

JOURNALISTIC RESPONSIBILITY.

The following letter, addressed to a certain journal which sets before its readers a medley of conflicting doctrines, is well worthy of notice; and the same remarks would apply to many more which evidently are not called of God to any such service. Our Lord said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32). And we have no commission to set before the household of faith anything which we do not believe to be truth. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?" The letter is as follows: –

"Dear Brother – The enclosed I clipped recently from your journal. Gladly would I help spread the truth of God, gladly shed light upon the path of those who are in darkness; but really, my brother, it seems to me your readers would hardly know what to believe, so varied are the theories set before them. And I ask you in all candor, Is such an array of doctrine conducive to stability of faith, or to leading the unsettled into the truth? Is it not rather calculated to drive them farther into skepticism and doubt, until they make final shipwreck amid the breakers of error or upon the rocks of infidelity? My own experience leads me to think it is. Conflicting theories, boldly advocated, came near driving me to doubt everything; but grace triumphed and I was led to the rock foundation of harmony which does exist in the Word of God despite the efforts of men, whether put forth with evil or good intentions, to cause the world to think otherwise.

"I was much impressed with an article in the first number sent me, with the following title, 'What do we Believe?' You declared yourself to be in the position of Paul, only on a very different subject, when he partly believed. In short, you

acknowledged yourself 'unsettled on a good many points.' You say 'you are just foolish enough to investigate, and for that reason are at present a little agitated, but if there is a God in Israel, you believe you will be rooted and grounded in the faith.' Surely there is a God in Israel, and may he grant you to be rooted and grounded in the truth; for he has declared by the mouth of the great apostle that he 'hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation [R1407 : page 150] through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth,' thereby showing that belief of the truth is a necessary qualification for salvation. He then goes on, by the mouth of the same apostle, to exhort the Thessalonians – and he exhorts us as well – to 'stand fast and hold the traditions which they had been taught, whether by word (of the blessed Master) or our epistle.'

"I know there are many in these days who think it of little consequence what one believes, [R1407 : page 151] if he is only sincere. It seems to me the first words of Paul above quoted would dispel that delusion of the adversary, and the second quotation should cause every one to see to it that the traditions they hold were given of God and not of men. We have a sure foundation given in the Word of God, upon which every doctrine must rest if it be of him, that of 'the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.' I would I might see you settled in the truth, and your little sheet advocating the same, instead of printing the medley of conflicting theories it now does. It is a positive fact they cannot all be truth; some of them must be errors, and we know, according to the Word, that the teaching of error overthrew the faith of some in Paul's day. Is it likely to do any different now?

"Now, my brother, in Christian love, but also in candor, I can only say I fear it is not for the good of the cause of God to present matters thus. I wish you could look at it in a different light, then study the Word by the aid of the holy Spirit to lead

you into the truth, and then use printer's ink, and writer's ink, for its dissemination. Then bear in mind that no scripture is to be taken by itself: that spiritual things are to be compared with spiritual. I pray you to be settled in the truth. Could I be of any service in the accomplishment of this object, I would be glad to render aid, but I pray God to lead you and that you may be willing to be led of him. Yours in the bonds of faith in Christ,

MRS. _____."

O! THE DEPTH OF DIVINE WISDOM!

"I would not choose the garden fair
Which lieth full in view,
All square and trim with faultless beds
Of scarlet edged with blue.
I love to wander unobserved
Through many a leafy nook,
And where the fragrant woodbine path
Winds downward to the brook,
With flowers in ambush, shy and sweet,
Awaiting my returning feet.

"Old ocean, too, would lose her charm
Could I her depths explore,
Or with a powerful telescope
Discern her farther shore.
I love the boundless mystery,
The tireless ebb and flow,
I love the wondrous history
That hideth deep below:
If all her secrets she should tell
Old ocean would not please me well.

"My friends were less my friends, I trow,
If I could once suppose

They had no yearnings high and strong
They ne'er to me disclose.
Kind, truthful tones of trust (regard
Implied, yet not expressed)
We hold the longest in our hearts,
And value most and best;
For, where the floods are swift and great,
The waters sometimes will abate.

"And shall I love thee less, my God,
Because in thee I find
A majesty outstripping far
The finite human mind?
Nay, rather, while for all thy grace
I bless thee and adore,
Because thy name is 'Wonderful,'
I praise thee even more.
This word within my heart I keep –
"Thy judgments are a mighty deep."

– *Selected.*
