

have found a place in which they can begin to have a little ease of conscience. I will close as I see my letter will be too long. Please excuse my scattering remarks, as I have written this in a hurry; much more could be said upon the subject. Examine it, and if worth anything you can do as you think best.

JAMES CARNEY.

SOUTH LOWELL, N. C., }
Aug. 23d, 1871. }

Dear brother Carney:—Yours in the LANDMARKS was received several days since. I have often thought of not only you, but all the dear brethren with whom, I met, while in your section last Fall. I sometimes wonder how it was, that entire strangers in the flesh, could in such a short time completely entwine themselves around my heart and feel so dear to me. Man, brother Carney, is made up of strange contradictions. Man, naturally, is a strange being any way, a mystery to himself unfathomable. Yet there is a power which can spiritually reveal him to himself, and show him his own deformity.—Man naturally is very fond of religion; consequently we see almost the whole world worshipping something, and I doubt not but that the followers of every sect think they are doing their God's service. We take the Bible as the word of our God and there we find that man's condition is described as dead in trespasses and sins, conceived in sin, brought forth in iniquity, incompetent to think a good thought, or perform a good deed, because led captive by the devil at his will; but who of the many thousands who read the Bible, and see these things in print, feel the words stamped as truth by the spirit of God upon their hearts and can say, by the evidence of the spirit, that the Bible is the word of the living God, and that Christ is indeed the Saviour of sinners not the righteous. This word teaches us that there are but two spirits in the world, the spirit of truth and the spirit of error, and that all men are under the teachings of one or the other of these spirits. Then it becomes every wise man making any pretensions to religion, to try these spirits by the word and see by which he is led. There are many sects of religionists in the world who differ widely in their faith, and I cannot conceive how they all can be right or how the spirit of God can teach the Old School Baptists, they are right and teach others that they are wrong; something has taught me that what the word describes as the most miserable, depraved and wretchedly helpless condition of man, in his lost estate is mine naturally; I had read this in the Bible often, until it became as a familiar tale and believed it in a way because the Bible said so, and was rather disposed to think it sui-

ted some others better than it did me, but when I was brought to see and feel that the worst was mine, that every curse was pronounced against myself, that I was the man condemned, that I was the one in the horrible pit, and that my very efforts to extricate myself, only sunk me deeper into the mire of despair. It was then that I was weary and heavy laden, hungry, thirsty, naked, stripped of my own righteousness, and made willing as I trust to fly to the outstretched arms of Christ, my city of refuge. Now in the first place who gave me this light to see myself so differently from what I saw myself before, and so alarmed me as to make me fly to the law of works for safety, there to find that I had no power to perform them, and if I had, there was that miserable load of sin in which I was conceived and brought forth against which I could not possibly have anything to plead. Here it was that I could realize the fact that the word was truth, and that I was indeed powerless to think a good thought even. Why because I could here see that the whole fountain was fouled and contaminated in Adam's fall, and I as one of his seed was just as much so as he was. It was here that I could see that if Adam was a free agent, I was not for I was the servant of sin, led captive by the devil at his will. Now man is no free agent unless of the devil, by virtue of doing his bidding willingly, and this I believe is so, for we are told that we have all sinned.

Now brother Carney, why is it that there is such a vast difference in the different sects, claiming Christ as their Saviour? I have long since seen this wide difference and have wondered why it was so seeing that all claimed to follow the same word, and believe in the same Christ professedly and I very liberally have tried to believe that all were merely branches of the same Church, and that Christ would own and bless all at the last day; but here comes the word again which says there shall be some there at the very Judgment bar of God claiming salvation through their many wonderful works performed in Christ name, and that not all saying Lord, Lord, shall enter in which forbids such a liberal conclusion on the subject of who will be saved, and it matters not what our wishes naturally may be on the subject, we must hear what God in His word says about it, and whatever that condemns, we as the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus should condemn also, following others as they follow Christ. Then why is it that some depend on faith entirely, some on works entirely, and some on both faith and works mixed up? I will tell you how I believe it is. When we look at the law of works delivered to Moses, we naturally lose sight

of our lost condition spiritually and think by the carnal performance, or obedience to the mosaic law we will reap spiritual blessings. In other words, I believe there are two religions taken from the Bible; for I think I have believed in both, one is a carnal religion, the other a spiritual. The first or carnal is I think the one most trusted in at the present day and based upon the works of the creature. There was a moral law delivered to Moses, and the Jews which promised them if they obeyed they should inherit the Land of Canaan, and if they disobeyed they should certainly be punished and the legitimate consequences of their misdeeds should fall upon their heads. Those laws are just as much in force now as then, if we as individuals or nations obey the moral law. I believe we will be blessed in our obedience, our land will flow with milk and honey, we shall be prosperous and have peace among ourselves, but if we disobey them we must suffer the consequences, and if we teach that obedience to the moral law by the carnal mind is the spiritual religion of Christ or in any way commends man to the favor of God it is a delusion an invention of man and we have confusion, wars, blood shed, divisions &c. Now we understand that the spiritual religion of Christ to be altogether different based upon a new spiritual birth, it is entirely a spiritual operation wrought out entirely by the Holy Ghost, impossible to be aided or forwarded by any carnal effort or even to be understood by carnal or natural wisdom, and in this spiritual birth man is not changed back into his last estate in the garden of Eden but is made a joint heir with Christ which is far better than even that which was lost. So we see that the child of God even rejoice to know he is a sinner, he has no cause to complain at God in anything because when God gives him the evidence of the new birth, he can then see that He has done every thing else well, and believes that all things shall work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called according to his purpose. It here seems to me that there is but one great question which should absorb the christian's mind namely to be continually seeking after the evidences of this new birth and just in proportion as these evidences shine within, must the christian be in different to all the threatening storms without which can be hurled upon him by men or devils. It was this evidence which could enable the old martyrs to mount the burning piles rejoicing and meet the grim monster death willingly and I trust it was this evidence that made me willing to sever every earthly tie and amid the jeers and frowns of the world to unite myself to your despised old band where I may hear

you lisp the name of Jesus in sweet accents, ascribing all glory to his name, and taking none to yourselves. It is by experience like this that we are enabled to trust God in the dark as in the light. After we have thus seen and felt our lost condition, our utter helplessness, and inability to do one single thing to commend us to God, and then feel from the evidences of the spirit within, corroborated by the word without, that God has done all things for us, that He is the beginning and the end of our salvation; then it is that we have no very exalted opinion of our ability or inclination to do good. Then it is that we can see and feel that to obey, simply obey, is better than sacrifice, that God does not require that man should compass heaven and earth to make one proselyte that after he should make him he should be two fold more the child of the devil than himself, now we have a clearer view of the exaltation of God and our own depravity, and we can while rejoicing in the evidence of being a child of God, by reason of this new birth, very well afford to be considered fools, glorying in our own ignorance and inability to find or see anything commendable in worldly wisdom, as we are sometimes accused of being indifferent to the excellences of worldly wisdom, in learning Christ. But we contend that there are two ways of learning Christ one Historically or by worldly wisdom the other spiritually or by the Holy Ghost. We can read the word and learn that above 1800 years ago a man lived called Christ who performed many miracles &c., but no man can say that he was and is the Lord save by the Holy Ghost. Brother Carney we are indeed strange creatures a mystery to ourselves, so great that nothing short of the spirit can show us to ourselves as we really are, dividing soul and body, causing the spirit to just against the flesh and the flesh against the spirit. This spirit is in the world to-day waging a war in the bosom of every child of God and sealing God's elect and when this work is accomplished time will be no more, and we need not give ourselves any uneasiness for fear any shall be lost for "He knows them that are his," and "not a hoof shall be left" every child shall come flocking home to Zion.

Brother Carney, the above are some of my reflections upon reading your precious article, very imperfectly committed to paper for your inspection, and if you see anything in them calculated to comfort any one of the babes in Christ you are at liberty to use it as a whole or any part of it, as your better judgment may dictate.

Yours &c.,
ISAAC G. CANNADY.