted

the hope of the world. This man told them that though in the world, he was not of the world, and that all who followed him, were likewise isolated from the present order of things; and that their position was to wait for him. Was that a fancy? It was not a matter of fancy at all. It was no new invention; no new religious theory that he was bringing before them; it was simply the view of things resulting from a consistent acceptance of the Book which almost all the world admitted to be true in its main facts. Those facts were very simple and capable of brief enumeration. The first was, that God was in the history of the Jewish nation; and no man who knew what he was speaking about—no man who was acquainted with the Bible, would fail to see that if they took God away from Jewish history, Jewish history fell to pieces. The second fact of the case was that Christ, of whom everybody had heard, and in whom nearly everybody in this country professed to believe, rose from the dead. Those two facts were simple, easy to understand, and afforded ground for a start in the argument to be unfolded. When they were quite certain of those two things, they were on the way toward finding the solution of the problems at present vexing the public mind. In speaking of that solution, he had to refer, as the previous speaker had done, to the promises made to the fathers. He would not say much on the promise of the land, but rather of that pledge of blessing for the human family which was given to them. No one would deny that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were prominent men in Israelitish history. God made promises to them that "in their seed (which Paul said was Christ) should all nations of the earth be blessed." That was the general guarantee, promise, or undertaking on the part of God, who had undertaken in a certain line of things clearly defined, to bring about its fulfilment. The purpose of universal blessing was variously expressed, for instance, "As truly as I live, saith the Lord, the whole earth shall be filled with my glory." In the prayer which Christ taught his disciples, there was the petition, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The kingdom had not come in the days of Jesus, or its coming would not have been a subject of petition: nor did it come in the days of the apostles, for they spoke of it as a thing connected with the second

appearing of Jesus Christ, nor had it come yet, for Christ had not come yet. The prayer was one for the disciples of Christ to pray all the time he was absent from the earth. What was meant by "Thy kingdom?" That introduced the promise made to another of the fathers—the father of Jesus genealogically speaking—David. What did Peter say of him? David, said Peter, was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. Raise up Christ to sit on David's throne? They looked back and asked how were they to identify the throne of David? It must be possible, for if it were not possible, wherein lay the meaning of the words? It was possible; there was no difficulty. They looked back and they saw David upon a throne, and surely the throne they saw David upon was the throne of David! Strange indeed that it should be necessary to argue the matter in apparently so superfluous a way, but it was so; for it was denied in our day that there was any connection between the throne David occupied, and the "throne of David" covenanted to the Messiah. There was a kingdom over which David ruled, not for himself but for God, and that kingdom had been blown to the winds because of transgression. But that throne was to be re-established, and Jesus, the Son promised to David, was the heir to it.

Jesus of Nazareth was an actual personage who appeared upon the stage of time about 1800 years ago. He went about preaching the doctrine of the kingdom, and it was recorded that he taught the people as one having authority, and not as the scribes, also that he spoke as never man spake, and did many mighty works. In the 19th chapter of Luke, they found it stated that the apostles "thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear," and that Christ spoke to them a parable, that they might understand it was not immediately to appear, but that there was to be a great work of steward-service rendered by the apostles and their successors—all true disciples—before the kingdom should be established. The parable was obvious in its significance: "A certain nobleman went to a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants and delivered them ten pounds and said unto them, OCCUPY TILL I COME."

"Ye are my friends," he said, "if ye do whatsoever I command you." "No man can be my disciple unless he take up his cross daily and follow me," and "if any man love father and mother more than me, he is not worthy of me." "OCCUPY TILL I COME." This was the attitude for believers. "Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world." "Ye are strangers and sojourners," he said by his apostle Peter. "Love not the world," he said by another of his apostles, John, "neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Those, therefore, who chose to be servants of Christ did not ally themselves to the world in its fruitless schemes of regeneration. They kept the commandments of Christ and waited for his reappearing who should truly bring about a work of regeneration. He came to purify for himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. To be of this people was all that a wise man would aspire to. Christ's servants were now as they always had been—unpopular, in a minority, accused wrongly of being narrow minded, bigoted, and uncharitable, which in plain language, meant that they were faithful to the word of Christ which presented the narrow way leading to life. "Occupy till I come." In the parable, the nobleman was represented to have received a kingdom, and having returned, that he commanded his servants to be called unto him. Those whom he found faithful, to them he gave a position in his kingdom. Looking upon the nobleman as Christ, the result of his return would be that described in the 11th chapter of Revelation v. 18. "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." The Spirit, speaking through David and also addressing Messiah in the 2nd Psalm, said, "Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron; thou shalt rack them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now, therefore, ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth." In the prophet Daniel, the career of human government upon earth was represented by an image of various metals, and the setting up of the kingdom of God was symbolised by a little stone which struck the image upon its feet, breaking it in pieces and grinding it to powder, that the winds might carry it away, the little stone becoming a great mountain and filling the whole earth. The interpretation of the symbols was

given by the prophet in these words: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Now, if they took their stand at the point of time when the kingdoms of this world were in the imperial grasp of the Messiah, the son of David, when he reigned on David's throne as universal Lord of the world, they would have presented to their minds an idea into which they could fit everything they found in the Bible. All the promises found their place, beginning with the first simple promise in Eden. The promises made to Abraham, to David, and largely unfolded in the communications to the prophets, and defined in detail in the preaching of the kingdom of God by Jesus and his apostles, would all have their illustration. And there was this great difference between the regeneration thus to be accomplished and that proposed by human effort, that in this regeneration, every faithful believer would have an individual part. Even if ages in the grave, his existence would revive, and he would take his place at the appointed time. They might have a political orator to depict in glowing terms the peace, happiness, and contentment to come from the adoption of certain political measures in course of time, but there was this drawback to individual enthusiasm in the matter, that the present generation would grow old and grey headed, and pass into their graves before the results could be realised, even if the expectation of the results was well founded; but in the political scheme which God had framed and intended to be carried out, when the time came for its triumph, they were told that "many of them that slept in the dust of the earth should awake," and that they should "come from the east and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and would sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God." Paul added to this information, in telling them that the vile body of present experience would have no place in that order of things. That as the raised ones had borne the image of the earthly, they should also bear the image of the heavenly, or partake of the nature of Christ. The language was explicit that Christ should change their vile bodies, that they might be fashioned like his glorious body by the energy by which he was able to subdue

all things to himself. In that renovated nature there would be no principle of decay, but its energies would always be brimming full and its faculties always at command. The *elixir vitæ*, which no philosopher had succeeded in discovering, would then be illustrated. It was in the gift of one man, who had said, "I am the life of the world, he that eateth me shall live for ever by me." People might turn away from that man if they liked, and they were being led away from him by men who were supposed to be appointed as the leaders to him. But if they did turn away from him, they must walk in darkness. There was no light, no life, in any mere human being. Life and light were with God only, and could only be obtained from God in the way He had appointed, and He had appointed Christ as the way, the truth, and the life. The apostles were sent by Christ, and in the providence of God, the apostles had written their word; and by means of that word, they might become enlightened with regard to their teaching. It was that teaching which was in an individual sense the panacea for the evils which afflicted the human race. The wise man looked at the seething ocean of trouble and fermenting and discontent, and while perceiving the hopelessness of any remedy that he might apply, he took hope and comfort from the promise of God's interference. In ignorance of this word, men grew heartless. They applied themselves philanthropically to this and that movement for years, but at last, they came to the conclusion that it was a hopeless matter. He saw that the good done was homœopathic in extent, and of a very unenduring character, and in despair, such men generally retired into privacy, seeking in the employment of cultivated leisure to console themselves in this time of vanity, till the term allotted to man was run out, and then they slipped away—perhaps violently and with great pain—into darkness and corruption, hid from sight by surviving friends who would quickly follow to the same end. Christ came as the only remedy, which was the resurrection of the righteous and the establishment of the kingdom of God. That kingdom of God was the instrumentality by which the political and social puzzles now existing were to be solved. As a divine and infallible despotism, it would abolish Parliament which, after all the high pæans sung in its praise, was not a philosophic mode

of government. It was a false theory that taught the suffrage of ignorance as the basis of wisdom. The doctrine of majorities was a mere compromise with evil. It was philosophically false. The true mode of government was the authority of infallibility administered through righteous channels, and this was the mode of government to be brought into force by Christ. Dispensing with kings and parliaments, and peoples, he would take the reins of universal power into his own hands, and placing his own friends in authority everywhere, would shew the world what it had never seen before—an invincible government, that would promote the people's welfare and conquer their praise. The saints were to sit upon his throne. This would settle the political difficulty. All opposition would be set aside. "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of the potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father." "If we suffer with him," Paul said, "we shall also reign with him." Under that government, the industrial difficulties which were upsetting the country would be effectually dealt with. The settlement would affect the aristocracy, and meet some very radical views. The landholders would be dispossessed.

It was written "He shall send the rich empty away." "He shall bring down the mighty from their seats, and exalt them of low degree, filling the hungry with good things." "Woe unto you," Christ said when upon earth, "that are full now." Woe unto you that are rich. Blessed are the poor now; blessed are ye that weep now; blessed are ye that carry the cross now; blessed are ye who identify yourselves with the outcast Nazarene now; ye shall be filled; ye shall be exalted; ye shall be had in honour; ye shall be comforted, and that in a system of things more worthy of exertion to attain to than the finest thing presented to the heart of man in this present state. For what did the best of present success amount to? A few years of a very mingled kind of experience, so uncertain in its composition that they could scarcely say whether it was happiness or not; a sort of feverish unhealthy excitement, largely mixed with anxiety about the opinion of this one or that one, and fear about this investment and that property, and

this turn of business and that condition of this frail body. He recently read a vigorous description of the utterly hollow state of society at the present time, and the corrupt and defective state of high, low, rich, and poor. And no wonder; for if they took away the noble incentive of practical faith in God, and the certain guarantee of a future existence which they possessed in the Bible, what had they left? Only the natural instincts which developed a respectable kind of brutality. By taking possession of universal property, sending the monopolists unceremoniously adrift, and adjusting society upon a righteous basis, probably on the system of the land law in force among the Jews, under which families could not permanently impoverish themselves in consequence of the recurrence of the jubilee, releasing all property from all burdens, there would be a cure for the miserable state of things that existed in a town like Birmingham for instance, where they had masses of people crowded together in hundreds and thousands, under circumstances where it was utterly impossible they could rise to true human development. Then, as regarded strikes and things of that sort, they would be regulated by the hands of a greater than Bismarck, when Christ should rule with a rod of iron, but with righteousness and true authority. He would simply tell the people what they were to do, and if they refused to do it, they would be made short work of, and would be got out of the way. And as to education! who was to interfere with him when the law went forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem? The world, however, would have to go through a terrible process to reach that

state. The neck of wickedness must be broken, and the stubborn back of pride bent to his will. But when that process had been gone through, the world would wait for his law. Brought into a suppliant and submissive state, they would merely wait to know what was to be done. They would have education then, and education of the right sort. Care would be taken that every child was instructed in all things that were good for it to know, especially in the fear of the Lord and the doing of his commandments, which was the beginning of wisdom and the whole duty of man. They could imagine how interesting the human race would then be, when every man and every woman was a vessel of intelligence, and honour, and allegiance to the king. The State Church question and the Pope question would be thoroughly, simply, and effectively settled, whom the Lord should consume with the spirit of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming. There would not be a Pope on the Seven Hills long after the arrival of the true Pope, for Christ was the King of kings, and head of the infallible Priesthood which would be given to the world by-and-bye. It did not matter what question they took hold of, whether it was a political question of the day, or the events of individual existence, the one great solution was that which was slumbering within the covers of the neglected Bible, but which would shortly break forth upon the world with the blaze of meridian day.

The meeting concluded with the singing of the 15th Anthem: "How beautiful upon the mountains" and prayer.

MONDAY.

MORNING.

The brethren assembled at ten o'clock, in the Athenaeum, brother Boshier presiding.

The brethren sang together Anthem 47 — "O love the Lord."

Brother Boshier read Psalm cxxvi, and then engaged in prayer.

The brethren sang together Hymn 150 — "Behold the mountain of the Lord."

Brother BOSHER then opened the meeting in a few lively remarks on the need for brevity of speech at a meeting where so many were present who were bursting with matter, like full water pipes. They were to speak fifteen minutes each: his business would be to turn the taps on and turn them off, which he hoped they would assist him in doing effectively. He first called on brother Andrew.

Brother J. J. ANDREW (of London) said that having the misfortune to belong to the letter "A," it fell to his lot to be the first speaker at that series of meetings: It might be thought that, coming from a large place, he would have much to report respecting the progress of the truth in that place. There was an idea in the minds of some that they had only to announce lectures in London to get a large and attentive audience, and that it was the easiest thing in the world to proclaim the truth in a place where there was such an immense population. A more erroneous idea could not exist. London was a more difficult place to work than the provinces. The immensity of its population, which at first sight appeared an advantage, was in reality a disadvantage. The population was of a floating character. People's minds and ways were not so settled as in country districts. There were not those social circles and links of connection between one and another that existed in provincial towns. Hence, the truth was not so likely to spread rapidly there as at some other centre. This had been found out in connection with various social and political movements; and some of the great agitations of the past twenty years had shunned London altogether as a centre point, and had preferred some of the large provincial towns, such as Manchester, Birmingham, &c. The experience of these movements had to some extent been the experience of the truth. They had found they could only work in one circle of London, and that a small one. London was like a large number of towns congregated together; and they could only just take one of those large towns and try to work that. That was what the brethren had endeavoured to do in London. It was about four years since they commenced operations in the way of bringing the truth prominently into public notice. Previously, the meetings were of a small and insignificant character, held in out-of-the-way rooms or private houses, which was a great disadvantage. He would just say here, that if there were brethren in any place who were meeting in a private house, he would strongly recommend them as soon as possible to get a public room for holding their meetings in. It was impossible to get those who did not understand the truth to come into a private house to hear the truth. Strangers should be asked to come on to ground to some extent of a neutral character, where their presence would not commit them to anything, and

where they would feel entirely free (if the numbers were small) to engage in conversation or ask questions. In a private house, strangers felt somewhat in fetters, and not in possession of that liberty which was desirable. Therefore, every exertion should be made by those who might be meeting in a private room, to get into a more suitable place. Four years ago, that very month, the London brethren commenced public operations in a hall in Islington—one of the great centres of London. Brother Roberts came and delivered three lectures. The attendance was good and the attention very great. Great results had followed from these lectures. Previously, some few lectures, on a small scale, had been given in a small hall, which had been engaged for the purpose.

The great difficulty they had to contend with in commencing operations in London was to find a suitable hall, and he might also say, a suitable speaker. There were some five or six brethren, and none of them in the habit of public speaking, so that they lacked two of the essential elements of efficiency in the work. But in the month of June, 1868, a little hall which they thought would just suit their small capacities, happened to become vacant in the very district they wanted it—Camden Town; so they took it, and one of them tried his hand at speaking with little effect at first. The audiences were very small; sometimes they would have half a dozen. Thus they continued six or eight weeks till the public lectures he had referred to. Then they had a sudden influx of listeners, brought about doubtless by the little excitement connected with the public lectures. The little room was filled for a time, but as in other things, so in this; when curiosity was satisfied, the audiences fell away, so they had to keep up the interest by bills and announcements of regular courses of lectures from Sunday to Sunday. In this way they had ever since continued lecturing from week to week, using all available means for extending the truth. The result had not been altogether discouraging. During the first and second years, twenty-eight persons obeyed the truth; during the third year, twenty-seven were immersed; during the last (the fourth) year, there had been ten. The present number of the ecclesia was sixty-three brethren and sisters. The number would have been higher, had they not had several removals to other places, and lost three by death, and three by defection. Owing

to the great distances in London, it was difficult to get the whole of the brethren together at any one time—in fact he might say impossible. There were cases in their ecclesia in which it was impossible for some—sisters especially—to attend in the morning. It had, therefore, been deemed advisable to have a fortnightly breaking of bread in the evening, for those who could not attend in the morning. It was held three-quarters of an hour before the ordinary lecture meeting. Of course, it was not so interesting as their ordinary meetings for the breaking of bread, a very small number attending; but it was thought better to have a poor meeting than that the poor ones should not be able to celebrate the death of Christ in any way whatever. And then, he might say they had week night meetings, and had found them very useful. He thought every ecclesia should have its week-night meetings. Seven days was a long time to be kept away from each other and from those things that flowed from union. The meetings on week-days, however, he thought should be somewhat different from those held on the first day. He thought the study of the Scriptures in a critical way was a very appropriate occupation for the week-night meetings. On the Sunday they met for exhortation and exposition of a practical and moral character especially; but on week-nights it was profitable to embrace the opportunity of going through certain books critically, thoroughly, and systematically—study them verse by verse, so as to get at their real meaning. He did not know whether there were any ecclesias that had not adopted that course. If there were, he would recommend them to commence at once, by a meeting for the purpose on some evening during the week. And now, generally, with regard to the duty of those who had embraced the truth, he would press upon them the wisdom and necessity of doing all they could to spread the truth they had received. It was not only a duty, it was an advantage. If they did not occupy themselves by work in some shape or other, the mind and time were liable to become engaged in other ways which would not be to profit. The great aim should be to find something to do. Each brother and sister should strive to find something of themselves. It was not for those who might take a more prominent part in the operations of the ecclesia, to point out to each individual brother what he might do or ought to do. It was for

each one to ask themselves "What can I do for the general advancement of the truth?" It was too often the case that those who took a prominent part, had all the work to do. This ought not to be. Every one could help, and every one ought to seek to find out the way in which he could best assist. In this way let them seek to fulfil the apostolic injunction which exhorted them to bear "one another's burdens." The upholding of the truth in this day of darkness was a burden, and if brethren were acting the part of drones in the matter, they came short of apostolic duty in this direction, instead of taking their share in the burden and heat of the day. Another thought it was well to have in view, viz., that they must not let their energy in this matter depend upon results. They must not let their sowing of the seed or their service of Christ depend upon the way in which their activity might be received. Their duty was to work whether fruit came or not. Christ himself was represented by the prophet Isaiah as saying, "I have laboured in vain: I have spent my strength for nought." There was no doubt that, comparatively speaking, this complaint of the Messiah's was true. There was very little evidence as to the numerical results of Christ's personal labours. They knew of 500 brethren who saw him after his resurrection; but the result was not great in view of the means employed. Yet Christ did not lessen his labour; but worked while it was called to-day. Such it seemed to him was the position of the brethren now. They had often to labour in vain, and spend their strength for nought. But they were like the husbandman, waiting for the precious fruit of the earth, and having long patience for it. Sometimes the seed sown was a long time in bringing forth fruit. Sometimes it did not spring up for years. He had known instances where three and four, and even five years had elapsed between the sowing of the truth and its bringing forth fruit. They should not be in too great a hurry to see the fruit of their labour. Perhaps they were sometimes too impatient. When they saw some listening, it might be year after year, to the exposition of the word, and apparently coming to no decision, they might feel weary at the delay, and wonder why they were so long; but they must remember that all were not alike quick, and while there seemed to be delay, the word was all the while striking its root into the mind, and

perhaps they not know it. God knew it; God saw the work they were doing; He saw the fruit of it all. They might depend upon it, that everything would come out right in the end. He would say a word with regard to the wonderful increase that had taken place during the past few years. He remembered when he visited Birmingham six-and-a-half years ago, that the whole number of the ecclesia in that place was something like thirty or forty, and might be got comfortably into a good-sized house. Now, there was something over 200—an increase which was not looked for then and which no brother in Birmingham had any idea of. He remembered that when the Birmingham brethren thought it necessary to remove from Ann Street School Room, it was thought a very great undertaking to engage the Athenæum Hall, whereas now the brethren had been able to take a much larger hall, and get good audiences there. This was matter for very great congratulation; but while congratulating themselves, let them remember that this increased development of the truth called for increased vigilance, individually and collectively. If they did not observe this vigilance, the evils which had existed in the past must creep in again. It was important to see that those admitted into the ecclesias were well grounded in the first principles of the truth. There might then be some probability of continued faithfulness and increasing progress in the knowledge of God unto the end. If they lacked vigilance, the evils which they saw rampant in the denominations around them would gradually creep in, and corrupt and undermine the truth, and destroy the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. The wiles of the adversary were numerous and deceiving. Let them be on their guard.

Brother BUTLER (Birmingham) next addressed the meeting. He expressed his gratitude at being permitted to take part in such a large gathering of brethren. He looked upon the gathering as unique in English history. Only to think that out of 30,000,000 of people in England, and he might add 1,200,000,000 in the world, only 300 could be assembled who were, as brother Shuttleworth expressed it, "honest to God." Brother Shuttleworth had well said, that while many people could be found who were honest to each other and kept within the law, very few were those who were ready to give God the glory due to Him, or the credit of

meaning what He said. How few we are concerned to study His mind, as revealed in the word of His truth, in order to ascertain His will. The majority of persons grew up with a set of ideas which were hammered into them when they were very young; and they appeared to have come to the conclusion that God Himself would bow down to the doctrines which they themselves had reared. Idol worship was not unknown in Christian England as it was called. Though Englishmen did not bow down to stocks and stones like the heathen, they bowed to the doctrines of Plato and other heathen philosophers with all the reverence shown by the heathen to their idols. They must all be thankful that, in the providence of God, they had been delivered from this prevailing idolatry. Their present gathering was interesting in many ways. For a parallel to it, they must go back almost 1,800 years. He ventured to say that there had not occurred such a meeting as that since the Apostolic era. The dark ages, as far as history threw any light on it, could show nothing like it. They must be exceedingly grateful at having assembled in such numbers, holding such a faith. It was their privilege to hold the one faith and the one hope of the Apostles in the midst of many who merely had the form of these things, and scarcely that. They might look upon the gathering as a sort of type of the great gathering in the presence of the Chief Shepherd in the day of his appearing, for which they were looking and longing. Their present gathering was not perfect as that would be; yet was it characterised by a love to God and a desire to do what He had commanded, and to believe faithfully and implicitly what He had promised. They had assembled from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south, as they would assemble on that great day. What they had to do was to try and look forward, and endeavour, as far as in them lay, to qualify themselves for a part in that glorious company when God would assemble his chosen from the ends of the earth—when the graves would give up their dead—and when they should see those glorious patriarchs of old, of whose words they read, and whose faith and hope they could picture to themselves while they studied the Word of God. He hoped and prayed they would all have a favourable reception on that day. He could not help dwelling on the privilege they possessed in taking part in that gathering. Many of their brethren and

sters throughout the country were unable to be present. Those assembled were merely representatives of a great number who would have been there if they could. When the idea was first mooted, it was supposed they would have a conference. Now a conference it was, but not such a conference as the Methodist Conference. It was a conference of faith and hope, not a conference to lay out work, but a conference to hold out the right-hand of fellowship and to encourage each and all in work already begun. Privilege was brought responsibility. The comfort of the gathering laid upon them increased obligation to renew their exertions in the work in which they were engaged. It was a solemnising thought that they might never meet again in the flesh. It was undoubtedly true that they would never all meet again. It was the last time to some of them that they would look each other in the face. Other meetings might take place. Similar meetings might spring from it; but the identical individuals composing that gathering would never be present together again, till the great gathering arrived to which he had made reference. That fact would have its effect on their minds. They should endeavour so to steer their course, that when they had so separated never to meet again, they might be able, at the great gathering in the presence of Jesus, to congratulate each other then as they congratulated each other now. They did not know what their respective positions might be in the company when they assembled before the Judge of the quick and the dead. There were some—of them hope the number then present would be very few—who would hear the words "Depart from me." Let them strive to be on the other side, that when the judgment had taken place, they might surround their elder brother, and indulge in far higher words of praise and congratulation than any that could be used now. When they should, so to speak, have passed the rubicon of the flesh, and entered into the possession of the glorious and everlasting inheritance which was promised to the sons of God. The object of the gathering was to incite each other to work more successfully than they had hitherto done in this direction. The real work was to be done in obscurity and away from all interesting excitement. They must remember that it was very easy on such occasions to feel good and inclined to do their duty towards God; but it was when

away by themselves, in contact with an evil world, that circumspection, and love, and hope, were most needed. Gatherings were, doubtless, powerful for help, yet they must not forget there was a danger. Increase of number, as things now existed in the world, meant increase of liability to go in the wrong direction. It was doubtless, owing to the vast numbers that embraced the faith in the early ages, that corruption so powerfully prevailed. Where numbers existed, it was very easy to depart from the faith. They must therefore take care. Let them not rely too much on each other, but depend upon their own individual exertions towards God. If they were right towards God individually, they would be collectively; if they were right privately they would be so publicly. If they were patient, God-like, and long-suffering in little things they would be in weightier matters. It was in private that the real work of subjugation to the truth was to be done. The difficulties of their position were not visible upon a joyful occasion like that. Godliness had far more opportunity in ordinary life. The trifles of life bore the hardest. Trifles which they would almost smile at when mentioned upon an occasion like that, were sometimes those that tried the most. To get up in a hurry, for instance, and find one's shirt buttons off; or to come down stairs with only five minutes to spare, and find it would be ten minutes before breakfast would be ready; those were the times to exercise patience, and show a meek and quiet spirit. Let that glorious gathering incite them to perseverance in every good work. The proclamation of the truth to others was not all. There was a work to be accomplished in themselves, and to this they must see. The race was to be run after coming into the truth, and there would be no prize till the goal was reached, and they could never be sure of the prize till the very end was reached. To run well for a time was not enough; they must keep up the speed. Unless they persevered to the end, they would lose the glorious prize. If Paul so lived, lest having preached to others, he himself should be a castaway, how much more need with all of us. Let them endeavour in private life to be more like God, more like Christ, pure and perfect even like their Father in heaven. They must recollect that without purity of heart, all their friendliness was a sham. Let them so walk that, whatever might befall them now, they might all have an entrance

administered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Brother BANNISTER (of Derby) said it was certainly very agreeable to be there, in the circumstances under which they were assembled—to see such a number of those who had come to a knowledge of the truths hidden for ages and generations. What a wonder! What a wonder! especially in his own case, inveterately attached as he was to one of the systems called religious in our day. In the course of the works of *Yahweh* in constituting His great name on the earth, by calling a people—first from the Jew, and afterwards from the Gentiles, for manifestation in His coming kingdom, He had in His mercy caused John Thomas to visit Derby, a town full of religious “harlots and abominations,” having about forty-two buildings where they had long and zealously violated and adulterated the faith once for all delivered to the saints. No new revelation came, but the rubbish of mistranslation, and worse, misinterpretation, was removed that the truth might become apparent to the few who were willing to be convinced that gold was gold, that there was such a thing as *truth*. A few only had been disposed—risking reputation and worldly gain—to resolve “with meekness to receive the engrafted word which was able to save their souls,” which, though not immortal were to be so, “when that which was perfect was come.” The immediate effect of the Doctor’s lectures, in 1848-9, was to produce considerable interest and opposition, leading several to meet together, to immersion, and to the breaking of bread, but through the persistent pre-sing of certain erroneous doctrines by one of the party, some were spoiled, others disgusted, and all disbanded. From the same era, standing alone, and independent of the party named—by most arduous study, labouring under sickness and straitened circumstances—with the “Bible,” *Elpis Israel*, and useful history at hand, brother Thomas Meakin succeeded in obtaining that knowledge and belief of “the truth” resulting in the obedience commanded for remission of sins and heirship with the Anointed King, to “honour, glory, and immortality.” In the year 1861, brother Meakin had prevailed upon William Allen to accept “the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Christ.” So they were both immersed into that name together. As a complete

statement could not be rendered without including some particulars respecting the one now addressing them, he was very happy in availing himself of that opportunity. Having read works on prophecy by Keith, Bonar, Faber, Cumming and others, he had been brought to believe that the Christ would reign on the earth, in Jerusalem with his saints to reign with him, at the end of the time allotted for the little horn of Rome to make war with the saints and prevail against them. These new views were added to a creed called Wesleyan, to which he had given blind credence for thirty-three years. Zealous in pushing these new ideas, he exhibited in his window a poem on “The Coming Messiah.” This apparently little incident attracted the notice of brothers C. and T. Meakin. Here was the entrance on a track leading to the discovery that the “new views” did not fit properly on a foundation consisting of Wesleyan dogmas; but upon certain promises and covenants made by the one Deity to the man Abraham, who had come from the other side of the flood in olden time, a “stranger in that land which he was afterwards to receive for an everlasting possession, through his one seed, the Christ, who in due time came, confirming the promises by his teachings and the pouring out his soul unto death.”

Away went one after another, the fables of Wesley, inherited from Rome, and the lies thus compressed:

“A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.”

Never had the speaker swerved from the position taken in relation to the *real gospel*, though the adversary had tried hard to move him. “But the Lord would bruise Satan shortly;” for “all the proud and them that do wickedly shall be as stubble and ashes under the FEET of those that fear the Lord, in the day which burns as an oven.” Then came the destruction of that hostile monster called the devil.

In the year 1865, three beside himself yielded obedience to that command which delivered them from the power of darkness, and translated them into the kingdom of the Son of God’s love, namely Meakin, Rose Allen, and G. Needham, and afterwards, S. Williams. Since then, brother Tucker (who is now in the Infirmary) joined them from Nottingham. Continuing to apply the word of the kingdom in our conversa-

nal style, and availing ourselves of the ability God had given brother Roberts to press that word upon human attention, with help from Birmingham to meet the expenses incurred by his lectures, they were able to report the addition of three more in 1871, such as they believed would be saved. These were brother and sister Meakin, jun., and Thomas Kirkland. As yet they had not obtained a public place for their meetings, but had been, till now, comfortably accommodated in the house of brother T. Meakin. The Lord reward him according to his works. Having received a promise that help would be given, they had looked for a room, but found none suitable, or such as the Satan would let them have, knowing that they could be sure to show him the sword of the spirit, and try to deliver his prey out of his power. Desiring to be faithful in all things, they had to state with grief that some had withdrawn from them. Williams on not seeing certain events take place at the time he expected, was now a volunteer for the defence of a country soon to be absorbed in the kingdom of the Christ. G. Needham, also, because of behaviour not to be named among saints; also W. Allen, who had met with them for two years, being offended at things said to him. These they should, on Scriptural conditions, be glad to see return, for the sake of their welfare in the future. He hoped, also, to see more turn to the Lord, to be kings and priests on the earth, when he would come whose right it was to be King of kings and Lord of lords. Seven of them met weekly for breaking of bread. They had a weekly contribution toward assisting the poor and purchasing books, which are constantly proposed for sale. He concluded by expressing a hope that we might continue faithful to the end which was near.

Brother D. CLEMENT (Mumbles) next addressed the meeting. So much had been well said that it appeared to him there was nothing left for him to say in connection with the truth. Yet, he might at least take the position of Peter who said he would not be negligent to put them in remembrance of these things, although they knew them and were established in the present truth. He gathered from Peter that it was not necessary for a brother to be continually saying something new. Their chief duty seemed to be to stir up their minds by way of remembrance, concerning the

things which they all understood and believed, but which it was necessary to be continually impressing on their minds in consequence of the leaky nature of the brain. He did not propose to give them a history of the truth in Mumbles, with which most of the brethren were already acquainted. He would merely say that the brethren numbered from fifty to sixty in that place. There had been a great many removals of late, which had lessened their numbers somewhat. On the other hand, there were some interested in the truth whom they hoped shortly to see enter the name of Christ. Coming to general matters, there appeared to him to be a particular need for the brethren and sisters attending to the word of James, "Be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." This exhortation to patience, if they looked at the context, they would find based on the necessity arising from the existing state of things when, as a rule, the poor were trampled under the feet of the rich. They would find the rich addressed thus in the 5th verse (5th chapter) "Ye have lived in pleasure in the earth and have been wanton. Ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. Ye have killed the just and he doth not resist you. Be patient, therefore, brethren." They had every reason to be patient. They would not always be trampled under foot. The heirs of the kingdom were chosen from among the poor, but they would not always be poor. The day of the Lord assuredly would come when Jehovah's poor would be filled with good things and the rich sent empty away. Impatience was all very well to those who knew not God and were without hope, but for those who were hoping in God, it was wrong. They had many evidences that the world was impatient. No wonder. The vast mass of mankind were so situated, that their whole energies were taxed in the provision of meat for the stomach and clothes for the back. There was no time left for attention to those high ends for which we were created. Having no hope, their impatience was not unnatural, but the brethren were told to be patient unto the coming of the Lord, for the present state of things would not always prevail. There would come a time when the will of God would be done. At present, as most of them knew who had anything to do with business, it was a struggle to rub through. In every line of business,

administered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Brother BANNISTER (of Derby) said it was certainly very agreeable to be there, in the circumstances under which they were assembled—to see such a number of those who had come to a knowledge of the truths hidden for ages and generations. What a wonder! What a wonder! especially in his own case, inveterately attached as he was to one of the systems called religious in our day. In the course of the works of *Yahweh* in constituting His great name on the earth, by calling a people—first from the Jew, and afterwards from the Gentiles, for manifestation in His coming kingdom, He had in His mercy caused John Thomas to visit Derby, a town full of religious "harlots and abominations," having about forty-two buildings where they had long and zealously violated and adulterated the faith once for all delivered to the saints. No new revelation came, but the rubbish of mistranslation, and worse, misinterpretation, was removed that the truth might become apparent to the few who were willing to be convinced that gold was gold, that there was such a thing as *truth*. A few only had been disposed—risking reputation and worldly gain—to resolve "with meekness to receive the engrafted word which was able to save their souls," which, though not immortal were to be so, "when that which was perfect was come." The immediate effect of the Doctor's lectures, in 1848-9, was to produce considerable interest and opposition, leading several to meet together, to immersion, and to the breaking of bread, but through the persistent pre-aching of certain erroneous doctrines by one of the party, some were spoiled, others disgusted, and all disbanded. From the same era, standing alone, and independent of the party named—by most arduous study, labouring under sickness and straitened circumstances—with the "Bible," *Elpis Israel*, and useful history at hand, brother Thomas Meakin succeeded in obtaining that knowledge and belief of "the truth" resulting in the obedience commanded for remission of sins and heirship with the Anointed King, to "honour, glory, and immortality." In the year 1861, brother Meakin had prevailed upon William Allen to accept "the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Christ." So they were both immersed into that name together. As a complete

statement could not be rendered without including some particulars respecting the one now addressing them, he was very happy in availing himself of that opportunity. Having read works on prophecy by Keith, Bonar, Faber, Cumming and others, he had been brought to believe that the Christ would reign on the earth, in Jerusalem with his saints to reign with him, at the end of the time allotted for the little horn of Rome to make war with the saints and prevail against them. These new views were added to a creed called Wesleyan, to which he had given blind credence for thirty-three years. Zealous in pushing these new ideas, he exhibited in his window a poem on "The Coming Messiah." This apparently little incident attracted the notice of brothers C. and T. Meakin. Here was the entrance on a track leading to the discovery that the "new views" did not fit properly on a foundation consisting of Wesleyan dogma; but upon certain promises and covenants made by the one Deity to the man Abraham, who had come from the other side of the flood in olden time, a "stranger in that land which he was afterwards to receive for an everlasting possession, through his one seed, the Christ, who in due time came, confirming the promises by his teachings and the pouring out his soul unto death."

Away went, one after another, the fables of Wesley, inherited from Rome, and the lies thus compressed:

"A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky."

Never had the speaker swerved from the position taken in relation to the *real gospel*, though the adversary had tried hard to move him. "But the Lord would bruise Satan shortly;" for "all the proud and them that do wickedly shall be as stubble and ashes under the feet of those that fear the Lord, in the day which burn as an oven." Then came the destruction of that hostile monster called the devil.

In the year 1865, three beside himself yielded obedience to that command which delivered them from the power of darkness, and translated them into the kingdom of the Son of God's love, namely Meakin, Rose Allen, and G. Needham, and afterwards, S. Williams. Since then, brother Tucker (who is now in the Infirmary) joined them from Nottingham. Continuing to apply the word of the kingdom in our conversa-

tional style, and availing ourselves of the ability God had given brother Roberts to press that word upon human attention, with help from Birmingham to meet the expenses incurred by his lectures, they were able to report the addition of three more in 1871, such as they believed would be saved. These were brother and sister Meakin, jun., and Thomas Kirkland. As yet they had not obtained a public place for their meetings, but had been, till now, comfortably accommodated in the house of brother T. Meakin. The Lord reward him according to his works. Having received a promise that help would be given, they had looked for a room, but found none suitable, or such as the Satan would let them have, knowing that they would be sure to show him the sword of the spirit, and try to deliver his prey out of his power. Desiring to be faithful in all things, they had to state with grief that some had withdrawn from them. S. Williams on not seeing certain events take place at the time he expected, was now a volunteer for the defence of a country soon to be absorbed in the kingdom of the Christ. G. Needham, also, because of behaviour not to be named among saints; also W. Allen, who had not met with them for two years, being offended at things said to him. These they should, on Scriptural conditions, be glad to see return, for the sake of their welfare in the future. He hoped, also, to see more turn to the Lord, to be kings and priests on the earth, when he should come whose right it was to be King of kings and Lord of lords. Seven of them met weekly for breaking of bread. They had a weekly contribution toward assisting the poor and purchasing books, which are constantly exposed for sale. He concluded by expressing a hope that we might continue faithful to the end which was near.

Brother D. CLEMENT (Mumbles) next addressed the meeting. So much had been well said that it appeared to him there was nothing left for him to say in connection with the truth. Yet, he might at least take the position of Peter who said he would not be negligent to put them in remembrance of these things, although they knew them and were established in the present truth. He gathered from Peter that it was not necessary for a brother to be continually telling something new. Their chief duty seemed to be to stir up their minds by way of remembrance, concerning the

things which they all understood and believed, but which it was necessary to be continually impressing on their minds in consequence of the leaky nature of the brain. He did not propose to give them a history of the truth in Mumbles, with which most of the brethren were already acquainted. He would merely say that the brethren numbered from fifty to sixty in that place. There had been a great many removals of late, which had lessened their numbers somewhat. On the other hand, there were some interested in the truth whom they hoped shortly to see enter the name of Christ. Coming to general matters, there appeared to him to be a particular need for the brethren and sisters attending to the word of James, "Be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." This exhortation to patience, if they looked at the context, they would find based on the necessity arising from the existing state of things when, as a rule, the poor were trampled under the feet of the rich. They would find the rich addressed thus in the 5th verse (5th chapter) "Ye have lived in pleasure in the earth and have been wanton. Ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. Ye have killed the just and he doth not resist you. Be patient, therefore, brethren." They had every reason to be patient. They would not always be trampled under foot. The heirs of the kingdom were chosen from among the poor, but they would not always be poor. The day of the Lord assuredly would come when Jehovah's poor would be filled with good things and the rich sent empty away. Impatience was all very well to those who knew not God and were without hope, but for those who were hoping in God, it was wrong. They had many evidences that the world was impatient. No wonder. The vast mass of mankind were so situated, that their whole energies were taxed in the provision of meat for the stomach and clothes for the back. There was no time left for attention to those high ends for which we were created. Having no hope, their impatience was not unnatural, but the brethren were told to be patient unto the coming of the Lord, for the present state of things would not always prevail. There would come a time when the will of God would be done. At present, as most of them knew who had anything to do with business, it was a struggle to rub through. In every line of business,

the competition was so great that a man to succeed had to give himself thoroughly to it. Holding things with a loose hand, did not work in business. Here was a danger to the sons of God who were in that position. It made them sigh that the provision of things honestly in the sight of man, should in any degree interfere with the service of God. But while they sighed, they took comfort, for the coming of the Lord held out for them the hope of deliverance. He did not mean to say that a man could not attend to business and the truth at the same time. Far be it from him to say such a thing: what he meant to say, was that in business they could spare much less time and energy for the truth than they would desire, but they must not grow impatient. They must be patient unto the coming of the Lord. While the worldly mob saw nothing before them but a continuation of the present fearful state of society, their impatience was excusable, but not so with the brethren. Every other now and then, they saw the impatience of the world burst forth with one mind and one strength against the present condition of things, but always without effect as regards reforming the evils felt. The only one who could reform the world was Jesus of Nazareth who would be here by and by, and with this knowledge, they could patiently wait as exhorted by the apostles. James referred to the case of Job as an example of patience. They were told to reflect on his case as evidence that the Lord was very pitiful and of tender mercy. Now, what was the lesson of his case? This, that in judging of the Lord, they must not look at things as they were. They must look at them from the point aimed at in the Deity's operations. If they looked at Job's sufferings merely, they would be disposed to think that the Lord dealt very hardly with him; but when they looked at the end, they saw the kindness of a Father who only tried his children so long. In the present state, we were in contact with much evil, but it was only a preparation for the glorious time that was coming. They might depend upon it that the end of the Lord to them would be pitiful and full of tender mercy, if they only walked faithfully under trial. They might even now rejoice together that the Lord had opened their eyes and ears to these things by which, though far removed one from another in distance, they had become one

family, rejoicing together in one hope of the gospel. They had but to hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end, and that continually. They must not be changable. They must not be at one time full of zeal and at other times fall off in their ardour. They must be always abounding in the work of the Lord—not holding these things lightly, but giving continual and earnest heed to the things they had heard, that they might find acceptance of the Lord in that day. They were also exhorted by James to grudge not one against another, because, says the apostle, "Behold the judge standeth at the door." This was especially true in our day when at any moment the announcement might be made "The Lord has arrived." Hence the urgent need for attending to the recommendation to grudge not one against another. We were unevenly placed as regarded social position. Some were rich and some were poor. Now, there was a liability to indulge in grudging one against another in these relations. It was not right. We must leave the Lord to judge. Masters had to remember that they had a master in heaven to whom at last they would have to give an account. Servants must remember that in reality, if the Lord's, they were not the servants of men but of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who were rich had to remember that if they had more than their brethren, they were but stewards of the grace of God, for their use of which, they would be held responsible, while the poor had to remember it was reckoned according to what a man had, and not according to what he had not. They must not grudge one against another. Every privilege brought responsibility, and as that responsibility was to the Lord, there was no reason to begrudge brethren those privileges which only made them tenfold more responsible than their brethren. They should rather each and all rejoice that their ears had been opened by the truth, and strive to make themselves servants of all. He hoped the effect of the Fraternal Gathering would be to increase and improve their zeal, and bind them together more closely in the bonds of love and patience unto the coming of the Lord.

The brethren sang together Hymn 212 "Oh, speed thee, brother."

Brother YARDLEY (of Leicester, who spoke in the absence of brother Collyer,) apologised for his unpreparedness, but

said he thought he could occupy a few minutes by setting forth in order a few facts relating to the history of their little ecclesia at Leicester. Something more than three years ago, there were very few representatives of the truth in Leicester.* There had been no regular meetings held for the proclamation of the truth. Three lectures delivered in the Temperance Hall, by brother Roberts, by the request and arrangement of brother Lester, one of the brethren referred to, had led to some attention being given to the truth, and resulted in the obedience of several, and the opening of a room in Halford street; but his own connection with the matter did not go farther back than the time stated. Just about then, some placards appeared in the town, announcing a visit from Dr. Thomas, who would lecture on the religious dogmas of the day. Just at that period of time, he (the speaker) was very unsettled. He was very dissatisfied with the Church of England services which he attended, and he determined to go and hear what Dr. Thomas had to say. This he did, and he now valued the incident the more from finding out that if he had not taken that opportunity, he should never have enjoyed the privilege and great pleasure of listening to Dr. Thomas. He heard him deliver three lectures, at the close of which the Dr. informed the audience that a room was to be opened in Leicester for the proclamation of the truth. At this room he (brother Yardley) made it his business to be present. Brother Roberts he believed came and lectured on that occasion. He attended the meetings for some short period of time, and saw clearly into the truth and the errors and superstition in which he had been steeped all his life. Consequently, in due time, he rendered obedience. Most of them would be aware that the Leicester ecclesia had had great difficulties to contend with—difficulties at a very important and very dangerous period of their existence. They all knew the dangers incidental to infancy. The period of dentition was a very trying period indeed. So they had found it in the spiritual order of things. They had a very great struggle. Trouble arose which resulted in the withdrawal from them of not less than eight of their number. They would readily imagine the straits to which, at such a time, such an occurrence reduced them. But a few months prior to that time, God had

blessed them with a very excellent nurse, in brother Shuttleworth, who nourished them well with the words of truth, by which he had reason to believe they grew and prospered in the spirit. His presence got them through the period of dentition; but no sooner was that period over than another trying difficulty arose, viz: the removal of their nurse to Birmingham. This was almost as great a trial as the other, for they had no one used to public speaking in their midst, nobody *i.e.* that could take his place. Another trying circumstance occurred about that time. The room which they had occupied up to that time, was taken from them, and the room which they entered on leaving the first was in such a state of incompleteness, that it was unfit to ask an audience to. Consequently, for two months, they were unable to ask a brother to come and proclaim the truth. Looking back, he often thought that those circumstances were just the circumstances they needed to be placed in, inasmuch as it almost compelled them to do some work for themselves. They were obliged to do it. Brother Lester and brother Collyer did their best, and he (brother Yardley) was obliged to follow in their wake; they would take no denial. The result was they got into harness, although their experience was somewhat in the spirit of Paul's words: "We were with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling." The ecclesia had now pretty well got over its difficulties. The shaking of the knees had ceased; they felt much stronger, and the fear had almost wholly disappeared. They had had very great reason to thank God and take courage. Some of the recent additions were the result of work done by brother Shuttleworth while with them in Leicester; but, he was happy to say, they were now breaking new ground. They had had several immersions from more recent labours in the truth; and they were cognizant of the presence of several more in the meshes of the net which they had been letting down for the draught. He must say that in common with the rest, he felt a very great pleasure in being present at that Fraternal Gathering and looking in the face so many brethren whose names he had often had to feel a special interest in, because of the amount of instruction which, one time and another, he had received from their writings in the *Christadelphian* and other works. He

* Now there are 85. But for 3 removals and 8 withdrawals, there would have been 46.

hoped the Gathering would be to their mutual benefit, and that they would go away strengthened and determined to be more zealous and earnest in the work which their Father in heaven had given them to do.

Brother W. CLEMENT (Mumbles) next addressed the meeting. He said the remarks of brother Boshier on Saturday night took him back in memory to the days of his Methodism. He recollected once being called upon to preach a sermon to make a good collection, and therefore he sought a good text in order to give the right spirit to it. (Jer. vii. 18.) "The children gathered the sticks; the fathers kindled the fire, and the women kneaded the dough." That was Methodism in right earnest; and it ought to be the heart's blood of Christadelphianism: for what did it mean? At it, all at it, always at it. By such a co-operation they could not fail to make their influence felt. Pulled out of the mud and mire of the Apostacy, he was thankful; but he did not mean to trouble them with any history of the matter. He would rather ask their attention to an exhortation in Paul's letter to the Romans, to which he thought they would give great heed. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is your reasonable service." He thought every brother and sister would say Amen to that verse. Brought out of Gentile darkness and introduced into the family of God—the most respectable family in the earth—and made heirs of an inheritance that would not pass away, it was only reasonable that they should devote themselves, their time, and substance, as far as they could, to the service of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. Paul, in one of his letters to the Corinthians, told them that they were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and therefore not their own. How reasonable then that they should give themselves unreservedly unto his service. Peter told them, as obedient children, not to fashion themselves according to their former lusts in their ignorance—in point of dress? all right, Paul and Peter. In point of behaviour? all right, Paul. In point of eating and drinking? all right. Let them fashion themselves so as to leave the impression on those with whom they came in contact that they were the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, looking forward to a better state of

things. If he understood the teaching of the word aright, it was their duty not to conform to the world, but to fashion themselves in all respects after the standard of the word. Christadelphians were the only true Nonconformists: they were thorough in their nonconformity. (A voice: "And in their conformity"). Yes: to the right thing. They were to be transformed in the renewing of their minds after the image of Him that had created them. Heads enlightened by divine truth and hearts rightly purified thereby, would at last turn the world upside down:—energetic, persevering, and determined men, brave to do that only which was right in the sight of God. Brother Clement concluded with a few earnest remarks on the need of learning the will of God, and submitting to it in all things, even to the crucifixion of the flesh.

Brother DASHPER (Devonport) next addressed the brethren. He said that in Devonport, which lay about 220 miles to the south-west of Birmingham, there was an ecclesia numbering about twenty-nine brethren and sisters. There would have been about forty of them, but five had recently left for foreign parts and five had separated from them on the question of the nature of Christ. He and brother Moore were the only two of the number who had been "let loose." A great many more brethren would have been present in Birmingham but for the chain that bound them to their posts. Connected with the ecclesia was a Sunday school with about fifty scholars. Devonport he thought a good field for the truth, if there were only effective labourers. The brethren meet in a room which was not in a public thoroughfare, and this was to the disadvantage of the truth. Nevertheless, their Sunday evening meetings generally numbered from sixty to seventy persons. So much for the retrospect, which it was appropriate to speak of at such a gathering as that. They felt on such an occasion the truth of Solomon's saying, that as iron sharpened iron, so did a man the countenance of his friend. It was a matter of rejoicing to meet thus, not to make laws or to interfere with each other's affairs, but to say God speed to each other in the work in which they were engaged. They felt upon such an occasion that the man was the happiest whose conscience was void of offence towards God and man; and that community in the best

position whose works and labour and patience were most in unison with the will of the Father, as displayed in the pages of inspiration. While looking back on the past and thinking of the song of triumph by the hosts of Israel under Moses, on the banks of the Red sea, they looked forward to that far more glorious occasion when, gathered round the Lord, they should be permitted to sing both the song of Moses and the Lamb. For this time, they were now preparing, by that obedience which the Father required of all his children. Brother Dashper concluded with an exhortation based on the figure of soldiership as applied to the brethren of Christ.

Brother DUNN (of Birmingham) said he experienced that morning some of the most pleasant emotions of his life. He had often felt that the Christadelphians occupied a most important position in the present age, and the Fraternal Gathering did not lessen that feeling. The present age was peculiar for the subtlety of error: for his own part, he could only recognise as Paganism, the most vaunted religion of the day; the most subtle form of Paganism that had ever existed in the world. In such a situation the Christadelphians stood forward to illustrate the power of divine truth to change the current of human thought, and to give an impetus to human action for the furtherance of the divine purpose. Not only so, but that Gathering evidenced the strength of the feeling of earnestness which they realised in connection with their position as brethren, and their duty to labour for the diffusion of the truth. It was their imperative duty to labour in the cause of the truth, and they could not better fit themselves for that duty than by drinking of the pure fountain of divine truth. They were considered insignificant in the estimation of the world, yet they possessed an influence that the world could not resist. The least among them, as regarded the rudiments of divine truth, could withstand the learned nonsense and the Pagan jargon of the theologic schools. No doubt this brought responsibility with it, and laid upon them the necessity of consecrating their energies to the work, as far as in them lay, of proclaiming the gospel, which was the power of God unto salvation. Brother Dunn illustrated the Pagan character of popular religion by an analysis of the popular doctrine of God and the future state. He con-

trasted the truth with these in their several features.

Brother ELLIS (of Liverpool) spoke for a quarter of an hour on Rom. iv., in connection with the Father's intimation in the second psalm, to Jesus—that he would give him the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. The earth, with all the riches which the Almighty had been pleased to store within it (and men had not yet, in reality, got below its surface in their researches) had been made over as a gift to God's well-beloved Son. The human family dwelling upon it, had also been given to the Messiah. He had been constituted lord both of the dead and living. All flesh were in his hands to do as he pleased. Was it a matter of surprise, then, that those who understood these things should rejoice together? Nay, far otherwise. Having had access by faith unto this grace wherein they stood, they rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. The glory of God was the power of God, as manifested in the energy put forth in raising the Lord Jesus from the dead, and filling him with incorruptibility of substance. This power they could have no conception of until they were privileged to be changed into the same image, and, even then, possibly they might not understand it, but they knew that that was the highest effort in relation to the children and men that the Almighty proposed to put forth. It was in hope of that power being put forth upon them, in each of their individual cases, that they rejoiced. But was that all? No: "As I live, saith the Lord, the whole earth shall be filled with my glory." The whole earth had yet to reflect the power and image of God, for they read that Jehovah would rejoice in all His works together. This was what they had to look forward to. Meanwhile, like Paul, they had to glory in tribulation. This was not so easy to do. Let them ask themselves how far they had got in this matter. He was afraid they grumbled about their tribulations. Paul said "We glory in tribulations also," not for their own sake but for their result, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed." Of all things, they would like least to be ashamed in the presence of the Lord at his coming. Let them then take thankfully the experience he subjected them to. In the present condition of things, they were under the

training of an all wise and Almighty Father; and in this training, they had to taste of tribulation. Those who were not subject to tribulation, were bastards and not sons. They were not subject to it, because not worthy of it; because tribulation would not in their case be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Christ, but otherwise. Only precious stones took the polish. A tried faith was said to be more precious than gold. Yes, because gold had no intelligence. It could not reflect intelligence or reproduce it. Those who had the truth put into them by tribulation, could reproduce themselves to the glory of God. They could operate upon their fellowmen, and generate in them by the power of the same word, the likeness of the glory of God in the face of Jesus. The hope created in them made not ashamed. Why? Because the love of God was shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit: not the spirit that wrought miracles, such as the apostles had, but the spirit contained in the truth which it had made known. The truth was the mind of the Almighty, and if it operated effectually through our understanding it produced the likeness and image of God in the heart, and thus His love was shed abroad by the Spirit, which gave the truth and was the truth speaking in the apostles. It was worthy of notice that Paul gave prominence to the fact that Christ died for the *ungodly*. In this, we were to be imitators of God, as dear children. We must love sinners: our goodness must expand to those that were without, if haply they might be brought within. The brethren had been brought nigh by the blood of Christ. They were once without hope like the world. That which had brought them within, would bring others within also, if they gave heed to the same word. God's love gave them a model for imitation. He did not give Christ in order to make Himself love the children of men; He loved them before and sent His Son to die for them. He gave the manifestation of His love in such a form that there was no mistaking it; and Christ was set before them as an example in this as in other things, that they were to reproduce the love of God in their operations towards their fellowmen.

The brethren sang Anthem 35: "Amen! blessing and glory."

The meeting concluded with prayer.

MONDAY EVENING.

On Monday afternoon, about 300 brethren and sisters sat down to tea, in the Athenæum, in two courses. The Athenæum being too small to allow of such a large meeting being held in comfort, the brethren adjourned, after tea, to the Temperance Hall.

The meeting commenced with the singing of the 4th Anthem: "The Lord shall inherit Judah."

Brother Turney read Psalms 46 and 47.

Brother Roberts engaged in prayer.

The brethren sang Anthem 6: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

Brother ROBERTS (in the chair) made a few opening remarks. He said that, fixing their minds upon the occasion upon which they had assembled, one especial feature presented itself. They had met together in a friendly capacity. They had not met together to do battle for the faith, nor to enter upon controversy of any description, but to refresh each other by the way; and that brought before their minds this thought, that the purpose of God which had brought them together to-night, was to bring great refreshment, great joy, and great friendliness at the last to all. They all knew the value of friendship, even in the present state of being; they all knew the sweetness of love, and that, apart from these conditions, the finest attainments were without a purpose. A man might succeed in getting a great deal of money, but what was the use of it, if the objects for which the money was alone valuable remained out of reach? A man might have a great reputation in connection with art or science, but if he enjoyed not the sweetness that came from disinterested friendship, how vain was his life. The body of Christ was a body of love; a real true believer was an embodiment of love. It did not follow that every believer they might meet with was an exemplification of that fact, for Christ taught in many ways the great lesson which appeared on the face of the parable of the net which enclosed all manner of fishes, both good and bad. This was the time of probation, and one of the indispensable conditions of probation was, that evil should be in the ascendant; for if it were not so, we should not be placed in those circumstances in which we could be proved. Allusion had been made that morning to Job, who was surrounded with evil, whose experience of evil was made the means of bringing about great good; for in those circumstances, the sterling character of Job was made manifest both to others and to himself. How few men there were who, if pushed to the pinch to which he was reduced, would take his attitude: "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" Let them

at all times have that sentiment before their minds. Should they have times of refreshing, of friendship, and encouragement, and not times of dearthness, and waiting, and endurance, and trial? Why, from the little experience they had had, they could see how precious was the result of that waiting. What was it that gave that occasion so much of its pleasantness? Was it not that the assembly was composed of individuals who, each in their own peculiar circumstances, had patiently, for Christ's sake, been pursuing a certain course? A fortuitous concourse of individuals—an assembly that they might gather off the streets—would have none of the joy they had. What was the cause of that joy? That in circumstances of obscurity, in moments of non-excitement, they had slowly apprehended divine principles and laid hold on divine promises, and, to a certain extent, applied them in their lives. Well, the kingdom itself would, in its full manifestation, be the illustration of that very thing. The kingdom, or the family of God, in the first phase in which it introduced itself to notice at the beginning of the kingdom, would be made up of many individuals gathered from many nations, from many countries, who had all been distinguished by one common principle of faith in God's promises and obedience to His commandments. Those two principles comprehend all that could truthfully be affirmed of the sons of God. With regard to friendship—love: Jesus said to his disciples, a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. What miserable company people made—and, unfortunately, we sometimes had experience of the misery of the thing, for we were still out in the dreary bleak wilderness—who were alienated from each other, or indifferent to each other; when the mind was eaten up of the evil thoughts, and envies, and jealousies, finding vent in evil speaking. Such an assembly would soon be rent asunder, and disorder, chaos, confusion, and every evil work would prevail. How different it was with a body compacted together by the prevalence of a common principle of intelligence, and love, and mutual interest. This was a picture of surpassing beauty; a picture which had been the dream of idealists in all ages, and which even the Communists, in a certain blundering way, admired, and sought to realise in all their revolutionary proceedings. But such a state of society would never be brought about in the way of the world. There was a way in which it was to be realised. God had His own way of getting it. The brethren had come to know what that way was. The plan centred in one man, who was slowly gathering out for himself a peculiar people, brought to righteousness, and love, and union, and wisdom, by the

power of his word, and who, in the day of his manifestation, would accord to him their general ascription: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." "Thou hast loved us, and hast washed us from our sins in thine own blood. Thou hast made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign with thee on the earth." Those who would be permitted to join in that song, were those who had walked in the spirit of love, joy, peace, gentleness, and patience now. But should we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not receive evil? Therefore, when they went away, and found themselves sorely beset by the travail of the way, bitten behind or at the side, slapped in the face, or have dust thrown in their eyes, and cold water thrown on their projects, or in any manner whatsoever tried with soreness of manner whatsoever, it might be that evil, let them remember, it might be that God's hand was in it. It was good to think so, when evil came, from whatever source it might come, from Jew or Gentile—and he used these terms now in their spiritual sense. Let them follow the example of David, who, when he came out of Zion, and Shimei cursed him, said "Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him." When they had to suffer evil, let them remember David, and apply the principle to themselves. Perhaps the Lord had sent it. This would help them to be patient; for out of all evil would come good at last for those who feared the Lord and walked in His ways; for God's purpose was not to let evil always prevail. He only permitted it now for a season for a good purpose. Had we never tasted evil, we should never have been able to appreciate the goodness of God a hundredth part so much as they should in that day when the tabernacle of God should be with man, and there should be no more curse.

Brother HADLEY (of Birmingham) felt great delight at seeing so large a body of Christ's brethren gathered together. The great and important thing for them, in the position in which they stood, was that they should come up to a due sense of their responsibilities in the faith. They were apt to get lost in phrases, and to talk about things they believed, without sometimes questioning and examining themselves thoroughly as to whether they did believe those things; as to whether it was really a heartfelt belief, or whether it was only an imagination that they believed certain things. It would be well for them, on occasions like this, when thoughts were directed by the majority of the speakers to the great things of their faith, to examine themselves, and to think whether they were in the faith or not. Had they such a faith in regard to God's promises as Noah had in regard to the prediction concerning what

was coming on the world? This was an illustration given by Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, amongst the other great worthies whom he gives as an example of faith to the brethren of his day. Noah, they were told, having been informed by God of certain things coming on the earth, immediately obeyed God's command. There was not only faith and obedience in his case, but the obedience was the test of his faith. Well, now, this should be the case with regard to them. Did they so believe the promises they had received as that they had strength and energy for the required obedience, because this, after all, was what was necessary? It would be a sad thing for them if, after having had their minds filled with the things of the kingdom, they failed to rise to a due sense of their responsibilities in connection with those things. They professed, as children of the Deity, and brethren of one another, to have love towards Him and towards one another. They used the terms, "brother," and "sister," in their communications one towards another: let them examine whether they really carried out, in their minds and bearing one towards another, the ideas which those terms conveyed. Did they always act towards one another as brethren ought to do, as good and true brethren should do? He was rather afraid of the answer. Of course, it was a point on which he felt some diffidence in speaking, because he was not quite in a position to point out failings in those so much older than himself, but he would put it for them to examine for themselves. Were there not things in which they showed unbrotherliness, or things they failed to do which, as brethren and sisters, they ought to do? Christ said, "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh!"—(Matt. xviii. 7.) If it was "woe" to them without who gave offence to any of the little ones, did it not follow it must be more woeful if the offence came from one of Christ's own brethren? Blessings were predicated of those without who did good unto Christ's little ones; and if the doing of a little act of kindness by an outsider, constituted something for which he would get a blessing, it followed that the brethren of Christ should do kindly things one towards another. He thought they were not generally short in doing acts of love as regarded bodily wants, but there was not that attention in regard to our mental wants—the difficulties and dangers which beset our path—and not sufficient conversation one with another upon the things which pertain more particularly to our walk and conversation in the truth. Now, it was possible to be absorbed in doing acts of a material nature, and neglect to confer

with one another, to help by kind words, encouragement, and conference, as to the difficulties we have to contend with, and by the bestowal of superfluous strength upon another who may be weaker. If it were so, it was a matter they might well look to rectify. It was very certain that if they fell short of what was required of them in the matter of obedience, they should not inherit the kingdom of God. That was a thought they could all take home to themselves, and it was well that they should not only have a selfish appreciation of the fact but also appreciate the fact that they were, to a great extent, their brother's keeper. He contended one brother was, to a certain extent, another brother's keeper, and that he was partly to blame if that brother should fail in attaining to the eternal weight of glory set before us. He concluded by again expressing his gratification at seeing them all, and hoped that they should see each other with joy, and welcome one another at the great Day of Judgment.

Brother DAVID HANDLEY, of Maldon, next spoke. He said: We have all embraced the one faith: Peter says it is a precious one. How came he to call it a precious faith? Why do we call a sovereign precious? Why, just for what we can purchase with it; and Peter calls the faith we have embraced a precious faith, because it makes us heir to everything. We had not always this faith. No; and that makes it the more precious to us, to think that we found it after a hard looking for. A good many Christadelphians have been a discontented sort of people, a worry to themselves and a worry to the society they have been connected with—I mean before they found the faith. They were not satisfied, and would not let the people alone. The reason was that they wanted a foundation, and the preachers could not find the foundation. On my way here on Saturday, I got into conversation, in the train, with a missionary from India. I put to him a question of a religious nature which he felt a difficulty in answering, and he said the heathen often asked them questions they could not answer, and they had to tell them stories; and one story they told them was concerning four blind men, who each had a different view of what sort of a creature an elephant was. Being blind, they could only form an idea by feeling it, and one felt its trunk, another its ear, another its leg, and another its tail; and the consequence was that each had a different notion of it. The missionary compared the ministers to blind men, which I thought was a very good comparison. I said so, and he, thereupon, said no more. He thought the notions we have of God very blind. But we had no right to be blind, with a revelation before us. God's Word is a light. We were not always

walking in the light, but we thank God for so many as have been brought to see the light of life. I said just now that many Christadelphians have been discontented, that is dissatisfied with the systems of religion. Well, some people are very stable. Some have been Churchmen all their days; others have been Methodists from youth; others have been Quakers for generations. Their fathers were Quakers before them, and their grandfathers were Quakers; and their family has had the Quaker blood running through them for generations, and that is how they come to be Quakers now. Well, why were not we? Because we wanted to find a foundation. The ministers of the day don't want people to think for themselves. When I was a boy I went to church, and prayed with the parson—"God have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner,"—and I was miserable. After that I was a Methodist, and I said, "I shall get things here a little plainer," and so I did. The parson preached hell and damnation, and that if I did not repent, I should be damned; but I was a discontented one. I wanted to know the truth, and I went on by degrees looking for it. Years passed away, and I was led to see that man had not an immortal soul to save, but was only mortal, and under sentence of death. If there had been any Christadelphians in my town at that time, I think I should have been pleased, but I did not know there were any in the world. When I showed others that man was mortal, they said, "Don't say anything about it; if you can see it, never mind, but don't tell the rest of the people. It will be sure to have a bad effect upon them." "But, surely," I thought, "the truth will have the best effect upon the people, let the truth be what it will." Well, having embraced the idea that man was mortal, I wanted to know how I could attain to immortality. I had been a leader amongst the Peculiar People. They are a very "peculiar" people, but as a whole, I believe, the best body of professing Christians in the world outside the truth. I was with them, but on embracing the doctrine of the mortality of man, I was obliged to leave them. I had been sprinkled with water upon believing that Jesus was the Saviour of the world. After leaving them, and seeing that there was no immortality out of Christ, and no Scriptural hope for that without being buried with him by baptism, myself and several others went into the water and baptised each other. Years passed away before I knew anything of Christadelphians. The way I came to know there was such a man as Dr. Thomas, was through Dr. Leask, the editor of *The Rainbow*, finding fault with a small work by Dr. Thomas. He found fault with it because the writer of it looked upon man as organized dust. Well, the very reason he

found fault with it was the reason I wanted to see it. Having got the book, which was entitled *How to search the Scriptures to gain Eternal Life*, I wrote to one of the brethren in London, and got in reply a long letter with some leaflets, and then I got the *Twelve Lectures*, with which I was very much pleased, as far as they went with me; but when they went contrary to me, I thought "What a pity." I thought I was right. There is such a disposition in people to think they are right. Well, I think they ought to think so until they are convinced they are not, and then they should alter. Never mind being called a turncoat. Saul of Tarsus was a turncoat. "Well," I thought, "I will set these Christadelphians right. What a pity. They deny the Trinity, the existence of the devil, and the present possession of the spirit." I thought if I could save Mr. Roberts and a few others who held the doctrine, I should be doing great service to them and shewing my love. So I set to work; but the result was, that I was satisfied that I had been wrong again. "Well," I thought, "I will make a good job of it this time; I have been sprinkled twice, and dipped once; I will settle the matter this time." And so, about four years ago next March, I marched down to Birmingham, and I was buried with Christ by baptism, in the Athenæum Rooms, and I came out of the water to walk in newness of life, and I praise God that I have continued up to this time.

Brother CHARLES HANDLEY, of Maldon, said he had looked forward to this Fraternal Gathering, from the first, with the joyful anticipation at the prospect of speaking to so many he had not seen, and, probably, never should see again till they met around the judgment-seat. He looked forward with great pleasure to being able to shake hands with so many who had renounced the fables of Christendom, and were looking for the fulfilment of the promises made to the fathers. They had to thank God they lived in such a time as this—the winding-up of the times of the Gentiles—and for the signs of the times in which they lived. This very gathering was itself a sign of the times. Many years ago, they could not have had such a gathering, nor indeed, going far enough back, could they have met on such an occasion without fear of losing their heads or being driven to the stake. But, thanks be to God! they lived in a country now freed from the tyranny of Rome, and could speak their minds. Thank God for this their day of visitation. God had visited them by the light of truth, and they had not kicked against it, although they did so at first. They were too glad when they saw it was the truth of God, to lay hold of it. The brethren in Maldon were for several years, before they obeyed the truth, in a very isolated

position, because believing man to be mortal. On account of this, they were separated from men and women whom they loved, and the desire of their hearts often broke forth that they might meet with a people holding the faith of the apostles. They thought they would walk any distance to hear a man who could expound the Scriptures, and set them before them as Paul did in his day. Well, at last, they heard the truth, and although, at first, they brought forward all the arguments they could against it, it proved of such a convincing nature that they were forced to give way. Well, they now occupied a glorious position. Looking at it from the orthodox point of view, it was not a glorious position, for they were looked upon as fanatics, as the off-scouring of all things, and as a people who ought to be put down. But as one ironically said upon one occasion, "The world does not know that their greatest men live in their midst." Looked at from the Deity's point of view, they occupied a glorious position. It was also a very responsible position. Their position was described by the psalmist: "Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven and whose sins are covered." They had been covered by the glorious name of Christ; they had sought the kingdom of God, and found it; and they had also sought His righteousness, and stood therein. Of old, they were children of wrath, under the sentence of death; but God had made known His will to accept them in Jesus Christ, "in the beloved;" and now they stood "complete" in Him. And now it was for them to see that they walked worthy of the end to which they were called, for, as the apostle Peter said, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" They had been made righteous; and it was for them to see that they maintained good works. James said, "Do not err, my beloved brethren." Now there was a possibility of our erring in the present day. There never was an age in which man was more exposed to error than in the present day; but they had no occasion to err with God's word in their hands. There were some who erred in the days of Jesus, and why was it? They asked him a question they thought would puzzle him, but they made a great mistake. He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." Jesus said, "Touching the resurrection, have ye not read, I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob?" No doubt they had read that passage over and over again, but they had not read it so as to know it; and it was very possible they might read God's word over and over again, and yet not know the Scriptures. They were to read them that they might know them; as the Churchman had it—"read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest,"

and not be only hearers, but doers of the word, that we may be blessed in the deed. There was a possibility that they might err, but God had made provision if they did, they were under the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. They had been made free through the blood of Christ; and as the priest formerly atoned for the errors of the people, so Christ atones for theirs, and whilst they kept a conscience void of offence, bringing forth the fruits of the spirit, and did the things God has commanded them to do, they were in a very safe position, and they might hold fast the rejoicing of their hope and the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end.

Brother MEAKIN (of Birmingham) said it was refreshing to hear the various sentiments expressed by brethren from different parts. Brother Handley's conversation in the railway carriage with a minister, reminded him of the charge brought against Christadelphians, that was brought against Paul; that they were "pestilent fellows." The ministers could not bear them at all; they bothered them about things which they felt they could not answer satisfactorily; Well, they took a delight in belonging to that pestilent sect, for many reasons. There was now a goodly company of them, which called to his mind the prediction of a "converted prizefighter," or something of the kind, who not long ago preached a funeral oration over the Christadelphians! It was rather a queer thing to preach funeral sermons before people were dead. But this individual, who was a ringleader of what is called the "Hallelujah Band," prophesied that before long, he should be able to stand upon the Christadelphians' grave and sing "Hallelujah!" If that individual had been there that night, he would have felt there was little likelihood of his prediction coming true. Instead of dying out, they were just beginning to live, and that instead of their graves being got ready, there were preparations that it might spread more and more, until the Christadelphians, when Christ returned, should stand upon the graves of all their opponents, when that monstrous city, Babylon, from whence the intoxicating cup has flowed, should go into perdition, and its priests and Pope, and all the rest of its community, should be hurled into the abyss; and sing the song of the saints, which John heard in Patmos: "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." It struck him very forcibly, that the only "Hallelujah Band" in existence was the Christadelphian band. It was complained of the Christadelphians that they had "swallowed the Bible." The preacher he had referred to said these Christadelphians were worse than infidels, because there was a possibility of converting infidels, but no possibility of converting a Christadelphian. There was a very good reason.

It was because they had not only "swallowed the Bible," but digested it. The Bible was also their two-edged sword. They were men who gave themselves over to the reading of the Word of God, who took the Word of God as little children took the word of their parents. They had studied it in all its bearings; they had seen that that Word is the Word of eternal truth; they knew that it was from God by many proofs, some of which brother Meakin proceeded to specify.

The brethren sang Anthem 11: "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness."

Brother ROBERT NORRIS, of Edinburgh, said that his name had found its way into the programme without his consent. He was not in the habit of speaking, and he did not come to Birmingham to minister but to be ministered unto; but although that was the case, he felt that he would be doing violence to his convictions were he to allow the present opportunity to pass without saying a word or two. He hoped that the impressions made upon their hearts during these meetings, by the truth that had been brought before them, would be lasting, saving, and sanctifying. It had been a distinguishing feature in the people of God in all ages, that the fearers of His name spake often one to another; "and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and thought upon His name; and they shall be mine saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels."—(Mal. iii. 16, 17.) There was a very important question that they should be asking themselves occasionally, because it was a truth that experience and observation taught them, that it was possible for them to be saying "Peace, peace," when there was no peace. It was true that they had been buried with Christ in the waters of baptism, but had they risen with him to newness of life? Was the life which they were living a life of faith upon the Son of God? Was that good hope which they had heard so much about on the previous evening, purifying their hearts from all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and leading them to live the soberly, righteously and godly, in the present evil world? There was a class of professors, in the days of Jesus, who were very sticklish about the orthodoxy of their creeds, but who were not so sticklish about the orthodoxy of their conduct. They could do things and say things as remote from the spirit of Christ as it was possible for two things to be apart; and Jesus addressed such in this language: "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" One of the laws in the universe of God was that cause and effect would be found together. Jehovah had inseparably connected the promotion of His glory with our true happiness, and in seeking to

promote the one, they followed the sure course to secure the other. In the keeping of His commandments they were assured there was great reward; and everyone who had been born from above, and who had watched the dealings of Jehovah, would be able to coincide with that testimony; and if they walked uprightly, He had assured them that no good thing should be wanting. He hoped they would excuse him not filling up a quarter of an hour, but he felt great pleasure in saying the little he had said, and he hoped they would all meet among the ransomed of the Lord, who would be brought to Zion with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads, and who should obtain joy and gladness, when sorrow and sighing should for ever have fled away. They looked forward with joyful anticipation to that time when God's name should again be great in the world, when His name should have become excellent in all the earth, and when the grand ultimatum of the plan of salvation should be fully realised which the angelic hosts announced to the shepherds in the Plains of Bethlehem at the birth of Jesus: "Glory to God in the highest; on earth, peace and goodwill among men."

Brother OSBORNE, of Tewkesbury, said he was very much in the position of the last speaker, his name having found its way into the programme without his assent, as he was not a public speaker at all. But he was glad to show his face to them. When he first heard of the project of the Gathering, he had doubts as to its feasibility, not on the ground of fearing a tendency to legislation, but on account of the waste of strength, which he thought could not be properly employed on the occasion. But he now thought the wisdom and propriety of the movement had been fully justified by the success that had attended it. He thought the wise distribution of the power that had been brought to bear on the present occasion fully justified it; and he was sure that to the brethren isolated as he was, from the greater advantages possessed by those of them who lived in the central towns, the opportunity had been exceedingly gratifying and useful. He thought the observations that had fallen from the previous speakers had been full of one leading idea, which they would all do well to take home with them, and that was the duty of more self-consecration to the truth. In battling, as they were, with the obstacles within and without, they had a two-fold battle to fight; and it required something of this kind to stir them up, that they might prosecute the war within and without with advantage; and he felt that the exhortations they had listened to would very much conduce to that end. He thought they did well to remember the words they were singing in the morning:

that

"There was a battle to be fought,
An onward race to run,
A crown of glory to be sought,
A victory to be won."

Brother Wm. BIRKENHEAD, of Sale, near Manchester, said it was a little out of the prescribed order for him to address them, but he felt glad of an opportunity of doing so, because he had a few ideas on the sensorium of his brain that he should like to transfer to theirs. But first of all he wished to relieve his mind of a little grievance. On Saturday evening, after listening to the words of copious invitation from their brethren in Birmingham, he felt, as one of those invited ones, that there was due from them a rather more copious response to those welcomes, and he should be very glad, on the present occasion, to act as the mouthpiece of all from other parts in expressing their warmest thanks to the brethren of Birmingham for extending to them that invitation; for he felt sure that many of them had gone to much trouble and inconvenience, so as to make the meeting profitable to them. Therefore, he felt bound to thank the Birmingham brethren for this invitation; and he also felt that they were all bound to express their gratitude to the God of heaven and earth for giving them the pleasure they had derived. He believed that, six years ago, when he was on his way from America, there was not one representative of the truth of the Deity in Manchester, or within miles of Manchester, and there were now, he believed, about thirty in Manchester and Sale. He did not say that as a matter of boasting, for his fear was that he had not done all he ought to have done. Manchester was a large place, and his feeling was that they might have done more. He must say his heart swelled with joy and thankfulness on beholding such a number of the children of the Deity at one time. He supposed such a gathering had not been for ages past, and when he said "Children of the Deity," let them remember what was embodied in that phrase—children of the God of heaven and earth, children who had taken upon them the great, glorious, and fearful name of the Lord their God. The fact of their being children constituted them members of that royal family which was the highest of all royal families, and therefore their hopes and aspirations were of the highest order. And although he saw before him so many of those who had professed the same truth, still he did not feel satisfied, for there was, from the very fact of the numbers before him, a greater craving for the appearance of their Elder Brother, the Captain of their salvation; for it required his presence to satisfy their minds

and to give them the things they were aspiring to. Were they among them and had they the good fortune to be approved at that tribunal before which they must stand, then indeed they might rejoice. But this reminded him that they were in the period of probation, in which they developed characters that would be either acceptable or not acceptable to the Deity. Whether they were acceptable or not depended upon themselves, for they were told they must work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. He thought they would find this idea underlying a most beautiful metaphor that Jesus used in addressing his disciples on one occasion: "Ye are the salt of the earth." What was meant by this phrase? This metaphor must be based upon some literal idea. What was the idea? What was salt? It was used as an antidote to corruption; and it, therefore, most beautifully represented the Spirit of the Deity. If they turned to the book of the law, in Lev. ii. 13, they would find that no offering of flesh should be made without the application of salt to that flesh. There was the sacrifice of flesh to be offered; but it reminded them of the putrefaction and decay. Salt—the antidote for decay and corruption—was associated with it in the offering, and hence the sacrifice of flesh, and the salt as the antidote, were a most beautiful emblem of Jesus—flesh, and the spirit by which he was made incorruptible, and by means of which they might be made incorruptible upon the same principle. The disciples had become the salt of the earth by having received from the mouth of Jesus those words of instruction which implanted ideas on the sensoria of their brains, or, in other words, in their minds. Those ideas were the words of his Father. They found that the truth of the Deity, coming through Jesus and the apostles to them, operated first of all mentally in instructing them what they had to do, and the outward manifestations of the operation were the works they had to work so as to make their faith valid. The truth operated first mentally, then experimentally, and in the end physically. It must first enter into their minds, and, having caused their minds to understand what God required them to do, they were then in a position to do what was required, and the result of that doing was that, at the time of the resurrection, the same spirit of the Deity would operate physically upon every tissue of their bodies, and turn them from the corruptible nature to the incorruptible. They would be clothed upon with their house from heaven, and become spirit-bodies, as Jesus was. They saw, then, how fitly the words "Ye are the salt of the earth" were used in reference to the disciples. But they conveyed more than that: if the disciples were the salt of the earth, because they were the custodians

of the truth of God, how great the responsibility attaching to their position. The disciples were commanded to have salt in themselves. In Mark ix. 50, they read, "Salt is good; but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? *Have salt in yourselves*, and be at peace one with another." But how were they to have salt in themselves? By deriving from the word of truth the same ideas as the apostles derived from the words of Jesus; and they were to manifest to their brethren and to the world the fact that they had that salt, by doing the things commanded by the apostle to the Ephesian church, as they would find in his letters to that church.—(iv. 28.) They would there see how the truth was to manifest itself in the actions of those who had first of all been illuminated by it. Said the apostle, "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." And further that, and this was well for them to observe, "Let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Then said the apostle in writing to the Colossians iv. 6, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Let their speech be seasoned with the salt of the truth. Let them take these things home, and apply them to themselves; and let them be careful to let no corrupt communications proceed out of their mouths; let them be careful to commit no act which would not be satisfactory in the sight of the Deity. There was one more thought connected with the metaphor alluded to, and it was this, if the disciples were the salt of the earth, in the days of Jesus, who were the salt of the earth in this day? Those who were the custodians of the same truth; those whose minds had been illuminated by the same thoughts that the disciples had received. And this also would come home to them: they constituted the salt of the earth of this day, if they had received that salt; and if so, what a responsibility there was attached to their position! If the disciples were to exercise their influence in their day in salting the earth, had not we to exercise our influence now? Yea, indeed; and this was the idea he wished especially to press upon their attention, that they failed not in their endeavours, that they flinched not before any obstacle in setting forth the truth, that they might have the praise of the Deity. They had become responsible, and let them notice what Jesus said to his disciples, in John xv. 8: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." Let their endeavour, then, be to bring forth much

fruit, to be salted with the truth, to be continually drawing from the word of the living God that salt which could be drawn from no other source, but which could be drawn therefrom by their daily application of themselves to its study. Let them study the word, that the saltness which they had received might not decrease but increase, and that as the result of that increase it might eventually transform their mortal bodies into immortal bodies, that they might be manifestations of the glory of the Deity, and that they might shine as gems in the crown of their Master. Let them strive to do these things, for there was no higher aspiration that they could aim at than to become sons and daughters of the Deity, constituted such by the resurrection from the dead, and the glorification of their bodies.

Brother CLISSITT, of Birmingham, said they were that evening just what the truth had made them. They were called by various disrespectful names, but they knew that their Master was called "a friend of publicans and sinners," "a wine-bibber," and even said to be in league with "Beelzebub," the prince of demons. If their Master was called by such names, surely they might patiently submit to be called infidels, when they thought of what he had done for them. His mind was taken away back from the present to fourteen years ago, when things were in a very different position as regards the truth. If two or three came to hear the truth in those days, the few brethren were highly pleased. He had heard some of the brethren say that they had sometimes six or twelve. Why! it would have been quite reviving. Well, they had been labouring and labouring on, but as they had so freely received, they must freely give. They must not merely have the name, but must show forth the power, and not only in their heads but in their hearts. It must lay hold of their affections. They must show that they had been brought to love him who first loved them; and if they had really been so highly favoured, could they stand still and see their fellow-men in the same position that they were once in, without moving themselves to do for them what they could? They could all do something, and it was by all putting the shoulder to the wheel that they helped on the carriage. How great must be their thankfulness when they thought of the past, that they had not laboured in vain, nor spent their strength for naught. They had been hewn out of the quarry, but then came the polishing time, when they were to be made to fit as the Lord would have them. He had been told in the morning that the Christadelphian Gathering was a kind of love-feast. Well, it was a most glorious feast to be there on Saturday and Sunday,

and at their tea-meeting that afternoon, and the meeting that evening, when they saw so many brethren and sisters who had been moved by the love of God to come from a distance, so that they might be cemented together as the heart of one man; and when they saw that there was no confusion among them, but that they were really a harmonious assembly of people, brought out from the superstition of the age in which they lived, and in which they once rejoiced. He thought of this sometimes when they had to deal with those who differed from them; and he found the longer he lived the more room there was to improve. There could not be any time in their lives when they would be standing still; for the truth was so wide, so high, so deep, that they would never come to the end, the fulness of it, until they should meet their Redeemer at the judgment-seat, and then it was, if found worthy, that they would enter into the fulness of the glory promised to all who were labouring and looking for it. It was gratifying to those who could look back to fourteen years ago, to think of their meeting last Sunday. How could he have let these meetings pass without having a word to say? Yes, it was all of God, not of themselves. Whatsoever they did, they must do it to His glory; and in proportion as they did that, and lived together in harmony, united together as one, thinking the same things, speaking the same words, they would find that others around them, if they laboured on patiently, would come in and see that, though called infidels, they were really those who were separated by God from the infidelity by which they were now surrounded. He thought the plan adopted at these meetings, of having short speeches, much better than having long ones. His heart had been warmed in that way. There had been a variety, which was much better than one ability. A blending of colours was more pleasing than one colour. They should take heed to the addresses they had heard in connection with the practical truth of presenting their bodies a living sacrifice to God, and throw aside the practices which had crept upon them when they were in the world, and rather spend the money that they had formerly spent in them, in tracts and publications, and ministering to the wants of the poor. He never liked to hear those who complained that they could not do anything, when they could lay out a shilling or eightpence a week on what was injurious to their physical and mental powers.

Brother SHUTTLEWORTH (of Birmingham), said that as something had been said by way of response to the invitation given by the Birmingham brethren to those in other parts of the country, he wished to put the matter on a right footing. In the history of

those who feared God in all ages, there were often things which corresponded, perhaps not in all the details, but in some of their prominent features. Now it appeared that in the term of David (1 Chron. xxix. 9), "the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to Jehovah;" and then David upon this basis "rejoiced with great joy;" and he poured out his soul saying, "Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever; Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all. But riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thy hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that they should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own hand have we given Thee. For we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were our fathers: all our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. O Lord our God, all this store which we have prepared to build Thee an house for Thine holy name cometh of Thine hand, and is all Thine own." The correspondence was this, that David's heart was rejoiced that the people had given so liberally, and so willingly, and of such a perfect heart, to the house of God. The brethren and sisters of Birmingham had only done the same thing, and in doing so, they believed that they had done it unto the Lord. All things came from Him: it was of His own that the Birmingham brethren had given to those who had come, and therefore they would unite in blessing and praising the Lord, for His goodness and mercy lay under all their ways that were according to His will.

It was a matter of no small joy to him to see all their faces, not because they were a number of men and women, but because of the things that united them, and which were the true foundation of their love, and also because for many years, he, for one, had been watching the course of events, and the progress of things ecclesial in particular. For some 16 or 17 years he had had something to do with the history of the truth in connection with the ecclesias at Halifax, Huddersfield, Whitby, Leicester, and now Birmingham. He had been subjected to a variety of experience, and sometimes of a kind such as Paul referred to when he spoke of things which were not pleasant but grievous; but, as a whole, they certainly had conducted to the development of those things which were set forth by Paul as necessary elements in

those who would attain to salvation. It had pleased him exceedingly to watch the progress of the truth, not only as regarded numbers, but also as regarded the quality of the materials brought within the ecclesias. When Jesus was asked, "Are there few that be saved?" he answered, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth to eternal life;" and therefore they were exceedingly interested in the truth of the things which made up the fruits of the spirit, which made up the new man. The Apostle was careful in many places to define their standing in the truth. He said, in writing to the Ephesians, that they were built upon the foundations of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. They knew that this foundation was immovable, and that they were built upon it, because the evidence of it was beyond all controversy, since it was based on a belief of the word of God. And again, the Apostle, in writing to the Thessalonians (2nd Ep. ii. 13, 14) said, "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." This was their glorious standing in Christ. And again in 2 Peter i. 16: "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." They could say with Peter that they had not followed cunningly-devised fables, for of nothing were they more certain than the truth of the things they believed: they were as certain of this as of their own existence. And wherever the truth existed, there was this certainty: it was in the very nature of the truth—but in nothing else—to give this certainty. Then in 1 John ii. 12, the apostle brought before them another item in saying: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." This was a blessed standing: to stand, as it were, in the presence of God acknowledged of Him; to stand, as it were, with the load of their transgressions and blindness of heart, and all the things of which they were formerly guilty, blotted out, and received into the favour of God through His mercy in Christ Jesus. Then, in Titus iii. 7: "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." "Justified," "heirs," "eternal life" in the distance. And again in 1 Cor. i. 26-28, the apostle referred to their calling; and in v. 30, he said: "Of Him"—that is of God—"are ye in Christ Jesus, who, of God, is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This

was their standing: they knew it was, because they had received the word of God. They were so certain of it that it was only necessary to remind themselves of it, so that they might be more confirmed that they stood in this grace, and that the God of heaven and earth was their Father. They knew the hope dwelt upon the previous evening; and there was this feature about it that he would notice: "rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God." The apostle said, "rejoicing always;" and there was a sense in which the servants of God rejoiced before him always. It was impossible for it to have been conceived of by any human intellect, and the more they grew in it the more they loved it. There had been a time when they only intellectually apprehended the truth; but many of them had outgrown these particular things, and had come to apprehend something of the height and depth of the love of God as manifested in Christ Jesus. As had been said, it had gone down from their heads into their hearts; and he, for one, could with his whole soul bless God for as many of them as had had their hearts reached in this way, for it was only as it reached the heart that it was capable of bringing forth in them what was designed. It was only by their love of the truth that they would be likely to be polished, and be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. This was the basis of the operations of God. Apart from a love of the truth, they must be turned from the narrow path; but if they loved it with all their heart and soul, nothing could separate them from the love of God. It was a hidden treasure; it was beyond all price; it was worth more than rubies, or even their own life, for it was the only means by which they could attain to the resurrection and the kingdom beyond. If they gained that, they would have gained more than all they had lost or sacrificed for Christ. The hope of these things gave them joy; but there was something besides joy: the obedience of these things gave them a satisfaction, and a conscience void of offence. It did not give them that kind of presumption which would say that they were pure and spotless, and that they had no sin; but it gave them confidence, along with humility of disposition. He stood up that evening that he might persuade them to lay hold of the truth with all their hearts, as the strength-giving basis of the trials through which they might have to pass; for every son and daughter must be scourged; they must be proved. They made no account of those who went outside and did what was right in the sight of their own eyes: that was not the spirit of the truth. They must hope, and work, and wait together for the salvation of God, and it was only by so doing that they could develop the things He had designed in their reception of the gospel. It

was a blessed thing; and they could say with the psalmist, "Sing ye praises with understanding." Nothing in heaven or earth was more worthy of their praises, and of their rejoicing, than this blessed hope to which they had set their hand, and which he prayed they might be able to hold to till the end.

Brother SMITH, of Birmingham, then made a few remarks on the parallel between the flood and the judgments now impending on the world.

Brother MORRALL, of Bridgnorth, having specially requested to be allowed to say a few words, said a celebrated man in Birmingham had, on the previous Sunday week, told his congregation that, after having spoken to them for 25 years, he thought it was high time he told them that the conscience of man was superior to the Bible, and that was to be the only judge, the only power by which their conduct was to be guided. In the town from which he (Brother Morrall) came, namely Bridgnorth, there was a saying, "Bridgnorth election was all on one side." Well, he had come to the conclusion that they were all on one side in reference to spiritual matters. He had, on several occasions, public lectures by friends from Birmingham, but he had

seen no results; and he had come to the conclusion—his "conscience" told him—that he had done that which was right, and that nothing more remained to be done. They had a little ecclesial meeting in Bridgnorth, and, as was the custom elsewhere, they put by a little, on the first day of the week, for the service of the Lord in a special sense, and having no use for it in Bridgnorth, he had brought this money to hand over to brother Roberts, to do what he thought best with it; but since he had come to Birmingham—and that showed that the Gathering had done some good—he had been convinced that he had not done all he ought to have done, and that George Dawson was wrong in saying that conscience was to be supreme. His conscience, which had been very quiet, had become disturbed, and he had come to the conclusion that the money should go back to Bridgnorth (Hear, hear, and applause); and if brother Roberts had got it, he should ask him to give it him back again (laughter), and they would have some more lectures in Bridgnorth, and they would try once more whether Bridgnorth was all on one side.

The meeting concluded with the singing of Anthem 21, "Be patient, brethren," and prayer.

TUESDAY.

MORNING.

The brethren and sisters, to the number of 200, mustered in the Athenæum Hall, between ten and eleven, for a short railway trip to Olton, five miles from Birmingham. At eleven, they walked to Snow Hill Station (Great Western Railway) where they entered carriages provided for them by special pre-arrangements. The morning was fine and the occasion exhilarating. It was a pleasant thing for so many brethren and sisters to start off together in a train. It made us wish for the last journey in the flesh—the journey to the Lord's presence at his coming. The train started at 11.20, and reached its destination at 11.35. Leaving the train, the brethren found themselves in a lovely piece of country scenery. Three minutes' walk brought them to Dr. Thomas's lonely house, behind which, a marquee, surmounted by two banners, showed its white canvass to the sun. The house inspected, a lunch of bread and cheese was partaken of in the marquee, after which a meeting was held, brother Boshier presiding.

The meeting commenced with the singing of anthem 4: "The Lord shall comfort Zion," after which, the 26th chapter of Isaiah was read. Brother Boshier then offered prayer, and the 13th Anthem, "Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob," was sung.

Brother BOSHER then said: We have met together for the last day of these interesting proceedings. We have been entertained right royally by our brethren, and the one feature that has given great interest to it has been the variety. We say variety is charming; and so it is, if that variety consist of those things in which we ourselves feel an interest; and nothing could have been more interesting to us than the things with which we have been associated on this occasion. It has been, on many occasions, by several speakers, referred to as a feast. Well, I think we can all say that it has been a feast—even the most dainty of us—of fat things, as the orthodox people sometimes say, even before we reach Mount Zion, and realise the things which God has promised in connection with that misused expression of Scripture. There have been many features in it that have identified it with a feast. We have had things tangible in relation to the body. We have also had the various chambers connected with a host in good circumstances

who when he has entertained us in one room shows us into another. We were first shown into one place, and then into another, and then back again as the feast required, and we now come to another place under circumstances altogether different to anything we have had. We have got this morning under our feet the most beautiful carpet that can be produced. We have the most beautiful canopy over our heads—outside (laughter)—and this which we have over our heads just now is very convenient and very good. We have to thank God on all accounts that he put it into the hearts of our brethren to bring us together and treat us so royally as they have done on this occasion; and we have to thank him that he has put it into their way to have the means. Under all circumstances as far as I am concerned and those with whom I have come in contact, and I have come in contact with a good many, and have been able to take notes and compare matters with them, we have all said that we have been well entertained. Well, but you know that to entertain a company like us indicates preparation beforehand, and we know they have had to do something since we have come. They have prepared tables and chairs, &c., they have provided food to eat, by which our mortal bodies have been refreshed and strengthened. And you know at a feast, we must have servants. Well, here we have had lots, always willing; never tired: if I ask for anything there are two or three ready to bring it me in a moment. We have had I don't know how many waiters of another sort, who have brought their nice little repasts that have taken just a quarter of an hour to eat. I am sure we cannot complain that they have not done their work well, and I believe those who have yet to serve us will do so as well as those who have done already. We have made them go through their work pretty sharply, and I think this little experience we have had here of these short speeches may help us in our ecclesias. I intended to say something of the circumstances under which we are met this afternoon. Our meeting is very interesting in itself, but we cannot meet here without having our thoughts called back in relation to this house, to the man who planned it, and for whom it was built. We had expected, in the good providence of God, that we should have had some such gathering as this when our beloved brother should return to our midst. He had planned the house somewhat with that view. All the details, except the wing, are the work of his own brain, and whilst he was here, he superintended it with his own eye. We can see what a taste he had in fixing upon such a spot, without saying anything of the wisdom of purchasing the ground, and building the

house, for he doubted the wisdom of that himself before he died. Yet, some of us can, even now, see the wisdom of the Deity connected with it. It has proved a link in the chain of events in connection with the development of the truth which John Thomas was honoured to bring to light in his day and generation. Well, we have not had the privilege of meeting our dear brother here, as we expected. One of the last things I said to our brother Roberts, one Saturday that we came over here, in the spring of last year, and before we heard of the Doctor's death, as we looked over the house, calculating when it would be finished, was that it would not be long before the Doctor would come over, and we should have a nice house-keeping on his return. I went by train on the Monday to my business, and the next day I received the intimation that the Doctor was no more. All our fond anticipations in relation to this house were destroyed. Crossing the Atlantic, we laid him in the grave, and I never shall forget, whilst I have consciousness in my brain, the moment I stood over the spot where we interred John Thomas. I felt, as I feel now, that he will rise from the dead the most honoured man of this generation in the estimation of the Deity; and if we are to be accepted of the Lord in the day of his appearing, we must stand round our brother Thomas, as his crown of rejoicing in that great day. Oh, I felt as I stood there—and I hope I may never lose the impression—that seeing such a brain had ceased to work, and such fingers had ceased to move, that so far as I individually was concerned, I would go into the gap and fill up the breach, and consecrate all that I had to the work of which John Thomas laid the foundation in this generation. And here, this afternoon, and throughout the whole of these proceedings, we feel that that is the sentiment of brethren and sisters throughout. The work is not dying: it is stronger now than when John Thomas ceased to breathe, and we believe that it will become stronger and stronger, gathering strength and power, until it shall, at the re-appearing of the Lord, become a mighty influence that shall oversweep mankind, and bear down all obstacles, until the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

Brother Boshier called on brother Tait, of Edinburgh, to address the meeting.

Brother ROBERTS stated that brother Tait, who was a railway station master, had been prevented being present, but had sent the expression of his mind in a paper which he would proceed to read. Before doing so, he felt tempted to continue, for a moment, the strain of remark adopted by brother Boshier. The house built by the Dr., as they saw, was still unoccupied, and what its

fate might be, it was impossible to tell. One of the last expressed wishes of the Dr. to him was that he (brother Roberts) should occupy it in his place rent free; but having regard to the interests of the truth in his day and generation, he had not acted on that suggestion. He did not wish to give evil-minded men a something to handle to the detriment of the truth. Had he occupied the house, many damaging things would have been said, which it would have been difficult to answer, so far as appearances went. Brother Boshier and himself, as they were aware, had been left in trust of what affairs pertained to the Dr. in this country, and their hope was they might be able so to utilise the property as to realise the Dr.'s wishes in connection with the truth. No stronger desire had he (brother Roberts) than that some hearty brother might turn up from some part of the world, and occupy that house as a tenant, and fulfil the original intentions with which it was erected. Such a brother would not only do this, but while paying rent, which he would have to do under any circumstances, would by that payment be serving the truth in a very direct manner; at present, the matter was in dinness, and they must wait the due order of Providence. He next read

Brother TAIT'S Fraternal Communication as follows:—

To the brethren of Christ, assembled at Olton, on Tuesday, 13th August, in a tent behind Dr. Thomas's house.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS.—Having been one of those appointed to address you on this occasion, as per programme sent me by brother Roberts, I do so with much pleasure even from this sheet of paper, but how much more had I been privileged in person to see you face to face. This privilege has been denied me by the railway powers that be, on account of Her Majesty's journey from England to Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, tomorrow morning, thereby causing me to be kept at my post and thus preventing me seeing your dear faces, and hearing the voices of my brethren in Christ.

Well, first let me refer to the locality of our Gathering at Olton, viz. "Dr. Thomas's House." This at once calls the Dr. before our minds, and somehow I must say for myself, and perhaps others the same, that I have never realised his death. He is ever before me and with me day and night. I think I see his venerable, happy face and welcome when I last saw and met with him in your own town of Birmingham, and I am sure that had it pleased our heavenly Father to have spared him till now, and were he and his dear wife and daughter now residing in the house, what a hearty welcome we should have got, and what a pleasure to them to entertain this company.

But we are also reminded that collectively

or ecclesially loated, we are "God's house," "the pillar and ground of the truth," and in a very especial manner are we here to-day as comprising that house. Let us each see that we do our duty as faithfully as we can, as our beloved Dr. did when awake. In almost every sense he was a living illustration of that spiritual house. He breathed forth by voice and pen the Spirit's doctrines, and was a living epistle known and read of all Christadelphians. He was a living example, and though now dead still speaks to us. Let us seek to walk in his steps by word and deed.

And now, regarding this happy tent meeting, are we not something like Israel of old when keeping the feast of tabernacles, every seventh month in the year, dwelling in booths and rejoicing before their God, having gathered in the precious fruits of the earth? They thus met and rejoiced by divine appointment. Well, we are believers of the right stamp—Yes; and may we not also include believers of the wrong stamp; that is to say, if they have at one time believed and obeyed the apostolic doctrines and precepts—I say, have they not thus become fruit on the apostolic branches of Jesus the true vine, of which the Father Deity is the husbandman? Here Jesus speaks to us, or sets before us that beautiful figure of the Father Himself, the apostles and believers as the (entire) "True Vine," or tree of Life, as seen by John in Patmos, whose leaves or fruit were for the healing of the nations." Now, we as believers are the fruit or leaves, both *now* and in the age to come. But the latter is predicated on the former. We must be *now* the right kind of fruit: bad fruit is injurious to the eater, and far better—yes, a thousand times—no fruit at all than bad fruit. But good fruit is one of the Deity's richest blessings to mankind, and to this we can all testify. Even so it is in the present time, and will be in the future with us. We are now to be *rich* in faith. The word of Christ is to dwell in us *richly*. We are not only to have these merely in themselves, but richly dwelling in us. Otherwise, we shall only be fruit of a hard, unripe, un-luscious quality, fitted only to engender disease and death. Well, now, how are we to be rich fruit? By drinking deeply and constantly into the vine, viz., the knowledge of God and His Son Jesus Christ, through the holy prophets and apostles, and in works of faith and love. Hence, the mere weekly observers of the divine testimonies will be starved. Just fancy, only one meal in seven days! The man and woman professing to be Christ's, and only partaking of him once a week, will starve and die. *Daily* are we to sit at Wisdom's gates; constantly are we to be reading and meditating on the Scriptures, &c., &c., hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that we may be filled with all the fulness

of the Father Deity. Therefore, I would experimentally recommend the necessity of every household having at least one copy of the *Bible Companion*, and daily, yes, at every meal of literal food, to make it a point to feed on the word. Hence, says Paul, "The inward man is renewed daily;" and so Paul ate of the word daily. I could not do better than give you an extract from the "Sunday Morning," in this month's *Christadelphian*, viz., at page 353: "The wisdom of daily reading becomes more and more apparent. This lesson cannot be too strongly enforced or too distinctly apprehended among those who have fled to lay hold of the refuge set before them in the Gospel. Their life depends on it (awful thought). They are in danger of being blinded to it. Away from it, they are open to a hundred plausible deceptions, which lay hold with a death grip, all the more fatal, because soft and sweet. Spiritual decay potently prevails where the reading of the Word is neglected. A lamentable mistake is made by those who conclude they have no time to read. What should we say of a person concluding they had no time to take their food? No more insane would this be than the other hallucination in its ultimate effect. Man lives not by bread alone," &c. And to this Jesus adds: "But by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Brethren and sisters, let us take this good word of warning and exhortation, and so let us live to and for God, so that His truth will be in each of us as a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. And thus being assured now that we live and move in His truth, and have our being therein, we shall indeed be fruit that shall not only refresh ourselves, but refresh others now, and be ultimately fruit gathered unto life eternal; and then what glory and honour await such in the antitypical feast of tabernacles, as seen and described by John in Patmos, chapters 5 and 7 Revelations:

"They sang a new song, saying Thou art worthy, For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God

By thy blood, and hast made us unto our God Kings and priests; and we shall reign on earth. They are the countless multitudes gathered out of all nations,

Kindred, and people, standing before the throne and before

The Lamb; clothed in the white robes, and palms in their

Hands; saying: Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon

The throne, and unto the Lamb; saying, Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour,

And power, and might, unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen."

May the Lord grant unto us, dear brethren and sisters, every rich blessing, that we may abound in all things profitable to ourselves and others, and acceptable to Him, both now and in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. We wish you every blessing in all your meetings at this time, and may they all redound to the glory of God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our life and hope.

Brother SULLY, of Nottingham, having to leave the meeting shortly, was called upon out of the programme order. He had ideas that he wanted specially to transfer to the minds of the brethren, but he merely wished to give expression to a few of the ideas which had been engraved upon his own brain. He had never seen the Doctor in the flesh; he had only read his writings, and he had no idea until he saw them all there how much they loved him. The secret of that love was now explained. Urging upon the brethren at all times to feel that they were in the presence of God, he remarked that they could not accomplish a great work unless they all strove together. Peter, in speaking of the destruction that should come upon the earth, asked, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness," and there were many exhortations which showed that they ought to throw aside every encumbrance. Much more might be done than they were doing for the propagation of the truth. If they all made up their minds to give one-tenth of their earnings, they would not need help from any. Let them throw aside everything, whether business or friends, or anything else that hindered their advancement. Business should only be used as a means to an end; they should make all subservient to truth. Let them make up their minds to work harder than ever they had done before; let them throw their whole soul into the work, and God would help them.

Brother TURNER, of Birmingham, was next called upon. He never liked, he said, to speak before the brethren, without preparation, and in view of that contingency, he had made some notes, but in the hurry of the other preparations, he had, unfortunately, lost his papers (laughter.) However he was determined to speak for all ever he was determined to speak for all that. Brother Andrew had said it was his misfortune that his name began with A.; he (brother Turner) thought it a misfortune that his name began with a T. He felt physically very weak, at present, but brother Boshier revived him when he began to talk of the Dr. and the progress of the truth. They had, indeed, much to be thankful for. What wonderful things some of the older brethren in the truth could remember! He could not remember so much as they, but he could recollect when they were a very insignificant number in Birmingham. When he went to

the meetings in Ann Street the first time, before he was a Christadelphian, he thought what a lot of plain, affectionate, hard-working, earnest men they seemed; but however good-meaning they were, he was convinced that they were wrong, and so he determined, if possible, that he would put them right. He soon, however, found that it was himself who wanted putting right; and since that day of small things, how the truth had progressed, and how thankful they ought to be to God for it. Look at the privileges they enjoyed that day; but they must remember that those privileges brought their corresponding responsibilities. There were plenty that could work for the truth, but how were they in the little things of life? in their homes? at their workshops? They must remember that they must be clean before the world; they must mind the little things if they would make progress in divine life. They must try to assimilate themselves to the mind of God in Christ Jesus; grow up to the full stature of the man in him. They had been talking about patience. He remembered brother Butler's buttons. They laughed at that; the men wanted patience and the women wanted patience—they all wanted patience. But it was not a thing to come all at once. Paul said, in a chapter that had been much quoted by the brethren, something about partaking of the divine nature by escaping the corruptions of the world through lust. There was no divine nature except for those who escaped the corruption of the world through lust. The things of the flesh must be stamped out. They talked about stamping out the cattle plague; they must stamp out sin by the power of the truth. And Paul added, besides all this, "Giving all diligence." Not a bit of diligence now and a bit then, but continuous diligence. If they had got a garden and neglected it one week and attended to it the next, would it get on? Well, just as a gardener must mind his garden if he wanted it to produce an abundance of fruit, so must we mind ourselves if we wanted to grow in the truth. Brother Turner proceeded further to quote Paul, shewing that we must add to patience, virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and godliness, and to keep their bodies under if they would attain the incorruptible crown promised. And, adopting the advice of Peter, they must keep these things *always in remembrance*. They were there that day with joy mingled with sorrow, thinking of their beloved brother, who, if there was one thing he would have them do more than another, it was this: that after his decease, they should always keep in remembrance that precious truth which he in the providence of God had communicated to them. They had the Bible before he came amongst them as they had now, but that Bible was an

unknown book to them; their eyes were blinded. Brother Turner concluded by urging on the brethren and sisters that there was something for every one of them to do, and by expressing the hope that they would each and all see that they did it, and that they would all be at last found in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Brother EDWARD TURNEY observed that he could not be on that ground without his mind wandering over the 3,000 miles of Atlantic water, and finding himself in the company of the man through whom they were assembled there that day. It was unnecessary for him to assure them that he was an ardent admirer of that man, but there was this word of qualification—he did not pledge himself to admire any man to the extent of supposing him to have no faults at all. But this he was prepared to say, that the man, John Thomas, was to him a model man in this day and generation, not only with regard to his writing and platform powers; but also with respect to his walk and conduct; and therefore he had great pleasure in holding him up to them as such. Some of them had not seen him in the flesh, but they could see him in his writings; and those who had had the pleasure of seeing his face could not do better than imitate him in many things, if not in all. Now what would the Dr. do if he were there on that occasion? Those who knew him would agree with him in this, and if they called upon him to give an exhortation, he would probably do it by reading a few verses with that telling emphasis of his, and then explain those verses, and bring home their meaning in words of kindness. In accordance with this good example, he would call their attention to a few verses in Peter's epistle. He could not refrain from saying as he had mentioned the Dr.'s name, what a splendid reader he was. He (brother Turney) would go ten miles to hear him read one chapter, if he did not say a word afterwards, for his reading was almost equal to another man's exposition. Well, Peter said, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these ye might be made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; and, besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, charity. For, if these things be in you and abound"—they must not only be in brethren, but abound—"they make you that ye shall

neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." And then Peter pointed out the other side in these terms: "But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." These were most important words; they reminded him of the saying of Paul, that we were the house of God if we held fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope from him unto the end. Let them dwell upon that statement; let them carry their minds back to the time when they first appreciated the truth so as to obey it. How did they all feel the period? He thought they all felt as he felt—that he had nothing to do but ascend a rostrum in their own and market-place to proclaim the truth, and everybody would receive and believe it. The beginning of their confidence was a big thing unshaken as a rock. The big shoulders of the hurricane might push against it in vain. And as to the rejoicing of the hope, that was another thing. Their heart was all on fire; at morn, noon, and night they were at it; if they were anything like himself, they could not let this truth alone. Well, many of them had been a good while in the truth, and the question to put to themselves now, was, "Is the fire burning with the same intensity?" Nay, let them put this other question, "Is it burning *more* intensely, or is it dim and flickering, and ready for expiring?" These questions were worthy of being brought before their minds from time to time. Brother Turney then proceeded to urge the necessity of practising the virtues enumerated by the Apostle Peter, adding that they must also have wisdom, which was the right use of the knowledge spoken of in the text. Knowledge and wisdom, said Cowper, had oftentimes no connection; knowledge was but the rude material with which wisdom built. But, observed brother Turney, they must have the rude material before they could build. Scripture enjoined them to be wise as serpents. If they could not get a gun in convince, let them go at him in the rear. They must use policy; and let them not rouse his prejudices, but proceed with him in such a way as to convince him that they had his interest at heart. Then as to the allusion to temperance, it must not be supposed that the Apostle was addressing men who were habitually addicted to the grosser vices of eating or drinking to excess, or smoking. There was temperance in speech, and he thought the Apostle included that. There was also temperance of manner. They must avoid all extravagance. There were sufficient terms in the dictionary, without resorting to the use of the slang terms so current in the workshop. They must remember that it was possible for a

decent man to be converted. He thought "Christadelphian" should not be considered an equivalent for "ignoramus." Manner and style had great influence with the people, as was evident on looking at some of the leading men of the various sects; and whatever was good in the enemy he would urge them to seize, and reject the bad. Let them fight him with his own weapons; and with the truth as a pedestal, the best manner and style would be irresistible.

Brother ARTHUR ANDREW of London, in the absence of brother Vernon of Dorchester, was next asked to address the meeting. He said, when the Fraternal Gathering was first proposed, his judgment heartily endorsed it, and his sympathies had run on with it through all the arrangements that had been made for it. He had felt that it could not but be a success. He should be very sorry to grumble at anything that had taken place or at anyone, seeing that all the addresses they had heard had been so good in their tone, and so encouraging to them to hold on to the things they had put their hands to; but if there had been a want in the addresses, it seemed to him that it was in this direction—in the way of hints with regard to the practical operations of the truth in their detail. Perhaps he might to some extent supply that want. He remembered about three or four years ago, in London, at their week night meetings for Scripture reading, going through the gospel of Matthew; and in the course of the reading, they came to that part which records that Jesus Christ sent out 70 disciples, two and two, into the towns and villages, to preach the gospel; and one very enthusiastic brother who had then been recently introduced into the truth, and whose enthusiasm, he was glad to say, had not been damped by the lapse of time, raised the question how far the matter had a bearing upon ourselves in the present time, and suggested that it might be their duty to imitate the disciples. At that time he (the speaker) was opposed to the suggestion. It seemed to him altogether impracticable, for several reasons. In the first place, the customs of society were so different now from what they were in Palestine in the days of Jesus; and the hospitality which was exhibited to strangers journeying about the Holy Land could not be expected in a country so thickly populated as England; for they would always find that in proportion to the sparseness of the population of a country, was the increase of hospitality. The early disciples were no doubt entertained wherever they went free of charge, as was evident from our Lord's instructions to them, and that could not be in this country. But notwithstanding these fancied objections, the experience of the last few years had convinced him that there was some possibility of carrying out the suggestion. The progress of the truth had taken a direction which they could

scarcely have expected, through the medium of such publications, as the *Rainbow*, and the numerous publications issued from the press by ministers of the Church of England and others who had accepted the doctrine of the mortality of man. By their instrumentality the fallow ground was being broken up, and prepared for the truth to be sown in its entirety. They frequently heard—through the medium, for instance, of the *Christadelphian*—of people coming across the truth who had previously had their minds prepared in some such way as this; and who were then, by means of lectures or Christadelphian publications, drawn into the gospel net. Brother Handley for instance, who had renounced immortal-soulism previous to coming in contact with Christadelphians was caught in this manner; and it seemed to him (brother Andrew) that if brethren would adopt the course of going into the villages and proclaiming the gospel in the market-places and other localities, they might lay hold of many people whose minds had been prepared in like manner. Brother Watts had for the last few days been carrying out some such plan, having walked along with one or two other brethren a good part of the way from London to Birmingham with that object. There were frequent references in the book of Revelations, to *fellow-servants*; “brethren and fellow-servants.” These “fellow-servants”—from the distinction made between them and the brethren—were evidently not in the truth; and yet they helped “the brethren” in their conflict with Paganism and the apostacy. “The earth” had in history, as they very well knew, helped the woman, and it might be said so now. The poet George Herbert, referring to the animals and other things in nature, said, “There are more servants wait on man, than he’ll take notice of.” This he believed was true, and it might be that if they neglected to make use of the work which others were doing, they were neglecting to propagate the truth to the extent which lay in their power. Another suggestion that he had to make had reference to the spread of the truth in the large towns. Until within the last year or two, very many of the centres of commerce had been totally without the light of the truth, though he was glad that it was now rapidly spreading in some of those quarters; and it seemed to him that they should make it a special object to plant the truth there; and they must not rest satisfied until they had it planted in all the large towns of the country. Let them concentrate their energies on such places, and work away there until a few intelligent men, able to propagate the truth, had embraced it, and then they might safely leave it in the hands of such. It would also be a great advantage if they could fix upon places where their publications could be procured; and to this end, he thought the brethren who had shops

should assist in their dissemination, by keeping publications in their windows. This plan would often draw those interested into the shop, and be the means of bringing them in contact with those holding the truth. Brother Andrew, continuing his practical suggestions, next remarked upon the necessity of having a system, not only in our daily reading of the Scriptures, but in our meetings. He had visited ecclesias where he was surprised to find they had no system at all. The presiding brother would perhaps go without any chapter prepared, and it would be left to the meeting, at the last moment, as to what part of Scripture they should read. All this difficulty would be obviated by the adoption of a system; by reading the chapters consecutively at successive meetings; and there would be the additional advantage of each brother and sister coming to the meeting with the mind better prepared beforehand for the reception of instruction. And on Sunday mornings, he thought, such portions of Scripture should be selected as would be most calculated to direct their minds to the ordinance they met to celebrate, leaving those portions which were calculated to create discussion and criticism for the desirable week-night Bible class.

Brother WATTS, of London, next spoke. Having read John viii. 12, he remarked on the glory of natural light, and pointed out the analogy between it and the light of the truth. They might, he said, have all the illuminating powers of men’s energy; they might have all the little theological systems bringing up their candle lights, their flickering *ignis fatui*, from the marsh-land of their imagination, but it would be nothing. In God’s light, as it beamed forth from His precious book, they saw the light of life, and could walk in it. There was one word, in the passage he had read, that was very suggestive; it was the word “followeth.” There was a following to be submitted to, and to be found in the life of every man who was acting up to those words he had just read. Elsewhere, Christ had said he was the light of life. What did he mean? Why that he was the light of the present life, and the life of the future life which he had brought to light. Without him, all was dark and cheerless. The company then assembled had become children of this glorious light. And what were they to do when they had got this light? Were they to hide it under a bushel? No. They had found something that others wanted, and it was their duty to go and tell them about it. He rejoiced in this thought, and if he had the power, he would “stump it,” as the phrase was, over England to proclaim the glorious truth to all. He himself had occasionally been stopped in the streets of London and thanked for speaking out so

boldly on such and such an occasion, and who could tell what the result of sowing seed by the wayside might be? They were not responsible for consequences so long as they did their duty; as brother W. Clement had remarked, it was their duty to be “at it; all at it; always at it.” Brother Watts then proceeded to give a brief sketch of a walking tour he and one or two of the brethren had made on their way from London to Birmingham, with the object of proclaiming the truth. No opportunity for public speaking appeared to have presented itself, but they had sown seed by the way, by disseminating various Christadelphian publications; and it was their intention to adopt a similar course in returning to London, when better opportunities might be afforded them. In conclusion, brother Watts exhorted them each to so apply themselves to the work as to have the mind of Christ stamped on their minds, that so working they might realise what it was in some degree to do Christ’s work, and that it might not be dreadful to put before their minds the coming of the Lord which was certainly drawing nigh.

Brother WOOTTON, of Grantham, was the next speaker, and occupied the time allowed to him by reading his thoughts on the parable generally named the parable of the prodigal son, but which he thought would be more appropriately named the parable of the two sons.

Next, and last, on the list of speakers came brother Whitecomb, of Birmingham, but the time being too far spent, it was resolved to omit his address, and to make up for the omission by publishing it in the *Christadelphian*. The following is

Brother WHITECOMB’S address, which, it will be seen, is eminently appropriate to be the last:

1 Sam. xvii. 7: “The Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for men look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart.” In this verse, dear brethren and sisters, we have the principle of selection used by the Almighty when choosing his servants, and I refer to it now because I think the same principle should guide us, so far as we are able to use it, in the selections we may make from the suggestions, &c., set forth by divers brethren during these very pleasant meetings. The Lord said look not on his countenance. The countenance is said to be the index of the heart; that is, what is going on in the heart it is thought may be seen in the countenance. But when choosing our guide, in such important matters as pertain to conduct, leading ultimately to eternal life or eternal death, neither the external features of a theory, or a man either, is sufficient. We must trace it to its vital centre, penetrate and see

whether it has for its source the flesh with its failings, or the Spirit with its sureties. If the latter, all right. Or the height of his stature; which qualification was of some weight when God chose a king in his wrath; but when making choice of a man after His own heart, neither height nor countenance were to be the guide. Jehovah, seeing not as man seeth, who looketh only on the outward appearance. This teaches us, dear brethren and sisters, not to trust ourselves too much in the selection of, or the judgment of, or the regulating of things pertaining to God’s work. Over-anxiety respecting such is not compatible with the dignity of it.

What though none on earth assist him
God requires not help from man;
What though all the world resist Him,
God will realise His plan.

So the guidance of the word, and the selection of the word which is spirit, will always be best as it will always be reliable; man at his best estate being but vanity. Well, we have had a host of exhortations, from the stripling in Christ to the robust and well equipped believer, ready to do battle and willing even to die for the truth. We have had the aged brother tremulous with emotion drop sweet sentences of hope and trust to his brethren; ardent spirits also to whom righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come are more than mere words, which have roused our feelings and achieved a victory over our ofttimes dormant zeal. We have had, too, brethren committing themselves to duties in the stream of the future, willing to go wherever that stream may bear them, so long as the buoyant hope they possess keeps them afloat. Long may it do so, even till they reach the haven of safety and peace. We have had recollections of the past and anticipations of the future presented, each having its bearing and influence. And now the scene closes; the groups here assembled will in a few hours separate, perhaps never to meet prior to the day of judgment, not perhaps

“Until the trump of God be heard,
Until the ancient graves be stirred,
And with the great commanding word,
The Lord shall come.”

Imagine, then, this lone house, when we are gone and all is hushed. Imagine how lone and silent it will stand beneath the stars to-night, a relic of him we loved and esteemed for his work’s sake. And then, some thousands of miles away, other relicts sit bereaved and alone. His widow, his daughter, his house, and the result chiefly of his work, all stand alone now, though united in faith, apart from him who now lies waiting the summons to return, and to stand before him who said: “He who believeth on me, though he were dead, yet

shall he live." What thought could be more suggestive of the desirability of unity? This thought of isolation should make us desire unity, not only with each other, but also with those things and those personages who have been introduced to us in the Word of life, for unity with Christ, our living Head, without which the body is inert; for the bridegroom, without the bride is desolate. The privations of the present are to us as the absence of the sun, as the coldness of solitude, or the painfulness of silence; and we involuntarily murmur, "When shall the voice of singing," &c., or with deep devotion pray, "Thy kingdom come, O Lord." In the meantime, let this place and this meeting be like the Mizpah of Jacob, a constant reminder of the covenant entered into through Christ; and just as that place reminded the father of Israel of the Omnipresence of God, so let it remind us of the same when far away one from the other.

This exhausted the list of the speakers.

Brother ANDREW then said, that, as insufficient response was made on Saturday evening to the kindness of the Birmingham brethren, and as a formal vote of thanks would not be in keeping, he proposed, on behalf of the visitors, to embody their sentiments in a slight paraphrase of Paul's words to the Colossians: "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, since we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and have seen the love which ye have to all the saints for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard in the word of the truth of the gospel which is come unto you, and bringeth forth fruit since the day ye heard it."

Brother ROBERTS said the matter referred to by brother Andrew, had been placed upon its right footing by brother Shuttleworth, on Monday night. What had been done by the Birmingham brethren, was only done as part and parcel of a system of service to Christ, in their day and generation, which he hoped they would maintain unflinchingly to the end.

Anthems 25 and 26, "The Lord bless thee," and "Blessed, blessed," were then sung, after which prayer was offered by brother Boshier.

The brethren then cleared the marquee for a quarter of an hour, while a substantial "tea-dinner" was put on the tables. To this, ample justice was done in due time; after which, the photographer having arrived (and train time approaching) the company were hurriedly summoned to the rear of the marquee to be "taken." This over, a rush was made to the station, where all arrived in time to be conveyed by the train to Birmingham, for the last meeting of the programme.

TUESDAY EVENING.

On their return from Olton, the brethren and sisters repaired to the Temperance Hall, where a public meeting had been advertised to be held at seven. At the appointed hour there was a large attendance. As the evening advanced, the audience increased till the hall was nearly full.

Brother BOSHER, occupying the chair, spoke on "The duty of all classes in relation to the great question 'What is the truth?'" He said: Dear brethren and sisters, and respected friends: It is not usual to give the chairman a subject to speak from, and it is not my intention to occupy your time at any length this evening, because I feel sure that the speakers who have to follow will be able to handle the subjects that will come before you better than I should be able to do; and besides that, it would be out of character for me in my position to occupy any length of your time. The subject allotted to me is one that would almost necessarily be the subject if I had anything to say. Of course the object of this meeting is not so much for those who know these things, and have long since drunk in the truth of the gospel which we intend to bring before you to-night, but it is to attract the attention of those outside to what we have to say upon these matters. Now it must be an unquestionable duty for every man that he should put himself in an attitude to search out what is the truth, if he puts any value on life. If he has any aspiration in relation to the life to come, it ought to be his first, his most important, his paramount duty, to ascertain what is the truth. The truth is to be found; it is not a thing that is far from us. Men may flounder about in the dark and miss it, but this is not because it is not within their reach; but because their eyes have been so blinded by tradition that they cannot see what lies before them in this blessed book which we call the Bible. The truth is a very precious thing; Jesus compared it to a very precious treasure; he said it was like treasure hid in a field, which, a merchant, seeking goodly pearls, found, and when he had found it, he estimated its value so largely, that he sold all he had to possess himself of it. The great king of Israel, the wisest that ever sat upon a throne, in one of his proverbs, says, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." One of our great statesmen said, as a maxim, for commercial men, "buy in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest," but Solomon says, "buy, but don't sell at all." If you once get possession of this thing, don't part with it, for no price could be paid that would compensate for the loss of it. We have shares in the market that go up and down; there are few shares in the speculations of men that are very certain, that can be depended upon as a certainty of value.

There is *one*—one of our large Water Companies, in London, the shares of which are now so valuable that one-tenth part of a share is a fortune. And what is the effect of all that? They are never in the market: nobody can buy them. You may run down the list of shares to be sold to try and find a share in the New River Company, in London, but you cannot find one; and why? Because those who have them know they are so valuable. Now, if you could understand the value of the truth, you would be just as much in earnest for it, and more so, than any man would be to get a share in this very wealthy company. Well, men have duties, of course, in relation to this thing, and they ought to seek it out. It is to be got, it can be found in the world, and some people have it. There are some few people on this earth who possess this precious boon, this inestimable treasure, that is called the truth. Of course, many people assume that position; but then we look to the charter in which the treasure is described, and let us compare things, and see whether what we have got answers to the original charter of the company that offers to us such a great boon, and then we shall see who have it not. And it is upon this point that we wish to address ourselves to you who are strangers amongst us this evening. We bring before you no new doctrine, no new notions of our own. What we want is to draw your attention to the oracles of divine truth, in order to hear what God has said, and so hold up the thing to you that you may see that it looks something like the genuine article, and in order that, when you see something in it that looks like the genuine article, you may have a harkening to possess yourselves of it. It has been said that this is a town of shams. No doubt it is to a very large extent. I suppose there are as many counterfeiters in relation to things that go out from Birmingham as from any town in the world. And there are amongst other things, counterfeit religions. But, because there are so many counterfeit religions in the world, it does not follow that there is no finding out the genuine article. You have means of testing sovereigns in Birmingham, and you have means of testing what is the truth of God, by His word; and you have to test these things for yourselves, and see whether they are so or not.

I will not occupy your time any further, as there are so many speakers to follow, but I will at once call upon brother F. R. Shuttleworth to address the meeting.

Brother SHUTTLEWORTH, of Birmingham, spoke on "The Missionary schemes of Christendom ineffectual for the regeneration of the world, which is a work to be accomplished by Christ and his brethren." He said, respected friends, brethren and

sisters, the first proposition which I would submit to you in relation to the subject which has been announced is, that the gospel was preached by Jesus and his apostles 1800 years ago, a proposition which no one believing the Scriptures will for a moment deny, but which is nevertheless necessary as a basis for the observations to be made this evening. Jesus preached the gospel, and in turn the apostles preached it also, Jesus was sent by the Father; the apostles were chosen and sent by the Lord Jesus Christ. The result of their preaching of the gospel was the taking out from amongst the Jews, and subsequently from the Gentiles, a people believing the things which they preached. This people so taken out, constituted ultimately of both Jews and Gentiles, are in New Testament phraseology "churches." They were congregations of people believing the message which God had sent through His servants the apostles. It was principally in reference to such constitutions that the letters of the apostles were written. Having laid the foundation in making known unto them the glad tidings concerning the kingdom of God, and the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, their next purpose was to confirm the churches in the things which they had believed, and to strengthen them in the understanding of them, and to build them up in their most holy faith. For this purpose there were raised up by God teachers, and evangelists, and pastors, and apostles, and prophets, to whom was given the spirit, that they might administer, in their several capacities, the things which would conduce to their building-up. Hence we read in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, that they had various gifts—gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, wisdom, faith, and so on. This was the constitution of things apostolic, and which is also well-defined by the apostle, in writing to the Ephesians, where he tells us, speaking to those brethren who believed, in Ephesus, that they were built upon the foundation of the prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. And when we come to give our attention to the Acts of the Apostles, we find that in the history of the preaching of the apostles, this fact comes out, that in all their testimony they testified of "none other things"—in Paul's own words—"than those which Moses and the prophets did say should come to pass." Well, this people then constituting the congregation of believers were joined together with one heart and one soul, believing Paul's doctrine and fellowshiping each other, and the Father and the Son, and they also continued together, as is testified in the Acts of the Apostles, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Now, as was predicted by Paul and others of the Apostles, this state of things, which was planted by the Apostles, did not continue in its primitive

simplicity. A time came when men departed from the faith, when, as Paul said beforehand to Timothy, they gave heed to fables, and turned away from the truth. We find that Paul's predictions have been fulfilled, and that the present state of religious society shows an analogy to certain prophetic parts of the New Testament Scriptures. Now for the fact which is stated in the subject, viz., that the missionary schemes of Christendom are ineffectual for the regeneration of the world. First of all, the religious constitution of things, styled Christendom, has entirely mistaken the nature, both of the gospel itself, and also the object for which the gospel was preached by Jesus and his Apostles. The gospel which was preached by them had reference to what is referred to in Acts xv. 14, its object being defined in those words: "To take out from amongst the Gentiles a people for his name." Now, the religious orders of Christendom, especially those who have ministered in the capacity of teachers, have so far misunderstood the Apostolic objects, as to suppose that they set out with the expectation of reforming the world. Even if they were successors to the apostles, they have mistaken the object for which the gospel of the apostles was sent into the world. The gospel was never designed to be the means of establishing the Kingdom of God, in the sense in which they understand it, and which is conveyed to us by a word which they have coined, and which they think fittingly descriptive of the state of things religious at the present time: the word is "Christendom." This word "Christendom" as at present used, is an evidence of itself of the completely mistaken notions with which the religious world of this day is filled. "Christendom" is a word which describes the existence of the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Christ: it is the dominion or Kingdom of Christ. Now we maintain with the Scriptures in our hands, that there is nothing extant on the face of the whole earth that answers to the word "Christendom." There is no such thing in existence as the Kingdom of Christ or the Kingdom of God, or the dominion of Christ, but rather otherwise. The Kingdom of Christ is a Scriptural constitution of things which is to come, and which is referred to in the Lord's prayer, and which is the prayer of everyone who understands this question, saying, "Thy kingdom come." The order of things promulgated by the apostles was never intended to be the basis of such an ecclesiastical and political constitution of things as now exists. There was a simplicity of things in the time of Paul, in the time of Christ: those who believed the truth came together simply in the capacity of brethren and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ. They had no connection with the state or with any civil power, or any

system or society of things outside themselves. indeed this was impossible from their very constitution, because, as Paul says in most of his letters in his introduction, he speaks of those believing this gospel as being "called to be saints," as being "the faithful in Christ Jesus," as being "the elect of God," and as being consequently set apart for a particular purpose, as being separated from the world, as indicated in the prayer of the Lord Jesus when he prayed, as he said, "not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one." The class of people believing the gospel in Paul's day and Jesus' day were a people who were like Jesus, "not of the world." Jesus says, "Ye are not of the world; I am not of the world." Now this is a phraseology which does not at all fit to the religious society of our day. It is of the world, because it has its foundation, to begin with, in the thoughts of the flesh. What they call "faith" is no faith at all. One of the great and misleading features of our day is that things are called by wrong names: they call that "faith" which is simply credulity, and that "orthodox" which is simply false, and that "Christendom" which is simply the kingdom of Satan, and that "Christian" which is simply anti-Christian; and in everything, as to the labelling of the various religious features of their constitution, do they mislead men from the things taught by the apostles, and cause them to set their minds and attention upon things which they did not speak about at all. What is faith, and how stands it related to those who constitute the disciples of Christ? Faith is based upon promises made of God, and apart from these there is no faith at all: there is no Bible faith. Bible faith is based upon Bible promises, and Bible hopes are based upon Bible faith. Apart from this there can be no constitution of things in existence analogous to that which was created by the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now in the present day we find that the churches throughout Europe have taken it into their heads that the world requires regeneration at their hands. There are several objections to this. In the first place, it is impossible, from the fact that it never was the object of the true gospel, much less that which is not true—to convert the world. The only object with which it was preached, was for the obedience of faith on the part of such as should be chosen to reign with Christ on his return. We must first of all reach the climax of this apostacy in the perdition thereof at his appearing. We are nearing that time. One of the evidences is before you. Paul's predictions point to a return to apostolic doctrine, after a long reign of apostacy, before the Lord's coming. We affirm that this state of things has already begun, that there has commenced such a return to

apostolic faith and practice, in that a number of people in our day have been brought to see that the promises upon which the religious world is built are entirely false; that instead of being built upon the promises and covenants of God, they are built upon the Pagan fathers, of that constitution of things with which the apostles had to grapple when they were upon the earth. Now, people, in talking about the regeneration of the world, little comprehend what is involved in it. There is involved in it that which is impossible to be brought about by any human agency whatever, least of all by the conflicting systems of religious things extant upon the face of the earth now, and denominated Romanism, Protestantism, and Dissenterism. The regeneration contemplated in the Scriptures is a re-constitution of things which have been before, a restitution of things Jewish, as referred to by the apostle in Acts iii. 21, where, speaking and testifying of the gospel, he says these words: "He shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Now here is something to be restituted, something to be restored, and something of which God has spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets, and therefore, something concerning which we may know, and something concerning which we may be informed, if we will only turn to the prophets. We find it stated in Isaiah i. 26, "I will restore thy judges as at the first" (speaking of the house of Israel); and then immediately afterwards, in the second chapter we have a description of the state of things with which that will be associated, viz. "It shall come to pass in the last day that the mountain of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it; and many people shall go, and say, 'Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.'" Now, the fulfilment of this involves a re-constitution of things Israelitish; they were things which then existed, but they are things which do not now exist; and if we look at the same prophecy as given by Micah, we shall find that, first of all Micah, in the 4th chapter, predicts the overthrow of the Israelitish commonwealth, and then subsequently the development of what we have just read from this prophecy in Isaiah. Now, it is evident that we, as Gentiles, and as to Jews too, are living during the time of the overthrow of the Israelites' kingdom, which is the kingdom

of God. There can be no mistake about this—of whatever religious creed you may be—you must admit that there was once a constitution of things Israelitish in the world, and that that has been overthrown. Now, it follows, that since the words of the prophets have been fulfilled concerning the overthrow of this Jewish Church and State, so also must their testimony be fulfilled in relation to its reorganization. Now, the regeneration of the world is associated with the reorganization and higher development of Jewish society as it existed in the hands of David and Solomon. Jesus refers directly to this in Matt. xix. 28, in saying, "Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, IN THE REGENERATION, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This answers to the testimony already quoted from Isaiah; "I will restore thy judges as at the first;" and it indicates also when the judges of Israel for its future constitution, will be chosen. We see that they will consist of the twelve apostles, and it also, by the phraseology in which this is expressed, precludes the possibility of these words being properly applied to anything now existing, since it involves the restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel. Now, it is a well-known fact, that the twelve tribes of Israel are not now in the land of Israel; that they are scattered abroad; that they are dispersed among the nations of the earth; and it has been a question, for some time, as to where the ten tribes are. But here is a prophecy by Jesus of Nazareth, which necessitates the political reconstruction of the twelve tribes, in order that the apostles shall govern them as here testified. The present religious order of things have mistaken the true attitude of the church in relation to the world. They have taken upon themselves to establish the kingdom of God during the absence of Jesus Christ; whereas the true gospel teaches that the establishment of the kingdom of God is dependent upon the re-appearing of Jesus Christ; for Paul says, in writing to Timothy, that he, Jesus Christ, shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom. These two things are inseparably connected. Apart from the re-appearing of Jesus Christ, there is no kingdom of God, and if you will read in the Old Testament Scriptures, you will see that the glorious features which are to characterize this kingdom, are the peculiar attributes of a constitution of things which is yet to come. Read, for instance, from the Psalms, the features of that kingdom—and by the way, let me say that when you read in the Psalms, and find glorious and blessed features of a social and political character, they refer to the kingdom of God—to the kingdom of God in the past, or to the

kingdom of God in the future; that they do not refer to the present Gentile confusion of things, but that they only find their parallel in the establishment of the twelve tribes of Israel, in the land of Israel. Now what are the features which are to characterise the kingdom of God? Well, no one reading the Scriptures can be mistaken as to their true character; there shall be peace to the ends of the earth; there shall be righteousness; the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the face of the earth, as the waters cover the great deep. Well now, what is one of the main questions before peoples' minds now in this country? Is it not the education of the people? And seeing that this is so, is it not evident that the knowledge of the Lord does not now cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea, for if it were so, there would be no occasion for such a controversy as this. When this is true, it will be true that all men will, as written by the prophets, know the Lord from the least to the greatest. This is not so now. And mind, when they know the Lord, they will know a great many other things of which they are now ignorant. It will comprehend knowledge of all kinds, and it will include those things spoken of by Daniel. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." There is a time to come when wisdom shall be the stability of the times; but no one can say now, speaking truthfully, pointing either to the ecclesiasticism or to the political state of Europe, that wisdom is the stability of the times. The fact is, the times are characterised by anything but stability, indeed, the whole political earth is quaking, as it were, and all in a ferment, sitting on a volcano ready to burst forth its lava of disaffection and discontent. Well now, as to the schemes of which the religious teachers of the people are at the head, the schemes which they have put forth for the bringing about of the regeneration of the world, in what do they consist? Well, besides pulpit preaching and missionary adventure, they consist, to a large extent, of thousands and millions of tracts which are devoted to fables—to mere common-place tales and soft-silly anecdotes and fables, which only amuse but cannot save; whereas, in contrast to this, the truth sets forth that the blessed state to come is dependent upon the political interference of the Lord Jesus on earth; for it has come to this pass, that it requires God's judgment to remove the obstructions which are in the way of the great blessing with which the earth is subsequently to be filled; it is on record that all the nations of the earth are to be blessed in Abraham and his seed (*i.e.* Christ and his brethren). There is no mistaking as to the certainty of these things coming about; but there is the greatest imaginable mistake as to the agency by which they will be accomplished; and there is no greater evidence of the utter

futility of the present system of religions things, than that they have had so long a trial of the means which they are now using, and that they have, to this day, come to naught.

Brother ELLIS (Liverpool) spoke on 'The disestablishment of state-churches one of the many signs of the second appearing of Christ, to establish a universal theocracy—righteous, humane, and invincible.' He said: Respected friends, brethren, and sisters, there cannot be a more important subject engage our thoughts than the coming again of Jesus, God's anointed. If he is not to appear again, the object of his first appearing has been defeated; and should what are called state-churches, or the churches founding what is called "Christendom," retain their position and their sway, they would also be successful in defeating the object for which Jesus Christ was born, the object for which he lived, the object for which he died and rose again. Probably, this may appear strong ground to take; yet with these Scriptures in our hands, we can take no other, and we, therefore, with all earnestness, invite your attention to some of those statements which the apostles whom Jesus sent, made in reference to his coming again. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, we have this statement, in the first chapter: "God having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which he hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one" (that is, under one head) "all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." The question will arise here, in the first instance, as to what "heaven" this is; and it might eventually be asked, will it be necessary on the part of Jesus, that he should gather together the things which are in the heavens above—the immediate presence of the Deity? No, that is not the object. We shall see what "heaven" it is by a quotation from a subsequent part of this letter. Turn, then, to the sixth chapter, and the 12th verse, where the apostle, in addressing his brethren, says, "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places." It is manifest from this quotation, that there are, or were heavens, which in the estimation of the apostle Paul, were filled with wicked spirits; that these wicked spirits ruled the darkness, that is the superstitions that existed in Ephesus. When we read in the Acts on the Apostles of Paul's visit to Ephesus, and the treatment that he received there at the hands of those wicked spirits, we can come to no other conclusion than that those spirits, at that time, were composed of the various orders of the idolatrous priesthoods that existed in

Ephesus, and, as the Town Clerk said, all Asia and the world worshipped Diana. Hence, those wicked spirits were those who were interested in the superstition, as represented in the worship of Diana. You notice, therefore, what the apostle says here, that God in Himself purposed that He should, in the fulness of his time, or in the dispensation that was then commenced, gather all these things into Christ; things which are in the heaven, or the ruling sphere, and things which are in the earth, or among the people. Take one quotation more, in order to place on a more definite basis those things which are in the heavens. In Colossians i. 16, you find it written: "For by Him,"—or on account of Him, that is on account of Jesus of Nazareth—"were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him; that is, they were created on his account."

The things, then, that are found in the heavens are the "thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers." Jesus died, and rose, and revived, that all these things in the heavens, things in the earth, the earth and all that it contains should belong to him. That he did not fail in this matter, is very manifest from what the Father said to him when he arose from the dead: "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." This is a quotation by the apostle Paul (Heb. i. 5, speaking of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and adds that this statement "thou art my son," had reference to the point of time when he was raised from the dead. That this has probably more point in it than some might be inclined to give us credit for in the first instance, turning to the 2nd Psalm whence this is quoted, we find this statement in relation to him and the kings of the earth. The kings of the earth somehow did always take a little interest in the affairs of the Almighty, not that they were anxious to further his schemes, or understood them for they always particularly interested themselves in their own. He asks this question in the second Psalm, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." This is always the privilege of one who is in power; he may laugh at and deride the petty schemes and the mean ways of opponents; but

above all is this the case with God, for He utilises the fruitless efforts of His enemies, and turns their schemes to the best account, so that with all their wiles and wisdom, they accomplish what he himself arranged to bring about. He says, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion;" then he adds, "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Jesus, therefore, has by inheritance obtained the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession. Well, we know that persons who have an inheritance, especially if they understand matters aright, are always very anxious to obtain possession of their inheritance. Do you think it possible that Jesus of Nazareth should come to suffer, and to die, and be subjected to indignity to obtain an inheritance, and then that he should leave it for ever in the possession of those miserable creatures who rule the darkness of this age for their own advantage? Will he leave his inheritance to the nations of the earth, that whoever will may invade his possession, and preach, and propagate their various superstitions of idolatry in one form or another? Nay, verily; he is now intently watching, intently utilising all the things that we see existing around us, and will continue to do so for the furtherance of the object for which he came, suffered, and died. The question, therefore, that we have brought before us is, Is he coming again? He is coming. We presume that this is a matter that is definitely settled, if the earth is recognised as his inheritance.

Now I have to turn your attention to some of those testimonies that relate to the fact that when He does come, there will be a commotion amongst those who are in possession of his inheritance. Prominently among these are the state-churches. There never was but one state church upon earth which had divine authority: that state church was the kingdom of Israel as established by God, who gave it a priesthood. Those rulers of the superstition in Ephesus, or, as they are pleased to call themselves, "all Asia and the world"—were mere counterfeits, very imperfect representations or copies of what they had seen existing in the land of Israel; we might almost say caricatures of that grand structure of things which God had established by the hand of Moses. Paganism

was the religion of the state of the Ephesians, paganism was the state religion of the Romans, and it is with them that we specially have to do now, because the paganism of Rome ultimately became changed in its character, or rather changed in name, not much changed in character; so that what we have now covering what is called Christendom is only a reproduction, with several variations, of the ancient caricature of Judaism, with some admixture of christian names and forms. We might say almost christian garments were stolen and put upon the pagan priesthood, so that they might look somewhat respectable. The state churches have all more or less been reproductions of what existed in pagan Rome. Various incidents have caused the existence of them in various parts; but substantially they are one and the same system. In this country, we have a state church, not because God established it, nor because the Pope established it, but because king Henry the eighth quarrelled with the Pope, and not getting his own way he established what is now existing as the Church of England, that is its origin. There is one feature of all state churches which is sufficient of itself to show that they are not of God, that is they have taken the sword. Now, Jesus said all they that take the sword must perish by the sword. In this alone we read their doom. These state churches are founded on the sword, and will perish by it. They have asked state aid, and they must perish with the state, according to the course which they themselves have chosen. There is no evading, no getting out of this result. They claim the name of Jesus, but his doctrines they do not know, and his precepts they do not practise, but are in direct opposition to him. These rulers of the darkness of our age, therefore, correspond exactly, in a great many particulars, to those Ephesian wicked spirits that occupied the heavens in Paul's day. Jesus said, before he died, in relation to his coming again,—as we find it in the three gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke,— Luke xxi. 25, "that there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." We are not so foolish as to go and take a telescope, and turn it towards the sun in the heavens: God does not place his signs there. Neither are we to go out in the night, and look

amongst the stars. It is in the world of intelligence, in the world of nations, or amongst the nations of the earth, that we have the theatre of his operations; and if we are to look for His signs, or for His operations, then we must look into those nations to see where we are in relation to the fulfilment of His word. He has chosen the sun as an emblem, and as the natural sun enlightens the world, and operates in various ways in fructifying and perfecting the fruits of the earth; so amongst the children of men, the ruling power is the sun, even as He has chosen to represent Himself as the sun. He was the sun of Israel, and their shield. Jesus of Nazareth is the sun of righteousness; he styles himself the light of the world; and in proportion as the light of the knowledge of God—as it shone in the face of Jesus Christ—was apprehended, the sun shone; but when the light disappeared, so did the sun or the light of Israel go down. "Christendom" has its light and its sun—understanding by "Christendom" the most enlightened of the nations of the earth—knows where the light is in which "Christendom" delights to bask; but that light has been in a dim and troubled state for a good many years. We all thought many years ago, that they esteemed that light an infallible light; but it appears they were not themselves satisfied on this point, until a couple of years ago. This exhibits want of confidence, want of definite understanding of their true position, and indicates very clearly the shaking that they are being subjected to. These heavens, therefore, are in a state of trouble, full of signs; they have had councils, and a variety of expedients to establish their position. These, however, have not been successful in giving confidence. Jesus adds, too, as a sign, that there shall be "on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring." The movements that have been going on in Christendom, while they are indications of the condition of things which is to obtain before Jesus Christ comes, are not at all to be confounded with that order of things which Jesus Christ himself is going to establish. These movements that exist now are from the earth: they are from beneath. They are only the indications of the boiling and seething condition below. Occasional ebullitions show that they are ready to burst forth. But God has not left them in ignorance

of His purpose. The operation of the gospel in the first century is thus defined by Paul in Ephesians. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." God did not leave these principalities and powers in ignorance of his intentions. The 2nd Psalm contains this exhortation: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges, (or rulers) . . . Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way." We see the merciful character of this invitation, when we reflect that it was impossible, in the nature of things, that those principalities and powers should even exist contemporaneously with the Messiah, or that they should ever hold power along with him. They were invited to come and kiss the Son; they could all embrace the Son; they could all submit themselves unto him, and become constituents of his kingdom and of his glory; they could all become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if they accepted that blessed invitation. Whether they were kings or priests, or whatever they were, no distinctions would obtain, and nothing would prevent them coming into this blessed condition of things. Hence, as the apostle says, one of the objects of his mission was that these principalities and powers might know what the intentions of the Deity were at the dispensation, or at the end of the dispensation of the fullness of the times. Paul makes mention of this so often that we cannot mistake his idea. I just quote this one passage before concluding: Ephesians i. 20, 21, "Which he (that is God) wrought in Christ, when He raised him from the dead, and set him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world (or in this age), but also in that which is to come." Now all this was done that men and women of every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, might come and take possession, along with Jesus of Nazareth, of the inheritance of the earth with all its peoples.

The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever after the order of

Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen; he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head.

BROTHER EDWARD TURNER, of Nottingham, spoke on "the approaching war of the great day of God Almighty." He said: Respected friends, as a point of departure for the short speech I have to deliver to you to-night on the subject of the war by Jesus Christ, the Jews, and his Saints, as a means of establishing the Kingdom of God upon the earth, I shall read to you a very short Psalm, which is the 110th:—"The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." I think you will all say this, respected friends, that that language has the advantage of great plainness. Now the first thing to which I wish to direct your attention is this, that in the 1st chap. of Hebrews, to which I shall turn at verse 13, Paul quotes the words, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Jesus, then as the "my Lord," in the 1st verse of the 110th Psalm, is none other than the Nazarene. He is sitting at the Father's right hand, for a period of time not in this place given, and for a definite object—that is until the time arrives for him to trample upon his enemies. Now who are his enemies?—I think you will say with me that his enemies are those who do not do his commandments, but who take such measures as would, if allowed to rule, rob him of his authority and his inheritance. It is no matter, my friends, by what names we choose to call these enemies. We are to judge them, as he said, by their works. We are to estimate them according to his standard—by their fruits, for names do not alter things, and the best thing we can do, I take it, is to adopt his rule, and to know them by their fruits. So you must look to what they teach, and what they practise, and not to the names and titles they have assumed, in order to be able to decide whether they are his enemies or his friends. Now, let me ask you this question, Where do you think this trampling, this treading upon his enemies, as Malachi says, "like ashes under the soles of his feet" (surely it would be difficult to spiritualize that!) where do you think it will be? Why, it must be the place where Jesus reigns. There he must set the feet of power upon them,

and crush them in the dust, so that they shall not be able effectually to rise against his authority thenceforth. We sing—I say “we,” because in early days I have sung the same thing myself, in my ignorance—we sing, with reference to his reign:

“With thee we’ll reign, with thee we’ll rise,
And kingdoms gain beyond the skies.”

Now, I ask you to consider what this would involve in view of the teaching of the 1st verse of the 110th Psalm. How can you deny this, that “where he reigns,” he must trample upon his enemies? Will he trample upon his enemies in heaven? Will he subdue any one there? If he reign there, it must be so because all obstacles are to be subdued during his reign. Paul says: He must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. But how can such a thing be? Let us come to the next verse, and that will show us, beyond doubt where his reign will be, and where the war, in order to extend his reign all over the earth, will be going on. That verse reads thus, as you have heard: “The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion.” Well, He must first of all put the rod of His strength in Zion, before He can send it out of Zion. It will not do, however, to be guided by your tombstone theology as to “Zion;” for there you will find that Zion is equivalent to heaven above the skies. But the Zion of which the Scriptures speak, is none other than that which King David of old by his prowess took with bow and sword from those people styled the Jebusites; and it is in that very place that the son of David, who is heir to David’s throne and to his power and kingdom, intends to make a commencement of his kingdom, and from that point to begin to trample upon all his enemies. Now, then, I come to another thing, and that in the 3rd verse, viz. “The people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” Please consider, respected friends, that the King of Israel has not Gentiles here before his mind: the two words “thy people,” when rightly read, point to the Jewish people. Now what state are they to be in? They are to be in a certain condition of mind, which is necessary to the assisting of Jesus Christ to establish his kingdom on the earth: they are “willing” to do all his commands in the day of his power; it follows, therefore, from this, because we see they are at present most unwilling to do anything the

man of Nazareth would bid them, that we have not yet arrived at the day of his power; and, therefore, we have not yet arrived at the day of his kingdom; for how could he have a kingdom without power? I would say that though some may possibly object to the statement—that the Man of Nazareth is the king of the people spoken of in the 3rd verse; but if you were present, respected friends, at a certain discussion within these walls not very long ago, and you left your prejudices behind you, and you regarded the word of God as the truth—whatever your views may have been before that, I do venture to think that you would admit that the man of Nazareth was the person about whom I am now discoursing. Well, what I wish to say is just this, that whatever David says in this 110th Psalm, you must believe is affirmed of the Man of Nazareth. Do you believe such things of your Jesus? By no means, on the contrary it is generally believed and taught that we are to glide very fashionably, as it were, into the millennial state, and to meet the King of kings and Lord of lords in a sort of kid attire. But why should we have such a repugnance, my friends, to the doctrine that Jesus Christ intends to establish His Kingdom by the sword? You have heard to-night that when Jesus was upon earth, he condemned the use of the sword. Well there is a time for all things—there is a time to use the sword, and there is a time to forbid the use of the sword; and now is the time at which the use of the sword is not intended, and therefore, as you have heard, the state churches are wrong, for they have taken the sword; and when the right time comes to use it, then they will perish by the sword; I say, my friends, why should we feel annoyed at the doctrine that the meek and lowly Nazarene intends to establish his kingdom upon the earth by means of the sword, as one means? I see no good reason for this whatever. Let us look at the question by the aid of common sense. Have we not had six thousand years’ experience of the highest human effort to turn men’s minds into a proper shape—to civilise, enlighten, and polish them? and what is the condition of things to-day, although our spiritual guides do tell us that we have the kingdom of God? Do you think, respected friends, that when the kingdom of God exists upon earth—when we have got into the epoch wherein will commence that abundance of peace which shall last “as long as the moon endureth”—I say do you think, you can

entertain for one moment the idea that at that time the Germans will kill 250,000 Frenchmen, and that a corresponding number of Germans, or something like it, will be killed by the French? Do you think, in those days, those instruments of about 64 lbs. weight will be used? Why! instead of educating men’s brains they blow them out; and yet we have these means sanctioned by our spiritual guides, who tell us that we are in the midst of the kingdom of God! The thing is an utter mistake; and while there is any breath in my body, it shall be employed to convince my contemporaries that it is a mistake which will land a man into the eternal pit of corruption. How can we object to having the Kingdom of God established by means of the sword? You have heard to-night that there has been such a thing as the Kingdom of God upon this planet, and we can quote you from the Chronicles to show that of all the sons God gave to David, he gave him one son, viz.—Solomon to sit upon His throne—and then we are told that Solomon sat upon the Throne of the Lord as David did before him, and there were something like 19 Kings in the line of Judah who sat upon the same throne, which was God’s throne. Now what I wish to bring to you, is this point—how was that throne established? That was God’s throne; the kingdom which surrounded it was God’s kingdom. How was it established? First, by killing Pharaoh—blotting him out in the waters of the Red Sea, and then mowing down the kings of Canaan. Do you believe in the literal war of Bethoron, or Jericho, and so forth? And what was all this for? To effect the redemption of the sanctuary—the Holy Land—to constitute the kingdom of God upon earth, which, if you believe Paul in Colossians, was but typical of the kingdom to be established under the greater than Solomon, viz.—Jesus Christ. Then if the typical kingdom of God were established by the sword, what objection can there be to the anti-typical kingdom being established by the sword? But let me go further than that, and observe that I do not see, above all things, why the spiritual guides, who figure in the campaigns of men—military and naval campaigns—should have any objection to establish a kingdom by precisely the same means by which they are seeking to establish their empire over the world—to further and support their missionary schemes. Why do they object to being met on their own terms? Well, whether

they object to it or not, they will have to be met on their own terms. But oh! their disappointment when the guns are pointed at their own heads! Oh, the disappointment, when they find the armies of Israel, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, and under a leader who will possess omnipotent power, and against whom no schemes—even of a Bismarck—will be of any avail, who will be like a torch of fire among the sheaves, and who shall devour all the people round about him.—(See Zech. xii. 6.) Oh, their disappointment then! The prophet Habakkuk in contemplating the scene, says: “My belly trembled when Jehovah came up, and cut them in pieces with his troops.” If you believe in the literality of his judgments to establish his first kingdom, how is it possible for you to disbelieve in similar measures in order to the establishing of his second and indestructible kingdom?

Now, then, let me look at a passage in this Psalm. I should like you to understand that all I can say to-night is but a very rough sketch of this subject, and that my object is merely to start you on the right track of thought, that you may at your leisure follow out this proposition: that by the sword the kingdom of Christ is to be established on the earth. If I put you on the track of thought, and you keep upon it till you are thoroughly convinced, something will be done; but to think it out for you, and to give all the testimony, well, I should have to do as Paul did, and continue my speech till midnight, or perhaps till the small hours of the morning; for you would be surprised, if we were to string together all the passages of Scripture on this point, what a bundle they would make.

“The Lord, on thy right hand,” says this 5th verse, “shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.” There have been many days of the Lord’s wrath; I have mentioned some. You see that He has frequently, in a literal manner, struck through kings, as it is written: “He putteth down kings, and he setteth up kings.” Why, the present kings are not half so wise as king Nebuchadnezzar, for he did come to this conclusion: That the heavens do rule; and to this also, that at a certain time, future to his day, it was Jehovah’s intention to establish a kingdom which should rule over all. Our kings would do well to take the advice of the Psalmist

which we have quoted to-night, and so be wise. Why it is generally supposed, my friends, that such men as kings possess all the wisdom in the world, or a great deal of it: that is the estimate which they make of themselves by themselves. Now it is not good to compare ourselves among ourselves: we do not get right conclusions by so doing. What is the estimate—I mean the divine estimate—of the present kings and past kings? Well, as a rule, Daniel says they are the basest of men—(Dan. iv. 17.) I do not say so, but I believe Daniel. That is one of the best reasons that I can think of for fulfilling the Scriptures, and removing them out of the way; for, so far as the world is concerned, my friends, their management is just of that description we properly call mismanagement. Now allow me to point out to you several testimonies under this head. First of all, let me read to you the seventh verse: "He" (that is Messiah, the Son, Jesus of Nazareth—I think we shall agree about that), "He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head." We look behind us, my friends, to the tragic scene of drinking at the brook in the way. We look before us to another scene—the lifting up of the head. Now you have seen somewhat in this short discourse after what manner he will lift up the head. In the retrospect he was, a man clothed with meekness, a worm as it were, and no man. "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? There is no soundness in me; a loathsome disease has seized upon all my body," and so forth. Such language is used with regard to the man of the past in the Psalms and in the prophets; but when we look into the future, how then, respected friends? Not as a lamb led to the slaughter, not as a sheep before the shearers dumb, and opening not his mouth. No, but as the Lion of Judah's tribe, before whom, when he lifts up his voice, all the beasts of the political forest must cower in their dens for very fear, and shout "let the mountains and hills fall upon us, that we may be hid from the face of the Lamb!" Nevertheless they will recover their courage, they will oppose his power, as is shown by Rev. xix. 19. Do you think now, respected friends, that if Jesus Christ were to come literally into the midst of our kingdoms, and say that he was the ruler of the world, that the time was come to establish his kingdom that they must lay down their arms, and give

up their wealth, and await his law—do you think, in the present temper of society, even with all our civilization and polish, they would be disposed to do it? Don't you think, my friends, they would do as they did before, but on a larger scale, come out with swords and staves to take him? Well, if you don't think so I exhort you to read the 16th, 17th, and 19th chapters of the Apocalypse, or the Revelations, where you will find the kings of the earth and their armies—(Can you spiritualize those terms? Well, if you can, you can spiritualize the colt upon which he rode into Jerusalem.) I say, that is a verse which no man can doubt the meaning of. What are they to do? They are to make war upon him (the Lamb) and those that are with him; but, thank God! the victory is never for a moment doubtful, for he is to overcome them, and their kingdoms are to "become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he is to reign for ever and ever." I am very sorry, respected friends, that the clock finger has crept up to the end of the thirty minutes. (Cries of "go on," and applause.) I have been promising to give you some testimonies, and I have given you some testimonies, but I have not turned over the leaves and quoted the testimonies, nor have I mentioned the chapters and verses where those testimonies are. The first I happened to think of is found in the seventh chapter of Daniel. There Daniel saw certain horns, which I may just remark parenthetically, signified powers; and Daniel considered these horns, and then he saw a little horn with certain characteristics; and then, at verse 9, to which I desire to come, he says, "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool," and this is what I want you to notice—"his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him, a thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Well, now, a fiery stream is a figure of speech, but do you think that, though a figure of speech, it does not mean something equivalent in intensity and severity to a fiery stream? It is evidently something which will destroy—and destroy what, I ask you? Why, the throne and the kingdom of men. And if you want plain language for that, if you would rather

have that than symbolic language, we need not go out of the same book, for there we find that in the days of certain kings that began to be developed in the fifth century—represented by ten horns, signifying ten kingdoms—in the days of these ten kings," I refer to Dan. ii. 44: "Shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." Well, what will be the effect upon these kingdoms? It will destroy them; it will pulverise them, and, by a tremendous hurricane, carry them out of vision and out of memory, and then there will be room to build up his own kingdom. Now do not be startled, my friends, if I tell you that the character of a "saint" is not incompatible with war. It is only in the period of probation that the use of violence is prohibited. At the time appointed, judgment is to be given to the saints, as we read in this chapter: and they will execute the judgment written. Now, if you say violent measures are not to be employed in the establishment of the kingdom of God, then you must recognise the necessity of something else being employed. Moral suasion must be employed; there must come a change of head and a change of heart. But think of what that involves, will God work a miracle in favour of the wicked? He never did that except to destroy them; and, therefore, when He has been, for so many ages using mild measures, and working by a slow process, in order to take out one here and there from this and that generation, upon a principle of faith, obedience, patience, and love, do you think He is going to establish His kingdom on the earth by working a miracle on millions, by changing their hearts by some subtle influence, and so placing them all on His side, all on His platform, and in His favour? No, not so; by no means. But this is His programme: they will learn righteousness "when His judgments are abroad in the earth." Why, that is just how they have had to learn righteousness in the past. Do you think there will be any chance for them, seeing that Jehovah has been at so much pains by sending His prophets, Son, and apostles, without effect? None at all, unless they surrender to his word. Now, it all depends upon that, they must receive his word. They are practically in the position of having cast His word behind their backs, and, therefore, of having thrown the greatest possible insult in His face; and if they persist in this when Christ returns, how will he deal with them? Why, just as he told the

Jews, "Bring hither those that would not I should reign over them, and slay them before me."—(Luke xix. 27.) Now, I have just to say that the saints are to be co-judges, co-executioners,—will you allow me the phrase?—with Jesus Christ in carrying out the judgment written, for this honour have all his saints. The 149th Psalm is now before my mind, "This honour hath all his saints." Well, what does the honour consist in? Why, to handcuff the kings, to chain our rulers hand and foot (see the Psalm), not because Jehovah delights in such things—for he does not delight in the death of sinners, not even of the worst of them—but because it is a necessity. There is no other way of getting rid of them. Don't you think 6,000 years is a pretty good proof of Jehovah's patience and long-suffering? And what is it now? If you believe the Scriptures, you must believe this, that it is because darkness has become so intense, so thick, so gross, that Jehovah can no longer restrain, as it were, the rising of the sun of righteousness to let in the light, and in his wings or rays there will be a healing of the nations. I say it is a grand feature of things; they must be removed after this fashion. I am merely, please observe, if you will bear the repetition, endeavouring to put you upon the track of thought, and in doing so I will quote you a testimony or two, and then sit down. I am reminded of the 10th chapter of the prophet Zechariah, and at the third verse we read this: "thine anger was kindled against the shepherds." Ah! those are the men—not against the sheep: "against the shepherds," especially the self-constituted shepherds. Don't you know, my friends, what was alleged against the shepherds of Israel? If you will pardon the figure of speech, they went after a subtle manner, with a pair of shears under their coat tails, and manifested the greatest interest in the flock about the time the wool was at its height, and clothed themselves with the wool and fed themselves with the fat—(Ezek. xxxiv.) Can you bear me to say that it is none otherwise with the shepherds of our day! When I read in history, and especially that admirable history of the reformation by William Cobbett,—oh! how strikingly I am convinced of this. Henry VIII. has been referred to to-night in his character of so called "Defender of the Faith." Why, some of you know this, that he received the title from Pope Leo X. Henry VIII. had written a

book against Martin Luther, and what is very singular in connection with this—most ridiculous and amusing indeed—the Protestants have continued the title of "Defender of the Faith" down to this day; and so, in effect, in the terms of the original title, what are they defending? The mother, the Roman Catholic faith, and they testify their respect for the mother in being such obedient daughters. Now, it was contended by Cobbett that what the law had made—and the law made the Church—it could unmake. Well, I must not go into that: that would take me into a very wide field; but I was just going to say that in order to blind the people, these shepherds, when they made the Prayer Book, and did divers other things, they told the people that they did it by the aid of what they call "the Holy Ghost," or, more properly, the Holy Spirit. I pronounce those terms with reverence, but as far as these "shepherds" are concerned, with deep disgust! They say by the aid of the Spirit they made the Prayer Book; and then they unmade it by the aid of the Holy Spirit; and, by-and-bye, they made it again by the aid of the Holy Spirit; and now they are finding fault with the book, and they don't know whether it is right or wrong. And yet these shepherds tell us we are to go to them for interpretation of the Scriptures! Our land, truly, is full of Bibles; but when they present Bibles to us, what is there behind the presentation? What is the intent of such an act as that? It is this: you must not read it for yourselves; you must not come to your own conclusion about it. No; you must exercise no independence of intellect on it, but you must believe what we say about it. And then if you appeal to these said "shepherds," what is their reply? Well, it usually is, "that is very mysterious." And I quite admit that is *to them*: to no set of men on earth more so. But the more the pity that the people are not to look into it. And—strange contradiction!—whilst we are printing copies of the Holy Scriptures, these very men, who are so ardent in their wishes, are the most obstinate and perverse of all men, throwing more obstacles than any other men in the way of getting at the root of those Scriptures. Now, then, I say that these shepherds, like the shepherds of Israel, are certain yet to be punished. The Master is equal to that. They are passing for shepherds now, but

they will be punished for just what they are, and that is goats. And in order to show you by what means they will be punished, I will read a verse or two from the prophet Zechariah (x 3): "Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the Lord of Hosts hath visited His flock—the house of Judah, and hath made them as His goodly horse in the battle." Please remember what I said as to how the kingdom was established in the first instance—the kingdom of Israel: "Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle-bow, out of him every oppressor together. And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle; and they shall fight, because the Lord is with them." Now when has the Lord been with them? I mean Jesus: when has he been their generalissimo? Do you believe this testimony? Well, if so, you believe that Israel will fight to subjugate the nations, for this reason, that the Lord will be with them. One more quotation, and then I resume my seat. I refer now to another prophet, viz. the prophet Micah. I refer to the prophet Micah with all the more pleasure, because I can avail myself of a certain portion of it which I know none of you—or which, at least, I have a strong hope that none of you—will call in question. Here the Judge of Israel, the one born in Bethlehem, is spoken of by the prophet; and we are told plainly in verse 4 of the 5th chapter, that "he shall stand and feed (*i. e. rule*, see margin) in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God, and they (Israel) shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth." And then in verses 8 and 9 come those testimonies which I believe I have quoted, and need not, therefore, quote again. Now, then, what follows? That the Bethlehem-born Ruler is a MAN OF WAR. Is anything of this kind found in the New Testament? Does not Paul, writing to the Corinthians, say that we shall judge the world? "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"—(1 Cor. vi 2.) Does not Jesus himself say, in the book of Revelations: "To him that overcometh, and keepeth my works to the end, to him I will give power over the nations, and he shall break them in pieces as a potter's vessel, even as I have received of my Father?" What is to be made, my friends; of such testimonies as this? Just receive it, is my

exhortation, as it is. Do nothing with it in the way of shaping it in harmony with your own convictions and pre-conceptions; but look into it, believe it; it is not difficult to comprehend, and cultivate this disposition, which, if you study the Scriptures day by day, will begin to grow upon you: a patient waiting for the Lion of the tribe of Judah, to establish his kingdom in the earth. Cultivate that state of mind; adopt that practically, so that when he comes to set up this kingdom, it shall be said to you: "Take the kingdom under the whole heaven, and possess it for ever and ever." Never mind, if he sends you into the Arctics to look after a few Esquimaux; if you have immortality to do the business with, that will be no mean reward. But aim at something higher, and perhaps you will be appointed to two, five, or ten cities. Our desire is that you should seek, first, the kingdom of God, and, afterwards, that you should shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

Brother J. J. ANDREW, of London, spoke on "The abolition of war impossible till the whole world comes under the personal government of the Prince of Peace, the Messiah." He said: Having just heard something respecting a future war, it is only right that our attention should be directed somewhat to a future time of peace, for it is declared in the book of Ecclesiastes that there is not only "a time of war," but also "a time of peace." We are told also by the prophet Isaiah, or rather the spirit speaking through him, that "I the Lord make peace." We are told by the Psalmist that "God maketh war to cease unto the end of the earth." We may, therefore, I think, expect from such simple testimonies as these that a time will come when there will be universal peace. There is a dim idea floating in the minds of men that such a time will come; but there is no definite conception as to how it is to be brought about. There have been numerous things suggested of late years, which have been thought to be sufficiently effective to bring about this peace. First, we have civilization: it has been surmised that as civilizing influences—such as arts, and manufactures, and sciences—become more developed, peace will increase upon the earth; and when the Great Exhibition of 1851 was held, that was looked upon as an augury of the great and glorious peace which men imagined was about to commence. What has been the result? Twenty-one years have

elapsed since that Exhibition, and we have not had six consecutive years without a great war on either the European or American continent. Then it has been suggested by others that commerce would gradually effect this peaceful condition of things. This you will remember was the theory of the late Richard Cobden: he endeavoured to promote those commercial interests amongst nations, which are for the benefit of the pocket; and he thought that the pocket—which is in all such things such a powerful influence in the motives of mankind—would operate upon the nations to such an extent, that they would cease to war with each other as they had done in ages past. That kind of theory is all very well as long as there is peace; but when the passions of men become roused, then the pocket ceases to exercise that influence which it does on ordinary occasions. It has further been said that the gradual influence of religion would produce this peace. After what you have already heard, I hardly think it is necessary to expand upon that topic. Not only have the clergy countenanced the army by becoming its chaplains, but there have been wars in times past between those who professed religion; wars, too, professedly of a religious character. Look, for a moment, at the civil war in America not very long since. Why! in that country there were members and preachers of the same churches in the north and in the south, who took up the sword against each other, contrary as you have already heard this evening, to the injunctions, general and definite, of Jesus Christ and his apostles. How then can it be expected that the religion which is now current amongst mankind, shall influence the minds of men to abolish war, and bring about universal peace? International arbitration is another theory which has been propounded; and the arbitration which is at present going on at Geneva, respecting the dispute between England and America, is looked upon as a happy commencement of this mode of settling national disputes. Only very recently a learned "divine" in the Baptist body (Dr. Thomas Thomas) uttered the following declaration respecting the way in which these disputes between nations would be settled in the coming time of peace:—"War," says he, "the first-born of Satan and of sin, will then be repudiated and abhorred, as the most wicked and irrational method of settling the disputes of nations. No more shall the material wealth of states, and the resources

of science and mechanical arts be employed in the organization and support of armies and navies, and in the invention and improvement of instruments of death and destruction; but all international differences will be adjusted by amiable diplomacy, arbitration, or a high court of nations." Now that looks very pretty in theory, but like other inventions of men, it is defective. It contains within it this fundamental flaw: that it is impossible, by such a system, to obtain a Court of Indication which shall be able to dispense impartial justice; for those who would act as judges would be sure to be, at one time or other, interested parties themselves, in the questions in dispute. It is a mere expedient; it is a mere attempt to cure a disease. Now that is not God's plan. God is going to adopt a better plan—that of prevention. Prevention, we know, is better than cure. None will dispute that it is better to keep in perfect health than to get into a state of disease, and then to have to send for a doctor, whose medicine may or may not cure. Now that is precisely the case with this proposition of "a High Court of Nations," on a system of arbitration. God is going to introduce a system of government upon this earth which will prevent all disputes amongst the various nations of the earth, whether they be by the kings or by the subjects. And how is He going to do it? You have already heard some testimony upon the point; but I must ask your attention to a little more. We are told that "there is no peace to the wicked."—(Isaiah xlvi. 12.) Therefore, as long as wars exist upon the earth, that is plain, clear proof that the earth is inhabited and ruled by wicked men. We are told by Solomon that "when a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Now there is one man who has pleased the Lord perfectly. Therefore to see the fulfilment of that proverb, we must look for his enemies being made at peace with him. You have heard just now that Jesus Christ has enemies, and that a time is coming when they are to be made his footstool. For what object are they to be made his footstool? In order that he and they may be at peace together; in other words, that he may exercise sway over all this earth in a peaceful condition. You will not deny, I suppose, that Jesus Christ is spoken of as "a Prince of Peace." If you ask for the testimony, I have but to point you to the 9th chapter of Isaiah,

where you will find in the 6th and 7th verses, the following words: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." It further goes on to say: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." There are several statements in these two verses, which give to us an indication of how the time of peace is to be brought about. We are told that a certain child and Son given, who is generally admitted to be Jesus Christ, is to exercise government rule while sitting upon the throne of David. That promise has never been fulfilled. Jesus never sat upon the throne of David. David never had a throne in heaven. David himself even is not now in heaven, as declared by Peter on the day of Pentecost.—(Acts ii. 34.) Therefore, the present position of Jesus cannot be a fulfilment of the promise. We must look for its realisation in the future. And when he does sit upon this throne of David, according to the testimony here given, he will be "the Prince of Peace." Then the prophet says, "the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." If, therefore, the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform it, it will not be performed by means of peace societies or other organizations in existence in the present day, which have for their object the establishment of this universal peace. Christ is the one who has been appointed by God to rule this earth in a peaceful state of things. God has decreed by the prophet Daniel that a kingdom shall be set up, a kingdom which shall be different from all other kingdoms, in that it shall be a kingdom not moved, a kingdom firmly established, a kingdom which shall swallow up all other kingdoms. The testimony upon this point will be found in Daniel ii. 44, where we read that "in the days of these things shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand for ever." Now what is the cause of wars in the present day? The ambition, the lust, the covetousness, the revenge of the

kings and princes of the earth. If those kings and princes are abolished, and God takes the government of the earth into His own hands, will not the cause of international disputes have been taken away? Truly so. There will, it is true, be kings then; there will be rulers in that age; but who will they be? Not fallible, mortal, flesh and blood men and women, as at present; but individuals who have passed through a probationary career, as did Jesus Christ, and who, like Abraham, will have manifested faith in God's promises, and have rendered obedience to His commandments in an evil state of things, and who, in consequence of their having overcome this world by their faith, will be appointed by Jesus Christ to rule the world in which they have lived. You have heard quoted this evening a passage from the 2nd Psalm to the effect that Jesus Christ is the inheritor of this earth. What does it say respecting him? "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." We further read in the 6th verse, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Now that is in perfect accord with what we have just read from the prophet Isaiah. To be king on the holy hill of Zion is none other than to sit upon the throne of David. We have heard this evening that the statement in the 2nd Psalm respecting the king who is to be kissed, in order that his wrath may be averted, is Jesus Christ. Now if we accept that testimony, we must accept the other testimony also, that he is the king to be set upon the hill of Zion, that he is to "have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." But let us come to the matter in a more definite manner. What is Jesus the king of? What is his title as a king? Is it not that of "King of the Jews?" Evidently so, if he is to sit upon the throne of David. Those who occupied the throne of David in time past were kings of the Jews. If Jesus occupies the same throne, will not he also be king of the Jews? The past history of the Jewish nation is one not of peace, but one of almost continual war. From the time when Moses brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, down to the present day, the Jews have, more or less, been at war with their Gentile neighbours. And why is this? Because their ways have not pleased the Lord.

There is only one time in their history remarkable for its peaceful character, and that is the reign of Solomon; and it was just because, during that time, they were, to a greater extent, pleasing the Lord. But the time is coming when they will please the Lord in a much more perfect manner than they ever did in the past; and, therefore, we find statements that they shall be in a peaceful condition. I will ask you to turn for evidence on this point to Isaiah xi. 12. "He shall set up an ensign for the outcasts of Israel, and shall assemble the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim." While the children of Israel were divided into two kingdoms, there was constant war between them. But here is a time predicted when they will be united into one kingdom, and when there will be no war between them. At that time they will also be at peace with their neighbours, for we are told, in the last chapter of the same prophet, that God "will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream."—(Isaiah lxvi. 12.) Now when Jesus sits upon the throne of David, will it only be the Jews that will be at peace together? Are there not indications in the Scriptures that the Gentiles also will be at perfect peace? We have only to turn for an answer to that question to the 2nd of Isaiah, and there we shall find some very pertinent testimony upon the point: "The word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass, in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The next verse predicts something which people generally believe, viz. a state of universal peace. It declares that the individual spoken of "shall" judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many nations, and shall rebuke many

people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." The result of war in the present state is just this—high taxes, national debts, low wages, high prices of provisions, death, famine, disease and desolated countries. When the time comes that the nations shall learn no more, these things will be almost wholly abolished, and, according to the testimony of this prophet, when the time does come, "many people," or, as Micah puts it, "many nations," shall go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord. Where is that to be? The testimony says "Jerusalem," because "out of Zion is to go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." So that it is clear that the Gentile nations will have to acknowledge their ignorance; they will, in fact, have to fulfil the prediction of Jeremiah, when he says that "the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (ch. xvi. 19); and one of those lies will be this, that Jesus Christ is not a king to reign upon this earth. Professing Christians say in words that Jesus is a king, but then when you ask them for an explanation of the terms, they deny the scriptural truth involved in the statement. What is that better than imitating the Jews who crucified him 1800 years ago because he claimed to be their king? The Jews put him to death, and endeavoured to prevent him sitting on David's throne as their king, by crucifying him. The Gentiles cannot do that: he has been raised from the dead; but as far as they can, by their words and by their teaching, they endeavour to deprive him of this great and glorious dignity, which has been given to him by his Father, God. And now it will probably be asked, what practical good is there in believing in and proclaiming this future time of peace? Just this: it is the essence of the gospel of the kingdom preached by Christ and the apostles. (Hear, hear). Do not suppose that this is a mere matter of curiosity, a matter just to be enquired into and then thrown on one side; it is a matter of vital import. Do we not read in the New Testament of a "gospel of peace?" Now if a future time of peace is coming, will it not be a fulfilment of that which

is called glad tidings of peace? for I need hardly tell you, that "gospel" is but another term for "glad tidings." When the apostle says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that preacheth the gospel of peace!" he refers to this future time; he means glad tidings of this coming peace, when all nations shall bow the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ, and when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea." Why was that gospel preached? For the purpose of gathering out from the Gentiles—it having previously been preached to the Jews—a people who should, by a belief of the gospel, be raised up at the coming of Christ, to be kings and priests with him. If you ask for testimony, I will just refer you to the 5th chapter of Revelations. There the redeemed ones are represented as using the following language: "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on earth." There is nothing vague about that; it is very clear, very simple; a child may understand it. "Thou hast made us kings and priests." We know what a king is; we know what a priest is. Here, then, are the redeemed saying that they are kings and priests. A king implies governmental power—as ruling over others. These kings, then, must have subjects. A priest implies the exercise of priestly functions. These priests, then, must discharge such functions. And by being at the same time kings and priests, they will have in their hands both the political and ecclesiastical administration of the whole of the affairs of this earth; so that there will be no possibility then of wars either of a political or ecclesiastical character. There cannot then be religious wars between Roman Catholics and Protestants, as there have been in the past. There can be no such a thing as civil war in the United States of America; no such a thing as a war between France and Prussia then, because the various kings and rulers who will rule these nations will be of one heart, of one mind. They will exercise their ruling powers under the direction of one who is infallible, viz., Jesus Christ himself. They will be infallible, but he will be their chief. You, of course, recognise the terms "King of kings" and "Lord of lords," as being applicable to Jesus Christ. Well, of what kings is he the king—the kings who reign now? Why, they are "the basest

of men," as we have just heard. Is it likely that Jesus, the one who has pleased God, who has committed no sin, is now, or ever will be associated if only in name, with the basest of men? Certainly not. The kings of whom Jesus Christ is the chief king are the kings of the future age, the saints who are to receive "power over the nations," and an entrance into Christ's kingdom when he comes, and to live and reign with him upon the earth for a thousand years. (Applause).

Brother Roberts, of Birmingham, spoke on—"The world's political future not Republican, but Imperio-theocratic, to be realised by the re-establishment of the kingdom of David, in the hands of Christ, at his second coming, who shall subdue all nations, and give the world a universal government of power, infallibility, and love." He said: Beloved brethren and sisters, and respected friends; The subject of the world's political future is one that is at present engaging very deeply the thoughts of all thoughtful men. It all depends upon the point of view from which the matter is contemplated as to the conclusion to which people will come. I grant that if we take the merely secular view; I grant that if we are prepared to say there is no God, if we are prepared to take the ground that God has not spoken, that God has no purposes in connection with this world which He has created; that in that case the general drift of public sentiment at present is a logical drift, and likely to be the right drift. There can be no doubt that from a merely human point of view the world appears rapidly drifting towards republicanism; although there are good reasons even to that: for we know in the light of history that all human movements are unstable. There have been republics before which have ended in anarchy, and confusion, and failure. Therefore the largest republics that may be developed upon the foundations now being established, may end in the same way, and develop as they have done before, and as they notably did at the close of the last century—military despotisms even worse than those which in the first instance they were intended to displace.

But I am not here to discuss the matter from a merely political point of view. As you have discovered, no doubt, from the remarks that have preceded me, the basis of the whole matter now being developed before your minds, is the

proposition that there is a God that judgeth in the earth, as David says, that all things exist in Him; that He ruleth over all, as David told a certain political personage of his time, and that He is slowly working out his own magnificent purpose, which hinges around a certain individual personage, concerning whom it is testified that God hath highly exalted him, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Now if we prosecute the question from that point of view, there is but one answer, and the advantage of our position is that that is the point of view of the great bulk of the religious public. The majority of the people profess to believe that the Bible contains a reliable record of actual transactions that have transpired in the course of the world's history; that the Bible is the word of God; and I am sure—not seeking at all to digress upon the question—that there is no competent man thoroughly acquainted with the Bible that can fairly resist the conviction. It is only those who look at it from a distance, or who look at it through the media of hostile criticism, or through the misty atmosphere of ecclesiastical foolery, who can come to the conclusion that so splendid a book is the concoction of priestly ingenuity. Those who are thoroughly acquainted with it are the men who feel the most confident that of a truth God did in sundry times and in divers manners speak in times past unto the fathers of Israel by the prophets, and did in the last days speak by His Son; and upon the basis of that view of the matter, when we come to enquire what is the political future of the world, we reach an answer, both very much at variance with conclusions of the merely secular politician and at the same time very consoling to all who are disinterestedly concerned for the welfare of mankind; for we have a prospect that it is not to be realised in any other direction. Allusion has been made to the fine schemes for tranquillising mankind and bringing them to live in amity and peace; but can any man of sense fail to see that however well constituted a judicature may be, or a tribunal of arbitration, unless that tribunal has the power of enforcing its decisions—that there is no guarantee whatever of peace amongst those whose affairs it undertakes to legislate upon, for it will only be where parties are satisfied

with the decision, that there would be the security contemplated. As soon as a question was brought to the bar of its judgment, in which the possessions or interests of mankind were involved to any great extent, we well know that the result would be, as it has been in many of the political conferences that have just preceded the greatest wars, where they have called together the plenipotentiaries of the principal powers in Europe to submit the matter in dispute, and the result has been that, as they could not agree, they parted to fight it out. And so it would be in all such schemes. But in opposition to this, the truth of the matter, as stated in the proposition before us, is that in the purpose of God all things in the earth are to be concentrated under one command; that the world is to receive what philosophers conceive idealistically to be the perfect theory of government, the rule of a righteous man, the rule of an infallible man, the rule of an omnipotent man, the rule of a man who is above partiality, the rule of a man who can make no mistake, the rule of a man whom it will be in vain to resist. The simple question is, is that the future of the world laid out before us in the word of God? To the majority of religious people, the Bible seems to have nothing to do with the affairs of mankind, but those who are acquainted with the Bible can see that from the beginning of it to the end of it, it is all about the affairs of this world. We go back to the beginning of it, and see that it deals with incidents which have to do with the development of the present state of things. It begins in the Garden of Eden; it begins with the transgression on the part of the ancestral head of the human race. It is continued in connection with circumstances transpiring in the earth: you find a man chosen from amongst the idolatrous populations of the time, and concerning whom Paul tells us in Romans iv. 13, that God made him the heir of the world. You find God calling him out of Mesopotamia, and taking him to the fertile country of Syria, which even now in climatical respects is the finest country on the earth, and which only requires to be in the hands of a provident and a wise government to regain all its lost glory; and we find God said to him: "To thee and to thy seed will I give this land for an everlasting possession;" Abraham himself being included; for you find Paul saying in Heb. xi. 8: that Abraham was called to go into a land which he should

afterwards receive for an inheritance. You find God taking his descendents by the hand, bringing them out of Egypt by those great military proceedings to which allusion has been made to-night; you find Him taking them through the wilderness; you find Him setting them in the place of the seven nations of Canaan, who were sunk in abomination and all idolatry, and who were extirpated by the sword of Joshua, the type of the Messiah; and you find that nation running a history of a thousand years under a divine constitution of things; and you find one of the leading men in connection with the system is David—a man after God's own heart, in that he feared God with all his heart, and was devoutly concerned to obey His will at all times, although in certain matters he made mistakes, and you find him ruling over the people of Israel; and you find God making a promise to him that of his seed according to the flesh, there would be raised up a certain personage in connection with whom David realises all his hope, all his salvation, and all his desire. In 2 Sam. xxiii. 3-5, you find him thus expressing himself with regard to that individual, and you will see the bearing of it on the present matter: "These be the last words of David." "The God of Israel said: the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." This, although it was a thing not to be developed at that time before his eyes, was David's expectation, David's salvation, was identified with a certain personage that was to arise upon the world as a sun that should illuminate all things. And we are left in no doubt as to who that personage is; we are left in no doubt as to whether it is a person; we are not left at the mercy of the theorists who would suggest that this is merely an allusion to some age of improvement that is to set in; for Peter, in the words of inspiration—for surely, if Christ is true, Peter is—says: "David being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn to him with an oath, that of the fruit of his loins

According to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne, he (David) seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of the Messiah." So that here in connection with David, we have a guarantee given to him that he was to have this son, whose picture in dazzling and brilliant colours we see continually before the mind, as we traverse the course of the spirit of God in prophecy. Let a man read Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and all the rest of the prophets, and what does he see continually before him? One great personage who is to be the deliverer of the world, who is to be the destroyer of princes, who is to be the breaker of the kingdoms of the earth, who is to fill the earth with peace and righteousness, the king of Israel, the Messiah who was to rise up in the line of David. And then you come on to that time when that personage made his actual appearance, and—as Isaiah had told the nation beforehand by the Spirit of God—when he appeared he did not appear in the character they expected, because he had a preliminary work to do connected with the taking away of the sin of the world, which to Israel had been a mystery. They rejected him: he was despised and rejected of men; he grew up as a plant with no strength. They put him to death; and we find him rising again personally from the dead; and that is the foundation stone of this whole matter. It is a wonder, indeed, that our intellectual men do not really grapple with that as the main turning-point of the whole religious question. They will neither tell the people that they deny that Christ rose from the dead, nor that they believe that he did. Let them take definite ground upon that point; for if they say Christ did not rise from the dead, they develop an issue before the public mind to which intelligent men may address themselves with advantage. On the other hand, if they admit that he rose from the dead, then the whole matter that is being developed before you in all its parts is proved, because all of it is maintainable. All of it is true and consistent, if that one fact be demonstrated, that this one personage, who has already made such a mark on the history of mankind, really rose from the dead. If he rose from the dead, he now exists, and we then comprehend the declarations of the apostles that this Jesus whom God hath highly exalted, is only in the heavens for a certain time, that time being defined thus by Peter: that the heavens must

receive him till the time of restitution of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets: since the world began. And what does he say? "God shall send Jesus Christ." And he is to be sent for the purpose of establishing the kingdom, and rewarding his servants, and sitting upon the throne of David, and blessing all mankind, according to the promises that have been established from the beginning. In very deed, that is the gospel; for if you read the New Testament you will find that the gospel of Christ was the gospel of the kingdom of God, and that his sufferings, and his crucifixion, and his ascension, were certain private matters of doctrinal import that he explained to his disciples, and therefore only to those who received the word of the kingdom in accordance with the argument that you heard on Sunday night, from which it was plain to be seen that the blood of Jesus Christ only cleanses from sin those who receive the gospel as proclaimed by the apostles, which is a gospel of good things to come. This is the principle on which God is proceeding: "He that honours me I will honour," says the voice of God, speaking in this book; and the form in which He has given us the opportunity of honouring Him is to believe Him, to build our life upon the strength of His promises, to consecrate ourselves, to stake our fortune, so to speak, our well-being, upon the fact of God bringing to pass what He has promised. The enforcement of these things is the meaning of the Christadelphian movement, which to some people is such a stumbling-block, and which by them is so entirely misunderstood.

The CHAIRMAN: Allow me to say a word or two in conclusion. If you rest with what you have heard, you will come far short of the object which we had in view in calling this meeting together. For your own sake—not ours: we seek not yours but you—for your own sake, if you believe the Bible to be the word of God, endeavour to carry as many of these thoughts as you can in your minds, and look into "the Book," and if you feel interested, come again, and hear what is to be said on these matters, that by embracing them you may obtain eternal life and spend an endless existence of enjoyment in the kingdom of God.

The meeting then separated.