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"When it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."—1 Pet. ii. 23.

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For the South Western Baptist.

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NUMBER 1.

This word means positions assumed without proof. "Deep plunging in our light soils, is of no service, for I have tried it," is an agricultural postulate: "No truth in science"—"No certainty in law"—"Religion is all hypocrisy"—"Mathematical demonstrations are all humbug," are postulates on various subjects, very nearly related to the science of blockheadism. Theologians sometimes announce postulates and think they are proved, because they use many syllogisms and sophisms.

(1.) "Christ joined the church when young." The Jews, of which Christ was one by birth, were supposed to be born members of their national organization and circumcised at 8 days old. At that tender age his membership was consummated, but it was not his act—the ceremony was performed by others, not his voluntary exercise. But others say "infants are born in the church;" if so, he would not join a society in which he was a member by birth, any more than the children born in these C. States acquire citizenship by oath, naturalization or some other form: all these would be a work of supererogation—they could not confirm rights possessed by birth. The record affords no proof of the postulate.

But the Old Testament organization was no church in the New Testament sense of the word: it differed in materials, infidel in sentiment and wicked in life, from those of a New Testament church who were "all the children of God by faith through Jesus Christ," widely as the poles. The word church is not in our Old Testament.

2. "Our Savior's treatment of children, Matt. 18:25; 19:14; Mark 10:13-16, in reference to his church and kingdom," proves that they were members. Coming or being brought to Christ while upon earth, does not prove or imply fitness for membership: thousands saw and heard him preach, yet had no love for him. Did his conversation with the Syro-Phoenician woman, Matt. 15 and Mark 7, out of whose daughter he dislodged a foul demon, make either a member of the church? Was Nicodemus by the long discussion of that memorable night, constituted a member? Did the miracle in which Jesus so multiplied the loaves so as to feed 4000 hungry persons, after he had blessed them, make any of them fit to be members? No more than the frequent conversations of the French Prince with the officers of both the Federal and Confederate Governments made him a citizen in either? Neither President or Cabinet can confer this right: the law points out a different course. The early churches claimed that this prerogative was in the membership—not in any other body: they received and excluded.

But the New Testament church was not organized when Christ "blessed," "prayed," "touched," "put his hands" on the children; hence they could not be members. Is the "blessing" named tantamount to regeneration? If not, it could not introduce them into the kingdom, for he declares, John 3, that without this vital change, no one can see or enter. But put his hands on, touch, pray, &c., are all named in the Evangelists and must be regarded as equivalent. Laying hands, &c., was an ancient rite, but was never supposed to reconcile the subject to God: Melchisedec blessed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but it was not regarded as renewing their nature. If the part performed in regard to those children was not equivalent to regeneration, then they were not for the kingdom nor for the church. There is no evidence that their parents brought them or were believers: hence to baptize infants from this example, makes the inference much too large for the premise.

3. Christ's kingdom "consists of a mixed community, tares among the wheat, good and bad in the same net, the only visible representation of it is the Church." Were the primitive churches composed of "a mixed community?" If the author of this postulate is the pastor of such a church, he is not a true minister of Christ else he would build upon the Apostolic pattern, only such as exercise faith and repentance—renewed in the spirit of their mind. It will be observed too, Matt. 13:38, that the field in which the tares were sown, was not the Church, but "the field is the world." So the net is cast into the sea, not into the church, the "good vessels," but the bad are thrown away or rejected, as all the unconverted should be. True ministers represent the kingdom like the merchant-man; they reject the unworthy as not fit for membership. The foolish virgins give evidence that they were not real Christians, so not admitted to the marriage supper. If the Church is this "mixed community," good, bad, wise and foolish, is it Christ's Church which he purchased with his own blood? which he is to present holy, pure without spot or wrinkle? If so, it does not come up to the standard of New Testament churches?

4. "Baptism has come in the place of

circumcision." If so, it should be administered to all the males of the family, slaves as well as free. If the Apostles, Jews by birth, administered baptism in order to carry out the statute given to Abraham, they exceeded their instructions most egregiously, for they baptized women, of which, as recipients, of the rite, the record knows nothing. In positive institutes, the agent may not curtail or enlarge the statute. If one come in lieu of the other, then all children have a just claim to the privileges of the church without public profession or confirmation, whether more or wicked, believers or infidel. Why were circumcised Jews also baptized, if one is equivalent to the other? How could certain "that wait out from us," Judaizers, that troubled many churches, declare that the Gentile converts at Antioch could be circumcised after baptism? It is clear that the Apostles at Jerusalem (Acts 15:24) gave them no such directions—they had gone to Antioch with a falsehood in their mouth to subvert the souls of the disciples, pretending it under Apostolic command. No faith was required for circumcision—but it was required in regard to baptism, and none but men and women are known to have been baptized in early times. Acts 8:12.

S. A.

For the South Western Baptist.

Mysticism.

BY JANNIE A. JUDGINS SEAMAN.

This province of religion received its first impulse in the fourteenth century: whose misty, barbaric splendor fostered a corrupt eloquence, corrupt philosophy and corrupt religion. Dionysius Areopagita, the famous hierophant, is our authority of it in the middle age, and the ponderous tones which he bequeathed to posterity, elaborate but one principle: that all creation, all revelation is symbolical.

Mysticism carries with it a germ of Pantheism, while spiritualism and theosophy are its extremes. It attempts transcendentalism, as defined in Huxley's philosophy, by self-annihilation. It quotes God and Nature as synonymous and enjoins man to become nothing, that he may be absorbed in Him who is All. This self-reduction they term poverty, simplification, denudation and death; the immediate consequences of which is a sublime restoration in God or deification. The history of this romantic doctrine dazzles you with its long record of spiritual adventure, its tragedies of the soul, the woes of its martyr spirits. The loftiest intellects have yielded to its indescribable fascinations, and become glorious examples of humility, benevolence and devotion. Their theory propagating the idea, that in proportion to the severity of the penance imposed, the reward would be more glorious, caused them to send their souls with purgatorial fires, that all the combustibles of sin might be consumed before death closed the scene. Here appears the doctrine of sanctification as it promises its devotees, a divine calm the fruition of absolute repose this side the grave. The principle of mysticism we conceive to be indestructible, as there will always be minds whose religious exercise assumes it spontaneously, while in the perpetual revolutions of society states will continually recur, to vitalize this delusive phantom.

Mysticism has ever been antagonistic to superstitious externalisms, though from its subtlety it has alike been canonized and denounced by sovereign pontiffs. Ruybroeck wrote against the excesses of mysticism, yet inculcated, though timidly, the belief that God frequently visited the souls of the most loved, with deep inflictions of spiritual anguish which was identical in object and character with the purifying fires of purgatory. This was to purify the soul from the dross of earthliness, rendering it a perfect and acceptable sacrifice unto God. The prevalence of this tenet brought the sale of indulgences to the verge of bankruptcy. As no devotee would impoverish himself to purchase exemption hereafter from a purifying process which he now believed himself undergoing in the patient endurance of his sorrows. Bigotry took the alarm and the crafty priesthood awoke like a slumbering giant, determined to wipe from the face of the earth all that espoused the doctrine of inner life. Thus Louis fourteenth at the instance of his Jesuit advisers revoked the edict of Nantes, gave orders to extirpate protestantism in France, empowered his ambassador at Rome, the infamous D'Etrees, to pursue with vigilant implacability the Italian mystics—and that monarch whose reign began so auspiciously, took part in the absurd and cruel dragonade, by incarcerating numberless victims in the inquisitorial dungeons. It was he who ordered the good prince Conde to attend mass or suffer the penalty of death or banishment. "By the grace of God," replied Conde, "I never will; as to the last, I leave it to your majesty's pleasure." Heroic response, worthy of the noble spirit who uttered it. Innumerable evidences might be collected from the Romanist records proving that they have bestowed the highest favors of the church on the coarsest materialized manifestations of spiritual truth. The wildest extravagances outliving Munchausen's adventures, have been sanctioned by the thunders of the Vatican, and yet this very church of Rome doomed Michael Molinos to death as a dangerous enthusiast.

The fashion of asceticism was inaugurated after the founding of the Abbey of St. Cyr, by Madame de Mayenon, but her restless spirit, after few years, wearied of the monomy and austerity of conventual life, and religious excitement was the ally resource to its inmates from enlivening, then the fascinations of mysticism was introduced in place of the minutiae of rigid formalism. In Paris mystical terminology became the fashionable language, Atheists turned Christians and the gifted Corbinelli exercised his fervid eloquence as the possessor of the new religious romanticism. Mysticism now shone conspicuous as a power, but recognizing no media, it soon merged into the extravagant, misrepresented and fell the victim of reaction. Doomed to silence, there it survives, weaving its mingled tissue of evil and good.

Mysticism teaches one sublime truth; that if we acquiesce ourselves to seek God in our own hearts there will we always find Him, though even this is susceptible of false construction if men so will it. The materials of religious happiness cluster about our firesides, among the lovely things of earth, and if these receive the proper culture and holy influence they will fit us for a blissful immortality.

Costly outward works, Pharisaical devotions, bargaining with papacy and asceticism for the priceless pearl will never redeem and renew the soul, but forge fetters to bind it through-out an eternity of woe. The mystic attempts to seclude his soul too entirely from externalisms, in indulging his hatred to formalism, thereby excluding a necessary help. In his zeal to protect the tender germ of spirituality from the force of earthly storms, he intercepts the vivifying influence of its appointed sunshine. This producing an intense and morbid self-consciousness—an overweening sense of personality which isolates them so elaborately from earth that they assume a decided tendency to exude the ego into the Infinite. Many a mystic has dreamed even as Swedenberg, that by special revelation he could perceive the promised land of religious truth emerging from his own nature in all the beauty of glade and fountain, of grassy upland and silver lake, of marble crag and overhanging wood, sparkling from the summer shower like diamond dewdrops in the breath of morn. Every nation, save America, has its traditional Eden of undisturbed serenity, its vale of Avalon sacred from the intrusion of worldly storms, or the sterner laws of nature, while the richest mines of secret love have yielded their utmost wealth of imagination to embellish the sacred fastness of perpetual calm. Such to the fancy of the middle age was the famous temple of Sangral, with its dome of sapphire, its six and thirty towers, its crystal crosses, its hangings of green samite, glittering on the very summit of Mt. Salvage, guarded by Knights of the true cross, invisible and inaccessible to the impure, or faithless heart.—Olaus Magnus celebrated the wonderful mound Hinkadulle on whose cloud capped height green grass waved, and bright flowers bloomed. Places like these have afforded a refuge to the ideal of the popular mind, a kind of spiritual Mecca where the pilgrim in his ecstasy and bliss forgets that it is only the fanciful creation of a finite mind. (To be continued.)

For the South Western Baptist.
CAMP AT MOSLEY'S (HUGH, NEAR)
NORFOLK, VA., Jan. 21, 1862

EDITOR BAPTIST: We had quite a "variety of weather" last week.—First it rained, hailed and sleeted, all in one day and night, accompanied by a heavy wind from the sea. Then it cleared away warm and pleasant, then it rained and cleared away again; now it is cloudy and dark. What will come next I am not prepared to say. If it should be anything unusual, such as the falling of mill-stones, pitch-forks or bull-frogs, I will make haste to inform you of the fact.

Some relief to the monotony of the camp has been the sailing of the Burnside expedition, last week, from Fortress Monroe. The vessels could be seen from our parade ground, when passing a certain point, and some of the men went down to the beach, where they had a good view. The vessels are nearly all small, and consequently of light draught, being intended, no doubt, to penetrate the land by means of the little creeks and rivers that empty into the sea along our coast. There were, I think, about thirty-five vessels. The Yankees expect wonderful things of this fleet, but whether their expectations will be realized, time will tell.

The absorbing topic of conversation in camp now is re-enlistment.—There is no doubt that nearly every man in the Regiment will enter the service again, but whether we will re-enlist before our present term expires, is the question. There is a diversity of feeling upon the subject, and as no definite conclusion has been arrived at, I do not feel at liberty to venture an opinion as to what the Regiment will do.

I suppose you have seen the Act of Congress in regard to the re-enlistment of soldiers now in the service. The Act proposes a bounty of fifty dollars, with a furlough for sixty days, and transportation home and back, to all who may re-enlist, besides the privilege of choosing their company and Regimental officers.

The proposition is generally regarded as a liberal one; there are, however, several reasons why it is not at once accepted by all who intend to

enter the service again. Some who now belong to the infantry, desire to join the cavalry or artillery; some prefer to go home untrammelled, and go again at their leisure or convenience; others again (and their number is not of the smallest,) desire to go home and see if they cannot, by some hook or crook, get into an office and wear a sword. As to the latter, their ambition is commendable, but their chances doubtful.

There is a curious fact connected with this subject of re-enlistment, which is worthy of notice. Those regiments that have been in battle, and suffered most the hardships and privations incident to a campaign, are the most ready to re-enlist; while those that have been compelled to lie by and do nothing, hesitate and delay. It is a verification of the truth of the military maxim, that soldiers, particularly volunteers, to be efficient and contented, must be kept moving and in active service. If the Third Regiment should decline to place their names upon the enlistment roll before going home, their action may be ascribed to the fact just mentioned, coupled also with the fear that we will be required to remain here in monotonous idleness for two years more.—Our Colonel has made repeated attempts to induce the War Department to send us to some more active field of service, but in vain. As our term of enlistment will expire on the 4th day of May, we are now content to remain here until that time, unless there is a certainty elsewhere of an opportunity to meet the Yankees face to face.

But if the twelve-months' volunteers do not re-enlist, to a great extent, at the expiration of their terms of enlistment, I think it probable the Government will be compelled to adopt some measure that will be unpleasant; because a large number of the twelve-months' Regiments entered the army in the spring, and it would be almost fatal to our cause for fifty or seventy-five thousand men to leave the service so nearly at the same time. But I have confidence enough in our soldiers to hope that the Government will not find it necessary to use compulsion to keep up its army.

The iron-clad steam battery, Merrimac, is expected to be completed and ready for action in about five weeks. It was made by cutting down the masts and upper part of the U. S. war steamer Merrimac, which the Yankees attempted to destroy when they abandoned the Navy Yard, and encasing it in a heavy coat of iron. The roof is shaped like the roof of a house, except that the gable ends are somewhat rounded, so that it is impossible for a cannon shot to strike it fair and plump. It mounts ten guns, four on each side and one at each end. They are of heavy calibre, and it is expected that the ugly looking vessel will do a good deal of damage when it gets amongst Lincoln's ships.

About five miles from here stands an Episcopal Church, which was built before the Revolutionary war. It is made of brick, which were imported from England, and I am told it is yet in good condition, though services are not now held there. It is called Donation Church, but I am not informed as to how it came to bear that name.

Good health still prevails in the Regiment. I am constrained to believe that a very large proportion, if not one-half, of the sickness which has carried off so many of our soldiers on the Potomac, and elsewhere, since the commencement of the war, has been owing to the comparatively little care taken by the commanding officers to see that their camps have been kept free from filth and other causes of disease. True, they have issued orders upon the subject, but orders are of no use if they are not enforced. It requires some care and trouble to accustom soldiers to keep their camps clean, because, where so many men are thrown together, there will be some who are not very particular in regard to cleanliness. I am pleased to say, that our camp has been kept clean, and with the exception of a few stragglers, we have lost fewer men than any other around Norfolk, so far as I have heard.

Captain SWANSON leaves for home to-morrow, and I embrace the opportunity to send you this letter.

The "Baptist" of the 16th came to hand to-day. Whenever I receive it, I feel like I have met an old friend from home.

Yours, &c.,

E. F. B.

A HEATHEN PRAYER.—The following is a remarkable prayer of Socrates at the end of Phaedrus:

"Oh! thou beloved universal Divinity, and ye other divinities, grant that I may become beautiful within, and that whatever of externals I may possess may be all in harmony with my inward (spiritual) being. May I regard the wise only as rich; and may I have just so much gold as no other would take from me but the virtuous man."

RELIGION AT HOME.—"Let them learn first," says Paul, "to show piety at home." Religion begins in the family. One of the holiest sanctuaries on earth is home. The family altar is more venerable than any altar in the cathedral. The education of the soul for eternity begins by the fireside. The principle of love, which is to be carried through the universe, is first unfolded in the family.

He who does not truly speak the truth is a betrayer of the truth.

Angel Visits.

They do not always visit us in beautiful garments, making the air golden with their sunny smiles. Oftener they come in sober-hued vestments, with lips grief-curved and eyes heavy, as from weeping. But come to us when and how they will, it is ever in love. Daily they are about our paths, though we perceive them not with our dull bodily senses, nor even recognise their presence by the spirit's finer instincts; for, "of the earth earthy," as we are, and with affections clinging to the earth, we have neither eyes nor ears for the inner sights and inner voices which are for the pure in heart. Yes, they are about daily paths, smoothing and making them flowery when they may, but oftener piling up obstructions and making them rough and thorny.

"Rough and thorny! Piling up obstructions!" we hear from the lips of some life-weary sufferer. "Is this a work for angels?"

Beautiful seemed the way before you, into the bright morning of early womanhood, heart-sick and life-weary one! And as your eyes went far onward, how many lovely vistas opened, showing blessed Arcadias in the smiling distance! To gain them was, you felt, to gain heaven; and onward you pressed with eager footsteps. You did not gain them! For a while the path was even and the fragrance of a hundred blossoms delighted your senses. But all at once your feet were wounded—there were sharp obstructions in the way—then thick clouds and darkness were before you, hiding the lovely Eden. Still, you pressed onward, though the way was rough and the sunny vistas opened to the land of promise were hidden from your straining vision.—Then a mountain arose suddenly, whose rocky steep you could not climb. Despair was in your heart, and in the bitterness of your disappointment you called yourself one mocked of God.

It was not so, precious immortal! Not so, pilgrim to a better land than the Arcadia of your maiden dreams! At the very foot of that inaccessible mountain a narrow path became visible, and though it looked rough and had no green margin, beautiful with flowers, there was an emotion of thankfulness in your heart for even this way of escape; for, already a mortal dread had seized upon your spirit. With hurrying footsteps you entered this new way, and the hope that it would quickly lead around the mountain, and bring the sunny land again in view, repressed the fear that else had been paralyzing.

It was the hand of an angel which led you into that new way and kept your heart from fainting. Narrow, rough and flowerless though it proved, it was a better way than that along which you were passing with such buoyant steps, for it bent heavenward. And think, life-weary one, do you not feel that you are nearer heaven now than when the sun of this world shone from an unclouded sky above the path of pleasure and prosperity? Think, and answer to yourself the question.

A heart-stricken mother sat grieving for the loss of her youngest-born, the sweetest and loveliest of her precious flock—grieving and refusing to be comforted. There had been loving sympathy, gentle remembrance and pious teaching from the lips of the minister, * * * * * but all availed not, the fountain of tears stayed not his waters, nor was the murmuring voice lulled in her rebellious spirit. At length one came to her who had known a like sorrow, and whose heart had, even like hers, been bowed into the very dust. She took into her own soft hand the passive hand of the mourner, which gave not back a sign. A little while she held it, clasping her fingers in a gentle pressure; then, in a voice whose tender modulations went vibrating to the inmost of her spirit, she said: "You had an angel visit last night."

An angel visit! What did the words signify?

"Only a year has passed since I had a like visit," continued the friend. "I did not recognize the heavenly messenger when she came, for my eyes were too full of tears to see her radiant form. She came and went, bearing on her bosom as she passed upward to the regions of eternal sunshine, the spirit of my lovely boy!"

The hand of the mourner answered to the light pressure of that in which it lay. "That night," went on the comforter, "I saw in a dream—I call it a dream, but regard it as a revelation—my translated one among the blessed in the upper kingdom of our Father. He was in the arms of the angel-mother, whose love for him, it was plain to see, was wise and tender, surpassing all my own deep affection as far as the unselfish love of an angel surpasses the love of a weak and erring creature of earth."

"Grieve no more!" said the heavenly being, as she came to me. "I have not taken this innocent one from you in anger or cruelty, but in love—love for both the mother and child. As for him, he is safe in his celestial home forever, and is and will be blessed far above anything you could ask—for it hath not entered into the heart of even a mother to conceive what transcendent delights are in store for those who are born into heaven. Is it not, therefore, better for your child? Were I to say, take him again into the cold, dark world of sorrow, sin and suffering, would you bear him back? No, grieving mother, no! You love this precious

one too well. But how is it better for you to lose the child in whom your heart was so bound up? I see the question on your lips, and answer—That is always best which lifts the spirit nearest to God. Is it not so? Think! Not with a heavenly affection, did you love your child, and such an affection cannot truly bless either you or your babe. It is now in heaven, and as your heart follows it there, it will come into heavenly associations, and thus be filled with aspirations for that higher life which descends from and bears back its recipient into heaven. Grieving one! I came to you in mercy, and though tears have followed my visit, they are falling on good seeds planted in your heart."

Thus spoke to me that angel-mother of my child, and ever since her words have been my stay and comfort. Such an angel came to you last night, grieving friend. The visit was in love, not in anger. Then lift your eyes upward, and no longer permit them to rest on the gloomy grave. The spirit of your child has already arisen, more beautiful in form, and is now with the angels appointed for its guardianship. The wisest love of our good Father hath transplanted a flower of earth to blossom in the warmer atmosphere of heaven. Be thankful, then, dear friend. Oh, be thankful!—but weep not!"

And the heart, which no words of consolation had been able to reach, felt itself swelling with a deep emotion, and lifting itself up towards the All-merciful.

"I will believe that it was an angel who came here last night and bore away my child," she whispered, as with shut eyes, fringed by tear-gemmed lashes, she bowed her head upon the bosom of her consoler. "Oh, if anything can soothe the anguish of this bereavement, it is to know that my precious babe, for whom I have cared so tenderly, passed from my arms to those of an angel; and that he was thus borne safely across the dark valley into which I look down with such a heart-shudder. I bless you for speaking such words of consolation!"

Not alone in misfortune or bereavement do angels visit us. They do not always make the way rough, nor always darken the fires around which we gather. Daily they come to us; hourly they seek to draw nearer, and quicken our better impulses. A thousand evils—soul-destroying evils—are warded off by them, even though we are unconscious of their presence, and it may be, resist the very influences by which such priceless benefits are conferred.

"Ah!" we hear it said, "if we could but open our eyes and see; if the scales that obstruct our inner vision could be removed; if we could know our celestial visitors when they come!"

We may know them, and we may perceive their presence. Whether we are in prosperity or in adversity, in joy or in sorrow, angel visitors are with us whenever the thought goes upward and the heart yearns for a better life. Their mission to the sons of men is to draw them heavenward; and if sorrow, affliction, or adversity is needed for the accomplishment of this great end, they are made subservient in the good work. But when, in their high mission, they bow a thirsty soul to the bitter waters of Marah, their hands hold not back the healing branch; and a song of rejoicing is soon heard instead of lamentation. Elim, with its twelve wells of water and seventy palm-trees, is just beyond.

Happy is that spirit to which the angels come not on their errands of mercy in vain!—Steps Toward Heaven.

(From the Southern Lutheran)

The Religious Press of the South.

We have been pleased to note the spirit of patriotic devotion to the South and her cause, which has actuated the religious press of the Confederate States, from the commencement of the controversy with the North. In doing this, however, we do not conceive that it has compromised its religious character, or soiled its robes in the dirty pool of mere party politics. It has not wantonly mixed up the matters of Church and State, or arrayed the members of the church militant with political parties under opposing banners to rudely jostle each other on the battlefields of party strife and polemical statesmanship. But the high and holy cause in which the South is now engaged—the cause of emancipation from the political thralldom of an unscrupulous and irresponsible faction—is emphatically the cause of the Church, and the religious as well as the secular press, not only has a right to be heard in the premises, but it is a duty which it owes to itself and the country, to speak out boldly and unreservedly upon matters in which all feel a common and abiding interest.

The readers of religious papers expect not only the war news but the opinions of the editors upon the war and the unfortunate controversy that led to it; and they might have just grounds for complaint if these matters of public interest were withheld. Many of their readers take no other paper, and are therefore entirely dependent upon their Church paper for the current news of the day.

The questions at issue and the principles at stake which involve the present struggle between the two rival sections of the Union, rise in

importance far above the character of mere party politics, where demagogues and petty partisans scramble for the spoils. It is a question of vital interest both to Church and State, and the prosperity and well-being—not to say the existence—of both, depend in a great measure upon the result of the present conflict.

Moral, as well as political questions, are involved in this revolution which is now shaking a continent with its earthquake tread, which are exciting universal thought and action, and opening up a wide field for broad and comprehensive discussion. Having vital interests at stake, the religious press, very early in the controversy, wheeled into line, as she very justly conceived it to be her duty to do, and has battled nobly for the Church and the country, wielding a powerful and controlling influence, potent for good throughout the Confederate States.

"The Times, the Church's Crucible."

Under the above caption, a correspondent of the *Banner of Peace* makes some appropriate and forcible remarks. The pressure of the present times is indeed well calculated to draw the line of demarcation between the dross and the pure gold—the wheat and the chaff—the formal professor and the true believer. Many who, like Peter, said, "though all men forsake Thee, yet will I not," have already gone astray after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and in their blind devotion to Mammon have exclaimed, "I know not the man!"

It is painful to contemplate the sad change which one short year of trial has wrought on many of those who were once considered exemplary Christians. They have, in a measure, deserted the house of God, and closed their hands and hearts to the calls of charity and religion.

It is a very pleasant and easy thing to a formally devout, and apparently consistent professor, to move with the current of Christian sentiment when the Church is popular and religion wears her silver slippers; and the narrow road may not seem so hard to travel when it is girt about with limpid streams and perennial flowers. But let persecution come, and the storms of adversity arise, and the fair and fashionable world begin to scoff and turn its back—let sacrifices have to be made, and difficulties surmounted, and you will see how many will turn back or faint by the way. The Savior, in the days of his incarnation, said to his disciples, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Would we could say as much of the timid and time-serving professors of the present day, as was said of the sleepers of Gethsemane: "The spirit truly is willing but the flesh is weak."

Pure religion, like pure gold, will come out of the crucible brighter and purer from the fiery ordeal through which it had passed; only the dross and alloy shall be consumed.

Some, we fear, have exchanged the house of prayer for the arena of rampant speculation, which, just now, seems to be sweeping like a whirlwind over the land, carrying away the hearts and minds of so many, who, instead of striving to fill their souls with the love of God, are straining every nerve to fill their coffers with ill-gotten gain. Well may it be said, if this little crucible can expose so much dross, what a fearful reckoning will there be in the day of eternity?—Lutheran.

The Home Guard.

War times gives titles to various departments of an army. The "Home Guard" is a phrase very familiar at present; and indeed this is a very important department of a defensive army. While the brave, noble, and generous move forward to meet the invading foe on the threshold of our territory, it is necessary that the women and children, houses and property, should be defended at home. Those who are not able, from age or infirmities, to endure the fatigues of a campaign, can render efficient service by guarding the home interest of others who have gone into the field. As in civil and military affairs, so it should be in religious; the home interests of the church should be carefully guarded. While we provide the word of God and religious reading for the soldiers in the field, we should not forget to look after the souls around us. Let those ministers and Christians who are not prepared to go into the active service of the country, look diligently after the churches around them. The Sabbath-school, the prayer-meeting, attention to God's poor, demand special notice. Nor should home Christians, in zeal and interest for the army, forget their own souls. Look well, Christian, to thy own experience. Grow in grace.

ENJOYMENTS.—I have told you of the Spaniard who always put on his spectacles when about to eat cherries, that they might look bigger and more tempting. In like manner I make the most of my enjoyments, and though I do not cast my cares away, I pack them in as little compass as I can, and carry them as conveniently as I can for myself, and never let them annoy others.—Southern.

Great merits often meet with very ill return, especially to posterity, when the benefactor is forgotten, as Joseph was among the Egyptians.

THE FIGHT ON THE COAST OF BALDWIN.—We were permitted to make the following extract from a private letter received in this city from a member of the "City Troop":

CAMP WITHERS, Jan. 21, 1862.

Dear Sir: The City Troop has had its maiden fight. Yesterday, we warned the Yanks up some. The schooner Wilder, from Havanna, was running the blockade and got into bad quarters. The Captain beached her opposite the mouth of the Lagoon, close to our middle pickets, when the blockader came on her side an avalanche, firing a great many shot and men

