

COMMUNICATED.

RICHLAND, GEORGIA,
July 7th, 1873. }
Elder P. D. Gold:—

DEAR BROTHER,—Since reading the communications of Elders Denton and Parker of Texas, and the troubles about two seed and especially as related to the devil, I have had many reflections and can't well dismiss the subject from my mind, and while I have no disposition to take part with either of the Brethren, and fan the coals of controversy, yet I have an inclination to say something; and, without knowing exactly what I must say—but however, I will begin by saying that I should be pleased to hear that any of our Brethren were contending with, or against the devil—but I am truly sorry when I hear that they are contending about him. I am inclined to think that the less we have to do with the devil, farther than to resist and point out his wicked devices, the better we will be; and, especially the Minister of the gospel should be very careful to take as little of the devil with him into the pulpit as possible. No difference whether he is self-existent or created, no difference whether he came from above or beneath he is here, and we are commanded to resist him. I have thought the devil did like very much to be brought into notice and especially to hear his Satanic majesty proclaimed from the pulpit! So, if he can get the preachers' mind charged with some point of his honor's existence or non-existence—it matters not with him, so he keeps the preacher's attention directed away from Christ. I say if he can do this he accomplishes an object of this kind, he deprives the Church of hearing the gospel of Christ, and entertains them, or rather detains them with some imaginary and fancied views about himself. And what good would it do a Christian to prove to him that the devil was created or self-existent? In what direction would he be edified to profit? When we preach the devil we do not feed the flock. You will never see a Brother or Sister shed a tear when you preach the devil to them, you will never see their bosoms heaving with the emotions of love to Christ, you will not see brotherly love increased, but you will soon see discord and distraction, you will see Brethren have each other by the ears and in circles of conversation you will hear the devil spoken of more than Christ.

I have had some observation of these things in gone-by-years, have seen Brethren waring with each other about the devil, and never have known any good results to grow out of it. See the distraction already in Texas—one Church dissolved and re-constituted and stands disconnected with her Brethren. All of this about the poor old devil and his seed. I once received a letter from a Brother Baptist in which he asked me for my views on some very knotty points about the devil. I replied to this dear Brother, that he

must excuse me as I had never had any impressions to preach the devil, and so I would say to the dear Brethren everywhere, surely there is enough contained in the gospel of Christ to employ our whole time. If there is not scope enough in the Divinity of the Son of God to employ our talent let us take Paul's admonition to Titus and constantly affirm that they which have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. Let us tell our Brethren to draw near to God and he will draw near to them—to resist the devil and he will flee from them—and for us not to pursue after him nor hunt after him—he will return soon enough.

Yours, in tribulation, farewell,
I. R. TEAT.

WE heartily and affectionately commend the views of Brother Teat above expressed concerning this root of bitterness. While controversy may be needful at times, Satan does have so much of his spirit in it, that we should be careful to keep ourselves out of strife.

SPARTA, LA., Feb. 15th, 1873.

Brother Gold:—

I have been confined at home and to the house with bronchitis, or preacher's sore-throat, I was taken the second Saturday in August last with a hoarseness while trying to preach. I gradually got worse till the 5th Sunday in September, when I preached my last sermon, and I have not been able to preach above a low whisper since November, and may never be able to talk any more, so I will try to write some for the LANDMARKS. That is, to give a reason of my hope in Christ.

I was born in the State of Alabama, Lauderdale County: my parents were Baptists at my first recollection, and moved to Mississippi where I grew to manhood, but up to the age of fourteen I never feared God nor the devil, and really doubted there being any such Being. Though I feared my parents, for they tried to make me know my place. So one Sunday while they were gone to meeting leaving me and my older sisters at home, I walked out to the road some distance, and as I went this thought struck me—you are a miserable, sinner!—I stopped and looked around to see what was the matter, and it seemed that I had been, and was then, the worst being on earth. Right there I thought I would try to pray, and selected a place where no one would see me. But when I got there I thought some one would see me so I went back home without trying to pray.—By this time my parents had returned from meeting and the preacher stopped for dinner, and they all talked about the meeting, and I thought they were all good people, but I was a miserable wretch and deserved punishment. So I remained in this condition some time, frequently trying to pray, until it seemed like my prayers did no good, and I felt afraid to get on my knees and try. About this time a young man died in the settlement, and when I heard of it I was

sure that I would be the next, and there was a disease in my head that would kill me and that I would go to torment. My father was reading one night, as was his custom to do, and I thought if I could read some it would relieve me—he stopped and asked me if I did not want to read. I told him I did. I read some and every word seemed to condemn me. I laid down the Bible and went out in the dark, thinking I had sinned away the day of grace and I felt like I was gone sure. I remained in this condition some time viewing the justice of God in my condemnation, and feeling condemnation continually. One night I thought I never would see another day and just before day I went to sleep and dreamed that the day of judgment had come, and that I saw all the saints assembled, robed in white and praising God, and I was cut off, and Christ appeared and told me I should be saved, and I awoke. It was the prettiest morning I thought that I ever had seen, all was peace and joy until I went to ploughing about two hours after when this thought struck me—you are deceived, it is nothing but a dream, your sins are not pardoned—and then I tried to pray—Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me! and that has been my prayer ever since. There was a very eminent Brother told me that he could not have received such a deliverance, and so I thought I, and prayed earnestly for a plainer one but never got it.—This I received in my fourteenth year. I was in trouble three months and I did not unite with the Church till in my twenty-eighth year. I went to Union Church, Noscuba County, was received and baptized by Brother J. G. Crelins and have been a poor, weak member ever since, desiring to do right I hope, yet I find in my flesh dwells no good.

The LANDMARKS come to me regularly and are much comfort, as it and the *Signs of the Times* are all the preaching I hear, though we have regular preaching here but I am not able to go. May God lead you in the right way is my sincere desire.—Farewell,

Yours, in much affliction,
P. F. WHITE.

Dear Brother Gold:—I will now give you a second experience, or call to preach, and I don't think any have the right only those that are called of God, as was Aaron. In my 23rd year I got married. I then thought I would never unite with the Church as there was much contention then between the Missionary and Primitive Baptists. I thought I would read my Bible and try to serve God at home and take no part with either, but I did not try that mind long before I became troubled exceedingly, and did not know the cause, but thought it was for the neglect of duty. This trouble grew till I thought I was a vagabond on the earth, not fit to live. I imagined that the people made a fool of me and pointed the finger of scorn at me wherever I went.

I told my wife it was so, and she said it was not—and this made much contention and hard-feelings between us—but when I reflected I knew that I was wrong. I was in this situation about a year. One evening while I was hoeing corn I went to rather a secret place and leaned my head against the fence, and tried to pray, and these are the words of my prayer—Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me and show me the way you would have me to go!—so, I went back to my hoe, and just as I took hold of the helve I heard these words—try the Spirits, for ye don't know what manner of Spirit ye are off!—then I wondered whether I would be anything or not. The Lord wanted me to be thinking it was to take up the cross and fill a back seat, but, alas! I found to the reverse. So I went to the house and told my wife what had taken place, and that I would offer to the Church some time, but my conduct had been bad. I must live so as to gain fellowship. Here I must state that I read my Bible constantly, every chance that I had, and could not keep my eyes off it. A new text would come to my mind and with all the beauty in the world, and I would read it and feel at the time that I wanted every body to hear, and it seemed to me that my very soul was led out for the welfare of the Church, her peace was my peace. And when I was baptized I thought and felt that I had done my duty, and went four days rejoicing.—The the case of Ananias and Sapphira was presented to me—you have not paid all the price, pay that thou hast vowed—I cannot, I am too ignorant and illiterate a man, no reputation, and would injure the cause which was very dear to me. I wept much and prayed to the Lord to relieve me in some way, for my burden was greater than I could bear. Sometimes it seemed to me that my heart would burst within me. Then family worship presented itself, and it was no small matter with me as my wife was no professor, I tried to get around it every way I could, but I had to take it up or I would die. I tried to relieve my feeling by talking to the Brethren. Even my father, who was a Deacon, reproved me so that I could not stay in that country, but sold out and moved to Louisiana. thinking I would keep my letter in the trunk; but before I reached my journey's end I wanted to find a church of the Primitive order, which I did, and put my letter in it where it is now. I kept my feelings hid for some time, and this text of Scripture followed me for months—Curse God and die—the language of Job's wife—so, before the war I commenced talking and was liberated. I volunteered and went off in the army, (Confederate) having never tried to preach for over a year. Through the solicitations of my friends I commenced trying again, the Church sent me license while in the army. I continued trying to preach till we broke up some time after the surrender. I have been holding out